

2015 Issue 15
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BEST (Bermuda Environmental Sustainability Taskforce)

Registered Charity No 858

Bulletin - Issue 15 (May 2015)

In this, the Year of Soils, it is distressing that we still have to fight to save our last remaining acres of agricultural land. The attempts by owners at Pink Beach, in the name of tourism, seeking to over-ride regulations and restrictions preventing the loss - FOR EVER - of this precious resource, is extremely unfortunate. Especially given that a large area of the site designated for tourism, including the iconic tourism asset and trademark Pink Beach, has been used for private housing! More on the importance of soils at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TqGKwWo60yE>



Beat the Bead Bermuda: we are delighted that this campaign has been so well received by the community. It was a pleasure to meet with some of the members of Plastic Tides, an energetic and adventurous group who have been visiting schools, connecting with local organisations and who managed to paddle around Bermuda non-stop!

On Saturday, May 9th, Christian Shaw and Gordon Middleton, of Plastic Tides, gave a presentation of their film "The Canal" about their expedition along the Eirie Canal in upstate New York to draw attention to the issue of microbeads. There was also a panel discussion about the local Beat the

Bead Bermuda! campaign. This campaign was launched in April to ask members of the Bermuda community to choose not to import, distribute, sell or buy any personal care products that contain plastic microbeads (or other plastic ingredients). Highlighted during that discussion was one of our BEST taglines, that “the environment isn’t just what we go through to get to the car”... that the environment is the context for all life on Earth and, therefore, depends on us and our actions for its future... our future!

Follow #beatthebeadbermuda and the BEST Facebook page for regular information on what is happening and what you can do.



Plastic Tides

Plastic Tides meet local members of Beat the Bead Bermuda at La Garza, St George, Bermuda

May 23rd - World Turtle Day – On the run-up to our very own Bermuda Day when many will be out on the water, please remember our turtles as you cruise the waves; SLOW DOWN within 100m of shore, traveling over seagrass meadows and where TURTLE ALERT signs are posted and especially if you spot a turtle.

The BUZZ - Good to see a temporary ban on RoundUp, in which the active ingredient, glyphosate, has been strongly linked to environmental harm, including human cancer. The announcement does not make it totally clear as to whether Rodeo (the road spray used by W&E) or other brand-name products are included, and what other pesticides are under scrutiny. We will be following up with the Minister, given the attention that is needed around regulating these chemicals in the

environment. Full release here: <http://bernews.com/2015/05/importation-weed-spray-round-suspended/>

On the world scene: (i) it was good news to read that Bayer had failed in its attempt to sue Friends of the Earth Germany over its claims that thiacloprid, a pesticide manufactured by Bayer, harms bees. Though not presently banned in EU there is evidence that it can make bees more likely to die from common disease and impair their navigational ability. (Ethical Consumer Vol. 154) This neo-nicotinoid is sold to gardeners under the names Provado Ultimate Bug Killer, Multirose Bug Killer and Baby Bio House Plant insecticide. Reading labels, which can seem confusing, is so important - if in doubt, leave it on the shop shelf!

(ii) A disturbing new report out of the US emphasizes the importance of bees and the need to sustain them.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/Environment/2015/0513/Why-more-research-needs-to-be-done-to-save-honey-bees-video>

Dockyard Developments: the proposed development for the America's Cup are complex. Much time and effort is being devoted to examination of the projects, research, meetings and follow-ups. Objections have been made to some aspects of serious concern. Sustainable development is the key element as we move forward.

Bermuda Botanical Gardens: Take Back Our Park is encouraged by public support with the petition now signed by over 2500 concerned citizens. There is quite a bit of media "chatter" regarding the development. For those who want to do more than sign a petition, please contact your MP and ask questions about the development - for example - why put a works yard in the very centre of Bermuda's largest park and only Botanical Gardens that are visited by over 100,000 people a year and are a prime tourist attraction? Do check the web site <http://takebackourpark.com> and Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/takebackourpark?fref=ts> page for further information.



Cycads Maintenance Yard Rare cycad with vegetation brilliant orange cones



Botanical Gardens site, all shielding removed

Your support would be welcomed if you are interested in helping in any of the above initiatives, our 2 dedicated, part-time staff members are working at full stretch, along with the Management Team and Board of Directors to fulfill the BEST mission “To preserve and enhance the quality of life in Bermuda for present and future generations by engaging with the community in advocating for sustainable management and development of the physical, social and economic environments.”

Wishing you all a safe and enjoyable May 24th. Whatever you do, wherever you go - “take only photos, leave only footprints”

Jennifer Flood
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Comments and questions welcome... please contact Jennifer@best.org.bm

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