

Issue 37
March 2011



SCOTTISH
BIODIVERSITY
FORUM

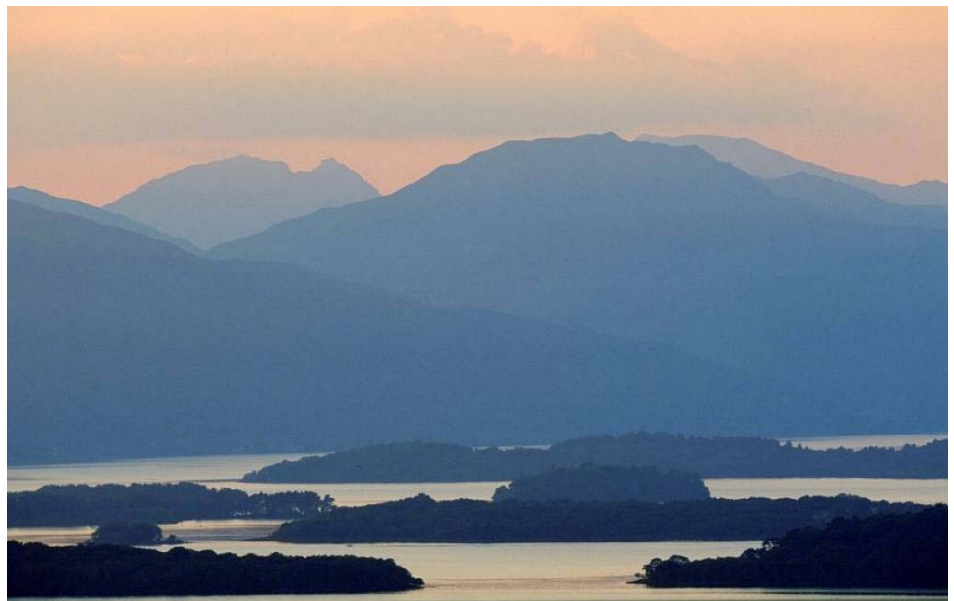
SCOTTISH BIODIVERSITY FORUM

The Forum

Scotland's Biodiversity: Scotland produces the world's first national Natural Capital Asset Index

Living in a healthy country is definitely an asset worth keeping an eye on, but how does the "value" of that asset change through time?

Scotland is the **first country in the world** to publish a detailed account of just those changes in a study commissioned by Scottish Natural Heritage. "Natural capital" is an asset comprising ecosystems which in turn provide valuable services such as fresh water, pollination, soil development and recreation.



Assigning pounds, shillings and pence to ecosystems, let alone their services such as fresh water is fraught with difficulty. Some "traditional services" such as tourism are measurable e.g. occupied beds in the tourism industry. Placing a value on others is exceptionally difficult. The trouble is that whilst most people would say that "fresh water for example is extremely valuable" and some might even say that it is worth trillions, yet if asked "how much would **you** actually **pay** for it", the trillions might evaporate?

Con't over

NEWSFLASH:

Until the new Biodiversity Scotland Website is completed, the main pages have been moved temporarily to the SNH website. Available at:

<http://snhwebsite:8090/protecting-scotlands-nature/biodiversity-scotland/>

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Contact details

Do you have a news story? Are you involved in a project? If so, then let the Biodiversity Implementation Team (BIT) know! Ask for our article guidelines to help you make the most of your article.

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The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the Scottish Biodiversity Forum. The editors reserve the right to edit or exclude articles; the editors' decisions are final. For further information about the Biodiversity Implementation Team, log on to: www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk



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Scotland produces the world's first national Natural Capital Asset Index

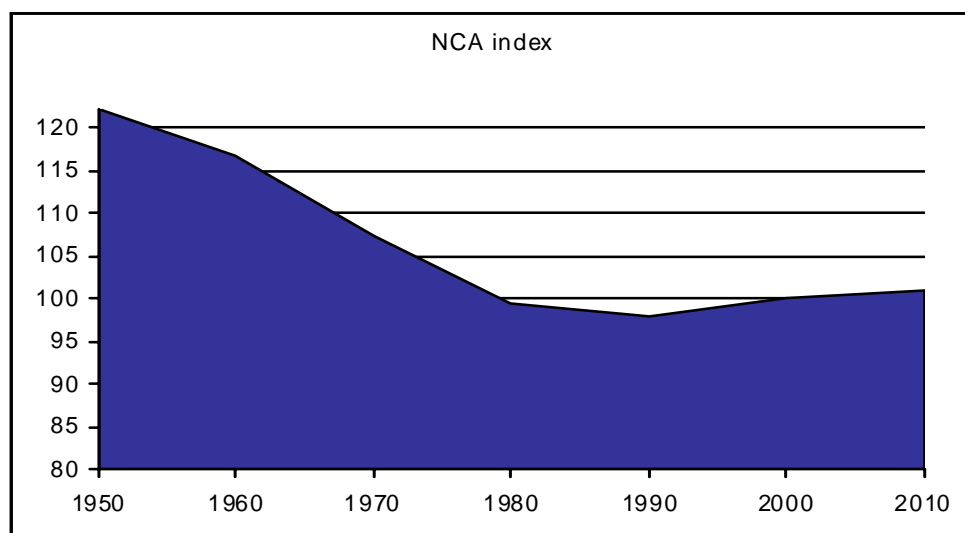
A recent international TEEB (The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity) report found that nature underpins our quality of life, yet is being lost. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) might not be the only way to measure current success or benefit for future generations. Scottish Natural Heritage has tackled this project “head on”. Whilst people might argue about monetary value, it is possible to measure ecosystems using an index which reflects their ability to provide valuable services. Scotland's first Natural Capital Asset Index was born.

