

Tayside Biodiversity Partnership



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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



BIODIVERSITY EDUCATION SUB-GROUP

2nd October 2007

Floor 13, Tayside House, Dundee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Present:	Catherine Lloyd (CL) (Chair)	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership
	Martyn Jamieson (MJ)	Kindrogan Field Studies Centre
	Morag Cooney (MC)	Dundee City Council Education Department
	Sandra Penman (SP)	Scottish Natural Heritage
	Ann Lolley (AL)	Broughty Ferry Environment Project
	George Potts (GP)	Dundee City Council Ranger Service
	Daniele Muir (DM)	Perth & Kinross Ranger Service
	Mark Simmons (MS)	Perth & Kinross Museum Service
	Gill Lawrie (GL)	RHET Angus Countryside Initiative
	Rachael Higgins (RH) (Minute Taker)	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership
Apologies:	Lesley Wood	Angus Ranger Service
	David Lampard	Dundee City Council McManus Collections
	Julie Bett	Dundee City Council McManus Collections
	Alistair Seaman	Grounds for Learning
	Fiona Meikle	Visit Scotland (Perthshire)

Also circulated to: Mike Flinn, Forest Education Initiative; Erika Luukas, Scottish Origins; 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, Trellis; Linda Winskill, Loch Lomond & Trossachs Ranger Service; Sharon Neilson, SCRI; Serge Merone, Perth & Kinross Schools in Action (Eco-schools); John Muir Award; Murton Trust.

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

Catherine Lloyd (CL) confirmed this was not a full Education sub-group meeting, but one that concentrated on agreeing the way forward for the Tayside contribution to Scottish Biodiversity Week 2008 and the proposed Tayside Biodiversity Festival 2009.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting (16th July 2007) and Matters Arising

Morag Cooney (MC) asked if the updated version of the minutes of the last meeting had been circulated. CL confirmed that they had (on 6 September), replacing the original draft minutes circulated on 27 July).

There were no other matters arising, other than for CL to outline current events: the two Bats and Trees

workshops held in Perth and Dundee were successful (attracting c50 people in total). The Carse of Gowrie Orchards Seminar to be held 16th October has attracted more than 80 bookings from all over Scotland.

3. Tayside's Contribution to Scottish Biodiversity Week 2008 - Sandra Penman

Sandra Penman (SP) reported that the date of the Scottish Biodiversity Week (SBW): 19th to 25th May 2008 is the same as the Perth Festival of Arts. There are still monies in the SNH Promotions Budget for Tayside (up to £1,000 per item/project) but decisions have to be made as quickly as possible. SP proposed 24th May to be the date for the proposed Street Theatre: is there anyone who wants to join this? SP met with the Youth Theatre Groups' co-ordinator and suggested it could be linked with species as a theme; they will meet again on 11th October.

ACTION: SP to report back after meeting

How about something theatrical on swallows / bees / pearl mussels? SP definitely has £1,000-£1,500 funding for the theatre. It could be set in Dunkeld forest over a one or two day event. It would link up with Perth Festival nicely. £1,000 is available for art director, producer, youth theatre donation, costumes if necessary. Ann Lolley (AL) may have useful costumes.

A comment was made regarding theatre on a larger scale - it could tour Eco Schools, Primary Schools, Sheltered Housing or Care Homes (this might encourage stories of youth). On a slightly more expensive note, something could be screened at Perth Concert Hall - a short film could be produced with sound, electronics etc for a sum of £10,000. Could save this idea for the Tayside Biodiversity Festival in 2009. Martyn Jamieson (MJ) said this would be a good idea to raise awareness and get the message across - something big scale would also be impressive.

AL said subtlety works well too: we could actually work with the theatre groups to come up with and play with ideas for a theme. She also noted artwork street theatre in USA - which was very subtle and engaging. We could be slightly different with the concept - opening of a Concert Hall event with a guided tour?

Mark Simmons (MS) asked about funding the theatre work. SP noted that Perth Festival of the Arts may have funding. MS to give contacts (Kirsty Duncan is Arts Development Officer at PKC).

