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SCOTTISH BIODIVERSITY FORUM

THE FORUM

Scotland's Biodiversity: Minister for Environment launches Scotland's Geodiversity Charter

On 6 June, Stewart Stevenson, MSP, Minister for Environment and Climate Change, launched Scotland's Geodiversity Charter recognising the importance of Scotland's geodiversity to society. Mr Stevenson said: "Geological diversity is often taken for granted but it is key to our environment and our quality of life - the importance of its sustainable management should not be underestimated. I welcome Scotland's Geodiversity Charter which not only encourages understanding and appreciation of our geodiversity but also promotes awareness and more integrated management of something so fundamental to all our lives."



Banded Gneiss, Isle of Coll

NEWSFLASH:

Scottish Biodiversity Strategy Review

The public consultation stage of the strategy revision has been officially launched by the Minister, Stewart Stevenson, today **6th July 2012** during a visit to Cairngorm National Park.

See Scottish Government website for more details.



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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



SCOTTISH
BIODIVERSITY
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Scotland's First Geodiversity Charter

Scotland has an exceptional geodiversity – our rocks, landforms, soils and natural processes, which span a vast 3 billion-year-long geological timescale. Our geodiversity is vital as the foundation of life, providing essential benefits for society through its profound influence on landscape, habitats and species, the economy, historical and cultural heritage, education, health and well-being.



Scotland's Geodiversity Charter has been drawn up by the Scottish Geodiversity Forum, with support from the Scottish Government, Scottish Natural Heritage, the British Geological Survey and GeoConservationUK. It will be signed by more than 25 organisations, pledging to ensure that our geodiversity is adequately considered and conserved, and continues to provide essential benefits for Scotland.

Angus Miller, chair of the Scottish Geodiversity Forum says “this is a great day for Scotland's geodiversity, with a range of organisations big and small coming together to celebrate the variety of our rocks and landscapes, and highlight how in many different ways they contribute to our economy, history and culture. Our geodiversity impacts on everyone in Scotland, and has a key role to play in how we respond to future challenges.”



Mike Browne, chair of GeoConservationUK says “Our Association welcomes what we believe to be the world's first ever Geodiversity Charter and hope that other nations in the British Isles, Europe and elsewhere will be inspired to build on this example of good practice.”

Although other charters address geodiversity e.g. the Australian Natural Heritage Charter, the Scottish Charter is thought to be the first national charter solely about geodiversity.

For further information:<http://scottishgeodiversityforum.org/charter/>



NTS—Trust uncovers rare plants

The National Trust for Scotland's ecologists have found new colonies of an extremely rare flowering plant in Scotland whilst checking the condition of woodland at Dollar Glen.

The extremely rare parasitic flower toothwort was thought to have disappeared from the glen, having last been spotted 10 years ago.

Completely lacking in chlorophyll, and with leaves reduced to scales, these pale plants survive by living off Elm and Hazel roots.

Mr Lindsay Mackinlay, National Trust for Scotland Nature Conservation Adviser, said:

"This is a really exciting find. For years, we have kept an eye out for this species but with no joy, then when we were wandering down one of the paths checking the condition of the woodland, there it was, happily growing feet from one of our footpaths!"

The work of Trust ecologists has also uncovered a thriving new colony of another uncommon flower, the meadow saxifrage, at House of the Binns. This beautiful, elegant flower used to be very widespread in the countryside but has disappeared from large areas of central

Scotland. Flowering at the moment, it can be seen ornamenting the grounds around the tower.



Lindsay Mackinlay added: "Part of the work of the National Trust for Scotland is to protect our wild flowers. It's always great when we find new areas for uncommon and beautiful plants and we make sure our management tries to conserve them into the future."

Toothworts are rare in Scotland.

Meadow saxifrage, *Saxifraga granulata*, is an increasingly rare flower of lowland grasslands, which flowers between April and June.

Contact Sarah Cuthbert-Kerr on:

0844 493 2483/ 07713 786 277

Concern for Swifts

Integrated Habitats Design Competition

Last year, a project in Holytown, North Lanarkshire, won a “Highly Commended” award in the prestigious competition. The project involved the creation of new swift nest sites to replace sites lost due to the renovation of the buildings.