John Crawford, Scottish Enterprise Policy Manager, said:

“Scottish Enterprise welcomes the development of a natural capital index for Scotland. Once we can place economic value on natural resources, we'll be better placed to measure their role and importance as part of a genuinely sustainable economy. SNH's pilot index is a positive step in this direction.”

Using seven ecosystems, each based upon broad habitat categories used in the Countryside Survey of 2007, by multiplying the area of each ecosystem by ecosystem quality an overall index can be produced.

Changes in Scotland's natural capital 1950-2009



The results show that Scotland's natural capital fell significantly from about 1950 to about 1990, with the greatest decline from the 1960's to the 1970's. Much of the decline was driven by changes to moorland and grassland. However a really interesting thing is that changes in other ecosystems have resulted in an overall increase in natural capital since 1990!

To identify “quality”, several indicators were used, with weightings applied depending upon the available data quality. Further information on the methodology can be obtained from Scottish Natural Heritage and the organisation acknowledges that the system is a pilot which will need to be refined. Putting that aside, as a national world first for something which is likely to gain momentum, this is something which Scotland can be proud of!!

The index, which includes details on how to provide comments, can be found at www.snh.gov.uk/docs/B814140.pdf.

Trees For Life—Biodiversity of the Dundreggan Estate

Dundreggan is a 10,000 acre (4,000 hectare) estate in Glen Moriston that was purchased by the conservation charity Trees for Life in 2008. Situated on the north side of the glen, the estate ranges from low lying riparian areas beside the River Moriston to a high point of 680 metres near the watershed divide between glens Affric and Moriston. It features a considerable diversity of vegetation communities and habitats, with mire and blanket bog in the north, widespread dwarf birch in the montane scrub zone and large areas of wet heath.

The native woodlands on the estate extend to about 100 hectares, and are mostly dominated by birch. Other trees such as Scots pine, aspen, holly, hazel, oak and wych elm occur sparsely in the woodlands, which are characterised by a remarkable abundance of juniper, some of it very large. The presence of juniper is an indication of the estate's unusual combination of more easterly-occurring species with more westerly ones, which appears to be a result of its geographical location.

Dundreggan has been recognised by local people as an important site for its biodiversity and Jane Bowman, a neighbour who is a keen naturalist, has made a number of interesting discoveries there. These include a rare mining bee (*Andrena marginata*) that had only been seen once in Scotland (in Strathspey) since 1949, but subsequent to its discovery on Dundreggan has been found to be widespread in Strathspey. Other discoveries include the golden horsefly (*Atylotus fulvus*), that has only two other Scottish records since 1923, and a number of birch trees hosting larvae of the goat moth (*Cossus cossus*), which features on the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) list. In total, the estate is home to over 50 species on the UK BAP list, including 6 species of tooth fungi in the genera *Hydnellum* and *Phellodon*, water vole (*Arvicola terrestris*), a good population of black grouse (*Tetrao tetrix*) and lesser butterfly-orchid (*Platanthera bifolia*), which also features on SNH's Species Action Framework list.



Zoned
Tooth
Fungi

*Hydnellum
Concrecens*



Lichen running spider—Philodromus margaritatus

Trees for Life has commissioned a series of biodiversity surveys for groups such as lichens, fungi, spiders, beetles, aquatic invertebrates, moths and butterflies, sawflies, true bugs (Heteroptera), birds and mammals, and some of these have produced very interesting results. Notable spiders, for example, include the UK BAP-listed lichen running spider (*Philodromus margaritatus*) and what is probably the largest known Scottish population of the spectacularly-coloured strawberry spider (*Araneus alsine*).

The extensive juniper population on the estate is home to a number of rare species including the juniper shieldbug (*Cyphostethus tristriatus*), which was only recorded for the first time in Scotland in 2007 (the Dundreggan record is the first for the Highland region), and the juniper sawfly (*Monoctenus juniperi*), which has provisional Red Data Book listing (pRDB3). Sawflies are unusual amongst insect groups in having their greatest diversity in more northern latitudes, and the survey done on Dundreggan for them has produced some of the most exciting results so far. One species (*Nematus pseudodispar*) found on the estate has never been recorded in the UK before. Another sawfly (*Pristiphora borea*), found in association with dwarf birch on Dundreggan, is an arctic-alpine species with only 3 previous UK records, while an aspen-feeding species (*Nematus fuscomaculatus*) had not been seen in the UK for the last 50 years. A further sawfly survey will take place in 2011, and surveys will also be carried out for aphids, millipedes and centipedes. Survey results are fed into a conservation management plan for Dundreggan. Through restoration work for native forests and other habitats, Trees for Life aims to protect and enhance the biodiversity value of this very special place for the future. Alan Watson Featherstone is the founder and Executive Director of Trees for Life)
<http://www.treesforlife.org.uk/>

LBAP Round-up

Stirling and Clackmannanshire Biodiversity Action Plans

Stirling and Clackmannanshire are developing a second generation of Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs) that will guide conservation action for the next five years.

