

Tayside Biodiversity Partnership



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BIODIVERSITY EDUCATION SUB-GROUP

Minutes of Meeting held at the Rangers' Office, Camperdown, Dundee – 23rd October 2006

Present:

Mark Simmons (MS)	Perth & Kinross Council Museum Service
Morag Cooney (MC)	Dundee City Council Education Department
Gill Lawrie (GL)	Royal Highland Education Trust Angus Countryside Initiative
Lisa King (LK)	Angus Countryside Ranger Service
Dave Ferguson (DF)	Dundee Ranger Service
Catherine Lloyd (CL)	Biodiversity Co-ordinator

Apologies:

Daniele Muir	Perth & Kinross Ranger Service
Ann Lolley	Broughty Ferry Environment Project
George Potts	Dundee Ranger Service
Lesley Wood	Angus Ranger Service
Erika Luukas	Scottish Origins

Circulated to: Mike Flinn, Forest Education Initiative; Ian Mason, Perth & Kinross Council Education Service; Richard Burton, Angus College; Ben Notley, National Trust for Scotland; Bruce Anderson, RSPB; Stuart Downie, Perth College; Alasdair Hood, Dundee Botanic Gardens; D. Stewart, Perthshire Countryside Initiative; Fiona Thackeray, Thrive; Linda Winskill, Loch Lomond & Trossachs Ranger Service; Martyn Jamieson, Kindrogan Study Centre; Sharon Neilson, SCRI; Carolyn Warwick, SNH, John Muir Award; Grounds for Learning; Murton Trust.

1. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the last meeting were taken as read.

Tayside Wildlife Festival

There is still much interest in taking a Festival forward. However, the Scottish Biodiversity Forum Implementation Team is now looking into running a Scottish Biodiversity Festival in place of the annual Week or Fortnight. No further details are available at present, but CL will report back to the sub-group as soon as possible.

ACTION: CL

Website

The average number of hits continues to rise; recently 7,500 hits per week were recorded. CL is still waiting to learn if the recording forms can be made interactive so that they can be completed online.

ACTION: CL

Funding - Tayside Biodiversity Action Fund (TBAF)

CL reminded everyone that monies are still available, bearing in mind that projects must be site-specific and with particular relevance to LBAP habitats or species. The next deadline for applications is 26th January 2007 (applications are considered quarterly). Application forms can be downloaded from www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk.

ACTION: All

Schools' Backyard Biodiversity Day (2007)

No update from Perth & Kinross Rangers was available as to whether this event will continue into 2007.

ACTION: DM

2. Round the Table Projects

Sheltered Housing Biodiversity Projects

LK reported that Angus Ranger Service is considering running a similar project in a hospital; CL confirmed that there are two such projects mooted in Perthshire (Blairgowrie and Crieff). CL confirmed this would fit in well with the 2nd Tranche HAP "Hospitals, Sheltered Housing and Nursing Homes HAP".

Perthshire Projects

No report available from Perth & Kinross Rangers. CL confirmed that the biodiversity display banners had been in constant use throughout the year.

Salmon in the Classroom

No update available.

Dundee City Council

DF listed a number of projects the Dundee Ranger Service has been involved in: the Town Swift Project (including survey); the Red Squirrel Project, and the pond at Broughty Ferry Nature Reserve. With the Broughty Ferry Environment Project's "Following the Life of Water" (FLOW), the Ranger Service is looking at various types of pond projects. The Barry Buddon Tern Project stalled during 2006 because of staff shortages in SNH. It is hoped that Barry Buddon Camp will take on the project. Tern towers and a camera have been considered and there was a hope that American schools could be involved via the internet. MC said that there was soon to be a meeting between the Education Service and the Ranger Service to discuss potential partnership projects.

RHET

GL confirmed that project evaluation is underway regarding the berry growing project. The Tatty Bogle Nursery School Project looks to be underway. Twenty per cent of farms visited must now have SSSIs on their land. MC confirmed that a Twilight Session had been arranged for DCC teachers.

Town Swift Survey

CL reported that there had been a Swift Mapping Session last month to update the Tayside maps with new survey information. A Swift Newsletter is planned for early 2007 (funding permitting). Much cross-boundary work is still taking place – the proposed "Swift Gathering" is going ahead in Stirling on 2nd November; anyone with a "working" interest in swifts is welcome to attend (contact Concern for Swifts Scotland - tel. 01431 554 8262; e-mail: swiftscot@yahoo.co.uk).

Red Squirrels

A second Tayside Red Squirrel Newsletter is planned at the end of this year.

Tayside Geodiversity

MS said that three trails leaflets have been planned: the Corsiehill (Perth) one is nearly complete; there will be one for the Dundee Law, and – in due course – another one focussing on the Seaton Cliffs area, Arbroath. The Group then intends to notify local authorities about RIGS (Regionally Important Geological Sites) and to encourage their use in educational visits, etc. The next meeting is planned for 10th January – if any new member would like to join, please contact MS direct – MJSimmons@pkc.gov.uk.

