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UK first for National Park

The Cairngorms National Park has been awarded the prestigious European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas, the first National Park in the UK to gain the accolade.

Celebrations began in the autumn when CNPA staff members Debbie Strang and Pete Crane, along with board members Sally Dowden and Bruce Luffman, travelled to Holland to officially receive the Charter.

The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas is only awarded to European areas which are committed to meeting the highest of standards for the sustainable development and management of

tourism. The Charter is awarded by the Europarc Federation, an umbrella organisation of over 500 protected areas across 37 countries. The Park's Strategy and Action Plan for Sustainable Tourism formed the basis of the application to Europarc.

The CNPA's tourism and economic development manager, Debbie Strang explained: "Our submission to Europarc was made on the basis of a strategy that outlines a range of priorities for action including environment management and conservation; information and interpretation; visitor management; partnership working and community involvement.

"In a survey of tourism businesses last year, 71 per cent said their top priorities for managing and promoting tourism in the Cairngorms are to conserve the area's landscape and wildlife, to encourage visitors to do the



Early morning sun over the Cairngorms



Receiving the European Charter

continued on page two

UK first for National Park continued



A Bed and Breakfast establishment in the Park.

same and to promote good customer service.

“What the Charter means for tourism businesses in the Park is that, with commitment from all those involved in tourism, we can protect and enhance what attracts people here and thereby increase tourism value to the area.”

A Europarc assessor visited the Cairngorms back in May, meeting with a variety of organisations and individuals involved in tourism.

As well as the recommendation to award the Park the Charter, the assessor provided useful feedback and advice including the continued involvement of local community and conservation interests in the delivery of sustainable tourism.

Board member Bruce Luffman added: “With tourism being a key economic driver in the Cairngorms, it is important that future development and growth is managed responsibly to ensure that the special qualities of the Park are preserved for the enjoyment of future generations. It is still early days for the Park Authority and a review in five years time will assess exactly what achievements we have made.”

A copy of the booklet ‘Tourism in the National Park’ – which outlines the CNPA’s work to date in relation to sustainable tourism and the actions for the future that are required from enterprises and partners in the Park to ensure that the Charter is retained – is available. For a copy please contact the CNPA on tel: 01479 873535 or email: enquiries@cairngorms.co.uk

EDUCATION

Film fun for Park pupils

The Cairngorms Schools Media Project has come to a spectacular end with the showing of all seven films at a Hollywood-style premier in Aboyne!

Pupils aged 14 – 17 years at Aboyne Academy; Alford Academy; Brechin High School; Grantown Grammar; Kingussie High School; Speyside High School and Websters High have been working with Aberdeenshire Council’s Education and Recreation Media Unit since December 2004, making movies about their lives in the Cairngorms National Park.

The students have been taught how to plan a film, write a script, use the cameras as well as editing and interview techniques. The project – which was funded by the CNPA and the Cairngorms LEADER+ programme – has allowed the pupils to develop new skills as well as increase their awareness of the Cairngorms National Park.

The premier event at Aboyne Theatre on 29 October attracted an audience of over 200 people, ranging from fellow pupils, teachers, family and friends as well as local councillors and CNPA board members.

RECREATION

Speyside Way extension moves up a gear

Plans to extend the Speyside Way Long Distance Route from Aviemore to Newtonmore have taken a step forward.

The development of a route between Aviemore and Newtonmore has been agreed in principle and responsibility for resolving outstanding issues has been left with staff who are working with members of the Speyside Way Management Group.

Head of visitor services and recreation at the CNPA, Murray Ferguson said: “We still need to have quite a bit of discussion with interested parties about some of the sections but we are now making progress towards an agreed line.”



Footpath signs

The CNPA has new duties under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. The CNPA is the outdoor access authority for the Park and is charged with developing a network of core paths and is now also responsible for long distance routes which go through the Park.