Local amateur naturalists and associated wildlife charities provide much of the expertise, manpower and enthusiasm that underpin the success of LBAPs. They produce the data and surveys upon which the conservation programmes are based and often the muscle power to implement them. The Stirling and Clackmannanshire steering committees wanted to familiarise themselves with the conservation priorities of the local naturalist community as well as assessing the strength of their commitment before developing new plans.

A workshop took place on the 23rd February at Municipal Buildings, Stirling to identify the priority species for the Stirling and Clackmannanshire BAP areas for the following groups of organisms:

- Invertebrates
- Plants (including mosses, ferns, lichens and fungi)
- Vertebrates excluding birds
- Birds

Fifty five local recorders and naturalists attended, with more contributing via email. They began with a look back at the Stirling and Clackmannanshire BAPs: their successes, shortcomings and future direction. Progress reports have been produced for both BAPs and are available online at : <http://biodiversity.clacksweb.org.uk/> & <http://www.stirling.gov.uk/biodiversity>



Setting Local Wildlife Conservation Objectives for the Next Five Years

It was always our intention to use the workshop productively. Local experts were asked to verify the national lists (UK and Scottish) that exist for the Stirling and Clackmannanshire areas. These lists were produced from the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) and the data that it contains. The workshop also asked participants to:

- Identify local priority species according to defined criteria
- Identify further sources of biological data
- Identify existing projects and initiatives that can contribute to the reviewed BAPs
- Identify actions that would most to aid conservation of priority species – participants were asked to list three achievable actions that might be incorporated into the LBAP
- To determine the level of support for ongoing work and an annual forum
- To state their aspirations for the LBAP
- To determine their future involvement and the future of these workshop groups

These lists will sit within the LBAPs as appendices. Some of the species will be identified as requiring targeted conservation action and will receive dedicated action within the LBAP. This will be through habitat level action where possible. It is intended that the lists will also:

- Be used to inform the Local Development Plans of both Council's along with their associated Strategic Environmental Assessments
- Influence development proposals with their associated Environmental Impact Assessments
- Be used to develop criteria for a review of locally designated sites

The outputs from the workshop will be posted on the Stirling Council website when the data has been processed and evaluated.

For more information contact Guy Harewood at harewoodg@stirling.gov.uk.

Creating a Social Buzz about Biodiversity

Biodiversity begins with a B is a darkly comic video looking at the importance of bees to our natural environment. It features cartoon bees which come to untimely ends, spiced up by the voice of Scottish comedian Phil Kay. Some bees are not doing so well, and it shows some easy actions we can take to help support bees and the variety of living things around us.



The film is being promoted via social networking and microblogging sites, such as Facebook and Twitter and through other digital communication channels.

**BIODIVERSITY
BEGINS WITH**

A



Biodiversity begins with a B can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/BiodiversityBee>

David Rodger, Communications Unit, SNH
david.rodger@snh.gov.uk

LBAP Roundup

North Lanark—St Maurice's Pond Habitat Improvements

This small, but valuable wildlife site is undergoing a habitat revamp. Clydesdale Bank staff, local primary schools and pupils from St. Maurice's High School, planted nectar rich plants to create a wildflower meadow. The High School pupils made bird, bat and owl boxes which were placed throughout the woodlands. An island and additional small ponds will provide further opportunities for wildlife. The existing path network was upgraded and boardwalk removed to create a quiet haven for nesting birds. A Programme of Community Involvement is planned for 2011 comprising of conservation tasks, bat surveys and wildlife walks.



Perth & Kinross - Swift Action

Perth & Kinross Council Countryside Ranger Service has been working with members of the public to help conserve dwindling swift numbers for the last six years. A record number of interested individuals and groups across Perth & Kinross were involved during 2011, reporting swift nest sites and screaming parties and helping to build up a map of 'swift priority zones'.

The majority of these sightings did come from locations with old buildings, but interestingly, a new swift colony was recorded at a new housing estate in Inchtute, where small gaps had been left at the end of the fascia boards.



Throughout 2011 two sets of 'swift banners' will be touring Tayside to raise awareness of the plight of swifts and what everyone can do to help these beautiful birds. During Scottish Biodiversity week a guided walk in Blairgowrie will double up as a swift survey training session, encouraging people to take part in this simple survey. And by working closely with the Tayside Biodiversity Partnership, the Ranger Service will be enabling local businesses and groups to provide new nest sites for swifts.

Nest boxes being put up on Council offices in Crieff.

NTS—Rare Ferns Unfurl at Grey Mare’s Tail

When The National Trust for Scotland and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh took steps to re-introduce rare oblong Woodsia ferns at the Trust’s Grey Mare’s Tail Nature Reserve near Moffat, two years ago, they did all the right things. And today, all 59 of the original plants are still alive and very healthy – and growing strong.

Property Manager and naturalist Richard Clarkson said:

“We’re delighted with the progress of the rare and diminutive oblong Woodsia. We set up the project in partnership with the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, where they grew this endangered species of upland ferns from samples in its spore bank.

“From past experience we knew that they grew best in scree, so we planted them there in an area fenced off to protect our rare montane willows – and spared them the attention of hungry sheep and goats. Last year’s growing season has seen the ferns increase in size quite significantly, which bodes well for the future.

“We’ll be monitoring them closely over the coming years and hopefully one day they will reproduce and spread.”

