

Friends of Penzance B.S.A.C. Conservation Officer's Report July 2014

Researchers from Denmark demonstrate in a study that large grazers and browsers of the past created a mosaic of various landscapes consisting of closed and semi-closed forests and parkland. Elephants, rhinoceroses and aurochs once roamed around freely in the forests of Europe, while hippopotamuses lived in rivers such as the Thames and the Rhine. New research shows how we can use knowledge about the past to restore a varied landscape with a high level of biodiversity.

This picture is a reconstruction of a Last Interglacial temperate landscape with typical Late Pleistocene European large herbivores such as the now extinct straight-tusked elephant (*Elephas antiquus*), an extinct rhinoceros (*Stephanorhinus kirchbergensis*) as well as the still common roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*)



A major new study of the seafloor has found that even in the deepest ocean depths you can find bottles, plastic bags, fishing nets and other types of human litter.

The litter was found throughout the Mediterranean, and all the way from the continental shelf of Europe to the Mid-Atlantic Ridge 2000 kilometres from land. Litter is a problem in the marine environment as it can be mistaken for food and eaten by some animals or can entangle coral and fish, - a process known as “ghost fishing” Scientists took nearly 600 samples from across the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans and in the Mediterranean, from depths ranging from 35 metres to 4.5 kilometres.

Climate change is set to trigger more frequent and severe heat waves in the next 30 years regardless of the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) we emit into the atmosphere, a new study has shown. Extreme heat waves such as those that hit the US in 2012 and Australia in 2009– dubbed three-sigma events, are projected to cover double the amount of global land by 2020 and quadruple by 2040. The new study finds that in the first half of the 21st century, these projections will occur regardless of the amount of CO₂ emitted into the atmosphere.

Eleven sightings of Bottlenose Dolphins during July were from Newquay on the north coast to Looe on the south. Mainly pods of 5 to 8 but a pod of 14 was seen in Fal Bay. 20 sightings of Common Dolphins were from Hells Mouth on the north coast to Gorran Haven on the south. 4 Reports of Rissos were all in Mounts Bay. 40 sightings of Harbour Porpoises were from Pendeen to Fal Bay. There were 21 sightings of Ocean Sunfish from St Agnes on the north coast to Fal Bay. There were only 3 Basking Sharks seen one in each of Whitesand Bay, Mounts Bay and Fal Bay 36 reports of Grey Seals were all from Fal Bay or Mounts Bay. 3 Minke Whales were seen in Mounts Bay on the 30th and singles off Pendeen and in Fal Bay. There are still lots of Barrel Jellyfish around with 22 reports from St Agnes to Charlestown. There was also an unidentified large whale, a Garfish, a Blue Shark, and Compass and Moon Jellyfish seen