

Bogtastic Day

Held in Simonsbath and Blackpitts



Interview with: the Bogtastic Team

Name of project: Bogtastic Day

Location: Simonsbath and Blackpitts, Exmoor National Park

By who: Exmoor Mires Partnership and the Heart of Exmoor Scheme

How: funded by the Exmoor Mires Partnership project (EMP), Heart of Exmoor Scheme, South West Water and Exmoor National Park Authority; donations from local groups and individuals and staff time input from other organisations on the day; many invaluable volunteers.



Aims: To raise awareness and understanding of Exmoor's bogs, wildlife and heritage: to educate whilst having a fun adventure activity day.

- Promote EMP and the importance of mire restoration
- Promote bogs and Exmoor's moorland as a fun place to visit
- Demonstrate the high diversity of unique plants and animals; scientific (storage of water and greenhouse gases), archaeological and landscape benefits

How long has it been running for and has it changed over time?

3 years; Each year it has grown in size, with more activities and more organisations becoming involved in the event at Simonsbath



Main considerations:

- Land manager and Natural England (sites are SSSIs) permissions
- Best time of year and day of the week to hold the event on
- Volunteer involvement
- Activities wanted at the event
- How best to get across key aims
- Publicity is very important, including ways in which to guarantee people will visit the event rain or shine, such as encouraging community youth groups and clubs and involving them in the organisation and build up too.



Partnerships and sources of advice:

Local people who have been involved with organising other events were fountains of knowledge; partner organisations shared their experiences and ideas for activities.

How was it undertaken:

A lot of planning, negotiations, organisation... down to the last "T".

Constraints and limitations:

Time of year is the main limitation: whether or not to hold the event during the school holidays, at the weekend, in spring or summer (nicest weather?). This has been the focus of many discussions, with considerations to how the "when" will effect the "who" (local or tourists) and number of visitors. Also, the potential impacts of this on the environment and wildlife and working sensitively around this.



Outcomes and recommendations:

The positive feedback collected on the day and the official evaluations have shown that the event is hugely successful and worth continuing: the key aims and messages of the event are portrayed well in the wide variety of activities and exhibitions on offer.

Collaborative and partnership working are key: could not be done without the cooperation of all parties involved.

Key considerations when managing volunteers:

- Ensure adequate training and briefing prior to the event
- We tried a rota at the most recent event so volunteers were able to move around the site, have a break and didn't get lumbered with doing the same duty all day – it is equally important for them to get a feel of the event and its messages as it is the visitors. This was a lesson learnt from the previous year, following feedback.
- Consider the task they would like to do and use their skillset
- Thank you! (*very very much*) at the end of the event – their input and assistance is invaluable so it is vital they feel appreciated.

Example of something you're pleased with:

Each year it just seems to get better and better – well practised at delivery now! The event in 2015 attracted over 400 people and raised over £600 for Exmoor Care Moor – it was considered to be our best Bogtastic yet! The BioBlitz has also captured hundreds of new wildlife records. We are now looking forward to Bogtastic 2016.

When something didn't got to plan:

For Bogtastic 2014 the team decided to try and set up a "market place" at the event as a way of getting extra income, providing a way of ensuring the sustainability of the event: stall holders would pay a fee for selling their wares; these stalls would also add an extra aspect to the event. This idea was well received with about 10 stalls in total paying the fee to be there. Despite this, when the event day arrived the weather wasn't ideal for setting up shop. The project team also realised having a market place didn't quite fit into the theme of the day, it being an interactive wildlife-orientated event. It was a great idea and definitely worth a try, but unfortunately didn't work out.

Advice for setting up a project:

- Don't be afraid to ask someone, anyone, for advice. If you are unsure about a certain aspect, there will almost certainly be an expert near by
- Make sure your aims and desired outcomes of the event are clear
- Publicity and engagement prior to the event is very important!
- Treasure your volunteers!

Other comments:

As long as you believe in the purpose of the event, the hard work will seem worthwhile.

To get involved with this event or to find out more about it, please visit:

www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/get-involved

Or the event page on Facebook at: [Exmoor Mires Project](#)



2013 Bogtastic!!
Friday 31 May
10am - 4pm

Free Event

A fun packed Adventure Day for all ages exploring the bogs and wetlands in and around Simonsbath and Blackpitts

All weather activities including stream dipping, clam making, crafts, undercover exhibitions, sawmill tours, guided walks exploring the local nature and heritage.

Now with tickets and activity providers welcome. Please ring 01598 752509 to book your place! Please wear outdoor clothing, wetters and/or boots for stream dipping. Tickets cost £4.00. (Includes free water and refreshments). Activities based at Simonsbath Sawmill (01598 752509) and Blackpitts (01598 752509) or National Park Centre Lymouth 01598 752509 or visit www.heartofexmoor.org.uk

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2014 Bogtastic!!
Wednesday 29th July
10am - 4pm

Free Entry

A fun packed Adventure Day for all ages exploring the bogs and wetlands in and around Simonsbath and Blackpitts

This 'drop-in' activity day has something for everyone, whatever the weather - indeed, the 'wetter the better!' From welly wanging to guided walks it is the perfect day out for all. Other activities include stream dipping, wildlife activities, undercover exhibitions, Simonsbath Sawmill and the infamous Bogtastic Course.

What better way to explore Exmoor's bogs than by attending Bogtastic!!

Please wear outdoor clothing and wellys and bring spare clothing. Children must be accompanied. Tickets on site. Food available. Some activities may charge. Activities based at Simonsbath Sawmill (01598 752509) and Blackpitts (01598 752509) or National Park Centre Lymouth 01598 752509 or visit www.heartofexmoor.org.uk

For more details please call: Lymouth National Park Centre 01598 752509 or visit www.heartofexmoor.org.uk

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2015 Bogtastic!!
Sunday 17th August
10am - 3pm

Free Entry

A fun packed Adventure Day for all ages exploring the bogs and wetlands in and around Simonsbath and Blackpitts

All weather activities include a Bog Safari, stream dipping, dam building, BioBlitz, undercover exhibitions including historic artefacts, sawmill tours and guided walks; games and stalls selling crafts and local produce.

Remember a **WILD NIGHT OUT**: 7.30 pm in Simonsbath the evening before.

New stall holders and activity providers welcome, please ring now to book your place! Participants, please wear outdoor clothing, wellys and spare clothes advised. Children must be accompanied. Tickets. Food available. Some activities may charge. Activities based at Simonsbath Sawmill (01598 752509) and Blackpitts (01598 752509) or National Park Centre Lymouth 01598 752509 or visit www.heartofexmoor.org.uk

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2016 Bogtastic!!
Tuesday 26th July
10am - 4pm

Free Entry

A fun packed adventure day for all ages exploring the bogs, wildlife and heritage in and around Simonsbath and Blackpitts

This 'drop-in' activity day has something for everyone, whatever the weather - indeed, the 'wetter the better!' From stream dipping to the infamous Bogtastic Course it is the perfect day out for all. Other activities include guided walks, wildlife activities, undercover exhibitions and Simonsbath Sawmill guided tours.

What better way to explore Exmoor's bogs than by attending Bogtastic!!

Please wear outdoor clothing, wellys and bring spare clothing. Children must be accompanied. Tickets on site. Food available. Some activities may charge and all activities are subject to change. Activities based at Simonsbath Sawmill (01598 752509) and Blackpitts (01598 752509) or National Park Centre Lymouth 01598 752509 or visit www.heartofexmoor.org.uk

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