The dramatic upland landscape of the Grey Mare’s Tail Nature Reserve is a paradise for botanists and wildlife enthusiasts, who come to observe the rare upland plants, peregrines, ring ouzels, feral goats and occasionally mountain hares.



CEMEX UK and RSPB Launch National Biodiversity Strategy in Scotland to Enrich Nature

In the company of Scottish Minister for the Environment Roseanna Cunningham MSP, building materials company CEMEX UK and the RSPB at Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh launched a biodiversity strategy for CEMEX's operations in the UK to enrich nature. With the support of the RSPB, CEMEX has committed to challenging targets covering its operations in the UK, including the creation and maintenance of 1,000 hectares of priority habitats by 2020. This is the equivalent to approximately 100 hectares per annum and represents a major investment in protecting and promoting nature and wildlife for future generations to enjoy.

In addition to firm goals around the creation and management of priority biodiversity habitats, the strategy which is being presented to key CEMEX stakeholders at regional events across the country in the coming weeks, provides detailed targets within the following key areas:

- Establishing biodiversity flagship sites
- Empowering employees to take biodiversity action
- Working in partnership for biodiversity
- Champion biodiversity to promote its benefits and importance

As the primary provider of sand and gravel in Scotland, CEMEX operates quarries such as Cambusmore within the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park where the restored site is becoming a haven for bird life. Elsewhere, at Cowieslinn Quarry in the Scottish Borders where CEMEX produce hard rock aggregates, the company is funding peatland habitat improvements within the catchment of the River Tweed Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

Speaking at the launch, Environment Minister, Roseanna Cunningham, said: "All parts of society, including businesses, need a healthy natural environment to provide the resources and services we need. It follows that we all have a duty to protect it. In Scotland we already have a world leading Climate Change Act and many businesses have already begun implementing carbon reduction plans, but if we also don't work to protect the biodiversity that drives our natural systems, reducing carbon emissions will be a hollow victory. This Biodiversity Strategy is good example of a company recognising the importance of biodiversity to its business model and I welcome CEMEX's commitment to act as a champion for the biodiversity cause."



CEMEX UK & RSPB (con't)

Director for RSPB Scotland, Anne McCall, said: “By committing to this comprehensive strategy, CEMEX will, with its employees, neighbours and conservation organisations, create habitats and enrich our environment here in Scotland.”

In 2007 CEMEX signed a Memorandum of Understanding with BirdLife International to promote biodiversity at an international level. By partnering with the RSPB, which is BirdLife’s partner in the UK, CEMEX UK aims to complement the international partnership and drive biodiversity locally.

President for CEMEX UK, Gonzalo Galindo, explained: “As one of this country’s leading building materials companies, CEMEX UK plays a key role in creating and maintaining Britain’s built environment. But we recognise that our business has consequences. It is a key challenge for us to balance these impacts with the need to build a more sustainable future. Our vision is for a successful, sustainable CEMEX that makes a positive contribution to people and the environment.



“Climate change is posing new challenges and threats to nature. Conserving biodiversity will play a key role in our ability to adapt to these changes. This is why, during the International Year of Biodiversity, when we are all encouraged to take direct action; we are setting our biodiversity strategy with challenging targets.

The strategy is part of a partnership which includes the appointment of an RSPB advisor dedicated to providing biodiversity focused restoration advice for CEMEX’s more than 80 UK quarries, as well as increasing awareness of biodiversity awareness among the company’s 3,500 employees.”

“RSPB’s CEMEX Biodiversity Advisor Dr. Sam Tarrant, said “Against the backdrop of cuts in public expenditure, initiatives like this become all the more important. Bringing together the expertise of CEMEX UK and the RSPB means we have a team which can deliver real biodiversity benefits, and that local communities will enjoy the special places created.”



SEPA—Delivering multiple benefits through River Basin Management Planning (RBMP)



Capelrig Burn



The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and the Glasgow Clyde Valley Green Network (GCVGN) partnership commissioned a project called '*Ecological networks and RBMP- Clyde pilot study*'. It aimed to develop an approach (screening tool) to align RBMP requirements with an Integrated Habitat Network Model for the Clyde Valley.

The project identifies areas where enhancement to habitat networks can be combined with measures to improve the water environment, providing opportunities for delivering multiple benefits and the greatest environmental improvement. Improvements to habitat connectivity are seen as a key mechanism for reversing effects of fragmentation on biodiversity, improving landscape resilience, enhancing networks for people, and helping species adapt to climate change. The pilot project covered the Clyde Valley, but the intention is to roll the model out to other areas of Scotland in the future.

The summary report and full project report can be found at:

www.gcvgreennetwork.gov.uk/component/option,com_docman/Itemid,78/gid,174/orderby,dmdate_published/task,cat_view/

– Clyde pilot study

Two subsequent partnership projects have recently been established to support on-the-ground project delivery and to apply the project methodology to other areas of Scotland.

- A sub-group of the Clyde Area Advisory Group has been tasked with taking forward and implementing Clyde pilot recommendations within the Clyde Valley area. Central Scotland Green Network (www.centernalscotlandgreennetwork.org) development funding has been used to support the production of feasibility studies/detailed plans in consultation with landowners for four sites. These plans will be detailed enough to enable partner organisations to implement or seek funding to deliver projects on the ground.
- A GIS mapping project has been instigated by SEPA and other partners involved in the development of the Strategic Development Plan for South East Scotland (SES plan), including Forestry Commission Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage and Forest Research. Phase One applies the initial screening steps of the Clyde project methodology to the SES plan area. This will identify potential areas of green network development which can also deliver for RBMP/flood prevention. Map based outputs will be presented in the SES plan public consultation.

