

Issue 44

Winter Issue 2012



SCOTTISH BIODIVERSITY FORUM

THE FORUM

## Scotland's Biodiversity: Species Action Framework Conference 2012

Scotland's five year Species Action Framework (SAF) programme ended in March this year. This unique programme, involving 100 or so partner organisations, and hundreds of individual volunteers, farmers, specialists and others, has advanced conservation and management action for 32 of Scotland's select species. These include red squirrel, sea eagle, capercaillie, freshwater pearl mussel, great yellow bumblebee, hazel gloves fungus and woolly willow, invasive non-native species such as North American signal crayfish and American mink. More details can be found at [www.snh.gov.uk/speciesactionframework](http://www.snh.gov.uk/speciesactionframework)



**NEWSFLASH:**

**BIT@snh.gov.uk has been changed to :  
Biodiversity@snh.gov.uk**



# Contents & Contacts

## Inside this issue:

SAF Conference 2012	3
New Parks for People Programme (UK)	4
NTS—Going ‘Baty’	5
Butterfly Conservation Scotland —Butterfly Survival Blueprint Unveiled	6-7
NTS—Newts at the Pineapple	8-9
Traditional Orchards HAP Group	10
Edinburgh Biodiversity Partnership	11
RSPB— Sat-tagged red kites explore <i>Brave</i> new	12
RSPB—Mull Eagle watch flying high	13
INNS—American signal crayfish eradication	14
SNH—SGP Event—Ecosystem Approach in Action	15
Fungus of the month—Pink Disco	16
Trees For Life—Environment Award	17
HLF—Goes with the Flow	18-19
RSPB—Nature of Scotland Awards	20
TSO—Publications Offer	21
YNS—Looking forward to 2013	22-23
Diary dates	24



## 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.

Email: [bit@snh.gov.uk](mailto:bit@snh.gov.uk) Tel: 01463 725325

Biodiversity Implementation Team

c/o Scottish Natural Heritage

Great Glen House

Leachkin Road

INVERNESS IV3 8NW

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](http://www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk)



SCOTTISH  
BIODIVERSITY  
FORUM

## SAF conference 2012

On the 22-23rd of November 2012 a conference was held at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh to celebrate the SAF, highlight the results, pass on experiences and look ahead at what needs to be done. We covered a wide range of activities spanning on-the-ground conservation, tackling species conflicts and non-native invasives, and developing novel approaches to sustainable use and management. The vast majority of speakers were from Scotland of course, but we were fortunate to be joined by colleagues based in England, Norway and Denmark. Environment Minister Paul Wheelhouse MSP also joined us for an evening event.



He said "The Species Action Framework is a pioneering approach to targeted species management in Scotland and a programme of work that SNH can be proud of leading. It has demonstrated how important it is to engage all sectors working in the Scottish countryside and the value of the natural heritage to the people of Scotland and our visitors. Nature is a key component of what makes Scotland unique and is vital to investment, tourist and consumer opportunities in Scotland.

The BBC Radio 4 'Saving Species' team were able to join us at the conference and hear about the work being done in Scotland. The resulting programme dedicated to the Species Action Framework was first broadcast on 4 December 2012, and it can be heard it again by going to their website <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b010x8sq/episodes/guide#b01mddj7> .

A podcast version can be downloaded from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts/series/nathistory> . The conference has now passed but SNH will shortly launch a web site which will include podcasts of the talks, and copies of the powerpoint presentations. A set of SAF posters was also produced for the event, covering every one of the 32 species, and these will also be made available via the website. Details on how to access this new website will be given at the above SAF web address once it is ready. Finally, SNH intends to organise the production of a Handbook on the SAF work over the coming year, and will also publish this on the SNH website.



## New Parks for People Programme (UK)

At a national event to inspire new thinking about the future of the UK's public parks under threat, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and BIG Lottery Fund (BIG) announced they will invest £100million for public parks over the next three years.

This funding marks a renewed commitment to parks by HLF and BIG, which, since 1996 have jointly invested over £640million and transformed over 700 historic public spaces.



The new-look Parks for People programme aims to get local people more involved in the management of their parks and, for the first time, will provide funding to conserve historic cemeteries and offer help and advice about long term park maintenance.



The programme has also been simplified so that local authorities, community trusts and friends groups will be able to access funding in a more streamlined way. Grants will range from £100,000 to £5million, with HLF committing over £70million and BIG giving £30million between 2013 – 2015.  
<http://news.biglotteryfund.org.uk/>



## NTS goes 'Baty'



### Bats in the Bunkhouse

It's not just West Highland Way walkers who are enjoying a night in the fantastic new Ardess bunkhouse, the bats have moved in too!

This summer, David Dodds Associates Ltd confirmed that soprano & common pipistrelles and brown long-eared bats have made the bunkhouse their home, establishing it as an "extremely important site in terms of bat conservation".

Alasdair Eckersall, Senior Ranger at Ben Lomond said "If you fancy watching the bats come out at dusk as you relax after a hard day's walking, then why not book into the Bunkhouse when the bats return between April and August. It's just another great reason to visit Ben Lomond!"



### Desperately Seeking Leisler's

Culzean Country Park holds the first, and so far, the only known breeding site for leisler's bat in Scotland!

Now into its third year, an exciting project run by John Haddow (Auritus Consultancy) and assisted by Stuart Spray (Stuart Spray Consultancy) spent a fortnight tirelessly catching and radio-tracking the stealthy bats across the local landscape with a gang of willing volunteers, rangers and a whole host of equipment.