Working with local resident and countryside ranger, Jackie Gilliland, and with Concern for Swifts (Scotland), North Lanarkshire Council architect Graeme Muir introduced an elegant design detail which incorporated nest sites for swifts, into the gable end of the renovated Holytown flats. The colony in Holytown is small – probably only 3 or 4 pairs, so this site is therefore crucial to its survival. In all 12 new sites were created.



Although, as the judges put it, “this project tackled a single issue and was not therefore eligible for the main award” they stated that “ it was selected for a commendation because it is a practical small-scale demonstration of what can be achieved for species of conservation concern through simple interventions on buildings.”

The key element is the integration of the design into the building.

In effect therefore the project was good enough for the judges to bend the strict criteria of the competition to give it an award.

Real success will of course only be achieved if the local swifts occupy the nest sites; but the recognition given to the quality and simplicity of the design by the judging panel will hopefully encourage others to imitate it.



HEATHLAND RESTORATION AT CROMBIE COUNTRY PARK

Crombie Country Park in Angus covers 102 ha of conifer plantations, birchwoods, lowland heathland, unimproved grassland and a freshwater loch. Last winter the lowland heath was enhanced by scrub clearance. Angus Council Ranger Service was awarded a grant for restoring some of its heathland. The £1000 grant from SITA Tayside Biodiversity Action Fund enabled the removal of Birch and Rhododendron along the Peddieston Trail. Countryside Rangers and local volunteers used hand tools and brushcutters to clear invading scrub and exotics from the heath. This opened up the heath beside the trail. Future work will include monitoring the heathland, continuing the scrub clearance and instigating a cutting regime on a 16 year rotation for the heather to further enhance the habitat.



Lowland heathland is a priority habitat in the Tayside Biodiversity Action Plan. Scotland has 20% of the UK's Lowland heath, which has declined over the last 60 years as a result of agricultural improvement, development and afforestation. Remaining lowland heathland is threatened by mismanagement.

For further information on the habitat work at Crombie, contact the Ranger Service at: crombiepark@angus.gov.uk



Kirkton Woodland & Heritage Group



The group are based in Strathcarron, Wester Ross and recently entered the SKY TV Great British Treehouse Challenge and won. The prize was the building of a community treehouse, which is now nearing completion.

The "house" is set in semi woodland surroundings and is available for hire to community groups and as a nature classroom for the local primary school

children. The group are currently producing an events diary for the year which will be based at the Treehouse.

Any monies generated from the hire of the facility will go towards fundraising to purchase the local woodland from Forestry Commission, Scotland. <http://www.wix.com/lctreehouse/kwhgroup>



Biodiversity & Ecosystem Service Sustainability (BESS)

Over 90 stakeholders attended the launch of the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Service Sustainability (BESS) research programme on the 22nd June at the Royal Over-Seas League, London. Among those that attended were many scientists, land managers and policy practitioners representing around 65 organisations.

Introductory talks were given by the Director of the Living with Environmental Change (LWEC)



programme, Professor Andrew Watkinson and the Director of BESS, Professor David Raffaelli. Presentations were also given by key stakeholders on the importance of BESS to their organisations, including Natural England, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and the Ecosystem Markets Task Force.

The launch event was aimed at promoting and building links between the research programme and the stakeholder community. Key to the success of the launch was the afternoon interactive workshop where all attendees were able to participate in knowledge exchange to discuss and identify key targets for research outcomes, impact and collaboration.

BESS is a five year (2011-2015) Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) programme being directed by the Environment Department at the University of York.



It aims to improve our scientific understanding of the role of biodiversity in key ecosystem processes while developing a thriving, interdisciplinary scientific community undertaking research related to biodiversity and ecosystem services.

See: <http://www.nerc-bess.net/>



Scotland leads the way.....



New legislation came into force on 2nd July to protect Scotland's biodiversity from the serious threat of invasive non-native species.

Non-native species, such as Japanese knotweed and signal crayfish, are estimated to cost the Scottish economy £244 million per year. Scotland is one of the first countries in the world to have such a wide ranging law on non-native species.

American mink, © SNH

The new legislation makes it an offence:

- to release an animal, or allow it to escape, outwith its native range, or
- to plant a plant in the wild outwith its native range.