Investigations into the possible extension of the 84km Speyside Way began last year. There has been widespread support for some time to extend the route – which links the Moray coast to Strathspey – into Badenoch.

A consultation exercise on a preferred route – involving landowners, farmers, community councils, local footpath groups, accommodation providers and people who generally enjoy the outdoors – was concluded in March 2005.

ECONOMY

Are you the arty type?

The Cairngorms National Park Authority is looking to initiate the set up of an arts and crafts association. From painters and potters to knitters and wood turners – as well as retailers of local products – the association would be designed to help promote the sector collectively, linking retailers to producers and vice-versa and helping smaller producers get themselves more established.

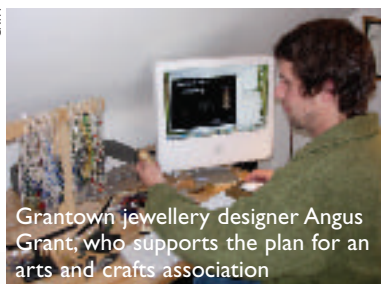
Similar initiatives in other parts of Scotland, such as Orkney, have proved popular:

John Thorne, economic development officer at the CNPA explained: "We've seen this sort of joint marketing and promotional efforts pay off in other places. Locally, Angus Crafts and North East Open Studios have both shown that local marketing works. A Cairngorms National Park arts and crafts association would complement and work closely with these existing local groups, helping visitors buy high quality locally produced arts and crafts and learn more about how and where they are made.

"The Cairngorms Visitor Survey highlighted the desire among visitors to buy locally produced arts and crafts so the sector clearly plays an important role in the economy of the Park. The idea is that the producers run the association themselves, becoming a voice for arts and crafts across the Park."

For more information, contact John Thorne, economic development officer at the CNPA on tel: 01479 870520 or email: johnthorne@cairngorms.co.uk

CNPA



Grantown jewellery designer Angus Grant, who supports the plan for an arts and crafts association

WILDLIFE

Pearls a winner



JIMMY MITCHELL / CNPA

Amy Moggach reintroduces freshwater pearl mussels to a secret site in the Cairngorms National Park

A top secret operation to reintroduce freshwater pearl mussels to two rivers in the Cairngorms National Park was carried out during the late summer months. Now current monitoring of the sites indicates that the rare species is set to make a successful comeback.

The CNPA, Scottish Natural Heritage, sporting estates and fisheries boards have come together in a bid to revive the species' fortunes in the Park and the project is being funded by the Park Authority, the Cairngorms LEADER+ programme, SNH and the Dee and Spey District Fisheries Boards.

The globally threatened pearl mussels play an important role in maintaining healthy rivers and have been reintroduced under special licence to two sites in the Park, where it is hoped they will thrive.

The secrecy surrounding the locations for the reintroduction of the freshwater pearl mussels, which are of European and global significance, is because the mussels are still under threat from criminal activity. The only information given is

that the sites are somewhere close to the River Dee on Invercauld Estate and the River Spey on the Strathspey Estate.

Freshwater pearl mussels were given full legal protection in 1998. It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or disturb freshwater pearl mussels or to damage their habitat.

The freshwater pearl mussels feed by drawing in river water and filtering out fine particles, with an adult being able to filter about 50 litres of water a day, so they play an important part in the ecology of rivers.

Dr James Butler of the Spey District Salmon Fishery Board said: "Healthy rivers mean healthy fish stocks, so the freshwater pearl mussels' presence in the Park is likely to be good in the long term for salmon fisheries, which contributes £11 million annually to the Strathspey economy alone."

Adrian Hudson, who works with the Dee District Salmon Fishery Board added: "We are very pleased to be involved in the restoration of the mussels to areas of good habitat where they have been lost."

RECREATION

The Outdoor Access Code – in detail!



DAVID GOWANS

Previous issues of Parklife have looked at the new outdoor access legislation and the introduction of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. As the outdoor access authority for the Cairngorms National Park, the CNPA is responsible for publicising the Code and helping people understand their rights and responsibilities.

