



# parklife

Issue number 17 Summer 2012

the newsletter of the  
Cairngorms National Park Authority



**WILDCAT PROJECT -**  
three years of success comes  
to a close.

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teaching the next generation  
about the great outdoors.

CENTRE PAGES



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a new five year plan due for  
approval this summer.

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## LAST EDITION

This is the last edition of Parklife. For information on how to keep up to date with the work of the CNPA please see the back page.

# Strengthening Communities

Exciting learning and training opportunities are being offered in the National Park for people and groups who want to make a real difference to their community.

The Strengthening Communities Project will help rural

communities in Badenoch and Strathspey develop skills and expertise to help them thrive even when faced with the challenges of things like rising fuel prices, budget cuts and unemployment.

Headed up by Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey (VABS), the project aims to stimulate local business and entrepreneurship by making sure communities have skills in things like business planning, marketing and communications. Community groups will hopefully gain the confidence to consider



School kids enjoying 'Honey' by Pif - Paf Theatre  
© Laggan Forest Trust

becoming employers themselves and generate local jobs or manage large sums of funding.

A good example of a dynamic community which is already doing this is Laggan. Currently planning for a new Forest Centre, they were recently successful in

a bid to the Enterprise Growth Fund. As a result they are developing several community-run business initiatives including a business supplying logs and wood chip for fuel, a local camp site, a trails and services operation and also support to improve local broadband capacity.

**For more information contact  
Karen Derrick,  
Strengthening Communities,  
email: [karen@karenderrick.org.uk](mailto:karen@karenderrick.org.uk)  
or telephone: 01479 873445.**



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[www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk)

## Improved Visitor Information

In March, John Swinney MSP cut the first turf in Blair Atholl, starting £500,000 of work on a new visitor information centre.

Blair Atholl Area Tourist Association and Blair Charitable Trust have developed the proposals supported by Perth & Kinross Council, CNPA and Scottish Enterprise. The new facility will

open in July and will provide information, interpretation and education for visitors to Atholl and the National Park. It will also be home to Atholl Estates Ranger Service.



Blair Atholl Ranger Base Architects Drawing © Brennan & Watson



Dulnain Bridge Signs © CNPA

## Take a different Path

Dulnain Bridge and Strathdon now have new signs and path leaflets showing new places to explore.

Why not take time to walk in the footsteps of old soldiers, imagine the bustle of the old laundry and enjoy the tranquillity of a path less trodden. Look out for the new leaflets in local outlets.

This Project is being part-financed by the Scottish Government & the European Community: Cairngorms Local Action Group LEADER 2007-2013 Programme.

## LEADER Updates

The demand from people in the National Park for information about Shinty has resulted in Newtonmore and Kingussie Shinty Clubs getting together to produce a leaflet which is available from tourist outlets and accommodation providers. Supported by the CNPA through the Cairngorms Local Action Group, it gives an insight into this exciting sport, the teams and where they play.

The Cairngorms Local Action Group has also awarded LEADER funding to the Junior Rangers towards their exchange trips (see centre pages) and Mar Orienteering Club to help with the Scottish Orienteering Championships in June.

**Further information on the Cairngorms Local Action Group and LEADER funding in the Cairngorms National Park can be found at [www.cairngorms-leader.org](http://www.cairngorms-leader.org)**



Game of shinty © CNPA

# WILDCAT PROJECT

After three successful years the acclaimed Cairngorms Wildcat Project came to an end in April, concluding with a conference at Boat of Garten Community Hall.

The project was set up to help safeguard one of Scotland's most iconic species - the Scottish wildcat - not only within the Cairngorms National Park which is a stronghold for the mammals but also across a wider area of Scotland.

There are only around 400 wildcats left in Scotland and using camera traps, researchers were able to gain an insight into the lives of the animals. Wildcats were spotted living in areas of the Park they'd not been seen in before and in total there were 465 potential sightings around the Park.

To help the wildcat from becoming extinct there is still a continuing need for pet, farm and feral cats to be neutered. Financial help and advice is available from the Cats Protection on 0300 12 12 12.

Work will continue to be carried out by the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, based at the Highland Wildlife Park, and anyone wanting to keep up to date with what is happening should keep an eye on the Highland Tiger website: [www.highlandtiger.com](http://www.highlandtiger.com)



## New Park planning network launched

The first meeting of a new group that brings community representatives in the Cairngorms National Park together to discuss planning and housing has recently taken place at the Lecht.