This includes moving plants and animals unintentionally, for example on vehicles or equipment.

'Native range' is defined as a locality to which that animal/plant is indigenous. It doesn't include areas where the animals and plants have been move to by people, no matter how long ago or whether the movement was intentional or not.

'In the wild' is defined by exception – arable and horticultural land; improved pasture; settlements; private and public gardens are not considered to be 'in the wild' – just about everywhere else is. This means that plantation woodlands, hedgerows, water margins and road verges in the countryside are all considered as being 'in the wild'.

“The clear message is – if in doubt, don't plant and don't release”



Signal crayfish © SNH



Himalayan Blusam ©
SNH

...in the battle against non-native species



Japanese knotweed © SNH

Introducing the new legislation, Environment Minister Stewart Stevenson said, “We have taken an internationally agreed approach to non-native species – based on prevention of introduction as we can’t always predict which species will become a problem – and have become the first country in the UK to translate this into law.

I am not suggesting that we should be eradicating all the non-native species in Scotland – what these changes will do is help us to stop any further unwanted introductions of invasive species to Scotland. The clear message is – if in doubt, don’t plant and don’t release.”

The intention is not to interfere with routine land management practices. As well as the types of land exempted from being considered ‘in the wild’, certain non-native plants and animals are exempted too – species commonly planted in forestry, hedgerows and wildflower seed mixtures, or released in country sports and coarse fishing are all listed under exemptions. Scottish Natural Heritage can also license the release of non-native species on a case-by-case basis.

The new legislation does not include an obligation to control non-native species that are already established in a particular location. However it does give additional powers to Government agencies to compel land managers to take action or take action themselves, if it is considered to be a priority. These powers will only be used as a last resort – working in partnership with land managers through a voluntary approach is always the preferred option.

This new legislation is about prevention rather than cure. The main aim is to prevent the release of non-native species in the first place and to enable a swift response to emerging threats. It includes powers to control the keeping of invasive animals and plants and to require the reporting of certain high risk species.

A new ***Code of practice on non-native species*** has been published. The code is aimed at helping people understand their responsibilities, whether they manage land containing non-native species or keep animals or plants.

Further information and links to non-native species websites can be found on the Scottish Government website at bit.ly/ScotGovNNS



Rhododendron flower, © SNH

Stirling-based Charity Picked for Orchard Funding

Stirling-based charity, Forth Environment Link (FEL) has been given a major funding boost with the award of £326,000 to further develop its Forth Valley Orchards' Initiative over the next three years.

The funding announcement by Environment & Climate Change Minister, Stewart Stevenson at Scottish Natural Heritage's Sharing Good Practice in Community Growing conference of funding for Grow Your Own projects is part of a £2.2M package of funding from the Central Scotland Green Network Development Fund for projects over the next 3 years.

The award will enable Forth Environment Link to take forward the next phase of the initiative until March 2015, focusing on developing the economic potential of orchards and expanding orchards in schools across the Forth Valley.

FEL Executive Director, Jane Cullingworth said, "We are absolutely delighted to have been awarded Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) funding for another three years. We have witnessed such strong engagement and interest in orchards across many communities. We are keen to continue this work, looking at where there are opportunities for people to develop their own orchard-related businesses, as well as extending orchards in school communities.



Among the programme of works to be delivered, is another three years of the CSGN Orchard Grant Scheme (across the whole CSGN area), a series of orchard workshops, a partnership course with Elmwood College in Fife in orchard business development, and a Forth Valley Orchards' Weekend in the autumn.



...Forth Valley Orchards



Forth Environment Link Project Officer, Diane Alderdice said, “This is a tremendous boost for orchards across Forth Valley. So many new orchards have been planted in community open spaces, schools, and on private ground, and people have been trained up in orchard care and management. Through our recent study on the economic potential of orchards, we believe that there is also a demand for fruit processing and developing orchard-related businesses. We will be developing a support package to help people develop these over the next three years”.

Mike Strachan, Policy and Development officer with Forestry Commission Scotland, said, “We are really pleased that Forth Environment Link has achieved a further success with their CSGN application. They are an excellent organisation to work with, always delivering on the ground results. Good luck with the next 3 years”.