Access rights cover many activities including:

- informal activities such as picnicking, photography and sightseeing
- active pursuits including walking, cycling, riding, canoeing and wild camping
- taking part in recreational and educational events
- simply going from one place to another

However access rights do not apply to any kind of motorised activity – apart from some types of disabled access – or field sports.

Outdoor access rights cover most of Scotland from our hills and forests, from farmland and field margins to beaches, lochs and rivers. However, access rights do not apply to

buildings or their immediate surroundings, or to houses or their gardens, or land in which crops are growing.

Fran Pothecary, outdoor access officer at the CNPA explained: "A lot of the Code comes down to commonsense, for example, not allowing your dog to worry animals or leaving gates as you find them. It asks people – both land managers and recreational users – to take responsibility for their own actions, have respect for the interests of others and care for the environment." The key issues for people enjoying the outdoors are:

- take responsibility for your own actions. Act safely, follow reasonable advice and respect the needs of others enjoying or working in the outdoors
- respect the privacy of others and keep a reasonable distance from houses and gardens
- help farmers and landowners to work safely and effectively
- care for the environment by

taking your litter home and avoiding damage or disturbance to wildlife or historic places

- keep your dog under proper control

And for landowners, farmers or others managing the outdoors:

- respect access rights and do not unreasonably obstruct people using the land or water
- act reasonably when asking people to avoid a particular area when working and perhaps suggest an alternative route
- work with the local authority and other bodies to help integrate access and land management

To find out more about your access rights and responsibilities – and also about rights of way and customary access – pick up the Scottish Outdoor Access Code leaflet or visit www.outdooraccess-scotland.com. For a copy of the full Code, please contact Scottish Natural Heritage on tel: 01738 458545 or email: pubs@snh.gov.uk

WILDLIFE

More aliens among us

Those involved in the management or use of river systems are being urged to take action to prevent non-native species being introduced to waters in the Park. The call comes following the discovery of more non-native fish in the Spey river system.

The Non-Native Fish Project, which is led by the Cairngorms Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) with funding from LEADER+, is now in its second year. Using an innovative electro-fishing boom boat – which stuns the fish, enabling them to be captured – a number of lochs, ponds and part of the River Spey were recently surveyed.

Non-native golden orfe, asp and juvenile tench were found in the Grantown skating pond. Juvenile non-native roach, rudd and adult tench were also present in Loch Beag near Aviemore and brown trout, eels and pike were also caught during the



Non-native Orfe

course of the investigations. Surveys in Deeside on Lochs Davan and Kinord turned up only eels, brown trout, pike and perch as expected.

Stephen Corcoran, the Cairngorms LBAP officer is urging everyone involved in the management and use of all river systems in the Cairngorms National Park to take the right precautions to avoid introducing either non-native or diseased fish, or other aquatic species.

He said: "Disease, parasites and

alien species can be introduced by contaminated live bait, the stocking of lochs and ponds, fishing gear or even canoes. Local people with ornamental ponds or small fishing ponds can also help ensure adequate safeguards to prevent fish escaping."

As part of the project, two new leaflets are being produced to help combat the problem. A code of conduct for pike anglers and a general information leaflet about non-native species will be available soon.

POLICY

Make sure you have your say on Park Plans come 2006

Work on the Local Plan and the National Park Plan is set to intensify in the New Year. There will be a three month consultation period beginning in March for the Draft Park Plan. This will inform the Finalised Draft Local Plan which will be published later in the year.

The CNPA has been developing both plans since the summer of 2004, consulting widely with members of the public, partners and other organisations.

The purpose of the National Park Plan is to guide the work of all those operating in the Park and co-ordinate the public sector in particular in meeting the four aims of the Park. The Park Plan identifies the overall direction for managing the Park, towards which all in the public, private and voluntary sectors can contribute.



