Welcome to the OWL Scotland bulletin which contains content 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

**OWL Scotland – National News**

**Forestry Commission Scotland and Forest Enterprise Scotland no longer exist**

From 1 April 2019 forestry has been fully devolved and two new Scottish Government agencies accountable to Scottish Ministers and the Scottish Parliament have been created.

*Forestry and Land Scotland*

*Coilltearachd agus Fearann Alba*

Looks after, manages and promotes Scotland’s national forests and land

*Scottish Forestry*

*Coiltearachd na h-Alba*

Responsible for forestry policy, support and regulation.
Informal Summer Networking Event

We are holding a free informal summer networking event on Monday 15th July 10am – Tues 16th July 10am camping at Pillars of Hercules Organic Farm at Falkland in Fife. There will be skill sharing and an opportunity for informal networking – we have confirmed an exciting workshop on Literacy and Numeracy in the outdoors followed by a make your own resources (story stones, wooden blocks etc) workshop by Alison Wilson. Bring your own lunch and breakfast and camping gear – you can camp from Sunday 14th. Please bring a dish to share for dinner. The event is open to and free for OWL Cluster Group members – but is by booking only. To book please email Bonnie.Maggio@forestry.gov.scot with your name, address, mobile number and OWL Group. If you are coming as a group (and sharing a tent) please book together so that we can allocate tent space accordingly. Closing date for bookings is July 1st. You are welcome to bring your partners/family but we ask that you book and pay for your camping separately with Pillars if you plan to do this (Book a plot in the “Bankings”).

Tree measuring at the summer networking event 2018.
**OWL Scotland Review 2017/18 Published** The latest OWL Scotland Report for 2017/18 is now available. The review reports on the activities of OWL Scotland nationally and locally and shows the scope of outdoor learning activities being undertaken throughout Scotland. It includes local case studies and output statistics. Thank you to everyone who contributed and to all the OWL Groups and their members for their hard work and enthusiasm throughout the year.

Local OWL Events and News:

**Forth Valley OWL Group**

**Calendar of Events**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Foraging</td>
<td>Di Blackmore</td>
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This was the first year Dumfries and Galloway OWL were solely responsible or organising the Dumfries and Galloway Environment Fair. We have helped organise it for the last few years but with Council funding cuts we took up the reigns. We were really lucky to be awarded funding by Scottish Forestry and our big event of the year was a fantastic success so we are all feeling tired and rather proud of ourselves.

It was great to see so many organisations promoting recycling and reducing plastic use and we were using the #TreadLightly. We had Zero Waste Space there who make their own non plastic items such as washing up sponges and the Eco Warriors who organise beach cleans across Dumfries and Galloway as well as the more traditional wildlife conservation organisations like Eskrigg Nature Reserve. Many of the people who were on the stalls were our OWL members so it was lovely to see them all in one place. Especially as we had much of the Fair outdoors allowing us to have traditional outdoor learning shelters, fires and space to run and climb trees. It was great to be able to talk to people who were interested in outdoor learning and our OWL too. We signed up a lot of new members. We have invited them all to join us for our next meeting and skills share on the Polwillimont beach on the 9th of June. Feel free to come and join us too.
Edinburgh OWL Group

‘It’s a busy Spring in Edinburgh Outdoor Woodland Learning Group. All enjoyed another excellent Nature Play Conference celebrating our 10th Anniversary year with our very own Sally York as Keynote Speaker. Sally took us back through the centuries to the very early educationalists who promoted Outdoor Learning and it’s benefits right up to present day. It touched many hearts and minds and confirmed that we are united in our passion for sharing natural environments and ecology with those with whom we work. There were a great range of high quality CPD sessions with all sorts of useful activities to take back to our locations. We ended with a song in our hearts and a skip in our steps. Thanks to all for making 2019 a very special event.

Fresh off the press was our All About Tools CPD on May 25th and a new fabby, Woodland location for the Edinburgh OWL Group. We are delighted to welcome new members and future collaborators. Thanks to Joni Hawley for his expert guidance and humorous flair.
Greater Glasgow OWL Group (GROWL)

Outdoor Learning Library
GROWL have secured funds from Awesome Foundation and The Friends of Glasgow Botanic Gardens, alongside OWLS funding, to enable us to buy a secure container to store kit and run a kit lending library, based in Glasgow Botanic Gardens. We are hoping that this will be open to members from Autumn 2019. We have a funding bid in with Tesco’s Bags for Life to develop additional resource kits for schools.

Upcoming CPD sessions
4 June 6-8pm Pollok Park: Free summer skillshare, open to all outdoor learning practitioners including teachers, forest school leaders and early years practitioners. Sessions include conifer tree ID and intro to tree meditation. Come with your own ideas for games and activities to share! Booking essential.