The Cairngorms Community Council/Association Planning Network is a joint initiative between the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) and the Association of Cairngorms Communities.

It is part of the CNPA's commitment to improving its planning services and the new group will increase communication, general understanding and awareness of planning and housing issues in the Park.

The Network also aims to improve Community Council/Association engagement on planning consultations and provides a voice and ear for Park communities on a range of other planning issues and decisions.

## Helping people to Tread Lightly in the Park



Rangers in the Cairngorms National Park have a handy tool to help visitors in the Park this summer. It's a neat concertina leaflet, sized to fit in a back pocket or wallet, and has information on how to enjoy the outdoors responsibly. 'Top tips and handy hints' are given on issues like camping, outdoor cooking, lighting fires, disposing of litter and waste, and keeping dogs under proper control.



## Junior Rangers

The Cairngorms National Park Junior Ranger project is on track to bring exciting and engaging activities to pupils in five high schools. Delivered by Ranger Services in the Park, they'll focus on visitor management, outdoor access and biodiversity.

Activities including conservation, bushcraft and mountain biking will give young people the opportunity to learn new skills as well as learn why the Cairngorms is such an amazing place.

International opportunities exist for this year's Junior Rangers, with the chance to take part in a camp in Slovenia and Italy as well as host Junior Rangers from the Bavarian Forest National Park in August. This is being part-financed by the Scottish Government and the European Community: Cairngorms Local Action Group LEADER 2007-2013 Programme.

## Panoramas for Schools

### X marks the spot!

Schools in the Park are being put on the map through an exciting offer from CNPA. Panoramic maps of the Cairngorms National Park complete with text and photos showing how schools use the Park for outdoor learning are available to schools for free!

The panoramas are painted by the world's leading panorama artist, Heinz Vielkind, and help to show the size, scale and geography of the Park and highlight its important landmarks.

**If your school would like to take advantage of this offer contact Alan Smith,**

**email: [alansmith@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:alansmith@cairngorms.co.uk)  
or telephone: 01479 870518.**

## John Muir Award

The John Muir Award celebrates ten years in the Cairngorms next year. Nationally recognised, this environmental award has been achieved by over 14,000 people since 2003!

This is a truly great achievement and the Scots born conservationist who inspired the award would be proud of the great work people have done over the years. Our thanks go to all those who have followed in the footsteps of John Muir through discovering, exploring and caring for the wild places of the Cairngorms and beyond and sharing their experiences with others.

# EDUCATION the next generation



# Resource Pack inserts

The experiences of eight groups of volunteers who have visited Scotland's National Parks and National Nature Reserves (NNRs) have been highlighted to inspire and support others to do the same.

The information sheets feature locations in the Cairngorms National Park: Glen Tanar and Craigellachie NNRs, Glenlivet and Atholl Estates. They show real groups' experiences of these sites and information on things to do, access for all, transport, accommodation and useful contacts.

They will help to address one of the barriers for some groups who may find it difficult to engage with Parks and NNRs by providing information that is relevant to people with disabilities, on low incomes or young people.

**The resources have been produced jointly with CNPA, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority.**

**For more information contact Elspeth Grant, email: [elspethgrant@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:elspethgrant@cairngorms.co.uk) or telephone: 01479 870506**

**or visit: [www.cairngorms.co.uk/learn](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk/learn)**

**SNH also has a travel grant scheme to assist community groups to visit the Park.**

**See <http://outdoors4all.org.uk>**

# NNR Education Packs

Packs are now available for teachers and group leaders to help them get the most from visits to two National Nature Reserves (NNRs) in the Park.

Using the special landscapes and habitats of Abernethy and Muir of Dinnet, the resources provide examples and activities for learning in the outdoors that can help deliver Curriculum for Excellence as well as background information, how to plan your visit and useful contacts.

They provide a starting place for teachers to develop their own approaches to learning and teaching in the outdoors, which can take place in the Park or back in their school grounds.

**The Packs have been produced by the CNPA with Scottish Natural Heritage and Education Scotland.**

**For more information contact Elspeth Grant, email: [elspethgrant@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:elspethgrant@cairngorms.co.uk) or telephone: 01479 870506 or visit: [www.cairngorms.co.uk/learn](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk/learn)**

ation and beyond...