Housing development in the Park

Developed in consultation with public agencies, communities, businesses, land managers and others with an interest in the Park, the Draft Park Plan identifies the long-term direction for the Park, but also the immediate priorities on which action should be taken over the next five years. Policy issues covered include land management, affordable housing, transport and outdoor access.

The Local Plan will replace the local plans currently in existence for the four local authority areas

covering the Park. It sets out a clear strategy for built development in the Park with land use planning policies and site specific proposals for development, enhancement or protection of the area.

Phase Two of the Local Plan saw every community in the Park have at least one public meeting between June and November 2005. Until January 2006, every organisation with an interest in the Park has a chance to air their views.

CNPA planners are now collating the huge number of comments and suggestions collected as a result of the most recent round of talks, which will be fed into the Finalised Draft, with all comments published in the Phase Two Consultative Report.

2006 marks a unique opportunity for everyone to express their views – don't miss it!

New grants scheme with LEADER+ attracts Parkwide interest

The Cairngorms National Park Authority has received a flood of applications for funding support since launching its new Grant Schemes in the summer.

In partnership with the Cairngorms LEADER+ programme, the new Grant Schemes have been introduced following the success of the joint 'Communities in the National Park' initiative last year.

The new programme – which has a budget of more than £300,000 over two years – has six funding streams aimed at a wide range of activities including:

- **investing in communities** – building capacity and participation
- **marketing and events** – activities which promote the Park and its products
- **biodiversity** – encourage communities to protect and enhance biodiversity
- **interpretation** – communicating information and local stories
- **outdoor access** – encourage high quality well maintained infrastructure
- **cultural heritage** – raising awareness, developing and preserving all forms of cultural heritage

CNPA board member, Lucy Grant said: “The Park Authority’s first grants scheme was praised for its simplicity and accessibility. It was important to ensure that as well as getting funds to communities with new project ideas, we really worked with them so that they engaged with us. In all, 49 projects right across the Park were supported by over £100,000 of Park Authority and LEADER+ money.”

The new Grant Schemes will offer awards ranging from £500 to £4,500 in the Small Grants Programme and a Medium Grants Programme will offer awards of up to £18,000. The Grant Schemes – combined with Cairngorms LEADER+ funds – will be able to provide up to 90 per cent funding. Specific activities, such as conservation of important local species and habitats with wide community involvement, and reflecting the aims of the Cairngorms Local Biodiversity Action Plan, may attract up to 100 per cent funding.

Examples of the types of projects that will qualify for support from the Grant Schemes are: the maintenance of



Patricia Hamilton, Lucy Grant and Dicken Higgins at the launch of the new Grant Schemes

existing footpaths and footbridges; short term development worker costs; installation of interpretation facilities close to the centre of communities; projects and events that will protect and enhance the natural environment, the local heritage and culture.

Dicken Higgins, programme manager at the CNPA explained: “The Grant Schemes are far more inclusive. They are designed to continue until 2007

The Carr-Bridge Gathering with its chainsaw sculpture competition was supported by the programme



Fresh veg on sale at the Cairngorms Farmers Market in Grantown



Glen Feshie

PROJECTS IN THE PIPELINE

Some of the successful applications so far...

INVESTING IN COMMUNITIES:

- * **Wildcat Trail Art Competition** (The Wildcat Centre): to carry out a weekend art competition around the wildcat trail and local area, establishing it this year and helping to make it an annual event – £1,577.
- * **Caberfeidh Cycles** (Health and Happiness, Badenoch and Strathspey): to purchase all abilities cycles and ordinary bikes for families with less able members to join in appreciating the Newtonmore area – £4,500.

MARKETING AND EVENTS:

- * **Celtic Club Champions Challenge** (Kingussie Camanachd Club): inter-club/sport challenge between local Scottish and Irish National champions – £3,825.
- * **Grantown Farmers Market** (Cairngorms Farmers Market Association): to support the early development of the Farmers Market, preparing for expansion next year – £1,465.

