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JOHN
MUIR
AWARD

wild places:
DISCOVER
EXPLORE
CONSERVE
SHARE

Biodiversity Stories

John Muir Award & Biodiversity

The John Muir Award encourages connections with 'wild places' – places with natural character, biodiversity. It supports people to enjoy them, care for them, and celebrate the experience.

Here is a collection of our Biodiversity Stories. The e-version, at www.johnmuiraward.org, lets you click through each story to find out more.

The John Muir Award is the main educational initiative of the John Muir Trust.

CHRIS MCGINLEY
COUNTRYSIDE RANGER

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Words from the wise

'When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe.'

John Muir

'This is a green world, with animals comparatively few and small, and all dependent on the leaves. By leaves we live. Some people have strange ideas that they live by money. They think energy is generated by the circulation of coins. Whereas the world is mainly a vast leaf colony, growing on and forming a leafy soil, not a mere mineral mass: and we live not by the jingling of our coins, but by the fullness of our harvests.'

Patrick Geddes

'The outstanding scientific discovery of the twentieth century is not television, or radio, but rather the complexity of the land organism. Only those who know the most about it can appreciate how little we know about it. The last word in ignorance is the man who says of an animal or plant: "What good is it?" If the land mechanism as a whole is good, then every part is good, whether we understand it or not. If the biota, in the course of aeons, has built something we like but do not understand, then who but a fool would discard seemingly useless parts? To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of intelligent tinkering.'

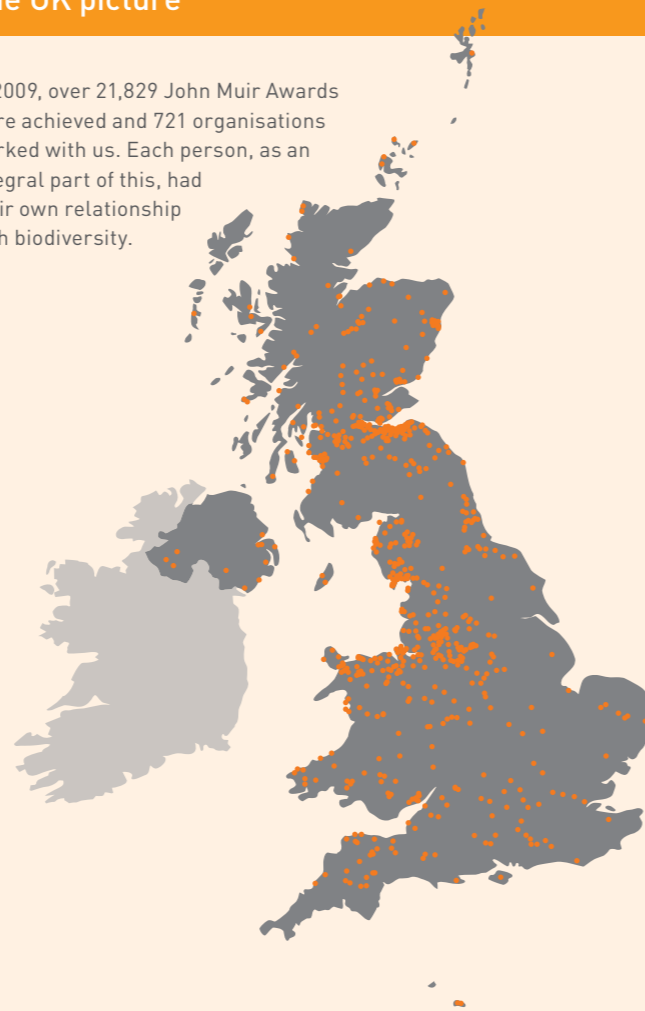
Aldo Leopold

'People will not care for the natural world unless they realise the joys and delights that come from it.'

Sir David Attenborough

The UK picture

In 2009, over 21,829 John Muir Awards were achieved and 721 organisations worked with us. Each person, as an integral part of this, had their own relationship with biodiversity.



Sharing Biodiversity Stories – Top Tips

personalise

Local biodiversity provides a platform from which to connect to global issues.

- Learn what people think of their natural surroundings, and start there
- Integrate pride in local places, plants and wildlife
- Highlight the personal benefits of doing something for nature



humanise

Mostly, we value nature as it relates to people.