ACTION: MS to liaise with SP re. contacts

Daniele Muir (DM) said we could have a workshop on bumble bees to link with other ideas (a continuation of one event to the next). CL agreed this would link with other Partnership projects: Orchards, Bees, and Green Graveyard - all relevant ideas for Biodiversity Week. CL asked if we could expand the idea outwith Perth or Perthshire? If not for 2008, then certainly to be Tayside-wide for the Festival.

CL said we should use the official "footprints" logo more. A long time ago she suggested Partnership members could use the footprints in connection with events as a way to publicise biodiversity.

SP said that Perth & Kinross Council's Meadow Roundabout at Broxden was a great success: could PKC not sponsor the TBP logo for next year? CL said this would link in with the proposed Conservation Grass Verge Project currently being discussed between the three Councils. All three local authority logos and the TBP logo would be used on the verge or biodiversity bank markers.

As regards SBW, CL pointed out that, in 2008, the Scottish Biodiversity Forum will run the Week from Monday 19th to Sunday 25th - all previous SBWs have included the weekend either side. In 2008 we will therefore lose a weekend at the beginning. International Biodiversity Day is 22nd May. GP was disappointed only one weekend is to be available. SP said she would ask why SBW can only involve one weekend.

ACTION: SP to check details with the Biodiversity Implementation Team

CL - we could use the 'missing' weekend to organise and promote. The Programme for 2008 will be put on the website as early as possible; there will also be a link with the Scottish Biodiversity Forum website. The Biodiversity Implementation Team is currently discussing national promotion ideas for 2008; CL has requested the publicity banners and fliers are not dated so that they can be reused in the future.

ACTION: SP to follow this up with the Biodiversity Implementation Team

GP said that Dundee Ranger events have not been clarified for 2008 - decisions to be made November 2007. The Balgay Event this year was not very successful - it was good for the first few years, but in recent years there has been less interest. The event could be re-focused and incorporated into Biodiversity Week.

SP said she would like a one day event within the Week at Loch Leven.

GP suggested there could be a connection made with boat trips. However it was essential to choose the right tide and date for this to be successful.

MJ suggested it would be useful to link International Biodiversity Day with the various Twin Cities - i.e. we could link Hen Harrier issues here with Hen Harriers elsewhere; talks at schools and other institutions abroad. The local papers are likely to pick up on this. CL confirmed that the Orkney LBAP Officer had set up an excellent International School Biodiversity Project along the same lines. CL was already in discussion with the Scottish Crop Research Institute's Living Field Centre regarding international links for International Biodiversity Day.

CL outlined the list that the Coast & Estuaries Sub-group agreed at its meeting earlier in the month:

- A guided Kingoodie Walk (Perth & Kinross Ranger Service);
- Dundee Naturalists Open Day walk at Barry Buddon - invite the public;
- Montrose Tern work - guided walk; talks;
- Scottish Wildlife Trust - an International Biodiversity Day walk or talk;
- Tayside Estuary Forum to host a Beachcomb;
- Dundee Ranger Service Boat Trip (public and commercial);
- McManus Wildlife Collection - Collection Tours / ID walks to link in with Local Records, organisations;
- Golf Training Days (Scottish Golf Environment Group);
- Bio Blitz (golf courses and other areas).

CL asked for ideas from the Education sub-group so that a list can be compiled as soon as possible. The brainstorm at the meeting produced the following:

- Launch the Wildlife Trees Project (CL - Woodland sub-group);
- Different ID walks, including Swifts, Sand Martins, Red Squirrels, etc;
- RHET ACI - GL is planning another Estate Day with Angus Council (the last one was very successful: 130-150 Primary 5 and 6 children). The Pond Dipping was great at Kinordie Estate (held on 9th May this year). There was also a Forestry session in Camperdown Park with the help of a pony! GL will need to co-ordinate dates to see if it would be possible to coincide with SBW.
- Angus FWAG - ACI may be able to work jointly.
- MJ asked about public holidays within the Week - are the schools on holiday at any point?
- MJ also suggested running specialist-type events not only for children, but also for adults or teachers.
- MS - in 2008 the Museum and Art Gallery learning staff will be too busy in May to help properly. MS offered 2 or 3 lunchtime lectures in Art and Biodiversity (generally older folk attend these). There could be a link in with Biodiversity and he could hold a lecture on International Biodiversity Day.
- MS to launch the Mammal Atlas.
- DM said that the feeling within Perth & Kinross Ranger Service was to do the usual thing - a few rangers will do their own events. They do not have time to engage in the SBW in 2008 or the Festival in 2009.