This project has given us a brilliant and surprising view of where these bats roost and forage at Culzean and has identified 7 new tree roosts this year alone.

## Butterfly Conservation Scotland:

---

Restoring and joining up habitat will prevent the UK's threatened butterflies and moths from becoming extinct in the future, a groundbreaking report today revealed.

For the first time, the report by Butterfly Conservation provides concrete evidence that projects aimed at conserving butterflies and moths at a landscape-scale have enabled threatened species to flourish after decades of decline. A landscape-scale approach works by improving and connecting land for wildlife by the coordinated conservation management of numerous sites for a range of species across a large natural area.

The report, *Landscape-scale conservation for butterflies and moths: lessons from the UK*, also shows that measures to conserve rare butterflies and moths have helped other threatened species as well as the habitats in which they live. Butterflies are the most threatened wildlife group; more than three-quarters of Britain's 57 resident species are declining and over 40% are listed as Priorities for Conservation. More than 80 moth species are also at risk.

Most threatened species are now confined to small patches of habitat that have been left isolated within the modern intensively managed countryside. For over a decade, Butterfly Conservation has adopted a landscape-scale approach to conserving these areas in order to manage existing habitats more effectively and link them with newly restored habitats.

This combination of targeted management and restoration has allowed many species to flourish in each of the 12 landscapes covered in the report, which includes Argyll and the neighbouring islands, an important haven for the marsh fritillary butterfly. This project implemented by Butterfly Conservation Scotland aimed to encourage farmers to undertake appropriate management on the ground, mainly light cattle grazing, to benefit the butterfly.

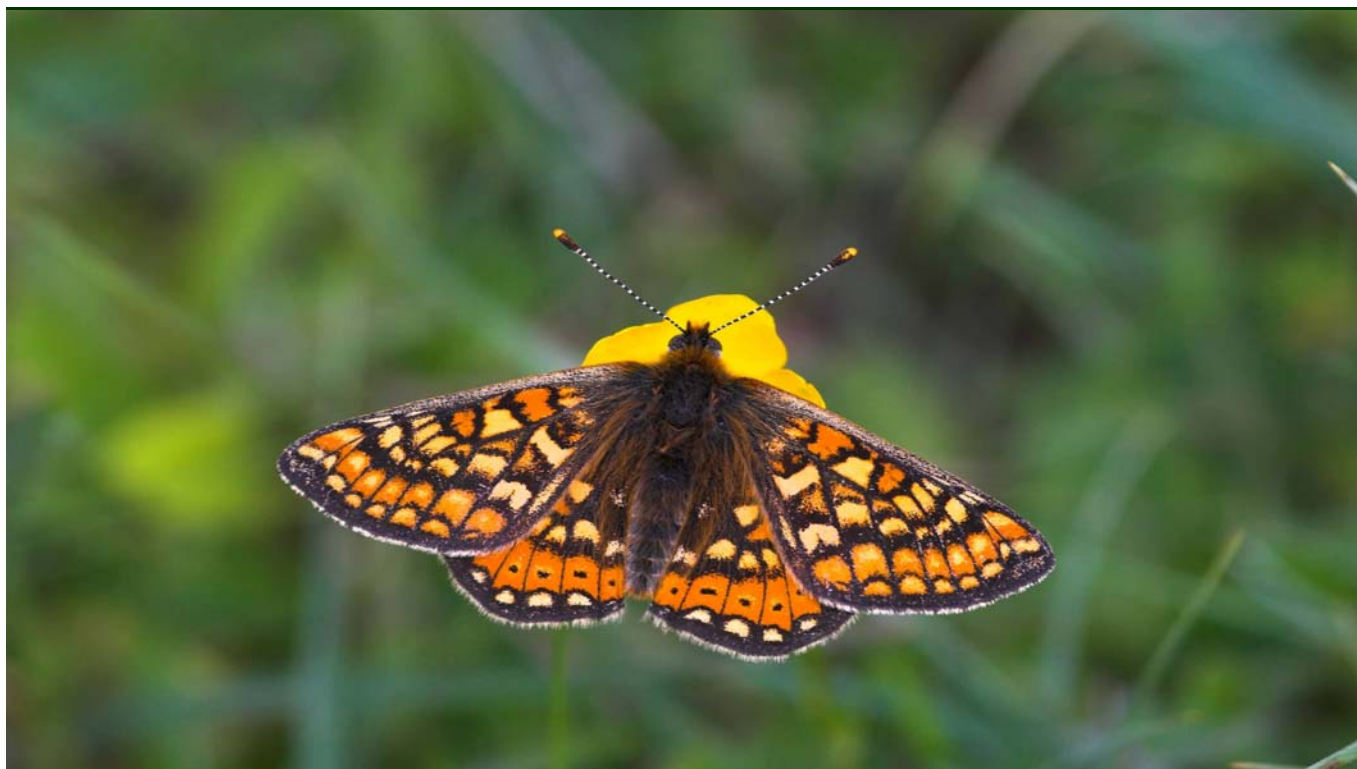


During the four year project contact was made with over 200 marsh fritillary sites resulting in over 3000ha of ground being better managed for the butterfly.

Photograph ©  
Tom Prescott



## BUTTERFLY SURVIVAL BLUEPRINT UNVEILED



Photograph © Peter Eeles

Dr Tom Prescott from Butterfly Conservation Scotland which implemented the project said “The success of this project was due to working in close partnership with farmers and their agents from Scottish Agricultural College and Agrimony, with each partner contributing their own expertise. Funding from the Rural Priorities agri-environmental scheme then allows farmers to implement beneficial management”.