- Talk about people behind conservation success stories, as well as the plants and animals
- Use testimonies and case studies
- Talk in human timescales, what you'll do in 5, not 25, years



publicise

Make the people involved, and their successes, visible.

- Use everyday role models, the people who are taking action in their daily lives
- Showcase success, what we've managed to save rather than what we've lost
- Show people what a difference they have made, and say thank you. Reinforce the feel-good factor and help turn one-off conservation actions into lifestyle habits



(adapted from 'Branding Biodiversity', Futerra publication, www.futerra.co.uk)

Biodiversity

It's everything that makes up life on earth. It includes habitats - where things live - and species - the range of living things, including us.

Us & Biodiversity

We all have a relationship with biodiversity.

It provides not only practical things like food, energy, medicine and clean air, but also the settings for our lives and how we live them. To varying degrees, we have a fascination, a deep connection and awe for nature.

A love of biodiversity can lead to care, action and a wish to protect it.

Resources & Links

Local Biodiversity Action Plans

Find your local plan at www.ukbap.co.uk

Nature Detectives

Practical guides and information on wildlife gardening, species, habitats – www.naturedetectives.org.uk

John Muir Trust

Information on properties, surveys, and getting involved – www.jmt.org/biodiversity.asp

OPAL – Open Air Laboratories

Easy to use surveys and regional activities (England) – www.opalexplornature.org

Nature's Calendar

Record and view seasonal events that show the impact of climate change on our wildlife – www.naturescalendar.org.uk

Nature UK

The home of Springwatch, Autumnwatch and UK natural history on the BBC – great Get Involved pages – www.bbc.co.uk/nature/uk

2020VISION

Britain's most ambitious conservation multi-media initiative – PR agents for bogs, bees and barn owls! – www.2020v.org

Arkive

Images of Life on Earth and Arkive Education – www.arkive.org

Plantlife and Wild About Plants

Find out what's happening with wild flowers and plants near you, and access activities, guides and resources – www.plantlife.org.uk and www.wildaboutplants.org.uk

Futerra Sustainability Communications

Publications on 'Branding Biodiversity', 'Sell the Sizzle' and more – www.futerra.co.uk

Bank of Natural Capital

Find out about the economic impact of biodiversity – www.bankofnaturalcapital.com



Branching Out

Forestry Commission Branching Out, Glasgow National Bluebell Survey on referral for mental health service users

"It's opened my eyes to the outside a bit more and eh, it's not all hustle and bustle. You can do things at your own pace."



Justine Robertson

Ardersier Common, Fort George Highland environmental children's group weighs in with rare sawfly sighting

"I feel extremely proud to have our own ISPOOT dedication and how so many people have taken an interest. It was so great to be mentioned in glowing terms on the Highland Biodiversity Recording Group's web site. I feel proud and overwhelmed that our discovery was described as a 'significant observation'." Jessica, 12



Lorne Gitt/SNH

Banavie Primary School, Fort William Pupils on Red Alert with Red Squirrel Conservation Officer

"I can't get over how interested the kids are in red squirrels. Focusing on the red squirrel helped introduce what biodiversity is, and it also made the concept of conservation real... as well as being great fun too." Teacher Andrea Culeen



J. J. Kent www.flickr.com/photos/lummydays/

Ballinkrain Special School, Stirling Residential School pupil catches the Ladybird survey bug!

"Bugs are so important to our lives. They are fascinating, they are beautiful, and they provide many services, such as pollination, that we simply can't do without." Craig Macadam, Buglife



Caroline Standing

Caroline Standing, Scotland A personal journey connected by water

"The cure for anything is saltwater – sweat, tears, and the sea."



Alistair Findlay

Alistair Findlay, Slamannan, Falkirk Awe and wonder in a familiar place

"No matter how often you visit your wild place and think you know it, there is always something new to discover, almost as if I you're discovering it for a first time."