Diane continued, “We will work with the volunteer Forth Valley Orchards’ Group and a wide range of partners over the next three years to develop the programme of orchard activities. If anyone would like to join us then we would encourage them to check our website, at www.forthenvironmentlink.org, to phone us on 01786 449215, or email diane@forthenvironmentlink.org. We are also developing a dedicated Forth Valley Orchards’ website, which will be announced soon, and which will be the ‘go-to’ site for orchards in the area.

Forth
Environment
Link


Education and Action towards Sustainable Living

HIGHLAND BUTTERFLIES SWEEP SOUTH



Speckled Wood Butterfly courtesy of Alan Barnes

Scientists are trying to discover why some Highland butterflies are coming down from the mountains and spreading south.

The public are being invited to help wildlife charity Butterfly Conservation Scotland track the expansion of the speckled wood butterfly.

The butterfly is expanding south from warm refuges around the Moray Firth and the west coast where it colonised many decades or centuries ago.

But now speckled woods are moving north from England and arriving in the Borders.

Some speckled woods that may have recently appeared in the Stranraer area may have flown over from Northern Ireland.

The butterfly is now descending upon the centre of Scotland from the north, west, south west and south east.

... Speckled Wood Butterfly Survey

The population have been geographically separated for such a long period of time. It is thought that the west coast and Moray speckled woods are a different subspecies to those from England. Scientists are eagerly anticipating what might happen when the subspecies meet in the coming years. Much research has been carried out on the speckled wood regarding its behaviour and reaction to climate warming.

Paul Kirkland, Director of Butterfly Conservation Scotland said: "Records sent in by the public help us to accurately track the expansion of the Speckled Wood. Records can be submitted online at www.butterfly-conservation.org/scottishspeckledwood"

The survey is supported by Scottish Natural Heritage, which has awarded Butterfly Conservation a new three-year grant to promote butterfly and moth recording and conservation in Scotland.

Contact Paul Kirkland, Director, Butterfly Conservation Scotland,
pkirkland@butterfly-conservation.org

Mobile: 07770 732825



E-petition leads to new Biodiversity Information Forum

A new forum has been established to improve the flow of biological information between conservation and scientific organisations and data users to benefit biodiversity.

The Scottish Biodiversity Information Forum was set up at an inaugural workshop hosted by Scottish Natural Heritage at Battleby on 25 May 2012. The initiative is partly in response to the Scottish Government e-Petition lodged by BRISC in 2009. The petition asked the Scottish Government to establish integrated structures for collecting, analysing and sharing biological data to inform decision-making and benefit biodiversity. The workshop, attended by about 70 delegates, prioritised some key challenges relating to the flow of species and habitat data in Scotland, both in the terrestrial and marine environment.

A Steering Group has been established, made up of representatives from a cross-section of organisations. The Group will identify and action issues to improve data-flow, and will oversee the appointment of an SBIF Coordinator role.

For further information, please email SBIF@SNH.gov.uk



2020Vision Exhibition Launches At Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

After 20 long months in the field capturing a stunning set of images telling the story of the UK's ecosystems and the services they provide, 2020VISION's team of 20 top UK nature photographers, such as Andy Rouse and Joe Cornish, launched the 2020VISION open-air street gallery exhibition at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) on Thursday, 5 July 2012.

Bringing together the very best images from the 2020VISION collection, this high quality large-format open-air exhibition is part of the 2020VISION Roadshow which, between now and 2015, will tour the UK communicating to millions of people the link between restoring and reconnecting our fragmented wild places and our own well being - to show that healthy ecosystems are not just good for wildlife, but are something we all depend upon.

The exhibition will be in situ at RBGE's John Hope Gateway from 2 July until 30 September 2012. RBGE's Regius Keeper, Professor Steve Blackmore has welcomed the exhibition, saying: "These beautiful images remind us just how important our natural heritage in the quality of our lives. I hope they will cause everyone who sees them to reflect on what more they can do to cherish and protect nature."



© Guy Edwardes
2020/VISION

2020Vision Exhibition



In addition to the pro photographer team, 20 young photographers have also been busy shooting images over the last 20 months. Mentored by the pro-team, these “Young Champions” provide a link to the next generation of decision makers, who by 2020 will be dealing with the legacy of what we do today.

