



Outdoor & Woodland Learning Scotland Bulletin November 2020

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.gov.scot

OWL Scotland National News

Update

With the nights drawing in and grey autumn days blurring into one as we continue on with restrictions on our lives and livelihoods this emoji from the South Highland OWL Outsider Decider programme sums up how a lot of us are feeling.



But life goes on and I am heartened to see how all of our OWL Groups are getting on and coping with these challenging times. There are many positives to be drawn including that our meetings have become more accessible as so many groups have taken them online. The benefits of this are particularly felt by the more geographically spread out groups.

OWL Scotland Campfire Cookbook

We thought it might be a good time to get outdoors and hone our campfire cooking skills. We are inviting contributions to an OWL Scotland Campfire Cookbook – no prizes except the honour of having your recipe in the book (!). Please send recipes and photos to me and we will select the most innovative and delicious to go in the book. Deadline December 20th 2020.

Covid 19 Guidance Update

Here is an update on what is happening as regards outdoor learning and moving forwards with Covid 19. We have been asked about OWL Scotland's policies on moving forward after lockdown and would like to reiterate that groups should follow Scottish Government guidance at all times.

All the Scottish Government documents are online here

<https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Restarting forestry work was included in Phase 1 also with the Forestry Sector Restart and Resilience Plan

<https://forestry.gov.scot/covid-19>

And the safety guidance for Forestry work :

<https://www.ukfisa.com/news-events/news/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19-in-forestry.html>

Early Years National Networking Event

Due to the Covid 19 outbreak we postponed the special Early years National Networking Event – we are planning to run the event in March in a different non-residential format. The event will be an opportunity to attend a variety of hands-on workshops to help develop the outdoor learning practice of early years practitioners. Date to be confirmed. Please watch this space.



Resources

We have updated our Resources section on the [website](#) with summaries of resources available for different levels. There are many more resources available in the resource library which can be searched for using the search function.

If you would like any hard copies of resources – we have some available:

Wee Green Fingers

Wolf Brother's Wildwoods

The World Beneath our Feet

Tree Stories

Tree Measuring

Woodland Workout

Trees and the Scottish Enlightenment

Pine Poster

Please email Bonnie.Maggio@forestry.gov.scot with your request and address. Thank you!

Local OWL Events and News:

Ayrshire

Membership

Membership/mailling list remains dominated by people involved in EAC education, we are pleased to see that it is gradually broadening in response to **enquiries coming through the OWL Scotland website** and our visibility on **Twitter**. **Direct mailing** of individuals and organisations working across Ayrshire in outdoor and woodland learning has also begun to increase membership.

The Future

Currently, the committee are all members of the same team working in East Ayrshire. At the recent AGM, new members agreed to serve on the committee as ambassadors for the respective Ayrshires and others will use the coming year to train up so as to be ready to serve as office bearers. Our new Chair, Jo Dempster, Princes Foundation, will take up the post in October.

Technology in Citizen Science, CPD available on the 2nd Nov, 4:00-5:30pm

Grab yourself a cuppa and join us virtually to explore the world of citizen science. Citizen Science can be a great tool to get out into the local woodlands and hills to take part in some meaningful STEM learning. Citizen science is when members of the public get involved with scientific research and it's a tradition as old a science itself. Charles Darwin himself had help from thousands of amateur naturalists writing letters from around the world to come up with the theory for natural selection. Lead by Jo Dempster, STEM Tutor at Dumfries House, we will take a look at how scientists use technology to enhance their understanding of the world around them, and how you can use it with your class to involve them in their own citizen science projects.

To join our virtual CPD email joanne.dempster@princes-foundation.org

December Skills share: Leave-no-trace Learning, 7th Dec, 4:00-5:30pm

With encouragement from the First Minister herself, a whole new cohort of people have been making the most of the beautiful Scottish countryside. Those of us working in outdoor education are thrilled to see this enthusiasm and want to support anyone who might be new to outdoor learning to access nature in a responsible way. With input from the North Ayrshire rangers, Dumfries House and the John Muir Trust, we will share with you how to take your learning

outdoors in a way that looks after the natural spaces that have become so valuable to us all over the last few months.

Our skills shares are an opportunity to learn from experts and examples of good practice, as well as discuss challenges and success with the OWL Ayrshire network of outdoor education practitioners.

To join our virtual skills share email Carolyn.mcfarlane@east-ayrshire.gov.uk

Argyll and Bute OWL Group

The networking event in Inverary has been postponed – We hope to organise the network event in spring 2021 – Watch this space.

The AGM & next meeting will be held on Wednesday 4th November. This will take place via Google Meet. Meeting likely to start at 4pm but may be 4.30pm. Get in touch to email below if you would like to join the meeting.