The report lends weight to the recent Government paper by ecologist Professor Sir John Lawton *Making Space for Nature* which states that we must make habitats far bigger, better managed and more connected if species are to survive in the future.

Sir John said: “The Butterfly Conservation report shows what can be achieved through a highly focused species-led approach. “Very simply ‘more, bigger, better and joined’ works, and needs to be rolled out far more widely. Recreating, restoring and joining up habitats benefits not just butterflies and moths, but a host of other creatures with which they share their habitat.”

Paul Kirkland, Director, Butterfly Conservation Scotland said: “Our report shows that landscape-scale conservation works for our most threatened species. We now need to implement landscape projects across other key areas in Scotland to halt the decline of butterflies and moths and other species.”

Butterfly Conservation Scotland is calling on the government to provide more funding for landscape-scale initiatives and targeted species conservation in order to reverse the decline in biodiversity and achieve the government’s 2020 targets on biodiversity.

The report *Landscape-scale conservation for butterflies and moths: lessons from the UK* is available from the Butterfly Conservation website [www.butterfly-conservation.org/landscapereport](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/landscapereport)

# National Trust for Scotland



The pond at one of the most unusual historic properties in Scotland has been partly dredged in the hope that great crested newts will prosper at the site for many years to come.

The Pineapple was built near Falkirk as a garden retreat in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and is famed not just for its

fruit-like shape but also its walled garden and beautiful woodland walks. Now the policies around this distinctive building are being given some TLC by the National Trust for Scotland.

The charity is dredging the pond to clear away years of vegetation growth, and hopefully restore the habitat for Great Crested Newts, which are hanging on in the pond's last remaining area of open water.

The protected amphibians are the UK's biggest newt and grow up to an incredible six inches long. While they are found at another National Trust for Scotland site – Culzean Castle and Country Park in Ayrshire, they remain one of the Trust's rarest species.





## Good news for newts as pond cleared at Pineapple

---

Nature Conservation Adviser Mr Lindsay Mackinlay said:

“This project has been a long time in planning, and thanks to support from the Falkirk Environment Trust and Scottish Natural Heritage and donations too, we’ve finally been able to get the diggers in and start to return the pond to its former glory.

“The digger drivers have done a fantastic job, cleared and landscaped over 1000 cubic metres of mud and clay from the pond, and provided plenty of open water for the newts when they come out of hibernation in spring. It’s been a fascinating project as the work has also discovered old pond walls and the Trust archaeologist even found an old curling stone sitting underneath about a metre of sediment.

“It looks a bit messy at the moment but we hope by this summer, the pond will be looking good and our surveyors will find plenty of great crested newts. This pond is actually great for amphibians, mainly because it does not suffer from any pollution and has no fish.”

The easy access paths are being re-laid, new seats added, and the area around the pond has been cleared by volunteers - opening up some wonderful lost views. The clogged waters themselves have been partly dredged in the hope that wildlife, including the rare great crested newt, might return.

The building is leased to the Landmark Trust, and hired out as holiday accommodation, offering a peaceful break in glorious countryside. The work being carried out will provide easier access for the less able, especially with a renewed viewing platform at the pond, while the newly seeded wild flower areas will give added natural colour.

Lindsay continued: “Opening up the views of the Pineapple, and providing a better wildlife habitat will make this a very special place. Work is still underway, and we’ve had great help from many volunteers, but once the groundworks settle down and wild flowers are sown it will look great.”

Work will continue on a new dipping platform, interpretation and further resurfacing of paths through until next summer.



## Meeting of the UK Traditional Orchards Habitat Action Plan group in Stirling

---

There was a good turn-out for this, the first meeting of the UK Traditional Orchards HAP Group in Scotland, hosted by Forth Environment Link in Stirling. Although a two day visit, I was only able to attend for the first day. The Group visited two very different orchards on the first day.

The first was Howkerse Orchard at Bothkennar, near Falkirk – a fine old pear orchard with 26 pear trees up to 200 years old and (unusually for this year!) laden with tasty fruit. Of particular interest is the new central section where there are 25 young pear trees – grafts of older unusual varieties. This excellent example of orchard replenishment was carried out under grant-aid in 1992 by Central Scotland Countryside Trust. The orchard is on flat, heavy carseland and is somewhat wet underfoot – and as the cattle that seasonally graze the orchard had only recently been taken off, the ground was quite badly poached.



We were pleased to learn that this year the fruit was going to be harvested by volunteers co-ordinated through Forth Environment Link, with some to be marketed through a local outlet.

Later we visited Drumdrulls Orchard situated on the ancient route between Bridge of Allen and Drumblane. Drumdrulls dates back to before 1723, but in 1894 passed into the ownership of Robert Scott of Carluke, a jam manufacturer, who is credited with planting many of the existing trees. The orchard is currently in a state of abandonment, with thick undergrowth, however there are still many plum trees. Unfortunately, some lower parts of the orchard have been underplanted with broadleaf trees (ash, oak) probably between 2000 and 2005. This together with volunteer broadleaves means that parts of the orchard will eventually be shaded out which is a great pity.

There is huge potential for orchards to deliver a range of Scottish Biodiversity Strategy outcomes – not just for biodiversity, but also for the health and well-being of people through the links to locally produced food. We discussed establishing a database of Scottish fruit tree varieties, and this led to talk of developing an Inventory of Traditional Orchards in Scotland similar to work that has been done by PTES in England and Wales, and a sub-group was charged with looking into this.



