

Tayside Biodiversity Partnership



BIODIVERSITY

THE VARIETY OF LIFE

Tayside Biodiversity Partnership launches revised website and exhibitions

In the record time of three months, the Tayside Biodiversity team - together with Web designer, Clare Bailey of Direct Design (Aberdeenshire) and Dundee College student, Ámbar Varela (who has since returned to Venezuela) - modernised the look and feel of the website www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk making it more suitable to the general public interested in local endangered species such as the red squirrel and barn owl or in finding out how to help biodiversity with regard to encouraging bumblebees into gardens and allotments.

Since the website's original launch 5 years ago, it has grown into being the key "biodiversity information hub" for Tayside, attracting over a half million hits per annum. It not only includes the downloads of the Tayside Biodiversity Action Plan, but also a suite of publications designed to "fill the gap" in local knowledge - this includes the Tayside Planners and Developers' Manual, the "Integrating Biodiversity into Local Services" handbook, and the "Making Way for Nature in Community Gardens, Orchards and Allotments" booklet.

Many of the presentations given at the Partnership's seminars and workshops are also made available to download, together with details of the numerous projects being taken forward in the area. Special sections of the website will raise awareness of Tayside's geodiversity and the new Recorders' Forum.

Guidance notes and application forms can be downloaded from the website for the SITA Tayside Biodiversity Action Fund. Since mid-2005, this Fund has enabled over 50 "on the ground" projects to be started through the allocation of £447,724 (and a total leverage of £870,000). Recipients include the Scottish Wildlife Trust and the RSPB for many of their sites in Tayside, the three local authorities, University of Dundee and Forest Research, as well as organisations such as the Tay Ringing Group, the Murton Trust, the Bat Conservation Trust, Southern Cross Healthcare, and Auchterarder Golf Club.

For the next six months, the Partnership will introduce the International Year of Biodiversity by offering a series of exhibitions at many of the libraries throughout Tayside. Visitors will learn how to get the most out of www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk, obtain free specialised materials produced by the partnership – and find out how to volunteer in working towards the recovery and enhancement of the region's rich biodiversity – even if that means just making their garden or allotment more wildlife-friendly.

381 words

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