

schools and one for secondary schools. For more information about the competition see www.unesco.org.uk/iyb or contact Leo Vincent at lvincent@unesco.org.uk. Don't forget the deadline: 28th May 2010!

PLEASE SEND YOUR SUBMISSIONS TO:
IYB Competition
The UK National Commission for UNESCO
Suite 98, 3 Whitehall Court
London, SW1A 2EL

GET INVOLVED!

Surveys are important in finding out how well a species is doing - whether that means if they have higher or lower survival rates from one year to the other, if they change their geographical distribution, or simply to tell us whether we need to do more to conserve a specific species from becoming vulnerable to extinction. Take part in any of the following throughout the year:

- ? Have you seen any Barn Owls in Tayside alive or dead? Unfortunately you are more likely to have seen a roadkill, but this information is important too.
- ? Breeding bird surveys for the British Trust for Ornithology the family can join in the Garden BirdWatch.
- Can you look to the skies for just one hour after 9pm in July and count how many swifts you see? Let us know your findings on the online survey form at http://www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk/Get_Involved_Project_Swifts_OnlineSurvey.asp
- ? Have you seen any natural sand martin nests? There are several man-made ones to see across Tayside, including Montrose Basin, Broughty Ferry, Forfar Loch.
- ? Red Squirrel surveys - there's a great information pack to download at <http://www.dundeered squirrels.co.uk>
- ? Bumblebee surveys find out more at http://www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk/Get_Involved_Project_Bumblebee.html

Every Action Counts!

Free wildlife bookmarks available let us know what you are doing at school for biodiversity (maximum 100 words) and we will send your class a bookmark each tayside.biodiversity@ukf.net. [deadline: 25th September]

First sightings - let us know where you see your first swallow, house martin, swift or sand martin. Fill in the online form at www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk or pick up a survey postcard and return it Freepost.



Tayside Schools Biodiversity Newsletter

Issue 1 -Summer 2010

APPLE DAY

Apple Day is on 21st October. Does your school have its own fruit trees? Will you be celebrating Apple Day this year? We're creating an apple map - can you let us know if you have a new orchard, or a fruit tree in a tub, an "apple arch" or a row of pear trees in the school grounds? We'll make sure your school is included on the map! Let us know via tayside.biodiversity@ukf.net.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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 E-mail: Tayside.biodiversity@ukf.net;
 Website: www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk.

WHAT IS BIODIVERSITY?

Biodiversity is simply "all living things". We are surrounded by a variety of living things from all shapes and sizes from the smallest ant to the largest tree, and even you and me! Biodiversity is EVERYWHERE: it is not only found in our gardens but all over our towns and cities, out to sea, in the air and, of course, in the countryside!

WHY IS BIODIVERSITY IMPORTANT?

Biodiversity is important to our health as many species of animals and plants provide key medicines. It is vital to our economy by supplying the raw materials for our clothing, food, drink, fuel, buildings and roads. Wildlife tourism is one of Scotland's major income-earners.

Thanks to the insects pollinating our crops and the blossom of our many fruit trees, there are numerous environment-based jobs in farming, fishing and services providing water, energy and building materials. Biodiversity also encourages us to go outdoors to exercise in beautiful surroundings, be that in the local park, down by the beach or up in the hills.

Question: Why is this year so special?
Answer: It is the International Year of Biodiversity (designated by the United Nations).

Go to the home page of www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk and click on the official IYB video link to enjoy an 8 minute update.



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY

We are all linked to nature and rely on it to live but our rich biodiversity is being lost at an increasingly fast rate because of our environmentally damaging activities. We are looking at 130 species lost every single day - worldwide 12% of birds are threatened with extinction, 21% of mammals, 28% of reptiles, 37% of freshwater fish, 70% of plants.

Habitat loss is the single biggest pressure on biodiversity across the world - conversion of forest to palm oil production leads to the loss of 3/4 bird and butterfly species!

If all this seems a long way away - what can we do about it, and why should we? Something as simple as our choice of what we eat (and that includes sweets and chocolates which include palm oil) can make the difference: suddenly the world doesn't seem so huge after all.



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This year we have the opportunity to join the rest of the world in trying to understand the key role biodiversity plays in keeping us alive and what we can do to help.

BIODIVERSITY IS LIFE - BIODIVERSITY IS OUR LIFE

There is lots of information available on the international website: <http://www.cbd.int/2010/welcome/> and on the UK website: www.biodiversityislife.net.

3 things you can do for Biodiversity....

- Create a wildlife corner in your school grounds or garden: it looks good, adds interest, benefits butterflies and moths and helps control garden pests.
- Plant up a butterfly-friendly window box for use at home, work or school. Try planting herbs or tomatoes into a hanging basket.
- Take all rubbish home from the beach - it can endanger wildlife if left behind.

Suggest your Eco-Committee gets a copy of the "Making Way for Nature Biodiversity in Community Gardens, Orchards and Allotments" booklet available from tayside.biodiversity@ukf.net; you can download a copy from <http://www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk/News/PDFs/BiodiversityCommunityGardens.pdf>.

TAYSIDE BIODIVERSITY FESTIVAL

Question: When is it?
Answer: Throughout the whole month of May!



What's On?

We have an amazing 140+ events across Angus, Dundee, Perth and Kinross, so there is something for everyone! Take a quick glance here at some of the fantastic family fun events being held throughout May from big discovery day events, outdoor performances, walks and talks: lots of information is available in the Festival programme (pick one up at your local library or check online at www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk). Become involved

and learn more about our special wildlife and plants and how you can help take care of the biodiversity we have left.