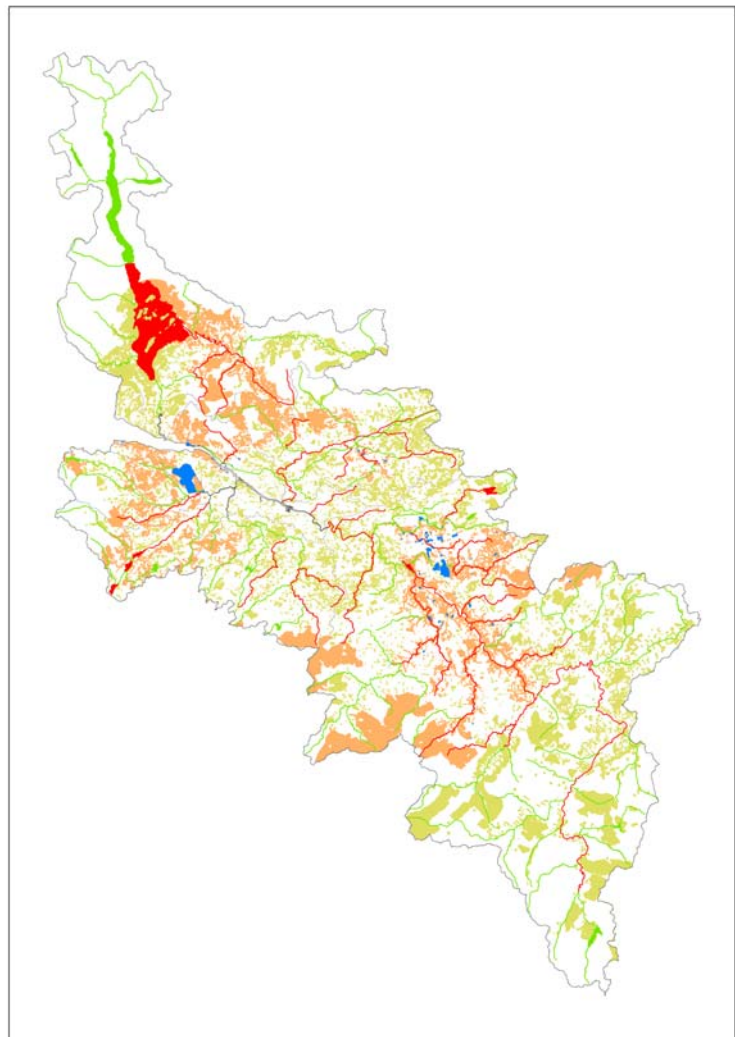
The diagram shows the Clyde valley pilot study area combined with RBMP water bodies.

Red areas - water bodies with diffuse pollution pressures that have less than good status.

Orange areas - woodland networks within 1 kilometre of water bodies with diffuse pollution pressures, intersecting with potential enhancement/restoration opportunity areas.

Blue areas - defined as vacant and derelict land.

For further info please contact SEPA's James Davidson – james.davidson@sepa.org.uk. More information on SEPA's work on biodiversity can be found at: www.sepa.org.uk/biodiversity.



NTS—Short-Eared Owls found at Kintail

An unusual winter owl roost has been discovered on the National Trust for Scotland's Kintail property in the Highlands. Short-eared Owls have been day roosting together amongst thick heather in an area of young native woodland.

One of four native owl species found in Scotland, short-eared owls are amongst our most under-recorded birds owing to their nocturnal and nomadic habits, and remote moorland habitat. The Kintail roost was discovered by visiting Norwegian students who reported their sighting to their group leader- who just happened to be Kenny Graham of the RSPB.

Every evening after sunset the owls have performed dazzling communal displays, including wing clapping, before dispersing to hunt their vole prey overnight. The lack of daylight during these displays has thwarted attempts to gain accurate counts of total numbers, with seven counted together on one evening, but calls heard suggesting there were more.



Short-eared Owl by Bob McMillan, www.skye-birds.com

NTS—Short-Eared Owls found at Kintail

Similar short-eared owl roosts have been documented in the past, the largest being of 20 individuals on Mull in 1981 and 18 in Lothian in 1987. The mountainous terrain of Kintail is not normally associated with this species, but four individuals were also recorded roosting together elsewhere on the property from September to November last year.

Rule Anderson, National Trust for Scotland Ranger at Kintail, said:

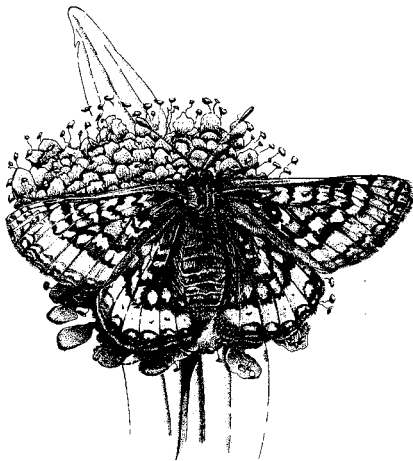
“The owls are the latest in a line of bird species to benefit from our habitat improvement work at Kintail which has seen grazing by deer and sheep reduced, allowing vegetation including heather and woodland to regenerate.

