

# Outdoor & Woodland Learning SCOTLAND



## Outdoor & Woodland Learning Scotland Bulletin February 2017

Welcome to the OWL Scotland bulletin which is adapted from the Outdoor Learning Wales bulletin

– Thank you to OLW for letting us share their bulletin! You can find more information on Outdoor Learning Wales [here](#).

If you have items for inclusion in the bulletin please send them to [Bonnie.Maggio@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Bonnie.Maggio@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)

### **OWL Scotland Update:**

#### **Courses and Events:**

#### **Date for your Diaries:**

The OWL Scotland Networking Event will be held at Kindrogan Field Studies Center near Pitlochry on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February until Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2017.

There are a few places left – booking will close on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> February.....

The booking form can be found [here](#).

#### **Local OWL Events and News:**

#### **Outdoor & Woodland Learning North East Group Events 16-17**

March 18<sup>th</sup> - Aberdeenshire Outdoor Learning Strategy Group CPD Event at Alford – supported by 3 OWL members

March – Science Week Family Event – Castle Fraser in partnership with NTS – supported by 3 OWL members

## South Highland OWL Group Events

### **Booking:**

Places on all of these sessions are limited so please book by emailing our group administrator Juliet Robinson: [julietp Robinson@gmail.com](mailto:julietp Robinson@gmail.com). Let her know which session or sessions you'd like to come to, and if you'd be willing to offer someone a lift, or would like a lift, and from where! All events are from **10am - 1pm** and are **free** for teachers and outdoor learning practitioners.

### **Saturday 25 Feb 2017 Outdoors with no props**

A collection of quick outdoor activities that can be played anytime in any outdoor space. There will also be chance to share your no props activities too (if you want to). By the end you will have built up a list of activities that are ready for immediate use with your class. Carrbridge Primary School. Delivered by Sarah Walker of RSPB

### **Saturday 25 March 2017 The Es and Os of shelter building....**

from mini to maxi scale. We promise to touch on all curriculum areas in the space of two hours.

Inverness (exact site tbc) Roni Smith, Suzann Barr (AFT) and Shona Amos (FCS)

### **Saturday 6 May 2017 The South Highland OWL BIG NETWORKING EVENT**

Details to be worked out but save the date!

### **Saturday 27 May 2017 Storytelling & Literacy outdoors**

Ditch reading directly from a book and learn techniques to keep your audience engrossed! A practical and interactive event using nature to ignite your imagination. The (brilliant) Treehouse at Lochcarron. Delivered by Lynda Beveridge

## NEWSFLASH!

### Time to apply for Scottish Finest Woods Awards!

## **Schools Award**

Scotland's  
Finest Woods  
Awards



Outdoor &  
Woodland  
Learning  
SCOTLAND



**Scotland's Finest Woods (SFW)** and the **Outdoor & Woodland Learning Scotland (OWLS)** once again team up to run an annual Schools Award in Scotland for 2017. The Award is to encourage and reward schools that increase young people's understanding and appreciation of the environmental, social and economic potential of trees, woodlands and forests and of the link between trees and everyday wood-based products.

*Teachers and helpers, as well as pupils, can take part and fun can be had by all!*

**Details for the 2017 Awards Programme are now available so do read on for our website news with all the 2017 Schools Award details below!**

**Who can enter?** Entry is open to nursery, primary, secondary and special schools anywhere in Scotland.

**What sort of project is eligible?** Entries can be practical or desk projects involving forestry, woodlands or trees. Here are some examples of projects that can be entered: *A programme of learning in a woodland or forest environment or in a forest industry setting.*  
*A classroom-based study of woods and forests or the forest industry.*  
*Practical tree planting or woodland improvement projects in school grounds or in the local community.*



The entry can be for an ongoing forestry or tree related project, or one that was already completed. For more ideas explore the OWLS website: [www.owlscotland.org](http://www.owlscotland.org)

## Prizes

There is a **cash prize of £500 for the winning school** and the **runners-up prize is £250** with both receiving a [Mag Post](#) and a special Tree Pack containing trees for planting or tree growing kits. Each prizewinning school also receives a **certificate** and a **special commemorative wooden display plaque** recording their achievement. In addition, the beautiful Crown Estates' **Schools 'squirrel' trophy** will be awarded at the discretion of the judges with custody by the winning school for one year.

