

Wheely great day out

open country

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SOLDIERS swapped rifles for rods on the Tweed at Carham last month.

Servicemen who had recently returned from Afghanistan and veterans from Erskine Hospital fished the famous salmon river for a week last month thanks to local charities.

And the trial week was such a success organisers hope to hold another next year.

Tweed Foundation director Nick Yonge said: "This pilot week on the Tweed has worked tremendously well. We wanted to do something to help injured services personnel and, in addition to gifting some wonderful fishing opportunities, we also have the benefit of being able to offer the wheelyboats specially tailored for ease of use by wheelchair users, enabling them to get the most out of their angling experience."

The trial week was organised by The Tweed Foundation and The Wheelyboat Trust, with fishing equipment and instruction provided by Hardy & Greys of Alnwick.

And 25 servicemen from the Personnel Recovery Centre in Edinburgh learned the art of fly-casting and fishing for salmon, with those injured using the specially designed craft.

Highlights of the week were the casting demonstrations given by Ian Gordon of Hardy & Greys and the salmon caught by Rifleman John Burns and by Peter Wilson, aged 89, a veteran of the Battle of Britain. Both men were catching and landing their first salmon.

Mr Gordon said of the men: "They were very enthusiastic and quick learners, wanting to further develop their newly acquired skills and do more fishing."

Another participant, rifleman Kyle Baker from 3rd Battalion The Rifles, said, "It's great! I've received fly fishing tuition from one of the best professionals in the country, Ian Gordon, and it is all part of my



Battle of Britain veteran Peter Wilson, 89, in one of the specially adapted Wheelyboats, sets out to catch his first salmon on the Tweed

rehabilitation therapy." Rifleman Smith who donated the fishing on his beat and to The Tweed Foundation and The Wheelyboat Trust for their organisation."

Major Kevin Wood, secretary of the Army Angling Association, explained: "As part of the welfare component of their recovery, personnel were invited to participate in a week of fishing and instruction - and the troops, mostly newcomers to fishing, have really enjoyed the experience. Our

special thanks go to Peter Straker-Smith who donated the fishing on his beat and to The Tweed Foundation and The Wheelyboat Trust for their organisation."

Bill Quarry, for The Wheelyboat Trust, said: "We are all pleased that everyone enjoyed the occasion and would be delighted to organise a similar event next year and to follow up with more fishing for the individual

servicemen who would like to fish more frequently. The Trust is grateful for the volunteer Boatmen, Lee Craig, John Edey, Bob Smith, Paul Hume and Tom Davis who gave their time to help with the fishing and tuition, and also wish to thank the local sponsors of the event: Best Intent, Bordialoo, Foreman Butchers, Ednam House Hotel, Queens Head Hotel, Collingwood Arms Hotel, Gill Orde in Catering, Hardy & Greys,

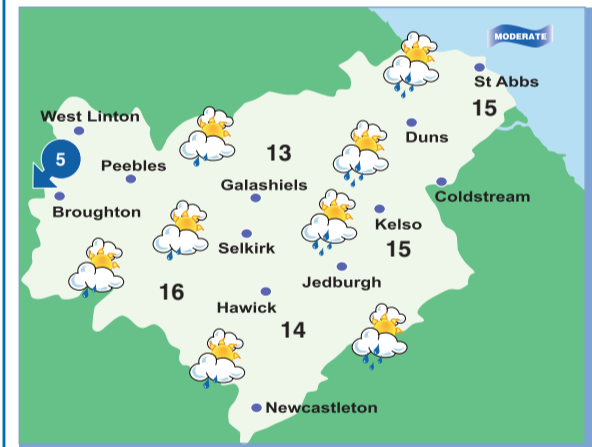
Tweedside Tackle and the Teviot Gamefare Smokery, plus numerous cash donations from generous individuals."

The Wheelyboat Trust developed the specialised angling boats to give disabled people the opportunity to fish the Tweed and elsewhere.

The Tweed Foundation protects the Tweed river system and promotes angling.

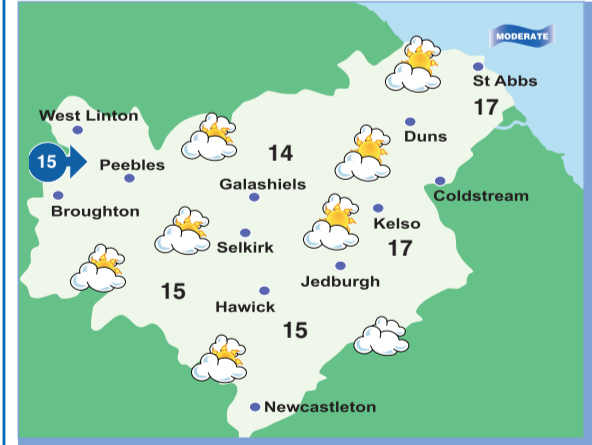
Weather

Region Today



Plenty of morning sunshine. Cloud will slowly thicken as the day progresses and there will be scattered showers, mostly light. A moderate north-easterly wind. Max temp 13-16C (55-61F).

Region Tomorrow



There will be sunny spells with scattered showers. Most of the showers will fall during the course of the afternoon. A moderate westerly wind. Max temp 14-17C (57-63F).