On a slightly gloomy note we noted that as a habitat across the UK, Traditional Orchards is one of the most threatened, and still declining in extent at an alarming rate. In response to this however, we heard about work by Forth Environment Link and Tayside Biodiversity Partnership, which amongst others, have been actively involved helping to reverse this trend in Scotland, promoting orchard establishment and restoration in Central Scotland - with 80 new orchards established in the last few years in Angus alone!

For more information contact: Kate Holl, Woodland Advisor, Scottish Natural Heritage  
Tel: 0131 316 2642 Email: [kate.holl@snh.gov.uk](mailto:kate.holl@snh.gov.uk)

A brand new website has been launched to celebrate Edinburgh's parks and green spaces. Edinburgh Outdoors contains information on events, park facilities, wildlife and heritage. Smartphone Apps will also be available in the near future, to allow access to information on the move. Edinburgh outdoors has been created by City of Edinburgh council and Nesta a charitable trust under its "Make it Local Scotland" programme.

<http://www.edinburghoutdoors.org.uk/>

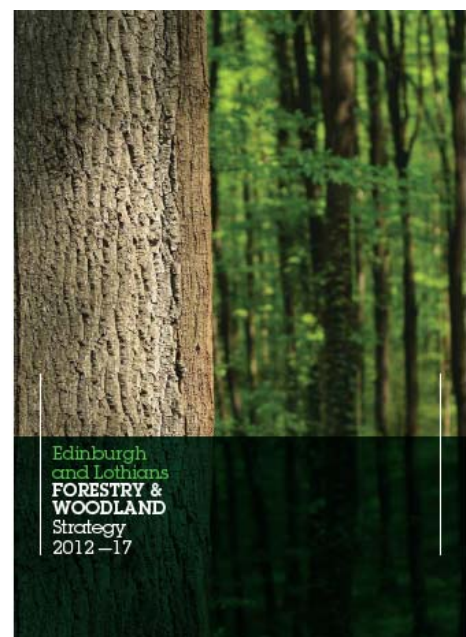


A damp grassland in Drylaw with great potential to become a species rich marshy meadow has been the focus of community action during 2012. Claire Bates from the Botanics, a trainee on the The Conservation Volunteers-funded Natural Communities programme, has worked with community groups at Drylaw Neighbourhood Centre to introduce Scottish wildflowers as seeds and plug plants. The project was inspired by the discovery of a northern marsh-orchid in a damp area of grassland maintained as a lawn in the grounds of the centre.



Closer inspection revealed a diverse flora of damp grassland plants including cuckoo flower. Enhancing existing grassland by changing mowing regimes and introducing species can be more successful than starting with bare ground, which can suffer from weed infestations and be too nutrient-rich. Claire has also worked to engage communities with the wild plants of Holyrood Park during 2012.

The Edinburgh and Lothians Forestry & Woodlands Strategy was launched on Monday 29 October at an event in the City Chambers, attended by Environment and Climate Change minister Paul Wheelhouse MSP. The Strategy sets out how woodland cover in the Lothians can increase from the current 13%, up to 19% by the second half of the century. This contributes to achieving the national target of woodland cover of 25% by 2050, set out in the Scottish Forestry Strategy. The Lothians strategy includes map-based information identifying areas with the best potential for new woodland and commercial forestry. <http://elfhnp.org.uk/projects/index.html>





Photograph © Dean Bricknell

With her striking red plumage and adventurous spirit, it's no wonder staff at RSPB Scotland's Tollie Red Kite Centre near Dingwall have named a young red kite after the flame-haired heroine of Disney/Pixar's film *Brave*.

Merida, a juvenile red kite, fledged near the centre in July and has since been doing what young red kites do best - exploring. Now the conservation charity is inviting members of the public to follow Merida's movements on the RSPB Scotland website as part of a project to track the progress of red kites in North Scotland.

After being satellite tagged along with three other kites: Millie, Ruaridh and Wyvis, Merida has been flying in the area close to her natal home. As the birds mature they will begin to disperse across the country and will eventually set up territories of their own.

Red kites were reintroduced to North Scotland between 1989 and 1994 in order to restore them to part of their historic range. Conservationists hope that tracking the charismatic birds will raise awareness and understanding of the species.

Brad Chappell of RSPB Scotland, said: "Our Merida is just as bold and adventurous as her on-screen namesake. After discovering her wings and exploring her local area she headed south to the Cairngorms National Park for a look around down there before heading back to her home range. The latest data show that she is on the move again this time investigating Loch Ness.

"We hope to track her movements and that of the other satellite tagged birds and encourage the public to do so as well via the website."

Merida and other red kites can be tracked on the RSPB Scotland website: <http://www.rspb.org.uk/tollieredkites>

## Mull Eagle Watch is flying high after receiving five stars from VisitScotland



It's been wowing visitors for over a decade, but a popular attraction in Mull is set to have even more tourists flocking after becoming only the second 5-star Wildlife Experience in Scotland. The Mull Eagle Watch, which offers unrivalled views of nesting white-tailed eagles, has earned VisitScotland's highest quality assurance grading award.



Photograph © Iain Erskine

The partnership project, which is run by Forestry Commission Scotland, RSPB Scotland, Strathclyde Police, Scottish Natural Heritage, Mull and Iona Community Trust and local volunteers, has been upgraded from four ("Excellent") to five ("Exceptional") stars. The new rating further secures Mull's reputation as a premier wildlife-watching site. The island is one of the best places in Europe to enjoy unique and spectacular sights of eagles, as well as other wildlife such as otters, seabirds, whales, basking sharks and red deer.