## How to enter

Simply complete a short [entry form](#) and return it by email.

## Closing date for entries

**The deadline is 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 and any entries received after this date will not be considered**

## New Resources:



**Scotland's Native Woodlands Learning Resource** – The long awaited resource for senior phase environmental science. This resource has been written to enable teachers and pupils to access and interpret the Native Woodlands of Scotland Survey. Free copies are available by emailing APS with your contact details, delivery address and number required: [forestry@apsgroup.com](mailto:forestry@apsgroup.com)

### **Working Forests' Campaign**

Forestry Commission Scotland has released a new forest safety interactive story aimed at children. It supports the 'working forests' campaign.

<http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/news-releases/1614-interactive-adventure-teaches-forest-safety>

### **CALEDON**

is a new completely free educational game about tree health and the ways in which resilience to pests and diseases can be increased. Low diversity in populations makes them vulnerable to attack and higher diversity, both of species and genes, creates

resilience. In a strategy simulation game players aim to keep their forest thriving whilst meeting specific objectives.

Level 3 and 4 Experiences and Outcomes delivered in Science, Technologies, Social Studies and Number and Maths. [Play and download for free.](#)

### **The World Beneath Our Feet – Soils and the Curriculum**

A focus group of soils experts was brought together in 2015 to create a 'suite' of stimulus resources to highlight the possibilities for learning that soils can offer. A key output of this approach is to ensure a legacy of learning beyond the 2015 International Year of Soils. We hope that this suite of resources will inspire you to explore the wonderful and diverse world to be found right under our feet.

The resource is now available both [online](#) and as a hard copy. Please refer to the Resources Summary Flyer below for information on how to obtain printed copies

### **New Resources from Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park**

- [Rural Land Use in the Park: Conflict & Resolution. National 4/5 and Higher Geography](#)
- [Rural Land Use – Case Studies on Conflict & Resolution](#)

These resources complement those produced by the Cairngorms NP which are also available on the Outdoor Learning Directory and can be found by searching the Directory under 'geography' and a few of these useful partner resources should pop up.

We have produced a [Resources Summary flyer](#) for download which sets out all of our resources, ages and stages and how to get copies.

### **Education Scotland Outdoor Learning online resource**

Information, resources, support, key organisations and national guidelines on taking learning outdoors in Scotland. Click [here](#) to access the online resource.

**Outdoor Learning: Practical guidance, ideas and support for teachers and practitioners in Scotland** This document provides materials and resources to support the embedding of Curriculum for Excellence through Outdoor Learning. Click [here](#) to access the document.

Keep up to date with new outdoor learning developments via the [Education Scotland Outdoor Learning professional learning community](#). Click [here](#) to view the page.

## **Other News:**

### **The Scottish Coppice Wood Festival**

The Scottish Coppice wood Festival is to be launched at Forfar, Angus, Scotland. The event is now live on EventBrite - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/scottish-coppice-festival-angus-site-visits-hazel-and-willow-coppice-tickets-31536721182>

### **Archaeology Scotland's Heritage Hero Awards**

Archaeology Scotland's Heritage Hero Awards officially Launched on the 21<sup>st</sup> of January at Argyll's Lodging in Stirling (with the kind permission and support of Historic Environment Scotland), coinciding with the start of Scotland's Year of History Heritage and Archaeology. 50 heritage and archaeology professionals, youth group leaders, teachers and young people travelled across the country to attend the event to celebrate the success of the pilot groups and hear more about how they can take part in the awards.

The Heritage Hero Awards are an award scheme targeted at young people in Scotland and were developed as a means of encouraging young people to connect with their past, rewarding their achievements in doing so; with the overall aims of improving young people's self-confidence and wellbeing through engagement with challenging heritage projects, inspiring a lifelong interest in Scotland's past; as well as increasing awareness of how to access Scotland's heritage in schools, youth groups and similar organisations.

The pilot scheme ran throughout 2016 proving to be a huge success in which 735 certificates were awarded to young people from school groups, youth clubs, heritage organisations and community groups from the Scottish Borders to the Highlands and Islands. Three of the pilot groups presented at the launch giving the attendees a taste for the types of projects completed for their awards. Attendees heard from Primary 7 teachers from East Ayrshire talking about their WW1 project, where pupils researched the stories of Kilmarnock Railway station workers at the break out of WW1; a small group of teenagers from East Lothian who carried out a project at Tree-ditions Woodlands Crafts School taking part in experimental archaeology and learning traditional heritage crafts, and the Dunfermline Young Archaeologist Club, who over the summer worked to excavate, record and research buried gravestones in the Dunfermline Abbey Graveyard.