© Joe Cornish
2020/VISION

Young Champion, Katrina Martin, who will speak at the exhibition launch about her involvement in the project, said: “This is the first time so many top photographers have come together to speak on behalf of conservation and it’s been very exciting for me to be part of that team”.



© Ross Hoddinott
2020/VISION



2020VISION is a collaborative project, working alongside many partners, such as RBGE, Scottish Natural Heritage and Nature Picture Library, to tell this vital story. To find out more about the project visit www.2020v.org

© Danny Green
2020/VISION

Heritage Lottery Fund

Distinctive features of Scotland’s unique natural heritage including woods, a trail, wildlife and shorelines, are to be protected thanks to funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). HLF have announced awards totalling over £million to six diverse projects which will see many hundreds of volunteers taking custodianship of the natural environment. Their efforts will encourage others to step outside and enjoy Scotland’s great outdoors, contributing to the £1.4 billion a year that ‘nature tourism’ adds to Scotland’s economy.

Colin McLean, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland, said: “No one can deny the beauty and impact of Scotland’s landscape and wildlife. They are an important part of our tourism industry inspiring visitors from across the world to come and experience what we have to offer in all its diversity. However, they are just as important to our local communities and through these projects, people will have the chance to get involved, to have a say in how the environment is managed, to learn new skills and apply new technologies, and spark a passion for our natural world and its long-term conservation.”

Environment Minister Stewart Stevenson said:

“Scotland’s rich and diverse natural heritage is one of our greatest national assets, attracting visitors from home and abroad year round, making a valuable contribution to our economy. These projects will enable local communities across the country to play an active role in helping to protect and enhance Scotland’s environment, encouraging more people to step outside and enjoy our great outdoors.”

Scotland’s Coastal Heritage At Risk Project: HLF grant: £307,000

Scotland’s coastline is rich in heritage spanning centuries, from neolithic settlements to viking graves to 19th century fishing boats. However, climate change is impacting on coastal sites and, with increased storm frequency and intensity, many features synonymous with Scotland’s identity will be lost. The first strand of this project, Shore Update, will see 200 volunteers from around the country trained to become Coastal Heritage Stewards. They will visit 950 high-priority sites around Scotland’s 15,500km coastline to assess and record what they find using a specially developed website and mobile phone app.



Baile Sear Iron Age site

Enjoy Wild Orkney: HLF grant: £341,100

As many as four times as many people will learn about and enjoy Orkney’s amazing wildlife through the Enjoy Wild Orkney project. Working with RSPB Scotland, local communities across Orkney will play an important role in implementing these initiatives. School children will be encouraged to ‘adopt’ their local reserve, helping to develop interpretation, design way markers and host open days for their families, while around 75 volunteers will be involved in delivering learning activities and conservation management.

Volunteers sign up to safeguard Scotland's environmental heritage

Evanton Wood: HLF grant: £321,400

The community of Evanton, near Dingwall, will be able to buy its local woodland, improve access to it and launch a programme of community events thanks to the HLF funding.

The 64 ha mixed woodland close to the Cromarty Firth is a special example of continuous cover woodland management and is home to red squirrels and woodpeckers.

As part of the project they will plant 5,000 native trees and remove invasive species. They will also improve paths, interpretation, and arrange a 5-year programme of community events and educational visits. There will be training opportunities in skills such as chainsaw operation and woodland management and a local firewood scheme to encourage more homes to use locally sustainable fuel.

Evanton Wood



Scotland's Mountain Woodland: HLF grant: £528,900

Once a naturally occurring part of the Scottish landscape, Scottish mountain woodland, sometimes known as montane scrub, has largely disappeared. Highland Birchwoods will, through large-scale planting, re-establish mountain woodland with the aim that these areas will eventually be self-sustaining. The planting will take place across three sites: Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park; Dundreggan Estate; and Lochluichart and Scatwell Estates.