21 July, near Kirkudbright Summer Foraging course. Last few places for GROWL members remain. If you are from Dumfries and Galloway OWL and want to come, get in touch with us at hello@glasgowowl.com

Committee update
We are delighted to welcome new Chair Sophie Kyle onto the GROWL committee, replacing Kim Craigie, who has done a wonderful job the last 3 years. We are currently looking for a new Treasurer and Secretary to join our dynamic team. Get in touch if you are interested!

Summer Foraging Course
21 July, 2019, near Kirkudbright, SW Scotland.
Guided forest, hedgerow and coastal foraging walk with Mark from Galloway Wild Foods, especially tailored for GROWL members. (Also open to D & G OWL Members if there are spaces).

The GROWL Development Officer has been focusing on building an online directory which will map all the Outdoor and Woodland Learning providers and practitioners in the Glasgow region. If you live or work in the area (either personally or via an organisation), please fill in this survey, to automatically become a GROWL member giving you access to CPD training, use of kit and to appear on our online directory (optional). We have also been developing our membership scheme, our fundraising proposal system and events programme and improving in general the way we operate.
GROWL are currently looking for funding for a secure shed to store our communal outdoor education kit on the site of our partners, Glasgow Botanic Gardens. If you know of any second-hand sheds or funding for a new one, please get in touch! We need £500 to make this happen and hope to create a resource for all our members!
Moray OWL Group
Workshop Calendar 2019

All workshops are FREE - 10:00am-12:00 (unless stated otherwise) and should be booked in advance with the contact details given below for each workshop.

Saturday 8th June - Running your School Garden with REAP – practical advice and activities for all ages to sow, grow and reap! At: Earthtime’s Outdoor Nursery, Duffus, IV30 5QB Contact: ann2@reapscotland.org.uk.

Saturday 8th June - Numeracy & Literacy in the Outdoors with Earthtime 12:30-2:30pm At: Earthtime’s Outdoor Nursery, Duffus, IV30 5QB. Ideas, activities & curriculum links to numeracy & literacy. Contact: natalie@earthtime.co.uk

Saturday 14th September - Campfire Cooking with Fly Agaric. Simple ways to feed a group in the outdoors! At: Earthtime’s Outdoor Nursery, Duffus, IV30 5QB. Contact: flyagaric@fastmail.co.uk

Saturday 9th November - Be Well, Be Wild with Earth for Life. An introduction to supporting mental wellbeing in outdoor work. 12:30-2:30pm at: Cluny Hill Woods, Forres. Meet outside Forres Library. Contact: nancy@earthforlife.org

North East OWL Group

OWLNEG – Campfire and Woodland Adventures

On Sunday 12th May at NTS Crathes, OWLNEG members delivered ‘Campfire and Woodland Adventures’ – a Natural History Adventure in conjunction with the Natural History Museum’s UK tour with Dippy the dinosaur. Drop-in and bookable workshops, for under 12’s, were linked to this theme: Life on Earth; Discover Birds (the dinosaurs that survived); Flower Power (a celebration of flowers and pollinators); Design a Dinosaur; and Being Human (use of tools and fire).

Last but decidedly not least, a pre-school mud kitchen and fossil hunt provided some welcome activity for younger siblings. The event was advertised on the NHM and NTS websites and proved very popular, reaching capacity within days. We had a few last-minute cancellations but were able to offer invitations either to families on a waiting list or visiting on the day - final numbers for the day were in the mid-fifties.
Dippy has sadly left Kelvingrove Museum and is en route to Newcastle but we had great fun with this adventure to mark his stay in Scotland. During the course of the weekend, we managed to build two popular exhibits: a wooden skeleton of Dippy and a wood henge as a reference to human activity in Scottish woodlands (The First Foresters, Forestry and Land Scotland):

With thanks to NTS NE Ranger Service for hosting us and to the Natural History Museum (Dippy on Tour) for support and publicity.

South Highland OWL Group

Programme for 2019

Saturday CPD workshops

The South Highland Outdoor & Woodland Learning (OWL) Group exists to support outdoor learning across the southern half of the Highlands. This group is for outdoor learning practitioners, teachers, early years’ practitioners and anyone with an interest in outdoor learning. All workshops are FREE (except the accredited course on 23 March) and count for CPD time for teachers.

