

EDUCATION & LEARNING - new learning initiatives launched in the Park

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BIODIVERSITY - get involved in recording the wildlife on your doorstep.

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THE BRAND TAKES WINGS - revamped Information centre opens in Aviemore

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Park's training boost for young people

Two innovative training projects for young people are getting underway in the Cairngorms National Park in the construction and land based business sectors.

The Cairngorms Construction Training Project is a three year initiative which has been developed to meet several challenges in the Park namely employment, training, affordable housing and sustainable construction and is funded by Cairngorms Local Action Group LEADER Fund, Scottish Government and the CNPA.

The Highland Small Communities Housing Trust (HSCHT) has recruited a project officer to work with 15 unemployed young people (16 - 25) who will receive a recognised qualification through Inverness College on successful completion of their training, which will cover a wide range of construction skills. HSCHT will also provide the site where the houses will be built, ensuring some valuable on the job training.

In addition, the children's charity Barnardo's has teamed up with a range of partners to provide opportunities for the young people in the Cairngorms National Park who want to work on the land, but are having difficulty finding jobs. All

participants will get some valuable training and make contacts in the sector. As well

as benefiting young people, Barnardo's Works Cairngorms - which is being piloted in Deeside - will help land based businesses who need people to work for them but cannot find the skilled labour or the time to train them.

This nationally funded project is supported with significant funds from Cairngorms Local Action Group EU LEADER and the Department of Work and Pensions. It will be specifically working with young people who may be at risk of offending, leaving care or simply having no family support when looking for work. Each will have the opportunity to spend 6 months learning new skills with the farms and estates in the National Park and will receive the necessary support to secure permanent employment.

For more information on:

The Barnardo's Works Cairngorms contact Elizabeth McShane

email: Elizabeth.mcshane@barnardos.org.uk or telephone: 0141 222 4700

Or about the Cairngorms Construction Training Project email: barrie.neilson@hscht.co.uk or telephone: 01463 233 548



Laying the foundations for the future © The Highland Council



Education and Learning

New learning initiatives have been launched in the Park, bringing together outdoor learning with the virtual world. The Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) has set up the Cairngorms Outdoor Learning Network (COLN), and working in partnership with Scottish Natural Heritage, has also unveiled the Cairngorms Learning Zone Website.

COLN is designed to make delivering outdoor learning easier for teachers and other leaders. The online resource gives them access to information such as contacts for outdoor learning providers, trainers, Continuous Professional Development courses and opportunities to share experiences. The CNPA is working

with schools and other interested parties to make sure that the Learning Zone meets their needs.

The Cairngorms Learning Zone contains a range of information on all aspects of the Park. It is aimed at secondary school pupils studying subjects such as geography, history, geology and environmental studies at Higher and Advanced Higher level. It is the most comprehensive online educational resource about the Park and can be used for all aspects of study and is also proving to be a useful tool in preparation for field trips for outdoor learning.

Furthermore, a new resource pack 'Getting Into Scotland's National Parks and National Nature Reserves' has also been published to support visits by schools and other groups. It contains lots of useful information, advice, ideas and contacts to overcome the barriers to engaging with National Parks and NNRS.

www.cairngormslearningzone.co.uk

Economic health of the PARK

A new report is available from this summer looking at the economic and social health of the Cairngorms National Park.

Funded by the CNPA, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Scottish Enterprise, the study covers everything from population, work, unemployment, industry and social measures and it will help both the private and public sectors plan for future development in the Park.

The report will give everyone a much improved picture of the Park and the people who live, visit and work here. More will be known about what is important to the local economy and trends within it, how we can work better together, and how we compare to other areas and Scotland as a whole.

For further information contact John Thorne email: johnthorne@cairngorms.co.uk or telephone: 01479 870520

Leading the way

LEADER funding for projects is still available with over £700,000 to be committed before the programme ends in 2013.

The Cairngorms Local Action Group (LAG) is keen to hear from groups with good ideas, especially those with a focus on young people.