“We have also seen incredible numbers of voles across our property since last summer, which more than likely has attracted this unusual concentration of owls here.”



RSPB—Oronsay’s Marsh Fritillary Success

The island of Oronsay had a bumper year in 2010 for marsh fritillary butterflies, which are a priority species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. Once the larvae of this brightly-coloured butterfly hatch out, they spin a visible web, and 303 such webs were counted on Oronsay this season, following on from an increase in 2009.



Most of the webs were found on an area which the RSPB grazes with Hebridean sheep to manage the heather and purple moor grass on hill and marsh areas. Another three webs were found in compartments managed for corncrake. Similarly large counts of webs were also found in 2010 on the RSPB's Islay reserves.



Froglife: Striving for Amphibians in Scotland

The Glasgow Living Waters Project is in its second year, and the newest Living Waters Project in North Lanarkshire is off to a hopping start.

Living Waters is all about creating and restoring habitats for amphibians and Froglife is working alongside Glasgow City and North Lanarkshire Councils over 20 sites including Country Parks, Local Nature Reserves and urban greenspaces.

The project has a strong community focus with many opportunities for volunteers to get involved. Living Waters is also working with schools to help engage young people with their local wildlife.

Habitat for species such as palmate and smooth newts have already been created at sites such as Cardowan Moss Local Nature Reserve (LNR), Dams to Darnely Country Park and Robroyston LNR. Other ponds on sites such as Dawsholm Park and Palacerigg Country-park will provide vital spawning grounds for species such as common frogs and toads. Froglife is creating hibernacula on many sites in order to provide terrestrial refuges for amphibian species. Planting of aquatic plants, wildflower banks and creation of water vole banks also provides varied wildlife benefits.

We are keen the public to be involved in our habitat work and amphibian surveys. We are also keen to help schools with environmental education. Future events are listed at www.froglife.org/events. Please contact iain.maclean@froglife.org or 01413390737 for further information.

The Glasgow Living Water Project is funded by Heritage Lottery Fund, Biffaward and Glasgow Landfill Communities Fund.

The North Lanarkshire Living Water Project is funded by WREN, North Lanarkshire Council, Scottish National Heritage and the Glasgow Natural History Society.



Volunteers at
Glencryon,
Photo by
Liam
Atherton

Have You Seen: Knowledge Scotland Publications



The Macaulay Land Use Research Institute (MLURI) has just published three biodiversity booklets, one on woodlands, one on uplands and one on farming. Each booklet presents a summary of some of the research carried out by them as part of the Scottish Government's "Environment—Land Use and Rural Stewardship" research programme. The research programme involved researchers from several bodies.

Some snippets from the research findings are:

Woodland:-

There may be a time lag in the decline of lichen diversity as woodland cover decreases. To protect species rich woodlands we should not rely on the current distribution of trees, but target new trees in buffer areas around the existing woodland.

Woodland expansion is likely to increase the number of ticks!

Farming:-

The Scottish sheep flock fell by 12.2% between 2004 and 2009. The changes in stocking vary across Scotland. This could result in significant changes in vegetation, in some cases adversely affecting habitats and species of conservation value. Too much grazing by sheep can however have a negative impact upon meadow pipits.

Uplands:-

Culling mountain hares may not increase red grouse densities, except under unusual circumstances, i.e. where red grouse have a very high prevalence of louping ill virus and in the absence of red deer (meaning that hares are the alternative hosts for ticks).

Upland song birds are sensitive to grazing pressure, suggesting that the heather and grass mosaic created by sheep grazing may be beneficial. Upland waders benefited from more muirburn and predator control.

The booklets can be found on the Knowledge Scotland website:
http://www.knowledgescotland.org.news.php?article_id=242

This has been another successful year both for Scottish Native Woods and for the volunteers taking part in our events. Over the last two years we have seen our conservation volunteers programme grow from occasional events to regular monthly outings. Volunteer numbers have swelled to almost 90 who attended our events, with a mailing list of around 180.

We have had a variety of projects to undertake this year.

These have included:

- Brashing and burning conifers
- cutting and burning *Rhododendron ponticum*
- Treeplanting
- Dry-stane dyking.
- Building a tree nursery
- Thinning sycamore
- Tree-planting after-care - weeding tree tubes.
- Clearing brash
- Bridge building and path clearance.
- Hedge planting

Bridge building in Falkland Estate



We have also taken on some new sites throughout Fife. These include the beautiful Falkland Estate and Flisk Wood on the North Coast. This is a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and very popular with walkers.

Where do our volunteers come from?

We are grateful to the volunteer centres in Kirkcaldy and Cupar for putting us in touch with volunteers. These make up a large proportion of our regulars. We also receive a large number of enquiries from people who have seen our website. Some people have found us via other groups' websites. We recruit through public events such as Big Tent Festival. Finally, some people happen to be in the vicinity during one of our events and want to find out more.

We carry out a wide range of woodland management activities. These take place throughout Fife and occasionally adjoining counties.

- Most workdays are on the first Sunday of the month.
- All tools, training and any safety equipment will be provided.
- Unfortunately we cannot provide transport (although we will try to arrange car-sharing to help).
- We meet on site.
- The day runs from 10:00am to 4:00pm. There are regular breaks and you can do as little or as much as you choose.
- Over 18s only, unless accompanied by an adult.