Please take part in as many events as possible and tell your friends and family: make this a world wide biodiversity celebration!

Family Fun in Angus

Join the Angus Rangers in some fantastic events in May. As part of our BioBlitz you can become a ranger for the day and explore the different habitats within your own school grounds and record the different plants and animals you can see! Get your school involved by calling 01241 860360 or Email: crombiepark@angus.gov.uk to take part.

Grab the chance to join the Junior Rangers Nature Club (Age 5-14yrs) and take part in a variety of biodiversity events from looking at how biodiversity can change through time, searching for wildlife as part of a Beastie Bus tour of the Angus Glens, join the Forfar 'Air Show', a walk featuring the acrobatics of swifts and bats. For more details call 01307 461118 or Email: forfarloch@angus.gov.uk

If you like picnics then join the Angus Rangers in discovering the variety of wildlife found at Crombie Park. Or learn why those buzzeeee bees are so important to biodiversity. Contact 01241 860360 or Email: crombiepark@angus.gov.uk. Come and learn how to make your very own bee nest box in our special workshop with the NE Scotland Bee Keepers Association. Call 01382 370202 or Email Monikiepark@angus.gov.uk for more information.

See <http://www.angus.gov.uk/leisure/rangerservice.htm> For more Angus events!

At the end of May look out for the Nature on Track events taking place on trains between Perth and Montrose - further details will be publicised in the local press. There is a leaflet telling you about the biodiversity you may see from the train - download it from www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk or collect copies from local stations.

COMING SOON - An Activity Pack for young travellers

For your copy, let us know where you travel from and to (and how often) send these details to tayside.biodiversity@ukf.net.

What can we do in Perthshire?

If you like wildlife, geology and history, why not visit the National Trust for Scotland Centre and have a go at the Soldiers' Leap Activity Trail. Contact LMedine@nts.org.uk for more details!

There will be an entire day of fun-filled biodiversity activities at the North Inch this May as part of Perth 800 celebrations. There will be wildlife surveys, a special outdoor production of the Perth Youth Theatre Collective's 'The Tree', displays, nature trails and much more! Just contact Niall Lobleby on 01738 475393 for more information. Perth Museum will have a Bees, Butterflies and Birds Day at the end of the month.

Learn how to make home made bread and butter the way they used to in the Iron Age, or join in a Nettle Festival! Contact the Scottish Crannog Centre on 01887 830583/info@crannog.co.uk for dates and times.

Join in the River Festival at Historic Scotland's Stanley Mills where there will be lots of outdoor activities, music, stories and much more! Bring all the family and have a fantastic day out. Just contact Kaye Finlay on kaye.finlay@scotland.gsi.gov.uk for more details.

And don't forget to join in the Otterly Mad Week celebrations at Kindrogan Field Centre, near Enochdhu - find out about otters, red squirrels and all the other wildlife in this special area - Tel. 01250 870150

Ask for your free packet of seeds!

Just E-mail: biodiversity.events@dundeecity.gov.uk before 25th June.

More Fun at Kinross

There will be pond dipping sessions at Vane Farm Nature Reserve to discover those wee lurking monsters of the deep. If you like a bit of bingo, why not join us in the RSPB's very own biodiversity bingo! With a biodiversity card, discover the diverse range of plants, animals and birds as you set across the reserve. Even turn your garden into a safe place for wildlife by creating your very own salad bowl full of fantastic goodies (all materials provided). Contact 01577 862355; Jane.Cleaver@rspb.org.uk for further details.

Last but not least, join in the Discovery Day at Loch Leven National Nature Reserve (Kirk Park) where

there will be fun activities for all the family. Many environmental organizations will be there to answer your questions, David Boag the international wildlife photographer will be running a mini photographic workshop - bring your own camera.

Biodiversity in Dundee

Dundee has a fantastic range of events for all the family to enjoy from family bat walks around Dundee University campus to an Oscar-winning film screening of 'The Cove' at Dundee DCA.

There are after-school workshops at the Botanic Gardens where you will get the chance to learn all about the pros and cons of tropical plants, which flowers are friendly to bees and even help in planting some bluebells with the gardeners. If that's not enough, there is a family workshop for the whole family to discover the variety of different habitats and living things in the garden. Contact C.Reaney@dundeecity.ac.uk for details.

Celebrate International Biodiversity Day at Dundee's Science Centre for a BBC Breathing Places Wild Day Out event for all the family.

Lastly, a date for your diary: 30th May - don't miss the Dundee Wild Day Out BioBlitz at Trottick Ponds for a brilliant day of conservation activities for all ages such as surveys, snail and bumblebee hunts, quizzes, and poetry. Contact Kathy on kathy.longmuir@dundeecity.gov.uk for more details.

To check dates, times, venues and costs for all events taking place across May see www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk or pick up a programme at your local library.

SCHOOL COMPETITION DEADLINE 28th May

To celebrate the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB) UNESCO Associated Schools network in the UK has launched a competition to find the school that best communicates the messages of the IYB:

- celebrating the importance of biodiversity
- raising awareness of the need to protect biodiversity
- encouraging people to take action to help protect the irreplaceable natural wealth around us

Your task is to devise a creative and effective campaign that can spread the IYB messages to your local community. You can submit a poster, collage, brochure, video or podcast. There will be two categories for the competition, one for primary