Patricia Methven, Grants Manager with the Cairngorms LAG explained: "The Cairngorms Local Action Group was established in the Park in June 2002 with the first Park wide LEADER+ Programme. The Local Action Group, which is 50 per cent community based, works hard to encourage many diverse communities of interest to apply to the scheme for funding support. Projects supporting young people into work are coming forward at the moment and it is hoped to build on these projects during the remainder of the Programme."

With Highland Perthshire expected to join the Cairngorms National Park in October, the LAG will be working more closely with the Rural Tayside Local Action Group. Tayside will still fund projects in this area or joint activities between LAGs may be developed.

To date, the Cairngorms LAG has helped 145 projects and committed £1.4m.

For more information email: patriciamethven@cairngorms.co.uk

FIREWOOD Festival

There is a superb treat in store for all the family at the Festival of Firewood at the Granttown Show in August.

The CNPA has teamed up with the show's organisers to celebrate with a feast of fiery fun. Chopping, stacking, demonstrations, talks, firelighting and food will be among the highlights at the Festival of Firewood.

The event, at the Granttown showground on Thursday August 12 will also see the launch of an innovative new Woodfuel Action Plan for the

There's no smoke without fire © Heather Lindsay



Cairngorms National Park.

The Park Authority has been working with landowners and partners to come up with ways of boosting both supply and use of this natural, carbon neutral, local resource.

Log onto www.lowcarboncairngorms.org to find out more, or contact Fiona Chalmers email: fionachalmers@cairngorms.co.uk or telephone: 01479 870524

Cairngorms Food for Life Project



Local Produce © Cairngorms Brewery

Interest in the provenance of our food continues to increase with more and more of us wanting to try local produce at home and when on holiday, which is why the CNPA, working with Soil Association Scotland, is developing the Food for Life project in the Cairngorms.

Food for Life aims to increase the availability and use of local, fresh and seasonal produce for both residents and visitors in the Cairngorms National Park. The Food for Life approach looks at all aspects of food production and consumption and involves everyone in the food supply chain working together to seek long term improvement to our health, environment and economy, maximising the opportunity for local producers but also recognising the fantastic range of produce available around the Park.

For more information email: ruathydonald@cairngorms.co.uk

EV travels the Park

You may have seen the electric car around the west side of the Park driven by volunteers from the Badenoch & Strathspey Community Transport Company (B&SCTC). Its eye catching paint job means you can't really miss it!

A converted Vauxhall Astra, the electric vehicle (EV) can reach 60mph, has a 100 mile range and charges up for around 1/10th of the cost of a petrol car, demonstrating too how communities can share a resource like a car.

The EV and its trailer mounted wind turbine will be at various summer events including the Granttown Show this summer if anyone wants to have a closer look. School pupils are also being invited for a test drive and to learn more about the alternatives to oil fuelled cars.

The project has financial support from the EU, UHI Millennium Institute's Centre for Mountain Studies, CNPA, Community Energy Scotland, HITRANS and the Climate Challenge Fund.

For more information on B&SCTC please telephone: 01479 810004 or on the EV, email: johnthorne@cairngorms.co.uk



The electric vehicle will be appearing at various shows throughout the summer © CNPA



Cairngorms BIG BIOBUZZ DAY



Everyone digs-in © Scott Jones



As part of the International Year of Biodiversity celebrations, one of Scotland's largest ever wildlife recording event took place in May. Granttown-on-Spey, Kingussie and Ballater took part in the 24-hour Big BioBuzz Day with hundreds of people getting involved in identifying the wildlife on their doorstep from dawn till dusk.

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment Richard Lochhead and his family visited the Granttown event, accompanied by CNPA Convener David Green.

Mr Lochhead said: "It was absolutely fantastic to see so many people out enjoying everything that the Cairngorms National Park has to offer. Everyone's efforts to collect as much

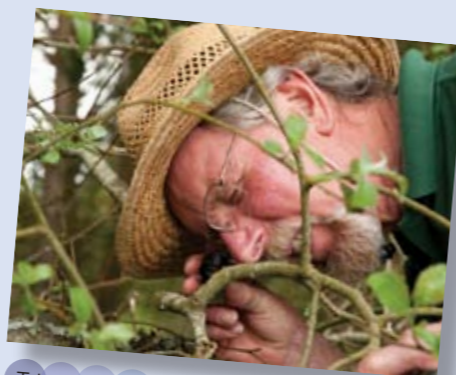
information as possible on biodiversity shows the great variety of plants and animals that we have in Scotland, whether that's in our national parks, local woods or our gardens."