What is expected of volunteers?

We are often asked this. Really it's about turning up with enthusiasm and a willingness to take part. Volunteers come from a wide range of backgrounds. We ask that you respect each others beliefs and refrain from using language etc likely to cause offence to others.

How do I get involved?

Check our website www.scottishnativewoods.org.uk forthcoming events.

To book a place contact Chris Childe, Community Education Officer by e-mailing chris.childe@scottishnativewoods.org.uk or ringing 01337 832619.

We look forward to meeting you.

United Nations Decade on Biodiversity 2011-2020

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the period 2011-2020 as the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity in its *Resolution 65/161*. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is in full support of this decision. The United Nations Decade on Biodiversity is a tremendous opportunity to mainstream the objectives of the Convention into actions and policies across society.



The Decade coincides with the duration of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its tenth meeting held in Nagoya, Japan. It contains ambitious, but crucial targets to help achieve the three objectives of the CBD and the Millennium Development Goals.

Building on the momentum generated from the International Year of Biodiversity, the Decade will spur efforts to meet the ambitious Targets in the Strategic Plan and ultimately secure the future of our planet's biodiversity - the basis of life on Earth. As we begin the transition from the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB) to the Decade on Biodiversity, the Secretariat encourages all Parties and organizations to use existing national committees established for the IYB, to continue to work throughout the UN Decade. In the event that a committee has not been established, the Decade provides the perfect opportunity to do so.

**INTERNATIONAL YEAR
OF FORESTS • 2011**



The decade starts with 2011, declared the International Year of Forests.

The Secretariat is currently in the process of finalizing and translating the Strategy for the Celebrations of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity 2011-2020 in the six official languages of the United Nations. In addition, the Secretariat is also finalizing promotional materials for the decade including a logo for use by all Parties and international organizations. The International Day for Biological Diversity, 22 May 2011 will serve as the platform to officially launch the UN Decade. Celebrations are scheduled and details will be made available once finalised.



A series of launches is currently being planned at both the national and regional level. Details will be made available once the programmes are finalised.



RBGE: Biodiversity Heritage Library for Europe (BHL-E)

This project will bring together existing digital collections of biodiversity literature from all over Europe. Do you have digital content you can contribute? If so, we would like to hear from you.

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE), on behalf of the Biodiversity Heritage Library for Europe (BHL-E) project, is seeking Scottish stakeholders to contribute content to the BHL-E web portal and Europeana. A document (BHL-Europe in a nutshell) detailing the benefits of becoming a partner of BHL-E, is available on request. Whilst BHL-E does not focus on digitising itself, the project can serve as a support for the implementation of digitalisation programmes. For further information please contact us.¹

Background

The libraries of the world, particularly those associated with natural history museums and botanical gardens collectively hold the majority of the world's published knowledge on the discovery and subsequent description of biological diversity.

Historical publications are an important source of taxonomic knowledge, but currently the only way to access this knowledge is to visit a number of different, geographically dispersed, specialist libraries. Since 2007, the Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL) has been making access to this knowledge easier by providing an online library of digitised literature via the Web². Examples of Scottish content that can be accessed through BHL includes such titles as "The Annals of Scottish Natural History" (1892-1911), "Flora Scotica" (1821), "The herring fisheries of Scotland" (1883) and "Hill birds of Scotland" (1915).

BHL
Biodiversity Heritage Library
EUROPE

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The Biodiversity Heritage Library for Europe (BHL-Europe)
BHL-Europe is a 3 year project, involving 28 major natural history museums, botanical gardens and other cooperating institutions.
The libraries of the European natural history museums and botanical gardens collectively hold the majority of the world's published knowledge on the discovery and subsequent description of biological diversity. However, digital access to this knowledge is difficult. The objective of the BHL-Europe project is to make available Europe's biodiversity information to everyone by improving the interoperability of European biodiversity digital libraries.
Furthermore, the project will provide a multilingual access point for biodiversity content through the BHL-Europe web portal with specific biological functionalities for search and retrieval and through the **EUROPEANA** portal.
The literature illustrations shown on this web site show some examples of the rich biodiversity material that we would like to make accessible to the world.
BHL-Europe is a Best Practice Network, funded by the European Commission under the eContentplus programme, as part of the i2010 policy.

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-building a digital open access library for biodiversity

In May 2009 the BHL-E project³ was launched to further develop, expand, and enhance the BHL by bringing together the extensive collections of biodiversity literature held in major European natural history, botanical, and research libraries. The project is funded by the European Commission under the *eContentplus* programme for 3 years.

BHL-E combines the efforts of 28 partner institutions from 14 countries. RBGE is one of 14 partner institutions which are contributing content. The corpus of more than 100,000 monographs and serial volumes will eventually be available online on 3 platforms: a multilingual BHL-E portal with enhanced features for search and retrieval using taxonomic name finding tools for scientists and public users; Global References Index to Biodiversity (GRIB) which will allow users to browse and search titles held by EDIT, BHL-E and BHL member institutions; and Europeana. Initial content from selected BHL-E partners was ingested into Europeana in May 2010.

Content from BHL-E will include rare texts on animals, plants, and original work by scientists such as Charles Darwin or Alexander von Humboldt, as well as artwork in publications from the 17th or 18th century.