Art of Pewter Casting Workshop
Join Lara Greene for an intensive day of working with pewter drop casting on an open fire. Saturday 22 June Highland Folk Museum from 10.00 – 15.30. FULL

Our planning meeting is coming up on Wednesday 26th June 4pm – 6pm Forestry and Land Scotland Offices, Smithton
Everyone has heard of Stonehenge, perhaps the greatest stone circle of them all. But have you heard of its neighbour, Woodhenge? This learning resource moves beyond the familiar stone circles of prehistory to explore the archaeology of our lost timber halls and timber circles. An inspirational blend of discussion, practical and creative indoor activities and outdoor woodland learning, the resource draws on the work of leading archaeologists to describe a very different Neolithic – one not of stone but of wood. Following on from Wolf Brother’s Wildwoods, where we imagined the world of the Mesolithic hunter-gatherers living within the wildwood, we now visit the Neolithic farming pioneers and imagine the world of the first foresters working within the wildwood. Our key objective is to explore the interconnected ideas of Neolithic first farmers, first foresters and first builders – and to encourage indoor and outdoor learning by ‘thinking like a first forester’.
Working Forests' Campaign
Forestry Commission Scotland has released a new forest safety interactive story aimed at children. It supports the ‘working forests’ campaign.

Tree Coring on Ancient Trees
Scottish Natural Heritage have published a new report about tree coring called A review of the theory and practice of tree coring on live ancient and veteran trees. You can read the full report here.

Training

Leading Earthwalks Day: Tuesday 25th June 2019
Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Scotland.
A new 1-day workshop celebrating the launch of the newly published Earthwalks book! This workshop will be delivered by the I.E.E.’s internationally renowned trainer, Jon Cree.
For more information, email kate@magenpie.co.uk or visit www.eartheducation.org.uk/workshops to download a flyer and booking form.

Funding

We are delighted to announce that the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority Grant Scheme is open for applications. £81,000 is available for projects which support the sustainable development of our communities and the area’s natural, cultural and built heritage.

The scheme is open to a range of organisations – including voluntary or community groups, schools and public funded bodies – as well as local businesses and individuals to help support projects that deliver against one or more of the outcomes listed in the National Park Partnership Plan.

Examples of previously funded projects include:
- Native hedge and tree planting
- Renovating traditional barns to help diversify a farming business
- Developing skills in angling/rivercraft, travel/tourism, insects/wildlife, stone masonry
- Tackling invasive non-native species
- Creating a permaculture garden to inspire local food production
- Restoring an historic building of public or economic significance
- Feasibility study to run a bike-hire social enterprise
- Scoping the development of a heritage trail
- Architectural, survey or design services to develop a tourism or community facility
- Improving the public realm through public art, interpretation, community garden

Grant scheme funding recently enabled Forth Rivers Trust to hold an ‘Intro to Angling’ event for young people in Callander to learn more about fishing and bankside safety.
Grounds for Learning

The new small grants scheme is open

http://www.ltl.org.uk/naturegrants/index.php

Paths for All launch Walking for Health Fund 2019-20

Scotland’s national walking charity, Paths for All, has launched its Walking for Health Fund 2019-20. Grants of up to £10,000 are available to projects working to increase the number of people walking in Scotland. Each year, Paths for All awards thousands of pounds to versatile and inspiring projects that are passionate about improving health and wellbeing through increased physical activity. The fund aims to:

- Increase the number of new walkers taking part in Health Walks in Scotland.
- Increase the amount of physical activity undertaken by people in Scotland, especially those experiencing health inequality.
- Improve wellbeing or reduce ill-health.
- Constituted groups, registered charities, community interest companies, public sector or statutory bodies, health and social care partnerships, health boards, schools, universities, colleges, and private sector organisations working in Scotland can apply for grants of up to £10,000 to help work towards these outcomes in their own communities.

To apply, visit https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/walking-for-health/wfh-fund

Other news

Take part in the outdoor kit survey!
Scottish Natural Heritage, in partnership with ReRoute (Scotland’s national youth biodiversity group), would like to find out more about the number and location of kit libraries in Scotland. If you are aware of a kit library, please take a few minutes to complete our survey. Your responses will help us assess and improve provision across Scotland. https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2GRZJVB

Check out the latest Outdoor Learning news from Scotland

Have a look at Outdoor Learning Directory news page, where you’ll find fresh updates, including news and resources from the Learning in Local Greenspace project. http://outdoorlearningdirectory.com/index.php/news/
Recipe of the month

Have a go at one of these trail mix recipes! Good way to keep energy levels going when you have your learners out and about.