Stephen Corcoran, the Cairngorms Biodiversity Officer, said: "What a superb day with people of all ages involved, locals and visitors alike. It raised the profile of just how much biodiversity is next door to where people live."

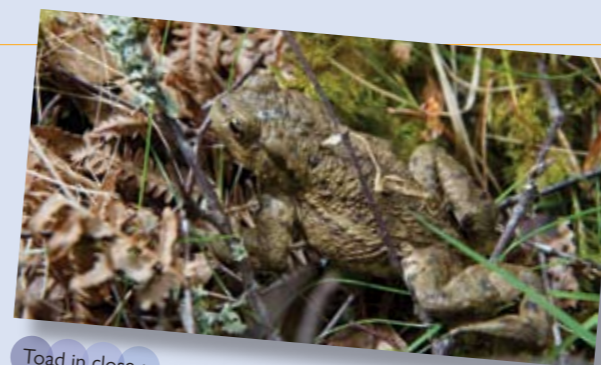
John Latham, Aberdeenshire Council Countryside Ranger

who was involved in running the Ballater event added: "The event has increased our knowledge of the biodiversity found in and around Ballater. It was also the first time nearly all the Ranger Services from across the Park have worked together on a project, which was a great experience."

More information on Big BioBuzz Day, including a list of wildlife found, photographs of the day and other items of interest can be found at the Cairngorms LBAP website: www.spanglefish.com/Cairngorms Biodiversity



Taking a closer look © Scott Jones



Toad in close-up © Raymond Besant



Fun in finding out © Raymond Besant



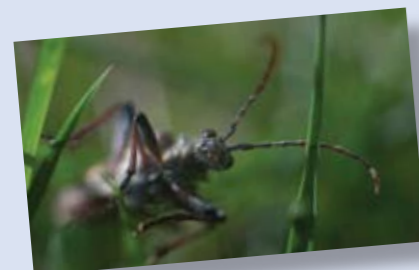
The art of nature © Scott Jones



Life in every patch © Scott Jones



Off on a field trip © Scott Jones



Photogenic insect © Raymond Besant



At home with Ladybirds © Scott Jones



Exploring pondlife © Raymond Besant

National Dragonfly Atlas

The third survey season for the new dragonfly atlas for Britain is underway - more records are needed from Scotland.

The 2008 and 2009 survey seasons saw records for only 17 per cent of 10 kilometre squares in Scotland compared

to 43 per cent in England and 65 per cent in Wales. There is now a handy new guide 'Damselies & Dragonflies of the Cairngorms' available to help you identify and record dragonflies.

For a copy of the leaflet or to get involved please contact Stephen Corcoran email: stephencorcoran@cairngorms.co.uk or telephone: 01479 870528

Make your WILDLIFE RECORDINGS

The CNPA has produced a recording booklet to help encourage people to record the amazing wildlife of the Cairngorms. We are looking for people to record all the species that they see from hedgehogs, squirrels and frogs to ospreys, butterflies and pine martens. We want everything - not just the rarer species!



It is crucial to gather records on species within the National Park as it provides information on the distribution and population levels, which will help the effective management of the species.

Recording booklets can be obtained from the CNPA offices in Granttown and Ballater as well as ranger bases throughout the park and participating Tourist Information Centres.