BIODIVERSITY:

- * **Cairngorm Mountain Tree Project** (Cairngorm Mountain Trust): support for educational project with local schools learning and getting involved with planting and nurturing mountain trees through the seasons – £1,833.

CULTURAL HERITAGE:

- * **History and Archaeology of Glen Feshie** (North of Scotland Archaeological Society): to publish a small book on the history and archaeology of Glen Feshie. This publication will include local walks and some of Landseer's drawings – £4,050.
- * **Kodally Choir** (Deeside Kodally Choir): to bring together the communities of Upper Deeside to learn to read and sing music using the Kodally method – £6,950.

and we expect that during the coming year, further schemes will be added.

“Our long-term challenge is to use grants effectively and efficiently to deliver the Park Plan. This means working towards a system that is more open and locally controlled, and which joins up streams of public funds, targeting those at projects which will make a real difference to building the Park.”

For more information, please contact Dicken Higgins, programme manager on tel: 01479 870527 / email: dickenhiggins@cairngorms.co.uk or Patricia Hamilton, Cairngorms LEADER+ programme manager on tel: 01479 873535 / email: patriciahamilton@cairngorms.co.uk

WILDLIFE

Call for ptarmigan spotters!



The British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) is calling on people who love hill walking in the Cairngorms National Park to get involved in Project Ptarmigan.

This basic monitoring study is aimed at gathering information on the Scottish ptarmigan population and distribution. The project simply asks walkers between April and August 2006 to look out for the ptarmigan and report their sightings or lack of them to the BTO.

The Cairngorms is one of the ptarmigan's strongholds with the

most extensive areas of their montane habitat in Scotland. In common with the mountain hare, the ptarmigan turns white in winter as camouflage in its snow-covered habitat – the only British bird to do so. Indeed, the ptarmigan moults its plumage three times during the year to maintain its camouflage in these extreme environments. When the ground is covered in snow, the hardy bird will dig to reach the shoots and leaves of food plants below.

The ptarmigan is thought to be

sensitive to a number of the environmental changes affecting the uplands and the birds will therefore be a key indicator of the condition of the area's mountain habitats, which are recognised as a high priority under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

To get involved in the forthcoming Project Ptarmigan or for more information, please contact Jacqui Kaye, development and fieldwork co-ordinator at BTO Scotland's offices in Stirling, tel: 01786 466560 or email: Jacqui.Kaye@bto.org

TRAINING

Training on course for Park's land based businesses

Courses for land managers, which deliver public benefits, are proving extremely popular in the Cairngorms National Park.

The CNPA's Land Based Business Training Project (LBBTP) has delivered several public benefit courses this year, all of which are free to those working in the land based sector: 'The Scottish Outdoor Access Code', 'Tick Control and Heather Management' and 'Wildfire Fighting' have all been over subscribed.

'Wildlife and Law', which provided a background for land based workers on the current legislation as well as helping to combat crime, was set up in response to a need expressed by a number of rangers in the area. This course was well attended by a cross section of people working in the land based sector and will be repeated early in 2006.

Another course delivered recently was 'Communication – The Tools

to Promote Your Public Benefits', which aimed to help land managers explain how their work benefits the countryside.

This course is being followed up by a series of shorter more focussed training days covering topics such as 'How to Produce a Short Film' and 'Holding Open Days'.

In addition to support for training that helps to improve communication, the LBBTP is seeking to set up a grants scheme where land managers can apply for funding to help deliver some of the communication methods outlined.

Kate Christie the LBBTP manager said: "The Land Based Business Training Project can help land managers access specialist training and we can either fully fund a course, if it delivers public benefits as opposed to commercial benefits for the individual business, or we can part-fund training which will help the

business to become more competitive. Partly-funded training courses cover things like business skills, computer training, vehicle use and maintenance and so on.

"However, it is the public benefit courses which have really taken off. I think this shows the desire among land managers to work with the National Park Authority and help to deliver the aims of the Park."