An independent study, commissioned by RSPB Scotland in 2011, found that that tourists travelling to see white-tailed eagles on Mull can contribute up to £5 million per year to the local economy. This season the project welcomed around 3000 visitors, and with wildlife on the island to be seen all year round, the new grading will help boost Scottish tourism in the quieter autumn and winter seasons.

This year, for the first time, the popular Mull Eagle Watch 'Date with Nature' project came from Forestry Commission Scotland's Glen Seilisdeir forest allowing the public to follow the fortunes of white-tailed eagle pair, Fingal and his mate Iona.



The 'Date with Nature' project is part-funded by the EU Interreg IVa HELP project, and administered by the Special EU Programme Body. 'Date with Nature' is a partnership between Southern and Northern Ireland and Argyll and the Islands which aims to link people with nature and, in particular, iconic species.

More details about the Mull Eagle Watch and the 'Date With Nature' project can be found at <http://www.rspb.org.uk/wildlife/tracking/mulleagles/>

Photograph © Iain Erskine

## **Invasive Non-Native Species—American signal crayfish eradication**

---

In June 2012 the Lochaber Fisheries Trust led an attempt to eradicate American signal crayfish from a pond in the West Highland village of Ballachulish. The crayfish had been discovered the previous summer by a child pond-dipping, and later inquiries suggest that about a dozen crayfish were deliberately released into the pond ten years ago by a local resident. Given this was the only recorded population in the region, urgent action was needed to prevent this potentially destructive, non-native species spreading beyond the pond.

The Highland Council (which own the site) SEPA and SNH provided funding for the project, which involved applying 620 litres of natural pyrethroids to the pond over two days. Such a mammoth task would not have been possible without the commitment and hard work of volunteers from Fishery Trusts across Scotland, Forestry Commission and the local community. The pyrethroids used are highly poisonous to crayfish and other aquatic organisms, but have low toxicity to humans, other mammals and birds. They also breakdown rapidly and, just a month after the treatment, the pond was already being recolonised by invertebrates and amphibians. Dead and dying crayfish were clearly visible on the bottom of the pond during and immediately after the biocide application. However, every single crayfish in the pond needed to be killed to achieve full eradication. Trapping in late summer 2012 found no crayfish in the pond, but it will take four more years of trapping to be certain that the eradication attempt has been successful.

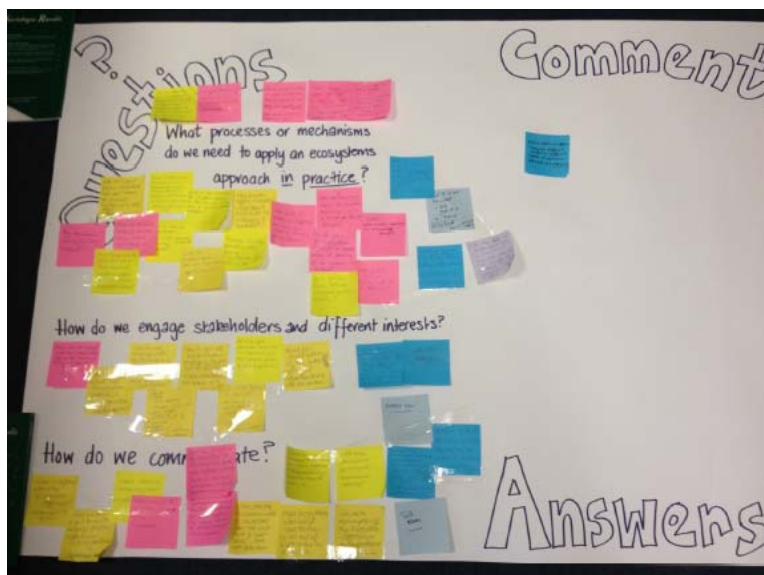


## An Ecosystems Approach in Action – Working with Nature

In October 2012, Scottish Natural Heritage held a Sharing Good Practice event on the practical application of an ecosystems approach. A report on the event has just been published. It distils the views of 70 participants on what an ecosystems approach is, as well as why and how it should be applied.

For example, an ecosystems approach can:

- *show how benefits from nature can underpin a viable and dynamic economy, with strong community buy-in*
- *help people think about how their actions fit into the bigger picture*
- *save money by allowing nature to deliver rather than always having human interventions*



Ideas for how to apply an ecosystems approach included:

- *Use an ecosystems approach as part of existing policies*
- *Work at the appropriate scale for the main issues involved – for planning this may be at a regional or strategic scale but for implementation at a local scale.*
- *Build trust around the data and the approach; use local knowledge and involve people.*
- *Start with a simple approach to mapping (using available data as land cover) and develop from there*



Presentations of the 10 case studies presented during the event are also available on-line. They cover a range of projects in diverse settings that are applying an ecosystems approach – from estate management to the sea, and water catchments to urban planning.

