

Walk with reptiles and more on this journey of discovery

Fiona MacLean

THE Tayside Biodiversity Festival 2010 will run from 1 to 31 May, with more than 100 events planned throughout the month.

Tayside Biodiversity illustrates the variety of wildlife to be seen in all its shapes and sizes, from smallest insect and fungus to largest mammal and tree.

Tayside has a rich biodiversity resource that is vital to its economy and, in Perthshire, the launch of the Tulloch Lade Project will take place on 1 May, involving a morning Green Fair at the local school followed by a walk by the Lade in the afternoon. There will also be a Highland Perthshire Bluebell Competition to find the best places to see this iconic species.

David Boag, the renowned

international wildlife photographer, will be at Pitlochry Festival Theatre on 18 May (www.pitlochryfestivaltheatre.com) and on 23 May the Scottish Crannog Centre will be making Iron Age herby bread (www.crannog.co.uk). There will be guided walks taking in heritage trees, bluebells and swifts and workshops will include wildlife photography, pollination and bumblebee identification.

The Kinross Loch Leven Discovery Day on 23 May will include a showing of the Perth Youth Theatre's outdoor play, *The Tree*, which can also be seen at different times in May at Crieff, Coupar Angus and Perth.

In Angus, everyone will have the chance to join in the biggest spring bird survey or find out about bird ringing.

There will be Backyard Biodiversity Days for schools and a reptile walk in the glens. Or explore the coast with a guided walk on the Seaton Cliffs.

The Nature on Track project will be launched between Perth and Montrose to encourage everyone to enjoy train journeys through Tayside and witness the rich wildlife surrounding them.

Dundee events include an After School Workshop and an After Work Wander.

The Balgay Biodiversity Bonanza takes place on the 23 May. During the same weekend three biodiversity films will be screened at the Dundee Contemporary Art centre, while the Dundee BioBlitz on 30 May promises to be a grand finale to the festival itself.

■ See the website at www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk for more



Blue heaven: A competition will help find the best places to see this iconic plant. Photograph: Dan Phillips