Weekend Outlook

Saturday: It will be another bright day with sunny periods and a light scattering of showers. There will be a light to moderate north-westerly wind. Max temp 14-17C (57-63F).

Sunday: It looks set to be largely dry on Sunday with plenty of sunshine. However, just the small risk of a shower. A moderate north-westerly wind. Max temp 14-17C (57-63F).

Today's Sun & Moon

Sun rises 6.08am
Sun sets 8.21pm
Moon sets 8.13am
Moon rises 8.14pm
Lighting up time: 8.21pm-6.08am

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Energy plan pays off with green cheque

A GREENER Melrose was presented with a cheque for more than £5,000 last week to help local people reduce their carbon footprint.

The group, which formed in September last year and covers the town of Melrose and its surrounding villages, was given the £5,312 from the Climate Change Fund.

Chairman John McLennan said: "This will help and encourage us to reduce our fuel bills. We will help people work together to ensure a better future".

A Greener Melrose will use some of the cash to buy energy monitors which will be loaned out, and to provide expert assistance, to help people cut down their energy usage.

The rest of the grant will go on transition training events,



The team takes delivery of the cheque from the Climate Change Fund

which it is hoped will take place in the new year, and to run an open day in the Corn Exchange in Melrose on October 2 which will include speakers, discussions, music and a

range of stalls promoting local initiatives. Treasurer Pauline Langworth explained: "The aims of A Greener Melrose are to protect, conserve and improve the environment; to promote sustainable developments that improve resilience and to use the Transition model to establish a Transition TD6 Initiative."

"It's brilliant that so many initiatives are happening in the Borders."

The group has already held meetings in Gattonside, Bowden and St Boswells and it hopes to hold one in Newtown St Boswells in November.

The transition movement, according to some reports, started in Ireland and is concerned with creating sustainable local communities in the face of diminishing oil supplies.

Road-kill shows mink still around

Border Country

by Corbie 

As the summer draws ever closer to its conclusion, most of our native wild flowers have finished blooming, leaving the coast clear for some alien species to fill the colour void.

I have already mentioned Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed in recent weeks and last week on a walk up my local riverside haunt, another two were spotted. Both are undoubted garden escapes but seemed quite happy in their wild setting. The first was the deep blue monkshood, which is one of the most poisonous plants known to man. I used to have it in my garden, but after hearing horror stories about its toxicity, I donned gloves and got rid of it. The other was the more benign keeled garlic, a member of the onion family with a loose head of attractive deep pink flowers. I first discovered it in 2008, but this was a new location a short distance away, so it seems to be thriving.

On the subject of foreign species, while out on my bike last week in the Ettrick valley I came upon the body of an American mink by the roadside. It had obviously been fairly



The dead Ettrick mink found by the roadside last week - evidence that the animals are still breeding in the area

recently struck by a car and was in lovely condition with a shiny black coat and white chest. It proves that they are still around, but not in the numbers they used to be. This was the first evidence I had seen of mink for quite some time (which is not a bad thing!).

Although sometimes distressing, road-kills can be a good indicator of how animal populations are faring in an area. This year I have seen very few flattened hedgehogs on our roads, which points to a

scarcity, but badgers on the other hand seem to be doing all right. On one morning alone, on the road between Selkirk and St Boswells, I counted three corpses in different locations. On the same road I have seen dead otter, roe deer, fox and even magpie (which I think was feeding on a dead badger).

Scavenging birds such as crows, buzzards and even owls can be at risk from being struck while eating road-kill, proving that "easy meat" doesn't come without risk.

Surely the bird with the worst road sense of all is the pheasant. I have seen them scurry across the road in front of a car then at the last minute turn round and run straight back into its path again, often with fatal consequences.

It is difficult to avoid hitting wildlife while driving, especially at night, but the risks can nevertheless be reduced with a little forethought, awareness and travelling at a sensible speed along narrow, winding country lanes.

COUNTRY DIARY

SUNDAY: Coldstream Ramblers, Edinshall Broch, Abbey St Bathans, Abbey Hill, Cockburn Law, 10 miles. Meet at Henderson Park car park, Coldstream, at 9.15am or 67-789610 (lay-by just off Duns - Grant-house road, on left about 3 miles beyond Preston) at 10am. Paths and tracks, a little amount of road and a fairly easy ascent of Cockburn Law. The Broch itself is an unusual ancient landmark in this part of the world.

SUNDAY: Scottish Borders Hill Walking Club. Dun Rig (73) 260392 G 9.15am.

SUNDAY: Circular walk of 10 miles to Skelfhill Pen, Millstone Edge, Langtae Hill and Cauldcleuch Head, returning via Priestthaugh Forest and Burn. Total ascent 600m/2000ft. Meet 10am at Priestthaugh; from A7, six miles south of Hawick, take the turning to Priestthaugh. Park in quarry area on the right of the road just past Priestthaugh Farm. No dogs please. Walk organised and led by the Scottish Borders Council Ranger Service, booking essential. Adults £5, concessions £3, children free. Please wear walking boots and warm waterproof clothing, and bring a packed lunch. Return approx 4pm.

For more listings, visit www.outdoor-diary/pages/events.php or www.scotborders.gov.uk/events2010

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