If you would like more information on the awards or to register your group please see our website: [www.archaeologyscotland.org.uk/Learning/Heritage-Hero-Awards](http://www.archaeologyscotland.org.uk/Learning/Heritage-Hero-Awards), or contact our Heritage Training Officer on 0300 012 9878 or [hto@archaeologyscotland.org.uk](mailto:hto@archaeologyscotland.org.uk).

## Funding

### Cairngorms National Park Travel Grant

#### **Planning a visit or a field trip to the Cairngorms National Park?**

Our 2016 Travel Grant scheme is now open to schools and voluntary groups to make educational trips to the National Park. Grants are available up to 75% of travel costs, up to £200 for trips taken this year and until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.

Applications are particularly welcomed from groups or schools who have not visited the National Park before, who come from socially deprived areas or experience disadvantage on account of their disability, age, health, race or income.

The grant scheme is funded by Cairngorms National Park Authority to encourage wider participation and learning about Scotland's National Parks.

For more information and application pack, go to

<http://cairngorms.co.uk/park-authority/funding/travel-grant-scheme/>

or email [learning@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:learning@cairngorms.co.uk)

## Community Fund

The FCS Community Fund supports community groups and organisations that encourage people to use woods more. You can **apply** for activities taking place up until **31 March 2017**.

- Community Fund leaflet
- The [Community Fund guidance \(PDF 86KB\)](#) provides full details on the fund and eligibility.

For application forms, questions, or to discuss a potential project, you can contact your local [FCS Conservancy](#).

<http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/supporting/strategy-policy-guidance/communities>

## Training

### **Sharing Good Practice event - Taking Citizen Science Outdoors to support your Teaching and Learning Battleby Conference centre, Perth, Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

Please find attached details of and a booking form for our forthcoming free event which is for teachers, teacher trainers and trainee teachers, decision-makers and influencers involved in learning and the environment, professionals involved in outdoor learning and in learning for sustainability, academics and anyone working with young people in the outdoors. The flyer and booking form will also be made available at <http://www.snh.gov.uk/news-and-events/events/event-details/?id=2982>.

Citizen Science can support Learning for Sustainability – an entitlement for all learners.

Citizen science gives young people and communities the chance to get hands-on with science in an exciting and meaningful way. It provides opportunities to learn new skills, engage with the scientific community and find out how scientific observation can deepen understanding and knowledge of our local environment.

This event will look at how young people can become involved in recording and monitoring their local environment through activities often now referred to as “citizen science”, including in classrooms, in school grounds, and in local greenspaces. It will look at formal and informal opportunities, a whole school approach involving the wider community, and links to the Curriculum for Excellence. It will aim to identify what works in practice through looking at educational resources and other sources of support and advice.

### **WILD SPARKS TRAINING WORKSHOPS**

Wild Sparks shall be running several 'Winter Play' training workshops in January- March this year. These workshops are aimed at early years and play practitioners and are designed to equip participants with new knowledge and ideas regarding health and safety in a winter environment. They also aim to provide activity examples including building and maintaining a fire and the many positives it can bring to an outdoor play session. Sessions will be delivered in Dundee (24th Jan), Glasgow (21st Feb) & Edinburgh (14th March). Days run 10am-3pm and cost £60 per participant. [office@wildsparks.co.uk](mailto:office@wildsparks.co.uk)

### **Sharing Good Practice Programme from SNH**

For your interest, please find attached our Sharing Good Practice programme of events for the next 6 months, from June - December 2016. This will be updated in September to include events until March 2017.

You can view the online version at the link below:  
<http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A1989576.pdf>

## **Taking Learning Outdoors - Scottish Advisory Panel for Outdoor Education and Education Scotland – Free full day CPD on Outdoor Learning – Three different venues available.**

This training will give staff the confidence and basic skills to undertake outdoor learning in school/centre grounds and other local areas. Delivered over a day this course includes a mix of theory, practical outdoor sessions and discussion time. Staff will leave with practical ideas and the theory to support further personal development. Please come in suitable outdoor clothing, full waterproofs if raining and a packed lunch. Teas and coffee will be available.