Cree Valley Woodland Heritage: *HLF First Round Pass: £224,600 including £29,600 Development funding

The Cree Valley Community Woodlands Trust has been given the green light to develop a project which will see the regeneration of 85 hectares of native woodland restoring habitats and encouraging rare species. A further 28 hectares of native oak woodland and 65 hectares of woodland fringe will be planted with the aim of creating a Forest Habitat Network which will link woodland throughout the Cree Valley.

The Semple Trail Heritage project : HLF grant: £399,100

The project, which is being managed by Renfrewshire Council, will interpret the site as a whole for the first time, encouraging visitors to discover and explore its fascinating natural and built heritage through improved paths, conservation of the ice house, ornamental cascades and other historic structures, and the establishment of 'lookootheries', guide books and audio trails. Camera systems will be installed to view swallows in nest boxes and rarely seen species such as otters. The Semple Trail will draw together these heritage, access and participation elements.

The local community has been heavily involved in the plans as they have been developed and will continue to be involved with a pool of long-term volunteers who will be trained in biodiversity surveying and sampling, as well as through volunteer day events to refurbish nest boxes, construct otter holts and edit camera footage.

Heritage Lottery Fund: Shiona Mackay on 01786 870638 / 07779 142890 or Jon Williams on 0207 591 6035, jonw@hlf.org.uk, www.hlf.org.uk

British Spider Recording Scheme

There are over 650 species of spiders (Araneae) known from the UK, and 441 of these species are known to occur in Scotland.

Although spiders receive more attention than some groups of invertebrates, they are still under-recorded in Scotland, and new recorders are to be encouraged.

Spiders are fascinating animals, with varied life styles ranging from active hunters to more sedentary species relying upon myriad forms of webs to trap their prey.

The British Arachnological Society Spider Recording Scheme (SRS) aims to provide up-to-date data on the distribution of spiders in Britain. The website offers distribution maps for species based on the latest data, and summary charts for seasonality and habitat are also provided where these data are available. Issues of the SRS newsletter can also be found on the website.



Four-spot orb weaver—Araneus quadratus (female)



A provisional atlas of British spiders was also produced by the SRS and published in 2002. Although now out of print, it is still available to download for free. However, the SRS website offers more up-to-date information.

Walnut orb weaver—Nuctenea umbratica (female)

British Spider Recording Scheme

Photographs courtesy of Chris Cathrine

Records of clearly identified species that cannot easily be confused with other species can be submitted by anyone, online. Photos can also be helpful, if sent to an experienced spider recorder. However, most spiders require microscopic examination for confident species level identification and so voucher specimens are highly recommended.

If you would like to learn more about spider identification and get involved in recording, there is an introduction to spider identification training course being run on 20th August in Stirling led by Chris Cathrine (South Scotland Area Organiser for SRS) and organised by TCV Scotland and Caledonian Conservation Ltd. This course offers a fantastic opportunity to learn the basics of spider field survey techniques and identification.

For more information, go to: <http://www.caledonianconservation.co.uk/>



Nursery web spider—*Pisaura maribilis* (male)

Alternatively, you can get involved in spider recording locally. For further information on recording spiders in the North East of Scotland, contact Grampian Spider Group (alistair.grampianspidergroup@hotmail.com) and for the South of Scotland contact Chris Cathrine (chris.cathrine@caledonianconservation.co.uk).

Details of vice county recorders are available from the SRS website.



Further details of the British Spider Recording Scheme, including SRS News and how to submit records as well as species distribution maps can be found at: <http://srs.britishspiders.org.uk/>

A Scottish spider information document, including species checklist, can be downloaded from Buglife at: <http://www.buglife.org.uk/conservation/Scotland/Scottish+Species+Checklists>

Crab spider - *Xysticus* (male)

Scottish Government is looking for projects that support the 2013 Year of Natural Scotland

Are you looking for funding for your project?

The Biodiversity and Ecosystems Strategy Implementation Team of SNH sends out regular information on a range of grants that you may find useful for your organisation's work. The current full listing is available on the Scottish Biodiversity Forum website: <http://www.snh.gov.uk/funding/our-grants/>.

One of the grants that is currently being offered is the Talking Science (Scotland) funding stream being administered by the Scottish Government. Talking Science is a new grants scheme for public science engagement events and activities. It is aimed at reaching members of the public in remote and rural areas, disadvantaged urban areas, and within sectors currently 'hard to reach' or under-served by science engagement activities. This could include young adults, older people, people with disabilities, or people from black and minority ethnic communities.