ACTION: All sub-group members to look into the possibility of running an event between 19th and 25th May and let CL know by 9th November so that ideas can be logged

4. Plans for Tayside Biodiversity Festival 2009 - Catherine Lloyd

CL reiterated the Steering Group's idea of a Tayside Biodiversity Festival Month where, if we chose to hold it in May, Scottish Biodiversity Week would be incorporated within the month. MJ thought this a good idea but cautioned that May tends to be a busy month - Perth Archaeological Month and Perth Arts Festival are both in May. MS said that the Perthshire Archaeological Month in May is now high profile - the key is having someone to run the Biodiversity Month from day one. CL said that September is usually a difficult month; April is too early - May seems constant. She held a Fife Biodiversity Month in April (with over 30 events) in the late 1990s, but the weather was too poor for it to be a resounding success. MS suggested we talk with Perth Arts Festival to get ideas on how they organise and administrate (Visit Scotland funding?); become a strong brand; Open Doors idea; Heritage Trust / Forestry Commission / Countryside Trust - main funders.

ACTION: SP/MS/CL to research further

2009 will be the 'Year of the Homecoming' - the Museum would like to link this with the theme of 'Return of the Native - Birds /Mammals Lost and Returning'.

MS said it would be a good time for a Bumble Bee Lecture. AL said the ZOOM initiatives could be linked in (if it is held a second year) - a potential theme. SP may have Bee costumes to lend!

MJ pointed out that street events are good for a small amount of people. What about bigger events for a bigger audience?

MJ said that the lead-in to the Month is just as important for launching the Festival. Could we have a radio slot or some other local media with regular slots to promote? CL would appreciate feedback from everyone as to their favourite media contact. She has a good network but wants to share out the list of contacts. We need to publicise at least one (preferably two) months ahead for the Biodiversity Festival.

ACTION: ALL

MS suggested running adverts every week for a few months. He is producing a newspaper article - happy to circulate.

ACTION: MS

CL confirmed that VisitScotland is willing to help publicise the event. MS said we need to start small. A booklet of events is extremely important. One month of events will need quite a bit of preparation time. AL agreed that an events booklet and plenty of information on the website is vital: we need cumulative solid impact for it to work. MS said that proper funding for it is also critical. GP said that banners and ads in papers are very useful, as well as the booklet - all will need funding.

CL said that the displays board would need to be "on tour" for the entire event. MS reminded everyone that he still has a panel of images and phrases about animals that can be easily reproduced and is very mobile for putting up anywhere.

CL also mentioned that in 2009 we could work on the success of the street theatre from 2008, but plan ahead for sufficient funding to tour it all over Tayside. It would be good publicity if the street theatre turned up in out-of-the-way places (pre-advertised beforehand with local schools, tourism businesses, etc.) - for instance, Glen Clova or Kinloch Rannoch, plus the smaller Tayside towns such as Aberfeldy, Blair Atholl, Milnathort, Comrie, Carnoustie, etc.

SP suggested the Scotsman could publish a list of the 'Top Ten Things to See in Tayside' (or Scotland) at the start of the Festival. MS added that we could ask them to do a specific feature on the Festival.

GP said that a Tayside event like this needs to be officially launched. CL agreed and said that some of the Partnership's key projects could be used to promote the success (or highlight the problems) of species in decline, i.e. the Tayside Red Squirrel Project; the Barn Owl Survey; the Swift/Sand Martin Surveys; success of the SITA TBAF.

MS confirmed that for 2009 Perth Museum learning staff would like to be engaged, but they will need dates as soon as possible as they work 18 months ahead for such planning.

AL pointed out that we need a format whereby we can slot ideas into a website in an easy way; this would make things easier on CL and RH. This would enable contributions/events to be added easily and the momentum would come itself.

