

# Newsletter



## Successful Year for Grant Scheme

This was a third, successful year for the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) grant programme. Nineteen projects were funded for a total of £63,952. There was a good geographic spread of projects across the LBAP area supporting

a tree sparrow box scheme for farms in the Angus Glens, and creating a pond at Deshar Primary School. A similar grant scheme will be run in 2008, for more information contact the Biodiversity Officers.



Participants on an amphibian training course

a variety of projects with a continued emphasis on community based proposals but also some research and survey projects funded. Projects included funding a golden eagle nest camera on Atholl Estate, habitat management work for the dark-bordered beauty moth, a website for the Glenlivet Wildlife Recording Group,

## Project News

### Swifts

The Cairngorms Swifts Nest Survey was launched in 2005 and over 150 recordings were reported of nest sites or of the dramatic aerial flyers. The majority of the records received were from Badenoch & Strathspey, particularly around Grantown, Nethy Bridge, Boat of Garten and Aviemore. Very few records were submitted from Deeside and none from the Angus Glens and Highland Perthshire. More records are needed and you can help by picking up a survey leaflet (which has information on swifts and nest boxes) or contact the Cairngorms LBAP for one, [www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk)

For more information on the LBAP or the Biodiversity Grant Scheme please contact Stephen Corcoran or Justin Prigmore, on 01479 870528



Non-native  
American mink



Twinflower



# Project News continued

## Water Vole

Water voles are native to the UK and were once abundant, but numbers have declined by over 90%. This is mainly due to non-native American mink. Efforts to safeguard the water vole have been extended to cover the whole of the Cairngorms LBAP area making it the biggest project of its kind in mainland Britain. Alongside the primary aim of reducing mink density in the Cairngorms, information is also being gathered on the distribution and dynamics of mink and water vole populations. Community and volunteer involvement is essential to the long term conservation of the water vole in the Cairngorms. If you would like to get involved in the project, either surveying for water voles or monitoring and trapping mink using mink rafts then please contact Llinos Davies on 01479 870570 or visit The Water Vole Conservation Project web site at [www.watervolescotland.org](http://www.watervolescotland.org)

## Netted Mountain Moth and Arctostaphylos heath

Help us find the rare day-flying netted mountain moth. This small black and white moth is found on moorland between late April and early June, and in particular patches of bearberry that is the food plant of the moth's larvae. Records of the moth and bearberry will help in identifying the distribution of

Arctostaphylos heath in the Cairngorms. This type of heath is important for a number of rare insects and the project will collate all known survey data for the habitat and associated species to create a GIS distribution map. This will guide planning and management to prevent the loss of Arctostaphylos heath by encouraging the appropriate burning and grazing regimes. Report any sightings to the Cairngorms Biodiversity Officers and check out the leaflet at [www.butterfly-conservation.org](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org)

## Aspen

The Cairngorms is the most important area in the UK for aspen. Until recently little attention was paid to aspen; however its importance for biodiversity is now increasingly appreciated. A recent project by the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh has identified over 300 species of lichen associated with aspen, including 8 species new to the UK.

The aspen tree nursery, run by volunteers from the Highland Aspen Group, is well established producing a small number of local origin aspen each year. Volunteers are needed to help run the nursery, sex aspen trees (trees can be sexed by their flowers in early spring) and collect root cuttings. Interested? Then please contact Ern Emmett, 01540 661962 or email [ecubed@btinternet.com](mailto:ecubed@btinternet.com).



The rare netted mountain moth



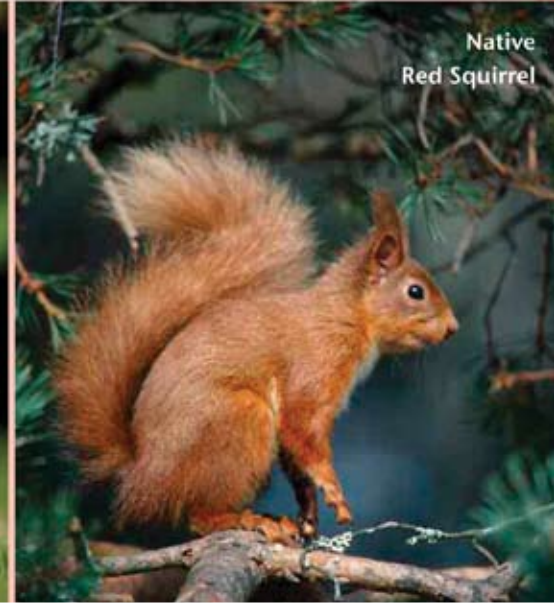
Water vole

## HAVE YOU SEEN A SQUIRREL IN THE NORTH OF SCOTLAND?

Non-native Grey Squirrel



Native Red Squirrel



Join in the squirrel recording project

### Twinflower

A project to increase the reproductive potential of twinflower in the Cairngorms has begun. The project is looking to expand the isolated populations and augment genetic diversity at known twinflower sites to prevent its extinction in the UK. Research was undertaken by Aberdeen University, in collaboration with Plantlife, into the ecology of the species indicating the need for immediate management. The project will develop options on a site-by-site basis which could improve genetic variation and secure the long-term survival of the species. For more information contact Justin Prigmore.