The LBBTP is funded by the CNPA and the European Social Fund. It is open to any business that is involved in the use or management of the land including estates, farms, crofts, forestry operations, outdoor recreation businesses and horticultural nurseries.

For more information on the Land Based Business Training Project contact Kate Christie or Sam Masson on tel: 01479 870535/537 or email: katechristie@cairngorms.co.uk / sammasson@cairngorms.co.uk

ENVIRONMENT

New website for moorland project

The Cairngorms Moorland Project has launched its own website: www.cairngormsmoorlands.co.uk. Now the wildlife and the people of the area can be discovered from anywhere in the world.

It is full of information about moorlands, the animals and plants, and the economic and recreational value of this resource.

Dr Andy McMullen, the Cairngorms Moorland Project manager commented: "Moorlands are an extremely important habitat in the Cairngorms National Park, not just from a nature conservation or economic viewpoint but also culturally and socially. It is great that people anywhere will be able to log on and learn more about this fabulous resource. Also, look out for the children's version of the website which is being developed at the moment."

The Cairngorms Moorland Project has been up and running since July 2003. The project aims to raise awareness of the importance of moorlands in and around the Cairngorms National Park and the part that people play in maintaining these valuable habitats.

The Cairngorms Moorland Project is hosted by the CNPA but others involved include Scottish Natural Heritage, the British Association for Shooting and Conservation, the Heather Trust and the Game Conservancy Trust.



A red grouse

TOURISM

First granite markers in place by spring



An artists impression of the Drumochter site.

The first granite signs marking the entrances to the Cairngorms National Park are scheduled to be in place by the spring of 2006, with the granite sourced within the Park. The £1.3million project is set to include associated landscaping, upgrading of lay-bys and interpretation facilities.

The point of entry signage project is being split into two phases with phase one involving 21 sites around the Park on non-trunk roads and long distance routes and phase two – which involves four sites at trunk roads – will eventually conclude the project in the summer of 2007.

Phase one of the project, which covers 21 sites and the upgrade of two lay-bys, will cost £328,000 over two years.

Phase two – which involves the installation of four large granite markers, the upgrade of three trunk road lay-bys and the provision of visitor information – will cost a further £800,000. The funding contributions for this element have still to be finalised but the CNPA has agreed in principle to commit up to

£500,000 to the second phase.

Funding to the value of £194,000 has already been secured from Europe, the enterprise companies and Moray Council and discussions are underway with the Scottish Executive in relation to the upgrade of three lay-bys on trunk roads in the Park.

Senior visitor services officer, Pete Crane explained: "The case for high quality entry point signage with associated interpretation and landscaping cannot be stressed highly enough. We want people to know that they have arrived in a very special place and we know already that visitors' experience of an area is strongly influenced by their first impression.

"By providing interpretation and orientation for visitors, we hope to encourage them to explore the Park further and return again. An estimated 45,000 people pass the road entry points on a daily basis. While £1.3 million is clearly a lot of money it is the extra spend of 5 per cent of our visitors staying one extra day in any one year."



CNP/A

The Thin Line

by Andrew Thin, convener of the Cairngorms National Park Authority

Many moons ago I visited the island of Koh Samui in the Gulf of Thailand. I was only 19 at the time, and on a back packing trip through Southeast Asia. Getting there involved an uncomfortable overnight trip, sleeping on the deck of a local fishing boat.

The island itself offered few places to stay and minimal infrastructure, but it was a truly beautiful place. The coastline was pristine and undeveloped, the place teemed with remarkable wildlife, and the people were friendly and welcoming.

Much has changed since. Koh Samui is now an international tourist destination with a large airport and a coastline dotted with concrete hotels and associated developments. Much money has been made, but the people no longer seem quite so

content, and the wildlife is no longer anything like what it was.