RBGE is contributing 3 titles - the complete run of the Notes from the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (1900-1990), the first 8 volumes of the Flora of Bhutan (1983-2000) and the Wallich Catalogue (1828-1849).

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² <http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/>

³ <http://www.bhl-europe.eu/>
<http://grib.gbv.de/>

<http://www.europeana.eu/portal/>

The entire BHL-Europe corpus can be explored by entering the search string: `ropeana_collectionName:087*` at: <http://www.europeana.eu/portal/index.html>

eu-

WANE Bill not Waning

The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Bill, often referred to simply as “WANE” has passed Stage 3. Why should this affect us? Well it is good news for all sorts of biodiversity related reasons, not least because we now know what the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act will look like. To become an Act, the Bill will require Royal Assent (Royal approval).

Notable changes at Stage 3 of the Bill are a new obligation for all public bodies to report on their compliance with the biodiversity duty at least every three years and the introduction of a vicarious liability on land managers regarding wildlife crime on their land.



Scottish Wildlife Trust

Creating a Safe Haven for Salmon, Birds and Water Voles in the North of Scotland

Mink-free zone will allow wildlife to flourish

February 2011: A wildlife conservation initiative aiming to protect nationally significant and economically important populations of salmon, water voles, and ground-nesting birds such as greenshank and lapwing is set to begin in April.

The project will create a safe haven for the wildlife in north Scotland, free of American mink. It will build on previous initiatives and is set to appoint four regionally-based community officers covering the Highlands, rural Aberdeenshire, rural Tayside, and Moray and the Cairngorms.

More than £920,000 has been raised by funders including Scottish Natural Heritage and the Scottish Wildlife Trust to get the project off the ground.



Water vole— *Arvicola terrestris*

Mink damage the environment... and the economy

Chris Horrill, Project Development Manager for Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland (RAFTS), said: "There are sound conservation and socio-economic aims behind our initiative. This work must be carried out if we are to protect Scotland's native wildlife and the communities and economies which rely on a thriving natural environment.

Invasive non-native species, such as the American mink, damage our environment and the economy. In north Scotland, an area that relies heavily on sustainable angling and shooting industries as well as wildlife tourism, we can't afford to take the risk of losing parts of our biodiversity."



Rob Raynor, SNH's Species Adviser and member of the project said: "This exciting project is the first stage of a strategic approach to managing the spread of mink in mainland Scotland and SNH is happy to be providing substantial financial support.

Mink trap

Scottish Wildlife Trust

'We hope to expand the mink-free zone in the future'

By building on previous successes in the Cairngorms and north east Scotland, the project will establish a strategic monitoring and control zone across the north, extending from the mid-Tay to the South Esk, around the east coast to the River Nairn, and across from Dornoch and Cromarty on the east to Ullapool on the west.

As we gradually establish areas free from mink, we hope to eventually expand the zone southwards in future.

The strategy relies on the involvement of volunteers and the local rivers and fisheries trusts, with their network of ghillies, water bailiffs and gamekeepers, who we believe are central to making this initiative a success."



Paul Gallagher, Habitats and Species Officer for the Scottish Wildlife Trust, added: "This project will monitor the movements of the mink population using mink rafts to identify their footprints and hopes to maintain mink-free zones by strategically undertaking the minimum amount of control necessary and prevent further spread of American mink across the Highlands.

'This is about the economy as well as ecology'

Establishing an alert system, made up of local land owners and volunteers, to ensure we can respond to animal movements in our target areas is essential to our success. Animal welfare considerations will be paramount to our operations.

The American mink is a non-native predator which through its hunting of water voles, salmon, and bird eggs and chicks, contributes to the loss of Scotland's biodiversity. The decline or loss of these species could also impact negatively on local economies which depend on angling, shooting, or wildlife tourism.

This initiative is as much about economic concerns as it is about ecological responsibility. We are working to protect people's livelihoods as well as our native wildlife."

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Diary Dates

31st March 2011: Scottish Green Roof Conference. The Royal Society of Edinburgh, George Street, Edinburgh. The conference aims to improve understanding and promote the benefits of green roofs in a changing climate.
www.SGRF.org

Bird & Bat Course Programmes 2011 - Echoes Ecology Ltd

Introduction to Bird Identification & Fieldcraft (Level 1): NTS Threave, D&G (12th - 13th April)

Bird Surveying Methods for Development (Level 2): NTS Threave, D&G (13th - 15th April)

BatSound & BatScan Sound Analysis Course: NTS Threave, D&G (24th - 25th May)

AnaBat & AnaLook Course: NTS Threave, D&G (26th - 27th May).

For further information contact :www.echoesecology.co.uk/training.php.

Various dates: New Caledonian Woodlands—For further information see website—
www.newcaledonianwoodlands.org

20th-22nd June 2011: IUCN UK Peatland Programme Conference 2011

Investing in Peatlands—Delivering Multiple benefits.
Stirling University.

<http://www.iucn-uk-peatlandprogramme.org/news/148>

6th-8th September 2011: ialeuk conference - Landscape ecology and ecosystem services. Wolverhampton University Telford
conference2011@iale.org.uk www.iale.org.uk

**‘Investing in Peatlands: Delivering Multiple Benefits’
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University of Stirling,
Scotland, FK9 4LA
Registration now open**

Register before 25th April to take advantage of our early bird rate.
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<http://www.synevents.co.uk/iucn/>