**There are three different dates available please note places will also be available through Glasgow City Council, Dundee City Council and Dumfries and Galloway Councils CPD gateway systems.**

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February, Caledonia Primary School, Glasgow – Please use this link - <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/OLGLA>

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February, Ancrum Outdoor Centre, Dundee – Please use this link - <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/OLDundee>

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March, Carlingwark Outdoor Centre, Castle Douglas – Please use this link - <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/oldg>

### Recipe of the month

#### *Pinwheel Pizza*



500g pack bread mix  
Flour for dusting  
50g mature cheddar, grated  
4 tbsp tomato purée  
Handful basil, roughly torn  
1 whole roasted pepper, from a jar, cut into strips  
70g pack pepperoni, chopped  
125g ball mozzarella torn into chunks

1. Make up the bread mix following pack instructions.
2. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured surface and roll out to an oblong 35 x 22cm using a rolling pin. Spread the tomato purée over the dough (leaving a border of dough plain all the way round), then scatter with the basil, pepper, pepperoni and mozzarella.
3. Carefully and firmly roll up from the longest side to make a Swiss roll, then slice evenly into 8 thick pinwheels.
4. Arrange 7 around the edge of the tin and put the eighth in the centre. Place in oiled tin and cover with cling film and leave in a warm place until well risen. Depending on the heat, this can take up to 1 hr.
5. Remove the cling film, scatter with the cheddar and bake for 12-15 mins until golden to eat
6. You can cook in the oven (240C/220C fan/gas 7) to eat outdoors or cook over a campfire or in a Dutch oven.



[www.bbcgoodfood.com](http://www.bbcgoodfood.com)

### Quote of the month

"When one of us tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world"

*John Muir*

## Activity of the Month

### *Ant Investigation*

Ants often go unnoticed in our world, but if you take the time to watch them you could learn a lot about their above-ground operations.

Learners should be supervised at all times during this experiment.

Ants can bite and precautions should be made e.g. do not touch ants and make sure feet are covered with closed-in shoes.

Hypothesis: What foods do ants like most?

- Control: water
- Food A: honey
- Food B: broccoli
- Food C: bread

Procedure:

Beside a busy line of ants place the different food types.

Check the food at 15 minutes and 30 minute sessions and document your findings on a data sheet.

What food do ants like to eat?

Which food do you think the ants will be attracted to? Why?

What do you think the ants will do once they find a food they like?

During the experiment:



How many ants are around each bit of food?

What are they doing with the food?

After the experiment:

Which food was the ants' favourite?

Why do you think it was the ants' favourite?

Do you think there was anything that might have made the experiment biased?

E.g. positions of the food?

Results:

You will probably find that ants like the honey most of all, minimal interest in the broccoli, least interested in the water and like the bread but not as much as the honey.

Why Honey?

Most types of ants are attracted to anything that is sweet, so even if there is a drop of honey or little jam on the floor, ants will get attracted towards it. Ants are such sweet addicts that they experience an almost magnetic pull towards jam in the sandwich, honey, sugar, lemonade, etc.

Why not try a similar ant experiment using sweet or salty and fruit or vegetables foods.

[www.mothenatured.com](http://www.mothenatured.com)

## Fact of the Month

Did you know that each time you see a full moon you always see the same side?

## Plant of the Month

*Pendulous Sedge / Carex pendula*



Also known as: Hanging Sedge, Drooping Sedge, and Weeping Sedge. A native marginal sedge plant that is found throughout the UK in damp woodlands, bogs, edges of ponds, lakes and streams enjoying full sun or partial shading.

This plant is perennial, forming dense clumps of broad grass with evergreen arching leaves up to 20mm wide and 1m long. It produces tall, pendulous red-brown flowers which spike up to 2m tall with triangular cross section in May and June.

Grasses are superficially similar but have round, hollow flower stems. May be mistaken for other sedges but only Pendulous Sedge has the drooping flowers and seeds.

The ripe seeds are edible after being stripped from the seed heads. Winnow to remove the husks which reveal the small brown seeds. They can be toasted and added to breads and salads or ground into flour.