The Cairngorms area has been a popular tourist destination for well over a hundred years. We are lucky that it has remained such a very special place, with much of our scenery, wildlife and tranquillity still intact. Tourists have brought to the area a great many benefits, and some 80 per cent of local businesses now describe themselves as operating in the tourism market.

Tourists have also brought threats, particularly to some of the sensitive habitats and species that we have here. There are areas of serious erosion now occurring on the high plateau; poorly controlled dogs sometimes threaten ground nesting birds; and in a few areas development pressures are beginning to encroach upon the very things that people come here to enjoy in the first place. Thankfully, although the impact of tourists on local people has been profound, it has for the most part also been positive.

In this edition of Parklife you will

find information about the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism that has recently been awarded to the Cairngorms National Park, and about the work that the National Park Authority, along with the industry, is undertaking to ensure that tourists remain the great asset they currently are.

Make no mistake about it, we need tourists and we should encourage many more of them to come here and enjoy what this wonderful place has to offer. But we must also constantly be on our guard against the negative effects of unmanaged tourism that have afflicted so many other parts of the world.

Everyone involved in the industry, from the largest hotel group to the village shop, has a role to play in ensuring that we get the very best out of tourism in this National Park, and that we do so without damaging the environmental and social fabric that makes this place so special. Not always an easy ambition, but one that common sense tells us must surely be right.

ENVIRONMENT

20,000 and counting

The John Muir Award (JMA) recently celebrated its 20,000th award, which was achieved in the Cairngorms National Park.

Rosie Maddock (12) from Kellands School in Inverurie spent five days in the Park at the Active Outdoor Pursuits Centre, Newtonmore, working towards her John Muir Award which involved experiencing the lochs, mountains and woods of the Cairngorms National Park. Peter Peacock MSP, Minister for Education and Young People presented Rosie with her 20,000th award certificate back in August 2005.

The Cairngorms National Park is



Taking part in the John Muir Award scheme

becoming a very popular place for people wishing to take part in the JMA scheme, which is the main educational initiative of the conservation charity the John Muir Trust. The JMA encourages people of all ages to enjoy and take responsibility for wild places. The scheme offers a

framework for groups and individuals to discover and explore wild places both on their doorstep and further afield, to put something back, and to share their experiences.

A ten-strong group of young people (aged 16-24), along with three leaders also recently gained their John Muir Award in the Park, learning all about the issues surrounding the management of some of the Cairngorms' best known habitats.

The group were part of the John Muir Trust Summer Activities programme residential week which was led by the JMA manager for the Park, Alan Smith.

WILDLIFE

Dragonfly and toad lovers wanted!

DAVID GOWANS



A female Black Darter Dragonfly

Two new wildlife groups are being set up to collect information and conserve habitats for amphibians, reptiles and insect species in the Park.

A local amphibian and reptile group will record species such as newts, toads, and adders, while a local dragonfly group is being set up to record dragonflies and damselflies. Both these animal groups are under-recorded in the area, and a number of individual species are particularly rare, such as the great-crested newt or the northern damselfly.

Stephen Corcoran, the Cairngorms biodiversity officer explained: "A key task for each of the groups would be to provide training to volunteers and undertake survey work for these animals across the Cairngorms. Amphibians and dragonflies both need areas of clean, standing water, or very slow moving water, to breed and develop in.

"The groups would therefore be

supporting the creation of more ponds, pools and wetlands, as well as encouraging the management of existing ponds to help promote these animals. In some areas it may be necessary to set up 'toad patrols' to help toads or frogs across busy roads to their breeding sites."

Amphibians and dragonflies are generally easy to recognise and even the smallest pond can be a mecca for frogs or damselflies. One of the easiest ways to help your local

biodiversity or wildlife is – if you have a garden – create a small pond, with lots of shallow edge habitat planted up with native species and an area of deeper water – but avoid stocking it with fish!

