



TAYSIDE BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

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BIODIVERSITY EDUCATION SUB-GROUP

Minutes of Meeting - 22 August 2003

Present:	Catherine Lloyd	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership (sub-group leader)
	Daniele Muir	Perth & Kinross Ranger Service
	Lesley Wood	Angus Council Ranger Service
	Ann Lolley	Broughty Ferry Environment Project
	Alasdair Hood	Dundee Botanic Gardens
	Gill Lawrie	REHT Angus Countryside Initiative
	Rob Bushby	John Muir Trust

1. Apologies

Merrill Smith, Dundee City Council (and TBP Chairman); Sue Warbrick, Scottish Natural Heritage; David Mitchell, SNH; David Johnson, Dundee City Council Education Dept.; Richard Burton, Angus College; Hilary Thomson, ACI; Shona Medford, RHET Perth & Kinross Countryside Initiative; Penny Martin, Grounds for Learning;

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising Adjustment to Minutes

3. Project Updates

“Into Schools” – Local Patch Project in Angus - LW said she had sent the new pack to 80 schools in Angus and the community leaflet to 30 community groups in Angus, but there had been little interest so far. CL suggested that as the 3 year project concludes in 2004 a final push is planned to interest as many different sectors as possible.

ACTION: ALL – ideas on how to promote the LPP during 2004 by the next meeting

Celebrating Biodiversity – Backyard Biodiversity Day (20th June) - All Tayside schools had received copies of the national leaflet; copies were also sent to all Ranger Services, libraries and museums. Our events had been included on the national website.

Because of funding problems it may not be possible to run a national Backyard Biodiversity Day in 2004, but such was the success of this year's events in Scotland it may still be possible to take the idea forward anyway next year.

ACTION: CL to report back on future of BBD in Scotland

Schools BBD - DM reported on the highly successful Schools Backyard Biodiversity event that took place at Battleby on 20 June. It brought together 15 schools (nearly 300 children) and rangers from the National Trust for Scotland, Atholl Estate and Perth & Kinross Council. Forest Enterprise and Perth Museum staff were also involved. There was good media coverage.

Time Lapse Film Loop – AL reported that 50 recyclable disposable cameras had been given away so that photographs of a favourite Local Patch could be taken every 2 weeks; 40 cameras had been returned and plans are afoot to produce a time lapse video to be displayed in a natural setting during the autumn. Within this project the pilot for the

proposed 'logo landscapes' took place; a decision has yet to be made as to what to do with these pictures.

Silvery Threads - AL's summer project involved over 40 local 8-2 year olds learning new skills using plant materials (including willow and flax weaving, rush mats, fish sculptures, handmade paper, and flax fishing nets). A spectacular display of six willow hurdles has been produced so that the children's work can be displayed on them. Various venues have agreed to feature the display: Broughty Ferry Library, Powrie Primary School, Eastern PS and Verdant Works. AH offered display space at the Botanic Gardens; CL suggested AL contact Perth Museum as soon as possible to see if they would make a good centre display for the forthcoming Tayside Biodiversity Exhibition.

ACTION: AL to liaise with AH re. Botanic Garden display.
Action: AL to liaise with Perth Museum

Biodiversity Mosaic – AL passed round the photograph of the mosaic and said there is great interest to continue similar projects elsewhere. RB suggested AL look at the John Muir Award website to work towards an award for such projects. Postcards of the mosaic would be available in due course.

ACTION: AL/RB to discuss re. possible JMT Award Schemes with BFEP

Salmon in the Classroom Project – CL reported that the proposed Tayside project would now be widened out Scotland-wide, with SNH taking the lead. Because funding had been pledged from Tayside Biodiversity Partners in Angus, however, the pilot for the national project would start this autumn in Angus.

School Biodiversity Calendar – CL circulated the Clackmannanshire biodiversity calendar; 800 copies had been produced by the Clacks LBAP Officer for each teacher at a cost of £790. There had been an excellent response in Clacks. All were agreed that the concept of such a calendar was an excellent idea and that costings should be explored for a Tayside version. CL felt there was great potential for partnership working as many Partners and sub-group members such as the John Muir Award could be take responsibility for a page each.

ACTION: CL to e-mail original calendar idea to RB, DM and any others who are interested.
ACTION: CL to obtain quotation for Tayside version

Go Wild in Garden Leaflet – CL reported that there had been a much larger demand than expected for these leaflets. As there is no funding to print them, a CD is available for members to do their own colour printing if they wished.