South Lanarkshire TV

South Lanarkshire Council Countryside Rangers, Chatelherault Country Park Fresh Air: Sequoias

See how Scottish naturalist John Muir continues to inspire young people today, on the John Muir Award YouTube channel. www.tinyurl.com/35vho6f



Scott Hunter

Noranside Open Prison, Forfar New pathways in Cairngorms National Park

"I'll certainly be making space for this sort of activity in future. I want my kids to grow up aware of the world in ways I never was. I want them to have a world with wild places for them to go to and take their children and grandchildren." Inmate



Amy Boud

YHA Do it 4 Real at Gradbach Mill, Derbyshire Historical watercress beds restored – for habitat and hostel menu

"The work by the John Muir Award participants has been really beneficial to the hostel. The watercress beds can now be used as an educational resource for school groups, as well as an attraction for our regular guests." Mark Wallis, Hostel Manager



Mandy Craig

Cockburnspath Primary School, Scottish Borders Weekly woodland visits create personal connections

"We walked silently and found evidence of animals living there. We found that things are connected in the woods and that we are connected too." P7 Pupil



Sandra McCrory

Hamilton Universal Connections, South Lanarkshire Youth Group helps with new Urban Fringe Park



Chris Davies

Pembrokeshire Youth Service, South Wales Ysgol Bro Gwaun multi-activity 'John Muir Award week'

"We all thought the week was amazing – we had lots of fun learning about our environment and looking after it."



Debs McKeown

Plas Gwynant Outdoor Education Centre, Snowdonia Ponds, orchard, a bog garden, long grass areas, reptile cairn, log piles, bird boxes and a 'Btingham Palace'

"The young people involved have loved creating something lasting in Snowdonia." Debs McKeown, tutor



Steve Doyle, Butterfly Conservation

Moor Row Primary School, Ennerdale, Cumbria Working with Flora of the Fells and Wild Ennerdale to reintroduce the Marsh Fritillary butterfly

"Great news! 92 flying Marsh Fritillary at Mireside and 49 at Hunter How and Longmoor Common. A stable situation after a third successful years breeding."

Butterfly Conservation's Steve Clarke



Rachel Ford

The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside IMPACT Project supports nature volunteering

"Through taking part in the John Muir Award... I've achieved a greater understanding of the importance of preserving our countryside and why, like John Muir, so many people protest against the destruction of nature through political decisions." Luke, Bury.



Katy Standish

Katy Standish, Northumberland and beyond From fungal forays to balsam bashing and hay meadow reseeded – a personal Award blog

Find out about Katy and her boyfriend Sam's Discovery and Explorer Awards at www.hikinghadrian.wordpress.com



Burnfoot Community School

Burnfoot Community School, Scottish Borders From neglected playground to biodiversity haven – with a focus on literacy skills

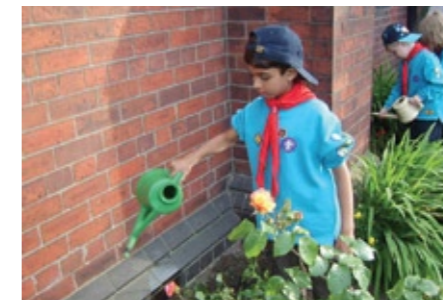
"Being an Explorer has made me more confident. It makes you look at things outside yourself. It has helped me write better. It means the world to me. We do lots of different things, like sketching to relax our minds. I feel happy and excited being an Explorer." Bryce, P6 pupil.



Kathryn Lindop

Abbey Hill School and Technology College, Stockton on Tees Vocation Fridays improve practical skills and confidence

"Not only did the group gain valuable practical skills and respect for their local environment but their skills of working with others improved immensely." Kathryn Lindop, teacher



Paul Hogg

17th Hartlepool St Aidans Scouts, Co Durham Church garden transformed for community enjoyment

"Thanks to all the Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and leaders for their hard work clearing rubbish, weeding and planting flowers in our church garden." Church Council member



The Outward Bound Trust Amy Boud

YHA Do it 4 Real, England wide Summer camps prove fertile ground for adventure and biodiversity

1,000s of young people discover wildlife through adventurous activities and put in over 9,000 hours of conservation volunteering. Click on the image for a 3 minute film, click on text for the Conserve Audit.



Rothbury and Coquetdale Youth Project

Rothbury and Coquetdale Youth Project, Northumberland Cheviots Champs

"We worked with National Park Rangers to remove cow parsley from upland hay meadows. It competes with less tall plants and has the ability to spread rapidly changing the plant make-up of the meadow."



Shannagh-More Outdoor Education Centre

Shannagh-More Outdoor Education Centre, Northern Ireland Bringing biodiversity to life through adventure

"It was very exciting to watch seals enjoy the evening sunshine. While watching them, I realised why we had to look after the planet, so beautiful creatures like these don't die out." Adventure Challenge participant

Inspired?

Find out more at www.johnmuiraward.org
Access the E-version of this leaflet and click on an image for the full story.