For more information contact Karen Couper email: karencouper@cairngorms.co.uk or telephone: 01479 870516

Lesser Butterfly Orchid © CNPA

ACTION for RARE PLANTS

Compared to feathered, furry and six-legged creatures, plants often struggle to get their fair share of attention but all that is about to change! The Cairngorms Rare Plants Project aims to conserve four rare species in the Cairngorms National Park:

- **Twinflower (*Linnaea borealis*)**
- **Intermediate wintergreen (*Pyrola media*)**
- **Small cow-wheat (*Melampyrum sylvaticum*)**
- **Lesser butterfly orchid (*Platanthera bifolia*)**

"All of these plants have undergone significant declines in the UK", said Andy Scobie, Project Officer. He is working closely with partner organisations, land managers and local botanists to develop and implement beneficial management action for these plants. Andy is currently surveying target sites and this information will help establish which populations of the plants are most at risk and the potential steps that can be taken to rectify this. Members of the public are asked to get involved in the project by reporting sightings of target species or volunteering to monitor local rare plant populations.

The project is funded by the Esmee Fairburn Foundation, the CNPA, SNH via the Species Action Framework, and in-kind contributions from the University of Aberdeen.

For more information contact Andy Scobie email: a.scobie@abdn.ac.uk or telephone: 01479 810477

Community Needs Initiative

The next wave of community action planning is hitting the National Park with Aviemore, Rothiemurchus, Kincaig and Alvie now going through the process with help from Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey.

This follows on from the work that has been done in Dalwhinnie and Newtonmore which resulted in the provision of community notice boards, improved gateway signage in Kingussie and in Laggan - with funding support from Highland Council, CNPA and charitable contributions - improvements to the pond and picnic area.



All abilities path in Ballater © Ballater (RD) Ltd

In Deeside and Donside a development manager has been recruited to assist the delivery of the next stage of community action planning there. Funded by LEADER, Aberdeenshire Council, Ballater Royal Deeside and the Park Authority, their role will be to support emerging projects in these areas.

Community action planning in Tomintoul and Glenlivet is planned for later in 2010.



The opening of the new VisitScotland Information Centre in Aviemore © Francis Porter

Since the launch of the Cairngorms National Park Brand in 2005, over 200 applications have been received and approved for everything from individual businesses and events to community publications and countryside rangers!

Countryside Rangers welcome visitors to the National Park and help people appreciate the area and this role is now clearer to visitors with rangers wearing a new branded badge.

Cairngorms National Park Brand spreads its wings

Newly 'branded' locations include the revamped VisitScotland Information Centres in Aviemore, Ballater and Braemar and new bus stops at the railway station in Aviemore. Other key locations include the new information points in Kirriemuir and Glenshee and ranger bases in Glen Muick and Tomintoul.

Many communities are also using the panoramic paintings and the brand on their local notice boards to let visitors know they are part of the National Park.

Stagecoach in Badenoch & Strathspey have started the process of re-branding their fleet of buses.

For more information contact Fiona Milligan
email: fionamilligan@cairngorms.co.uk
or telephone: 01479 870519



Dotterel on Cairngorms © www.cairngormslandscapes.co.uk

Raising a family on the extremes

It's been a long cold winter and even now, icy weather retains its grip on the mountain plateau.

One of our rarest breeding birds, the dotterel, is a summer visitor who comes here and raises its broods on these high mountain tops. If you are walking up on the tops, you will often see them as they are quite 'tame' birds with a striking plumage. They are also one of the

most unusual in that the male is the main 'child carer' and takes responsibility for incubating the eggs and raising the chicks.

As well as contending with cold weather and watchful predators, people and their dogs can unwittingly interfere with a successful breeding season. That huge open space over which your dog is running may contain well-hidden nests, and even the best behaved dog may drive the adults away and expose the eggs and young to the harsh environment.

Whilst you are out walking you may come across signs asking you to keep your dog under proper control, through areas where these birds are known to nest - in doing so you and your dog will be helping the survival of this unique and fascinating bird.

For more information contact Justin Prigmore
email: justinprigmore@cairngorms.co.uk
or telephone: 01479 870513

Brighter future for businesses in the Cairngorms National Park

Businesses throughout the Cairngorms National Park have joined forces in order to compete with other international tourism destinations and secure a brighter and more sustainable future for the region.

The Cairngorms Business Partnership (CBP) recently launched their website www.visitcairngorms.com with over 800 business listings. It is a one-stop-shop for visitors and residents alike, providing information about accommodation, events, activities, attractions, businesses, the local area and much, much more.