Nestbox and Bird Survey Projects – the Swift and Swallow Survey is ongoing; a new leaflet is available from CL if required. Angus Council may set up a small Swift Nestbox Project at Arbroath when it is renovating some of its properties. The Tayside Barn Owl Survey is proving popular, especially in Angus where Angus FWAG are collating sightings information and planning a nestbox project that will involve local schools and the community. Elsewhere in Tayside the NTS is working with the community in Glen Errochty (Highland Perthshire) and Perthshire FWAG and SAC are liaising with landowners in the Tay Valley.

CL suggested it may make more sense if a larger all-encompassing Nestbox Project could be set up across Tayside so that smaller individual projects could be started within this to suit the individual sectors – schools, hospital grounds, etc. RB pointed out that this could be linked to the John Muir Award to add value. CL also mentioned that such a project could be publicised around the National Nextbox Week events in mid-February.

ACTION: ALL - ideas for funding such a project to CL before next meeting

Red Squirrel (Dundee) Project - Kate Farrar, Dundee Ranger Service, to launch the project at the Dundee Flower Show; as Dundee is the only city in Britain with Red Squirrels there will be many opportunities to widen this project.

Harris Moore Awards for Environmental Excellence - CL reported that she had been asked to be one of the Judges of this Perth and Kinross Award Scheme. She had visited four school projects: at Straloch PS, near Pitlochry – raised beds planted with vegetables and herbs; Tulloch Nursery School, Perth – a wildlife garden with its own fruit tree; Butterstone School, by Blairgowrie – enhancement to an old curling pond; and Longforgan School (an eco-school). The latter won the 2003 Award because of its wide-ranging projects that involved the whole community – and for its understanding of biodiversity! RB pointed out that the John Muir Award couldn't fit in with other Award schemes. CL hoped that if considered appropriate the Perth and Kinross Ranger Service could get involved in 2004.

4. Botanic Garden's Educational Policy

Alasdair Hood, the Curator of the Dundee Botanic Gardens gave a brief overview of the Garden's Education policy.

The basic message is "Plants = Life". Learning for Life – based on two documents: '*The International Agenda for Botanic Gardens in Conservation*' and '*The Action Plan for Botanic Gardens in the European Union*'. There are 2,000 botanic gardens in the world; a quarter of all plant species in the world are found in these gardens so they are extremely important for conservation. They can be looked upon as centres of environmental education. At the Dundee Botanic Gardens there is an Education Officer and approximately 2,000 children visit. As 50% of these go on to the university, the student's monetary worth can be calculated to be in the region of £24,000 over a 4-year period!

Changes are afoot in Dundee – one of the properties is to be sold and changes to the visitor centre will create a classroom to accommodate up to 35 children.

5 The John Muir Award – How to Get Involved

Rob Bushby attended the meeting and gave a brief presentation on how the John Muir Award could be integrated into a number of our biodiversity projects. Although open to all ages, he pointed out that only a small number of 12-24 year olds are actively involved in the environmental sector. The Award Scheme focuses on wild places – many outdoor centres are capitalising on the value of the award, the Ardroy Educational Centre, for instance. In this case the Award is a way of combining both the countryside rangers' and public's agendas. Out of School Clubs are also a consideration for the Award Scheme.

Currently 43 organisations in Scotland use the award; benefits are involvement, motivation, addition to the CV, recognition, etc. It is also very unbureaucratic. A survey shows that 91% of those taking part feel a sense of achievement.

RB pointed out that training courses for potential leaders of the Award take place in the autumn. The John Muir Trust also has a JMA Manager in the Cairngorms – Robbie Nicol. He is based in Grantown on Spey; there may be a possibility for us to work with him in the future.

RB asked to be included in the mailing list for the sub-group; he would be interested in attending an occasional meeting. A variety of John Muir Trust leaflets and Award booklets were circulated; a Teachers' Information Pack is available on request. For further details, please contact RB direct – 0845 458 2910; e-mail: info@johnmuiraward.org. Website – www.johnmuiraward.org.

6. Any Other Business

CL once again thanked the Dundee Botanic Gardens for their hospitality, and Daniele Muir for taking the minutes.

7. Next Meeting

It was decided to open up the proposed tour of the Botanic Gardens to anyone in the Partnership who wanted to learn more about the biodiversity aspects of the garden, and to meet the Education sub-group members.

A meeting at the Gardens was therefore confirmed for *10.00am on Tuesday 11 November* to specifically discuss which projects the Education sub-group could take forward in 2004.

This will be followed by a general invitation to the Partnership (and members' guests) to join a tour of the garden led by Alasdair Hood, the Curator, at 11.00am. Lunch will be available in the Botanic Garden's café afterwards if required.