ACTION: CL to liaise with website designer

It was agreed that we need to know our priorities for the Festival: dates, core events and funding. The event needs to be planned throughout the first half of 2008 in tandem with the plans for SBW in May 2008. This time next autumn we need to finalise things for the Festival.

Although the next Sub-Group meeting will be a general one, plenty of time must be given to the plans for both SBW in 2008 and plans for the Festival in 2009.

5 Bee Wild and ZOOM Projects - Ann Lolley

AL explained that 'Bee Wild' is the practical part of the ZOOM initiative. The Urban Sub-group wants to highlight bumble bees - let's link in with ZOOM, which encourages surveys, feedback and awareness. Could be a joint project with the Urban and Education sub-groups. AL getting the packs together, to be finalised by the end of year. RH can help with this. This is likely to be a very successful project with 1,000 gift bags available Tayside-wide. SNH is funding the project and there will be a newspaper campaign from the start: very proactive. It has been suggested that ZOOM is officially launched during Scottish Biodiversity Week next May.

CL asked if anyone had ideas for funding the Bee Wild Project? She had already approached Grounds for Learning. The project will naturally link into other projects; at the moment it tucks in behind ZOOM.

ACTION: Funding ideas to CL ASAP

6. Other Biodiversity Awareness-Raising (publicity, publications, website, events)

The website is being regularly updated.

The Urban sub-group's "Community Gardens, Orchards and Allotments" booklet is being finalised with local case studies where appropriate. The booklet is the key outcome to the Habitat Action Plan of the same name.

AL circulated the Sand Martin booklet and mentioned that it is being used in English lessons at schools. She still wants to officially launch the booklet, possibly in November. GP said that the Britain in Bloom Judges mentioned the work being carried out for Sand Martins and Squirrels last week.

MS: Geodiversity leaflet (Corsiehill, Kinnoull Hill, Perth) - a local volunteer did a lot of work on it. MS circulated copies. He acknowledged PKC's assistance throughout, especially the Ranger Service taking on the printing. The leaflet will be on the geodiversity section of www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk soon. Paper copies are available from MS on request. A leaflet was also being produced on the Coastal Walk on Arbroath Cliffs with funding of £4,000 from Angus Council this year.

MJ asked for links and contacts for Tayside Geodiversity.

ACTION: MS/MJ

MJ mentioned the Real World Learning Campaign - very successful in England and Wales. It is promoting out-of-classroom learning. He also highlighted the Forest Education Initiative - Forest Schools have really taken off. There was a successful workshop hosted by Kindrogan with 80 people involved.

ACTION: MJ to forward GL links to Real World Learning Campaign website

GL said farm visits could be included; MJ - Museums / Galleries / Places of Worship. AL said she had a video about Special Needs.

ACTION: AL to post a copy of the video to MJ

7. Any Other Business

Calendar - the biodiversity calendar idea was discussed. CL confirmed that the original idea for a school calendar (to run from August to July) would take time to research and prepare; it was still on the "to do" list, but we could plan a fun 1-page poster calendar instead which would be much quicker to prepare. She had just been sent a bat calendar Leeds City Council had prepared. We could adapt the idea to an overall biodiversity theme, focussing on the Partnership's projects. SP said we could get funding for the calendar from the SNH Promotions Budget. AL has a good artist contact for calendar.

ACTION - CL to send AL bat calendar and ideas for biodiversity calendar layout

Gill Lawrie asked if the calendar should follow the school year as per our original plans? CL said that the calendar could have wider use than just the Tayside schools so it might be best, in this instance, to run the calendar from January to December. SP said the Publications Department at SNH could supply the base layouts for calendars if required.

Geodiversity Meeting - the next meeting will be held on 23rd January 2008. Further details available from MS. New members very welcome.

8. Date and Format of Next Meeting

A full Education Sub Group Meeting has been provisionally confirmed for 28th January 2008, 10:30am - Tayside House. A sandwich lunch will be arranged. An Agenda will be circulated nearer the time.

ACTION: RH (to book meeting room and arrange catering for c12 people)

CL thanked RH for taking the minutes of the meeting.