3. Project Proforma 2007-10

CL had presented the Sub-Group's draft project proforma to the Partnership's Steering Group at the end of August and circulated the SG's feedback. Those relevant to the Education sub-group are:

- Mammal Atlas – Perth Museum/TBP;
- 'Bee Wild' Schools and Communities Project – TBP;
- Biodiversity Calendar – TBP;
- Environmental Education Awards – TBP;
- Sheltered Housing & Hospitals Biodiversity Project – Local Authorities, TBP, NHS;
- Tayside Wildlife Festival – TBP;
- Countryside on Wheels Educational Bus – RHET;
- Practitioner Training – TBP;
- Local Patch Project (with the Urban sub-group);
- Salmon in the Classroom (a watching brief with the Water and Wetland sub-group);
- Wildlife Trees Project (with the Woodland sub-group);
- Veteran Trees Survey and Project (with the Woodland sub-group)

The proforma were discussed and updated with the following comments:

Mammal Atlas – MS pointed out that the proposed project would be "web pages only". Everyone agreed that there would be a possibility of discussing widening the project to Tayside at a later date.

ACTION: CL – update proforma

Bee Wild Schools and Communities Project – Erika Luukas of Scottish Origins has provisionally agreed to act as Lead Partner for the proposed Kinross-shire pilot; she could not attend the meeting. This project will now incorporate the proposed Schools Calendar (and the Biodiversity Awards Scheme – see below).

ACTION: CL – update proforma

Community and Educational Biodiversity Awards - it was agreed to incorporate these Awards into the “Bee Wild” Project.

ACTION: CL – update proforma

Sheltered Housing and Hospitals Biodiversity Project – it was agreed to expand the number of “hospitals” in the proforma targets. This would bring in Dundee Ranger Service who already run Red Squirrel projects at Liff and Nine Wells Hospitals.

ACTION: CL – update proforma

Tayside Wildlife Festival – MS suggested that in view of the Scottish Biodiversity Forum proposing a national Festival it might be useful to add a ‘feasibility’ section to the Tayside Festival. This would keep the project “on the table” but allow a small sub-group (or e-group as necessary) to discuss links to a national festival and a potential local Festival ‘Partnership’ for either contributing to a national festival or running our own.

ACTION: CL - update proforma

Countryside on Wheels – RHET do not have the staff or funding resources to take this project forward for the time being, so it was suggested we change the project timescale to ‘2009 onwards’ and revisit the possibilities at a later date. CL confirmed this would fit in with the Perth & Kinross Wood Bus Project which will be looking for Phase II funding at about the same time. There may be a possibility of undertaking a Tayside-wide (or Central Scotland) overview of similar projects in 2008.

ACTION: CL – update proforma

Practitioner Training – this proforma has been passed to the Education sub-group from the Urban sub-group. CL explained the background to the proforma and asked for the sub-group’s comments on the proposed “Planning for Wildlife” seminar (spring 2007). MS wondered if it would be possible to add a tutorial on the subject of “Record Centres” and to ask FERN (Fife Records Centre) to lead it as they have so much experience on the subject. LK also suggested that a 2-day event might be off-putting to many of the audience, especially as overnight accommodation would have to be considered for some delegates. MS suggested the seminar was split into two, holding one day during the 2006-07 financial year (i.e. March 2007), the other in 2007-08 (possibly autumn 2007).

ACTION: CL – update proforma

Joint Projects with other sub-groups:

Local Patch Survey (Urban sub-group): it has been agreed to revamp the survey by using innovative techniques similar to those used by BFEP’s Zoom project which will encourage a wide range of people to observe wildlife in Tayside. From 2007 the list of key species would be used to involve people, concentrating on bats, sparrows and bumble bees. It would also look into opportunities for those who wish to record other species via website etc.

ACTION: Urban sub-group to update proforma

Salmon in the Classroom (Water and Wetland sub-group) – this would be a watching brief of the Tayside part of a wider project.

ACTION: Water & Wetland sub-group to update proforma

Tayside Wildlife Tree Project (Woodland sub-group) - DF suggested that orchard trees be included in the remit, especially with a view to certain areas in Tayside that have specific heritage varieties (Carse of Gowrie, Arbroath, etc.).

ACTION: CL to liaise with Woodland sub-group to update proforma

Veteran Trees Survey and Project (Woodland sub-group) – there is still an educational remit to this survey and project (linking to Highland Perthshire Eco Schools). The Perth & Kinross Countryside Trust would be the Lead Partner. They are currently discussing potential linkages with the Woodland Trust’s Veteran Tree Project.

ACTION: Woodland sub-group to update proforma

CL will forward the updated proforma to the TBP Chairman on 1st November for further discussion at the next Steering Group meeting on 1st December. If anyone has comments on the updated versions,

please contact CL.

4. **AOCB**

CL reported that the 1st Tranche Review will be completed as soon as the national UKBAP Review is published and its findings integrated into the LBAP. The 2nd Tranche consultative draft HAPs and SAPs are now on the website, with a deadline for receiving comments by 19th November – everyone is encouraged to contribute comments. Many of the Action Plans still need “SMARTening” up and case studies added.

ACTION: ALL

5. **Date of Next Meeting**

No date was arranged. CL thanked the Dundee Ranger Service for hosting the meeting.

Education Sub-Group Remit

Aim

To support the implementation of practical biodiversity actions to the wider local community through education – by means of both formal education and informal lifelong learning