If you are interested in getting involved in either a Cairngorms Amphibian and Reptile Group or a Cairngorms Dragonfly Group please contact Stephen Corcoran on tel: 01479 870528 or email: stephencorcoran@cairngorms.co.uk



Sandy Park

PERSONNEL

Stepping up

Andrew Thin has been re-elected as convener of the CNPA's planning committee. Highland councillor and Nairn Provost, Sandy Park has been elected as vice-convener, replacing Aberdeenshire councillor Bruce Luffman.

Sandy Park, who is also chair of Highland Council's Planning, Development, Europe and Tourism Committee, joined the board of the CNPA in September 2004.

POLICY

Want to know more about CNPA's work?

DAVID GOWANS



The Linn of Quoich, near Braemar

The CNPA is producing a booklet outlining the work of the organisation and its priorities over the next few years, and will be available by the end of 2005.

The guide gives an overview of the Park itself and the role of the Park Authority in helping to protect and enhance this very special place. There is information on caring for the Park, enjoying the Park and how the Park Authority – with partners – is looking after the economy of the Park and its communities.

The Park Authority's planning and development control function is also

explained as well as the CNPA's duties as the outdoor access authority for the Park. There is also a section on the new Grant Schemes, which are open for applications until 2007.

The guide book is illustrated with beautiful scenic images of the Park, its communities and the people who live, work and play here.

To obtain a copy of 'The Work of the Cairngorms National Park Authority', please contact the CNPA on tel: 01479 873535 or email: enquiries@cairngorms.co.uk



POLICY

Parklife

Remember, we always welcome your views and comments about Parklife and the articles which we include.

Also, don't forget that Parklife is now available in a variety of formats. You can read the newsletter on our website, www.cairngorms.co.uk, or we can provide you with copies of all the articles in large print. It is also available on audio cassette.

So if you have any comments or would like to request an audio cassette or large print version of Parklife, please contact us at: Cairngorms National Park Authority, 14 The Square, Grantown-on-Spey PH26 3HG, tel: 01479 873535, email: enquiries@cairngorms.co.uk

Contact:

Cairngorms National Park Authority, 14 The Square, Grantown-on-Spey PH26 3HG
tel: 01479 873535, fax: 01479 873527, email: enquiries@cairngorms.co.uk

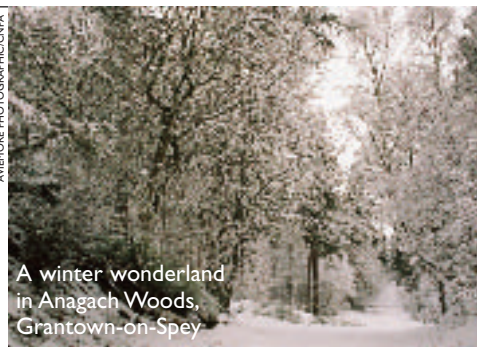
OR Albert Memorial Hall, Station Square, Ballater AB35 5QB

tel: 013397 53601, fax: 013397 55334, email: planning@cairngorms.co.uk

www.cairngorms.co.uk

WHAT'S ON?

AVIEMORE PHOTOGRAPHIC/CPA



A winter wonderland in Anagach Woods, Grantown-on-Spey

Park Authority meetings

December 2

Board meeting and planning committee, Ballater

December 16

Audit and planning committees, Grantown

December 30

Planning committee, Ballater

January 13

Board meeting and planning committee, Aviemore

January 27

Planning committee, Ballater

February 10

Board meeting and finance and planning committees, Grantown

February 24

Planning committee, Ballater

March 10

Board meeting and planning committee, Tomintoul

March 24

Audit and planning committees, Ballater

April 7

Board meeting and planning committee, Newtonmore

April 21

Planning committee, Ballater

May 5

Board meeting and finance and planning committees, Angus Glens

May 19

Planning committee, Grantown

Further details regarding venues and times of board and committee meetings can be found on the CNPA website at www.cairngorms.co.uk/parkauthority or see local press.