Applications may come from community groups, businesses (including sole traders), charities, colleges, universities, research institutes, visitor attractions, museums, civic groups, local authorities, and any other organisation wanting to engage with a public audience on science, technology, engineering and maths topics. A total of £300,000 is available and the level of funding available per project will vary according to the number of people reached.



The closing date for applications is 1pm on Tuesday 17 July 2012.

In 2012-13 up to £300,000 will be available for this grant scheme.

There are four tiers of grant available:

- £40,000 for projects reaching at least 12,000 people. There are up to four awards at this level.
- £25,000 for projects reaching at least 6,500 people. There are up to five awards at this level.
- £10,000 for projects reaching at least 2,500 people. There up to five awards at this level.
- £20,000 will be shared by smaller or pilot projects, with an audience of at least 1,000 people. The minimum grant available is £3,000, the maximum is £8,000.

Another Successful Scottish Biodiversity Week!

A very big thank you to everybody who took part in Scottish Biodiversity Week this year!



The Scottish Parliament took note of the Week with two motions being lodged in its support by the MSPs Paul Wheelhouse (South Scotland – Scottish National Party) and Clare Baker (mid Scotland and Fife – Labour).

Further details can be found on the Parliamentary Business pages of the Scottish Government website. www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentary-business

These positive endorsements by MSPs are really welcome and should have positive repercussions for biodiversity conservation work in terms of local authority support.

Over 110 events formed part of the programme from the top of the country in Caithness and Sutherland, down to Angus, Argyll and the Scottish Borders.

There was something for everyone, including the chance to spot a puffin colony or searching for whales and dolphins in Caithness; walking through bone caves where ice age reindeer, humans and polar bears were



discovered or joining in with a worm charming championship in Sutherland; taking part in guided beaver walks near Lochgilphead; searching for bats in Letham; watching for peregrines near Kirriemuir; joining a ranger-led walk around Possil March local nature reserve in Glasgow;

finding out about barn owls in Galashiels;

learning about birdsong near Newton Stewart; taking part in a biodiversity scavenger hunting in the Pentland Hills; or joining any number of activities at the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh.

One final aspect of the Week is the annual nature photography competition and this year's theme is Nature: caring and sharing.

The competition is open until 30th July. <http://www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk/area/biodiversity-week/photo-comp/>



*Last year's winner,
Jennifer Sanger—Sky
Edge*

*Last year's runner-up
Catherine Clark
Gannet with feather*

Diary Dates



25th August 2012: Scottish Arachnologists' Meeting: Which will be held at Perth Museum. Registration forms can be emailed to: mike.davidson55@btinternet.com or posted to: Scottish Meeting, C/O 77 Mile-end Avenue, Aberdeen. AB15 5PS
<http://wiki.britishspiders.org.uk/index.php5?title=Events/Meetings>

4th-9th September 2012: British Science Festival: Energising Minds. Each September the British Science Festival transforms a different UK city into a vibrant celebration of science, engineering and technology, celebrating the role they play in our lives. Venue: Aberdeen University. <http://www.britishscienceassociation.org/web/BritishScienceFestival/>

26th September 2012: Windfarms and Minerals: Exploring benefits for biodiversity and communities in South Lanarkshire A South Lanarkshire Local Biodiversity Partnership (SLBP) Conference at Hamilton Racecourse. For further information please contact: Siân Williams, Biodiversity Officer, South Lanarkshire Council Email: sian.williams@southlanarkshire.gsx.gov.uk Tel: 01698 426213

17th November 2012: Scottish Geodiversity Forum Conference. At Battleby Centre Perth <http://scottishgeodiversityforum.org/2012/04/03/conference-2012/>

20th September 2012: Freshwater Biodiversity in the UK—Status, threats & conservation concerns. A discussion meeting at : Environmental Change Research Centre, University College London. Register at : www.aquaticbiodiversity.eventbrite.co.uk

23-23 November 2012: Species Action Framework Conference. Managing Species in a Challenging Climate: Scotland's Species Action Framework. At the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh. Further information at www.snh.gov.uk