The CBP is a not-for-profit partnership which will provide a cohesive voice on behalf of businesses giving them influence over local, regional and national agendas, which will in turn support profitable, sustainable growth in the area.

For more information please email: office@visitcairngorms.com
or telephone: 01479 810200



Highland Pipe Band © CNPA/Stewart Grant

David Green © CNPA



The Green outlook

David Green, Convener of the Cairngorms National Park Authority

Grantown to St Pancras

I was recently updated by John Partridge and Bert Nicolson the new Project Manager on the progress being made by the 'Rails to Grantown Project'.

Over the years I have been very impressed by the tremendous hard work and commitment of John and the team of approximately 140 volunteers who have kept the present steam railway between Grantown and Broomhill in operation and enjoyed by many tourists and visitors alike. John is planning to stand down as Chairman of the SRC, but his energy and drive have left the next phase of the restoration of the railway to Grantown very well placed to make sound progress.

However, this is not just an extension from Aviemore to Grantown.

It is a sustainable transport link between one of the main Highland resorts and a beautiful historical town which would benefit from economic regeneration.

As a journey it will be one of the top attractions on the British Rail Network.

It will be this and more as a transformational project which will bring economic, social, educational and cultural benefits to the Cairngorms National Park.

That is why the CNPA has given its support in principle and has and will lend what assistance it can. Likewise the project has received significant cross party political support clearly evidenced at the packed public meeting in Grantown last year.

The challenge is big in terms of funding and a host of other issues, but the opportunities this will bring are even bigger so that for instance folk from Grantown and the wider hinterland can have rail access to St Pancras and onward with Eurostar to Paris - though I still think the shopping is better in Grantown!



Quick updates

Milestone for Paths in the Park

The Cairngorms National Park has a well earned reputation as one the best places to enjoy the outdoors. The vision for paths providing opportunities for all to enjoy the Park's riches has come one step closer with the publication of the Core Paths Plan.

This plan was developed in consultation with communities, land managers and visitors. Future work will include path development and promotion of the path network through community path leaflets.

For more information email: bobgrant@cairngorms.co.uk

Local Plan And Supplementary Planning Guidance

The latest consultation on the first Local Plan for the Cairngorms National Park finishes on 23 July and CNPA staff are getting to work on considering the responses and working towards having the Local Plan adopted by the end of 2010.

Alongside that, another consultation is taking place on the various pieces of Supplementary Planning Guidance that accompany the Local Plan. This consultation doesn't finish until 24 September 2010 so there is still time to make your views known. This guidance provides additional information on some of the policies in the Local Plan. If you want to comment, please go to our website for details

www.cairngorms.co.uk/localplan

If you have any further questions please contact either Alison Lax: alisonlax@cairngorms.co.uk or Karen Major: karenmajor@cairngorms.co.uk

Don't forget that Parklife is available in a variety of formats

You can read the newsletter on our website **www.cairngorms.co.uk** or we can provide copies of all the articles in large print. It's also available on audio cassette.

We're always pleased to receive feedback, comments and suggestions:

**Communications Team, Cairngorms National Park Authority,
14 The Square, Grantown-on-Spey, Moray PH26 3HG.**

Email: enquiries@cairngorms.co.uk Tel: 01479 873535

What's on?

Cairngorms National Park Authority meetings 2010

July 23

Planning committee, Grantown-on-Spey

August 6

Finance & planning committee, Glenmore

August 20

Audit & planning committee, Boat of Garten

September 3

Planning committee & Board meeting, Ballater

September 17

Planning committee, Aviemore

October 1

Planning committee, Mar Lodge

October 15

Planning committee, Ballater

October 29

Finance & planning committee and Board meeting, Strathdon

November 12

Planning committee, Grantown-on-Spey

November 26

Planning committee, Nethy Bridge

December 10

Audit & planning committee, Ballater

December 24

Planning committee, Grantown-on-Spey/Ballater via video link

Please check the CNPA website for further details of dates, times and venues. www.cairngorms.co.uk/parkauthority