All photographs © CNPA





# NEW PLAN for the PARK

Agreement has been reached between the CNPA and many organisations working in the Park on what we can all do to support the vision for an outstanding National Park. A Plan has been produced for the next five years that includes exciting work on things like improving the condition of some of our rarest species and habitats, improving IT and mobile connections to help businesses and communities and on making this a first class visitor destination with an international reputation for iconic landscapes, accessibility, activities and quality of service.

Ensuring our communities are sustainable is a big part of the Plan and encouraging young people to stay in the Park is seen as vital. It means there must be suitable training and education opportunities along with a growing economy to provide jobs and good wages. There must also be the possibility for housing to be built that meets their needs and the needs of the community.

The Plan was produced following a public consultation last year and is due to receive approval from Scottish Ministers this summer. Further information on the National Park Plan and our work can be found at [www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk)

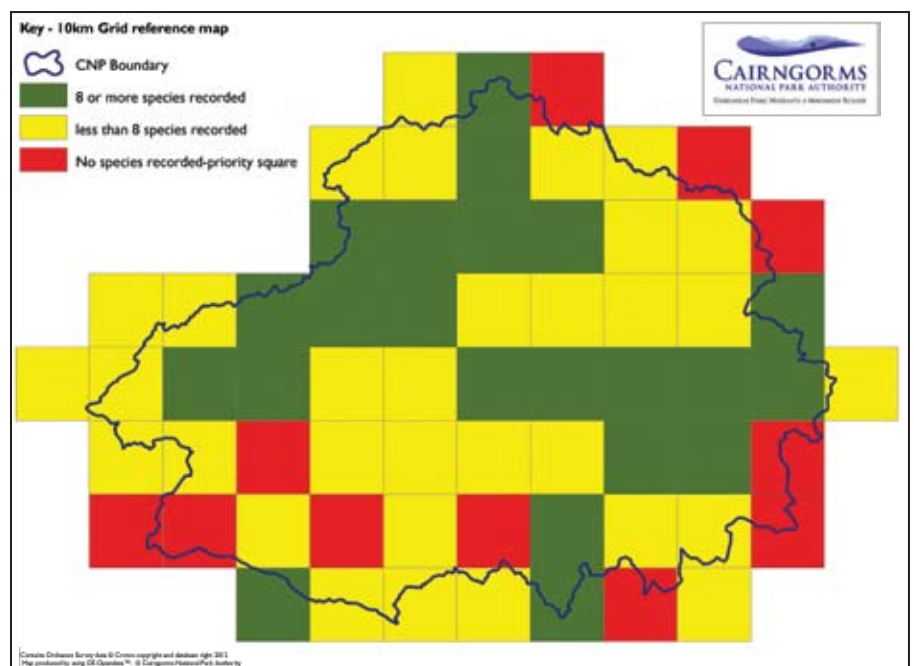
## Dragon and Damsel enthusiasts wanted!

Time is running out to help map where damselflies and dragonflies are found for a new National Atlas in 2013. The information being gathered will help direct future dragonfly conservation. Good progress has been made across the Cairngorms National Park, with the green areas on the map having eight or more species recorded, the yellow areas fewer than eight.

**Your help is needed in the remaining nine red areas which so far have no records of dragonflies.**

Key areas to visit are to the north and east of Glen Buchat, the hills either side of Drumochter on the A9, upper Glen Bruar, the Gaick Forest around Loch an t-Seilich, the hills north-west of the Spittal of Glenshee and the south-eastern edge of the National Park around Loch Lee. For more information, please download the Damselflies & Dragonflies of the Cairngorms leaflet at [www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk) or go to the British Dragonfly Society's website <http://british-dragonflies.org.uk>

**If you spot any dragonflies in these areas or anywhere else in the National Park please contact Stephen Corcoran, Biodiversity Officer, email: [stephencorcoran@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:stephencorcoran@cairngorms.co.uk) or telephone: 01479 870528.**



# Looking after our LANDSCAPES

So many people enjoy the great beauty and diversity of the National Park landscapes and we want to keep it that way, but this doesn't mean 'no change'. We have recently added the Landscape Toolkit to our website to give people landscape-specific information and guidance.