Visit the event web page at [http://www.snh.gov.uk/policy-and-guidance/sharing-good-practice/presentations/document/?category\\_code=SGP&topic\\_id=1578](http://www.snh.gov.uk/policy-and-guidance/sharing-good-practice/presentations/document/?category_code=SGP&topic_id=1578)

## Seasonal Fungi—*Aleurodiscus wakefieldiae*—Pink Disco

A recent joint foray visit to Dumfries and Galloway by Scottish recording groups turned up a bright pink encrusting (corticoid) species on beech twigs in Carstramon Wood. The collection seemed rather too pink for *Peniophora incarnata*, which was an early suggestion so it was taken back to the workroom for further investigation. Under the microscope it was quite clearly lacking the distinct encrusted cystidia associated with the genus *Peniophora* and the large, amyloid spores (white spores turning blue black in the iodine based 'Melzer's Reagent') strongly suggested the genus *Aleurodiscus*.



Photographs © Liz Holden

Frustratingly, it just wouldn't key out to species in the texts that we had available. It was only when I got home that further investigation turned up the species *A. wakefieldiae* and amazingly although rarely recorded in Scotland one of its known sites was Carstramon Wood! This species is not included in the 'Corticaceae of Northern Europe', nor Ellis and Ellis 'Fungi without gills' nor Nordic Macromycetes volume 3 and only warrants the briefest mention in the latest book on corticioids – Fungi Europaei Vol 12. It does however figure in Stefan Buczacki's recent publication 'Collins Fungi Guide'. Maybe this lack of reference is one of the reasons that it is so rarely recorded.

The common name 'Pink Disco' is given for the bright pink colour of this fungus and the characteristic rounded patches that it forms on its woody substrate. 'Disco' is the name usually given to members of the ascomycota (spores inside pressurised cells and shot out into the air currents - spore shooters) that often form disc shaped structures but this particular disco is a basidiomycete (spores externally produced on the cell and relying almost entirely on gravity to disperse – spore droppers).



Photographs © Liz Holden

Found on either dead attached or recently fallen branches of deciduous trees including alder, beech and oak species. Recent collections in Dumfries and Galloway have all been from small, fallen beech branches or twigs in well established woodland containing oak. The species is thought to be a saprotroph rather than a parasite.

Recorded in the UK from September through until January (with a record from the Isle of Man in April), *A. wakefieldiae* seems to be mainly an autumn and early winter species. Scottish records are so far from September, October and November.



## Trees for Life — Founder wins Environment Award

Alan Watson Featherstone, founder and Executive Director of conservation charity Trees for Life, has won The Environment category of the prestigious Glenfiddich Spirit of Scotland Awards 2012. The accolade was announced at a special ceremony held in Edinburgh on 29th November.



“As the winners of these awards are decided by public vote in the UK, this is inspiring, national recognition of Trees for Life’s restoration of the Caledonian Forest. I’m very grateful to everyone who voted – it’s an honour that shows how deeply people care about conserving Scotland’s world-class wild landscapes, and about protecting our stunning biodiversity and wildlife,” said Alan Watson Featherstone.

Photograph © John Paul

The charity has now planted more than one million trees at dozens of locations in the Highlands, and has created 10,000 acres of new Caledonian Forest. It has pledged to establish one million more trees by planting and natural regeneration within the next five years.

The Caledonian Forest, Scotland’s equivalent of a rainforest, once covered much of the Highlands. Today only a fraction of the original forest survives, but Trees for Life is restoring the forest and its unique wildlife to an inspiring, spectacular wilderness region of 1,000 square miles to the west of Loch Ness and Inverness.

In his acceptance speech for the Award, Alan acknowledged all the support he’s received from the present and past staff of Trees for Life, and the thousands of volunteers who have worked on the project since 1989. He also dedicated the award to everyone who’s been inspired by, and cares about, the Caledonian Forest, which he described as ‘a Scottish national treasure’.

Alan’s wide-ranging, long-term work to change humanity’s impact on Nature and the planet has also helped to provide inspiration for ecological restoration projects in the Scottish borders, on Dartmoor in England, and for the endangered Parana pine forest in south east Brazil.

People can support Trees for Life’s work by purchasing dedicated trees to celebrate births,



## Heritage Lottery Fund—



One of the most significant contributions to the UK's climate change targets has moved a step closer as the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) announced a \*First Round pass for a grant of over £4million, including Development funding of £147,000, to restore Europe's largest intact expanse of blanket bog.

'Flow to the Future' is an ambitious plan, co-ordinated by the Peatlands Partnership, to restore seven square miles of globally important peatlands (blanket

bog) in Caithness & Sutherland. This will dramatically improve the habitats for many rare plants and species, such as otters, hen harriers and golden plovers, while playing a critical role in the fight against climate change.

The peatlands of the Flow Country stem from the damp, cool conditions that have encouraged the growth of sphagnum moss and cotton grasses since the last Ice Age, over 10,000 years ago. The partially decayed plants have slowly formed layers of peat in places many metres deep. This ancient environment is a repository for vast amounts of carbon locked into the peat. An estimated 400 million tonnes of carbon is stored in the peat in the Flow Country which is double the amount of carbon in all the UK's forests. One of the last great wildernesses left in the UK, the Flow Country has been put forward by the UK Government as a potential UNESCO World Heritage Site.

After remaining largely untouched for millennia, the area underwent a massive change in the 1970's and 80's with the planting of non-native conifer trees and deep forestry ploughing in an attempt to make the land more productive. As a result, huge areas of blanket bog have been damaged or are eroding with devastating effect. Bog plants have been lost, rare bird species have seriously declined, and carbon is now being emitted rather than absorbed and stored. A loss of only 5% of the carbon stored in peat would equate to the UK's total annual green house gas emissions.