**Sunshine Trail Mix**
- 150g salted peanuts
- 75g roasted almonds
- 75g raisins
- 75g dried cranberries
- 75g chocolate chips
- 75g chocolate covered sweets

**Tropical Twist Trail Mix**
- 150g roasted and unsalted cashews
- 150g yogurt covered raisins
- 75g pistachios
- 75g dried pineapple chunks
- 75g dried papaya
- 75g shredded coconut

**PB & J Trail Mix**
- 250g granola clusters
- 150g dried cherries
- 75g dried blueberries
- 75g dry roasted peanuts
- 75g roasted and salted peanuts
- 75g white chocolate chips

**Instructions**
In a medium bowl, add all ingredients and stir until well incorporated.
Place in air-tight container and serve.
Yields between 14 and 16 servings
Storage- 2 months in air-tight container

Note on nuts – be aware of allergies. Use salted, unsalted, roasted or unroasted nuts depending on preference.
www.babyfoode.com

Quote of the month

“Nature is pleased with simplicity. And nature is no dummy!”
Isaac Newton

Activity of the Month

Nature Skeleton
Fun way to consolidate “how my body works” learning outside.
This activity uses natural materials to represent the main bones of the body.
Get your learners to collect these items from your outdoor space.
- a big rock for the skull
- white and black paints
- thin sticks
- small rocks/pebbles

In small groups or pairs ask your learners to paint a skull on the big rock. Provide your learners with a picture of a skeleton face if they need support with this. Begin building the skeleton by placing the skull on a suitable flat surface outside. What ones come next? Ask the groups to work slowly through the main bones in the body using the collected materials to represent them. Compare the finished skeletons and peer assess. Extend by adding additional body parts. www.mothernatured.com

**Fact of the Month**
Did you know that cows do not have upper front teeth?

**Collective noun of the month**
A memory of elephants

**Species of the Month**
*Moorhen / Gallinula chloropus*

Moorhen are a type of waterfowl that belongs to the rail family. Worldwide, there are around 10 species of moorhen. They can be found on marshes and areas near the streams and ponds. Habitat destruction (draining of the wetlands) and uncontrolled killing have already resulted in the extinction of some species of moorhen. The most popular and best-known species of moorhen, common moorhen, is still numerous and widespread in the wild.

Moorhen can reach 12 to 15 inches in length and 7 to 14 ounces of weight. They have bluish black plumage on the breast, head and neck, dark brown plumage on the back and wings and white plumage on the rump. Flanks are covered with white stripes and short, rounded wings and strong legs with long fingers which facilitate movement across the uneven substrate. There red bill has a yellow tip.

Moorhen are also known as "swamp chickens" because of the chicken-like shape and size of the body. They are omnivores with a diet based on insects, spiders, snails, worms, fish, fruit, berries and seed.

Moorhens are social birds, living in flocks of 15 to 30 birds outside the mating season. A dominant male is usually the leader of the group.

Natural enemies of moorhens are wild cats, large dogs, foxes, and reptiles.

Most species of moorhen are poor flyers. Certain species, such as common moorhen, can travel up to 1,200 miles from the breeding grounds to the wintering grounds and back. Migratory species usually travel during the night.
Mating season of moorhens takes place from April to August. Moorhens are very aggressive and territorial during the mating season. Females often produce 2 to 3 broods per season. Both male and female participate in the construction of the nest and incubation of the eggs. Nest is often located over the water or on the ground.

Female lays 6 to 10 eggs that hatch after three weeks. Both parents provide food and take care of their chicks until they become ready to fend for themselves.

Moorhens are excellent swimmers at the early age, but they lose this ability later in life. Young moorhens can find food on their own at the age of 3 weeks. They learn to fly 7 weeks after hatching, but they stay with their parents until the autumn to help them in raising of the new generations of chicks.

Moorhen reaches sexual maturity at the age of one year. Moorhen has an average lifespan of 3 years.

www.softschools.com
www.rspb.org.uk

**Plant of the Month**

*Common Dog Violet / Viola riviniana*

The most common wild violet in the UK. Best seen in local woodlands, grasslands and uplands during April, May and June.

It has distinctive bluish-purple petals, leafy stems and heart-shaped leaves in a basal rosette. The flowers have a pale spur and resemble pansies.

It is easily confused with Early Dog-violet, which can be distinguished by being more petite and by its petals being lighter than the spur which is straight, pointed and not notched.

This plant is very important for several fritillary butterflies, including the Small Pearl-bordered, the Pearl-bordered and the Silver-washed Fritillaries, because they lay their eggs on it.

Did you know?

'Dog' means it lacks scent, as opposed to 'sweet' violet. Dog, like Horse, is a common English prefix for distinguishing an inferior species from its superior relative.

Other names include Blue mice, Cuckoo's shoe, Shoes and stockings, Hypocrites, Pig violet, Horse violet, Summer violet and Snake violet.

www.plantlife.org.uk
www.wildlifetrusts.org

**Contact:**

To contact your local OWL group please go to the [OWL Scotland website](http://www.owlscotland.org.uk)

**Or contact us:**

**Bonnie Maggio**

OWL Scotland
Scottish Forestry
231 Corstorphine Road
Edinburgh EH12 7AT

Bonnie.Maggio@forestry.gov.scot
Join us on Facebook – “Forest Education Initiative” group (we have over 5000 members so were unable to change from our original name!)