The leaves can be used intact or thinned into strips, dried and twisted into strong cordage and rope. They can also be dried and pounded and used to stuff clothing as insulation.  
[www.woodland-ways.co.uk](http://www.woodland-ways.co.uk)

### **Species of the Month**

*Black Garden Ants* / *Lasius Niger*

Ants are important as they keep the environment in balance. Many animals such as frogs eat them. They are also great scavengers, cleaning the world of dead animals or crumbs left behind from a picnic in the park.

There are over 12,000, known different species of ants but the Black Garden ants are the most commonly seen ants in Britain and are the only ant regularly seen indoors. They are common throughout the countryside, and like to nest in soil that is dryish and sandy, but not desiccated or exposed.

With just a couple of rare exceptions British ants fall into two categories the stinging Myrmicine ants – typified by the long bodied and sculptured red ants, and the non-stinging Formicine ants – smoother and shorter bodied, the best known examples being black ants, yellow meadow ants and wood ants.

Black ants are entirely harmless, like all other Formicine ants they do not have a sting and unlike the wood ants they don't spray formic acid either. Jaws are the Black ants' main defense, but they are not strong enough to break someone's skin.



Black ants eat insects and sugary substances such as nectar and rotting fruit. They are dutiful farmers of aphids, protecting them from predators, collecting the sugary honeydew that they produce, and carrying them around to establish new herds. They probably also take some aphids underground over winter, it is likely that some of these will be eaten!

Black ants are important soil engineers, mixing it up and increasing its fertility.

A Black ant colony will contain just one queen – many other ant species actually have more than one queen in each colony. A fully grown Black ant colony contains the queen and 4,000 to 7,000 female workers, but a big colony may contain 15,000 workers. Only the queen lays eggs, the workers forage for food, feed the larvae and build the nest.

The hardest part of the Black ant life cycle is the job of the young queen in raising the first generation of workers. This is very difficult as she cannot forage for food and has no herds of aphids. The queen shuts herself in a cell underground and when her first eggs hatch she feeds the larvae with a fluid created from the breakdown of her own muscles. By the time the first workers emerge from their pupae the Queen will be terribly weak, having lost about half her body weight. The first role of the workers is to forage food and nurse the queen back into good health.

Two closely related ant species skip this difficult stage of development. The young queens cheat by infiltrating a Black ant nest and depositing the queen. The invading queen then uses pheromones to control the previous queen's workers and persuade them to raise her young instead.

Worker ants find food by sending out scouts. When a good source of food is found they lay down a scent trail so that other workers can easily find the food. They have two stomachs, their true stomach and a much larger social stomach that they fill with food to take back to the colony and feed the larvae, builders and the queen.

If the young queen successfully rears the first brood, if she is not deposed by a parasitic ant species, and if her workers find good food sources then her colony will thrive. Only after several years when the colony is fully grown will the queen lay the first eggs that will become drones (males) and queens. On a hot and humid day between June and September the nuptial flight occurs, males and females from many colonies in the area take to the air simultaneously and mate. The new queens then lose their wings and burrow underground to start the cycle again.

Ant facts:

- The total weight of all the ants in the world is the same as, if not larger than that of all humans.
- The largest ant colony ever found was over 6000 Km or 3750 miles wide.
- Ants are the longest living of all insects, living for up to 30 years.
- One ant species owns the record for the fastest movement within the animal kingdom.
- The ant is one of the worlds' strongest creature in relation to its size.
- One ant species is the most venomous insect in the world.
- Dozens of colonies of the world's smallest ant could live in the brain case of the world's largest ant.
- Ants move an estimated 50 tons of soil per year in one square mile.
- All worker, soldier and queen ants are female.
- Some ant species are asexual, they clone themselves and do not require any males.
- Ants and humans are the only creatures that farm other creatures.
- Some ant species make slaves out of another ant species.

**Contact:**

To contact your local OWL group please go to the [OWL Scotland website](#)

**Or contact us:**

**Bonnie Maggio  
OWL Scotland  
Forestry Commission Scotland  
231 Corstorphine Road  
Edinburgh EH12 7AT**

[Bonnie.Maggio@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Bonnie.Maggio@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)

**Join us on Facebook – “Forest Education Initiative” group (we have over 5000 members so were unable to change from our original name!)**

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