### Cairngorms Forest Habitat Networks Project

The Cairngorms contains the most extensive tracts of Caledonian forests in Britain. This nationally important ecological network of native forest habitats is one of the best recognised special qualities of the Cairngorms National Park. A new project is being developed that aims to enrich the biodiversity of the Cairngorms woods and forests by the enhancement and creation of woodland networks. This will benefit wildlife by providing wider and more sustainable natural habitats. For more information on this project please contact Stephen Corcoran.

### Grey and Red Squirrels

Red Squirrels have declined drastically in the last fifty years and Scotland now holds 75% of the UK population. The greatest threat to red squirrels is the non-native American grey squirrel, which carries the Squirrel Pox virus - deadly to red squirrels.

Grey squirrels were released into parks in Aberdeen in the 70's and are moving through Aberdeenshire. In order to help protect one of our native icons, a new recording scheme has been set up so that members of the public can help. Pick up a postcard and record sightings of red and grey squirrels or go on-line:

[www.grampiansquirrelgroup.co.uk](http://www.grampiansquirrelgroup.co.uk) or [www.highlandredsquirrel.co.uk](http://www.highlandredsquirrel.co.uk)

### Wetlands

A project is underway in collaboration with SEPA and other partners to attempt to map the current and potential areas of wetland within the Cairngorms. The importance of wetlands for flood defence, improving water quality and as vital habitat for a wide range of species is becoming more appreciated. The aim is that these areas identified by the study will become the focus of wetland restoration or creation projects that will benefit both society and biodiversity.

# Events & Training

## 22nd May

Priority Butterflies of the Cairngorms, Grant-own-on-Spey.

Contact one of the Cairngorms Biodiversity officers.

## 6th June

Aspen Site Management Demonstration.

Contact John Parrott 01456 486426  
john.parrott@scottishnativewoods.org.uk

## 16th June

Damselflies & Dragonflies of the Cairngorms, Boat of Garten.

Contact Kate Christie 01479 870535  
katechristie@cairngorms.co.uk

## 17th June

Damselflies & Dragonflies of the Cairngorms, Ballater.

Contact Kate Christie 01479 870535  
katechristie@cairngorms.co.uk

## 17th June

Aspen Site Management Demonstration.

Contact John Parrott 01456 486426  
john.parrott@scottishnativewoods.org.uk

## 17th June

Insects, Burn o'Vat Visitor Centre, Muir of Dinnet.

Contact Helen Rowe 013398 85751  
helen.rowe@aberdeenshire

## 25th September

Fungi, Mar Lodge.

Contact Rob Rowe 01224 897400  
robrowe@aberdeencity.gov.uk

## 3/4th October

Aspen Conference, Boat of Garten

Contact Kate Christie 01479 870535  
katechristie@cairngorms.co.uk

## Do One Thing for Wildlife

Throughout the world one-third of amphibians are in decline. We need your help to clarify what is happening in the Cairngorms. Get involved and send in any sightings of frogs, toads, their spawn, or newts to the Biodiversity Officers. You can pick up a leaflet about amphibians at various outlets or download one at [www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk)

You can be more proactive in helping amphibians, and biodiversity in general, by building a pond and using native plants and avoid stocking it with fish.

For other ideas to help your local wildlife go to the BBC's Breathing Space website: [www.bbc.co.uk/breathingplaces](http://www.bbc.co.uk/breathingplaces)



## Cairngorms National Park Plan

The Cairngorms National Park Plan was launched in 2007, providing a shared vision for all those involved in managing the Cairngorms. All public bodies involved with the National Park now have a duty to ensure that the document doesn't just sit on the shelf! The National Park Authority's role is to drive this along, bring people together and maximise all opportunities to fulfil the objectives of the plan. There are seven priorities for action in the Park Plan, the first of these is Conserving and enhancing biodiversity and landscapes. The Cairngorms LBAP is represented on the delivery team for this area of work and has already played a pivotal role in identifying the priority species and habitats that we must focus on over the next few years.

For more information on the LBAP or the Biodiversity Grant Scheme please contact Stephen Corcoran or Justin Prigmore, the Cairngorms Biodiversity Officers: Tel 01479 870528 or visit our web page at [www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk) or email: [stephencorcoran@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:stephencorcoran@cairngorms.co.uk) [justinprigmore@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:justinprigmore@cairngorms.co.uk)