An online questionnaire revealed that 80% thought the information in the Toolkit would be helpful to them. We now plan to expand the site with information covering the whole of the National Park and all its settlements and to develop it so anyone can contribute.

**To see for yourself go to [www.cairngorms.co.uk/landscape-toolkit](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk/landscape-toolkit). Contact our Landscape Officer, Frances Thin, with your thoughts: [francesthin@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:francesthin@cairngorms.co.uk)**



Glenshee © CNPA

## New Cairngorms Rare Plants Project website

The Cairngorms Rare Plants Project was launched in March 2010 to deliver action for four threatened plants of high conservation. This project is a partnership between Cairngorms National Park Authority, Scottish Natural Heritage and the University of Aberdeen, supported by the Esmee Fairburn Foundation.

**To find out about this project and the rare plants being cared for including twinflower and intermediate wintergreen, check out the new website: [www.cairngormsrareplants.org.uk](http://www.cairngormsrareplants.org.uk).**

Intermediate Wintergreen © CNPA



David Green

© CNPA/Stewart Grant



## The Green Outlook

**It gave me great pride to see the Olympic torch being carried through the National Park. Not only did it showcase to the world how beautiful a place we live in but highlighted how enthusiastic all our communities are in getting involved and coming out to give their support.**

**The Park of course has bred and been a training ground for many wonderful athletes, admittedly most in winter disciplines. But in recent years we've seen a shift in the variety of sports on offer here: businesses are identifying the Park as the perfect location for people to try new things, hone their skills and ultimately have fun.**

And this "open for business" message doesn't have to come at a cost to the environment. With careful planning and management, the two can co-exist. How this works is the sort of thing young people in the Park are learning through the Junior Rangers programme or in their schools. The Park is a fantastic place to learn and we've been investing time in showing schools what outdoor learning opportunities there are and encourage them to come here as part of the Curriculum for Excellence. I hope one day everyone in the Park will carry a torch for it.



## Quick updates

### Communicating Cairngorms

Need to know how to write a press release or navigate your way through social media? Help is at hand! The CNPA has developed an online tool kit to help everyone and anyone with an interest in communicating about the Park to do so with confidence.

Find out more at [www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk)

### Design Awards

There is still time to enter the Cairngorms National Park Design Awards. Find out more at [www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk)

### Local Elections

Council elections took place on 3 May in Highland, Moray, Aberdeenshire, Angus and Perth & Kinross. Local Authority nominations for their representatives as CNPA Board Members will be made in July and once approved by Ministers will start on the Park Board on October 1st.

### Keep up to date with our e-bulletin

This is the last edition of Parklife so to keep up to date with the work of the Cairngorms National Park Authority please sign up to our e-bulletin.

The e-bulletin is a fortnightly service, giving subscribers the most up-to-date information on a range of issues and projects from nature conservation work, outdoor access and training to land management, tourism and planning. People will also be able to keep up to date with the latest developments on the National Park Plan and the Local Development Plan.

If you have any feedback or comments about our e-bulletin please do not hesitate to contact us: Communications Team, Cairngorms National Park Authority, 14 The Square, Grantown-on-Spey, Moray PH26 3HG. Tel: 01479 873535. Email: [enquiries@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cairngorms.co.uk)

**To subscribe to the CNPA's e-bulletin service, please log on to: [www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk) and click on the e-bulletin button on the homepage.**

### Don't forget...

You can read this and previous editions of Parklife on our website at [www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk) or we can provide copies of all articles in large print.

Thanks for all your interest in our newsletter over the years. We hope you have enjoyed being kept up to date with our work and partnership projects.

## What's on?

Cairngorms National Park Authority meetings 2012

**July 20**  
Planning committee,  
Boat-of-Garten

**August 17**  
Planning committee,  
Ballater

**August 31**  
Board meeting,  
Grantown-on-Spey

**September 14**  
Planning committee,  
Boat-of-Garten

**October 12**  
Planning committee,  
Ballater

**October 26**  
Board meeting, Blair  
Atholl

**November 9**  
Planning committee,  
Boat-of-Garten

**December 7**  
Planning committee,  
Ballater

**December 21**  
Board meeting,  
Grantown-on-Spey

All venues TBC.

Please check the CNPA website for further details of dates, times and venues:

[www.cairngorms.co.uk/park-authority](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk/park-authority)