The UK is a world-leader in peat restoration - some of it developed in the Flow Country - and this expertise will be used during this five-year landscape-scale project to restore the blanket bog. A new field centre will be located at the RSPB's Forsinard Flows nature reserve. The reserve, the RSPB's largest, has been at the centre of peatland restoration work for 16 years. Volunteers, PhD, MSc, and BSc students from across the world, working alongside RSPB staff, will have the opportunity to train in monitoring and evaluation work and contribute to this emerging centre of excellence in peatland ecology, hydrology and carbon capture. It is estimated that there will be nearly 6,000 volunteer days delivered through the project.

## - Heritage Lottery Fund goes with The Flow

There will be a step-change in communicating the importance of this threatened landscape so that the Flow Country become a key symbol for public engagement with this globally-important subject. The current visitor centre at Forsinard Railway Station will be improved to provide an interpretative gateway with engaging and interactive exhibits, encouraging people to enjoy the landscape and its wildlife. New technologies and a mobile exhibition will bring the story of the peatlands to those that cannot visit.



Colin McLean, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland, said:

“The Flow Country is an area of exceptional natural heritage merit. Over 8,000 years of the history of plants, weather and people lie preserved in its layers of peat. Yet this living landscape is as important to our future as it is to our heritage. We are delighted to be able to give our initial support to a project which will reverse the damage of earlier forestry planting, while we still can, and make an important contribution to the global climate change agenda.”

John Henderson, Chairman of the Peatlands Partnership, said: “We’re delighted that we have cleared this all important first hurdle and that the Heritage Lottery Fund recognises the potential of what can be achieved in this landscape. The Flow Country is a truly special area, a valuable store for carbon, a haven for birds and animals and remarkably beautiful. Its future protection and conservation is essential if we want to reduce the devastating impacts of climate change.”



The Peatlands Partnership comprises RSPB Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry Commission Scotland, Highland Council as well as key stakeholders and individuals from the local community.



## RSPB—Nature of Scotland Awards 2013

---



The Nature of Scotland Awards recognizes and rewards those who are making a real difference to the conservation of Scotland's beautiful landscapes and unique wildlife. The 2013 awards are open for entries from the 14th November 2012.

There are eight categories to enter, each identifying a different area of nature conservation: Marine Conservation; Sustainable Development; Politician of the Year; Innovation; Outstanding Contribution; RSPB Species Champion; Community Initiative; Education.

The awards ceremony will be a black tie event held in Edinburgh in October 2013. This event promises to be a night full of entertainment, and provides an exciting opportunity to network with 300 fellow supporters of Scottish conservation.

It is free to enter and nominate those who you believe should be rewarded for their conservation efforts. We look forward to receiving your nominations! Deadline for submission 15th March 2013. For more information on how to enter, please visit [www.rspb.org.uk/natureofscotland](http://www.rspb.org.uk/natureofscotland)



# TSO—Publications Offer



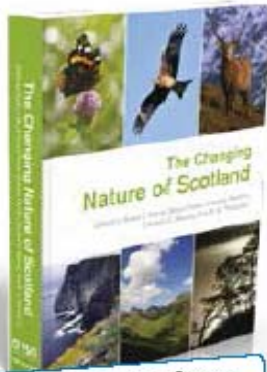
## Essential publications from Scottish Natural Heritage



### The Changing Nature of Scotland

'The Changing Nature of Scotland' provides a stock-take of environmental change across the land, water and seas of Scotland. This book makes an important contribution to our understanding of environmental change in Scotland and what we need to do to secure a healthier future.

9780114973599 ~~£27.50~~ Now **£24.75**  
Quote code **SNH3** to receive 10% discount

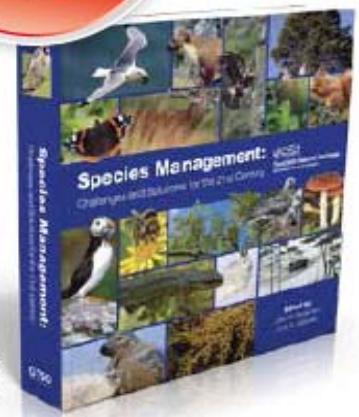


*"This book should be on the shelves of every nature conservationist in Scotland."*  
Jeremy Greenwood in *BTO News*, May-June 2012

### Species Management: Challenges and Solutions for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

This book contains 30 chapters which draw on the experience of international experts (including scientists and conservationists) in facing and resolving the different challenges presented when trying to manage species in need of conservation.

9780114973483 ~~£27.50~~ Now **£24.75**  
Quote code **SNH3** to receive 10% discount



## 15% off the Complete Natural Heritage of Scotland Series

Title	ISBN:	Price	Quote code <b>SNH4</b> for 15% Discount
Waterbirds Around the World	978011497 3339	<del>£35.00</del>	£29.75
Energy and the Natural Heritage	978011497 3414	<del>£25.00</del>	£21.25
Soils, Sustainability and the Natural Heritage	9780114952709	<del>£20.00</del>	£17.00
Farming, Forestry and the Natural Heritage: Towards a More Integrated Future	978011497 3247	<del>£20.00</del>	£17.00
Mountains of Northern Europe: Conservation, Management, People and Nature	978011497 3193	<del>£20.00</del>	£17.00
Birds Of Prey in a Changing Environment	978011497 3087	<del>£20.00</del>	£17.00
The State of Scotland's Environment and Natural Heritage	978011497 3063	<del>£10.00</del>	£8.50
Enjoyment and Understanding of the Natural Heritage	978011497 2905	<del>£10.00</del>	£8.50
Earth Science and the Natural Heritage: Interactions and Integrated Management	978011497 2837	<del>£10.00</del>	£8.50
Landscape Character: Perspectives on Management and Change	978011497 2660	<del>£10.00</del>	£8.50
Scotland's Living Coastline	9780114958565	<del>£10.00</del>	£8.50

### Easy ways to order

Order by 7 February 2013 to receive your 10% or 15% discount on these selected Scottish Natural Heritage publications

Online See the full range of Natural Heritage of Scotland publications and merchandise at [www.tsoshop.co.uk](http://www.tsoshop.co.uk)  
By Telephone 0870 850 4477, quoting ref SNH3 or SNH4  
By Fax 0870 243 0129, quoting ref SNH3 or SNH4  
By Post TSO Marketing, Freepost ANG 4748, Norwich, NR3 1YX  
By Textphone 0870 240 3701

Don't forget, TSO can keep you informed of the latest publications from Scottish Natural Heritage. Register to receive updates by visiting: [www.tsoshop.co.uk/signup](http://www.tsoshop.co.uk/signup)



All discounts are valid from 7 December 2012 until 7 February 2013.  
Prices and images are correct at the time of going to press but may be subject to change without notice.  
TSO (The Stationery Office) Ltd. Company Registered Number: 03049649. Registered office: 1-5 Poland Street, London, W1F 8PP.  
Part of the Williams Lea Group.  
The Marketing of products published by TSO is funded by TSO [www.tso.co.uk](http://www.tso.co.uk)



## Year of Natural Scotland—2013

---



You might hear a bit more about the Year of Natural Scotland in the coming months, or YNS as it is now referred to. In fact quite a bit more!

But what is it all about? YNS is the fourth of a series of Focus Years that spotlight some of Scotland's great assets and build upon the momentum generated by Homecoming Scotland as we journey towards 2014.

It is a great opportunity to showcase our stunning natural landscapes, our wildlife species and to promote responsible enjoyment of Scotland's natural heritage. But YNS is more than

a marketing tool, we really do have outstanding scenery and fantastic wildlife on our doorstep to shout about and why shouldn't we? Of course, it's also about encouraging more of us Scots to put on our walking boots and venture into the outdoors!



# Make the most of the Year of Natural Scotland 2013!

The overall theme encompasses the Natural Scotland product in its broadest sense, namely: **Natural landscapes, Flora and Fauna, Natural playground, Historic landscapes, Natural larder, Green Tourism, Art in Nature, and Nature in Cities.**

At SNH, we are working on 5 key initiatives to support the year:



- 1. Celebrating John Muir** – Celebrate the first John Muir Day in Scotland on 21 April 2013, the 175th anniversary of his birth. Look out for special events across Scotland during the month of April and follow his steps into nature.
- 2. Scotland's Big 5 Celebrations** – Celebrate Scotland's iconic wildlife creatures and vote for your favourite Big 5. Visit your local National Nature Reserve and check out our ideas and tips on where to spot some amazing wildlife.
- 3. View from the Train** - Make your train journey memorable and discover some iconic natural landscapes with our audio guide, App and leaflets along Scotland's scenic train journeys.
- 4. Inspiring Young People** - Get out and about with some great ideas for young people by young people to get active. Look out for our video snippets and podcasts and share your stories on a new Facebook App.
- 5. Linking cultural and natural projects** - Get inspired by some fantastic art projects, from artists in residence at key nature sites to outdoors theatre and films showcasing Scotland's nature.

We will also be working with events organisers, the tourism industry and the media to help raise awareness of the Year of Natural Scotland and inspire more of us to connect with the nature on our doorstep.

**Watch this space and visit our website to find out about events during the YNS**  
[www.snh.gov.uk/natural](http://www.snh.gov.uk/natural)    [www.visitscotland.com/natural](http://www.visitscotland.com/natural)

Anne Roels Year of Natural Scotland Project Manager





# Diary Dates

**5th—7th February 2013: Reducing Risks - Ecosystems and Human Well-Being in the UK**  
**Venue:** Snowdonia National Park Centre at Plas Tan y Bwlch  
**Further information at :** <http://www.eryri-npa.gov.uk/study-centre/professional-training/course-details/D03>

**6th-7th February 2013: Scottish Wildlife Trust—National Ecological Networks conference.** **Venue:** National Museum for Scotland, Edinburgh  
**Further information at:** <https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/shop/nen-conference-2013/>

**16th March 2013—Scottish Birdwatchers Conference: All Change for Scottish Birds**  
**Venue:** Our Dynamic Earth Edinburgh **Further information at:** <http://www.the-soc.org.uk/conferences.htm>

**18th-19th March 2013—Scottish Renewables Annual Conference & Exhibition 2013**  
**Venue:** Edinburgh International Conference Centre (EICC), Edinburgh **Further information at:**  
<http://www.scottishrenewables.com/events/annual-conference-exhibition-2013/>

**15-17 April 2013—European Association of Fisheries Economists: Securing the future - Implementing reform in European Fisheries** **Venue:** Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh. **Further information at:** <http://www.masts.ac.uk/newsItem.aspx?ni=1032>



***The Forum would like to wish all it's readers a Happy and Biodiverse 2013***

*A big thank you to those who contributed articles for the newsletter in 2012—please keep them coming, we would love to hear from you.*

*If you know anyone who would like to subscribe to the newsletter, please ask them to contact [biodiversity@snh.gov.uk](mailto:biodiversity@snh.gov.uk)*