We have 2 outdoor first aid courses arranged, The 1st one will be the weekend of 23/24 October in Inveraray and is currently fully booked. There is another the weekend after (31st October/4 November) which currently only has 3 places filled. If you are interested in booking a course, then please get in touch.

Email argyllowlgroup@gmail.com

Greater Glasgow OWL Group (GROWL)

Under lockdown, GROWL has put all face-to-face CPD and networking events on hold until restrictions are lifted.

We have been working on creating an outdoor learning kit library online booking system (one of our Special Projects).

The next committee meeting and craft skill share is on 8th December.

We have also started a weekly online discussion forum for outdoor learning practitioners based in Glasgow. This call is to share challenges and best practice as we get back out into the woods and if any other Owl members are interested in joining, to get in touch directly with our Chair Sophie Kyle at sophiekyale@gmail.com

West Dumbartonshire OWL Group

WD OWL have been having Zoom meetings to kick-start The Lost Words Project where we aim to create activities to champion 5 of the poems from The Lost Words book by Robert MacFarlane. Activities will cover Literacy, Numeracy, Health & Wellbeing, and Expressive Arts experiences and outcomes and will all be designed to take place outdoors in the hopes this supports practitioners going forward with teaching CfE in the outdoors.

Contact us at: Wd_owl@hotmail.com

Dumfries and Galloway OWL Group

DGOWL are trying out new things to help with maintaining our activities and group during the coronavirus pandemic. For a while we have been having committee meetings on Zoom and we decided to have our April meeting virtually too. It was a great success with 10 people able to join in. We started by discussed how we all were and what we were each doing and if there was any help anyone needed. People were really positive and were developing new ways of working and volunteering.

Next dates for meetings and skill shares in 2020:
8th December

Lusi Alderslowe
co-chair

Dumfries and Galloway Outdoor and Woodland Learning Group
check us out on Facebook @OWLDG and Twitter @DGOWLGP

North East

Willow, Wonderful Willow

Working in partnership with Aberdeen City Ranger Service we are delivering a maintenance workshop for anyone working with willow in school grounds on 7th November 2020. The course content includes:

Why are willows special and valuable to school grounds?

Are they worth the effort?

Creating structures

Maintaining structures

Involving children and risk benefit analysis.

Due to high demand this course is already full, but we are looking to deliver it again soon.

Outdoor 2 day paediatric first aid course

Working in partnership with Duncan McNeill we are organising a 2 day outdoor paediatric first aid course, hosted by Mucky Boots on Saturday 14th & 21st November 2020.

South Highland OWL Group



Family Nature Play & Outsider Decider Training during Covid pandemic

Roots and Shoots Highland recently ran a series of family nature play & Outsider Decider lifeskills training sessions in Aviemore, as part of a South Highland OWL Special Project Grant. We wanted to share our experiences in the in case it is of use to other OWL groups who might be interested in doing something similar. The full report can be found [here](#).

Programme for Spring/Summer 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** and count for **CPD** time for teachers.

1. Gaelic in the woods. Learn about how to engage children in woodlands through the gaelic language @ Strathspey. February 2021
2. Woodland beastie hunt & Wild Challenge. By Sarah Walker, RSPB. March 2021 @ Strathspey. Postponed 2020
4. Slipper felting in the woods with Abriachan Forest Trust. April 2021 @ Abriachan. Postponed 2020
4. Citizen science using biological recording in the woods by Emily Brown, Science Development Officer. May 2021 @ Inverness. Postponed 2020
6. Natural dyeing with Christine Matheson @ Abriachan. June 2021. Postponed 2020
7. Story telling in the woods with Creeping Toad @ Inverness. June 2021

Midlothian OWL Group

Midlothian OWL group started off life with the grounds of Newbattle Abbey college which developed a Forest College and innovative pathway programme of SCQF credit rated Forest and Outdoor Learning Awards (FOLAs) for Scotland in 2018. Patrick Boxall, who was a key player in developing these awards has moved on to Queen Margaret University to teach on the Primary Education course – great news as now all QMU primary education students get some training in forest and outdoor learning.

I have just taken over as Forest College Co-ordinator and am really pleased to be able to progress this exciting role.

FOLAs are designed to be relevant to the Scottish education system with various entry levels and progression. Lots of discovery and learning on woodlands and natural environments, conservation skills, sustainability and nature connection. These are particularly relevant for secondary school students, those with ASN, no formal qualifications or who prefer experiential learning.

A number of organisations including OWL Scotland's very own NESOLG group are delivering FOLAs and have become approved assessment centres.

If anyone would like to know more about FOLA courses and/or becoming an approved assessment centre please contact me at judypaul@newbattleabbeycollege.ac.uk

Judy Paul Co-chair Midlothian OWL and Forest College Co-ordinator Newbattle Abbey college

Tayside OWL Group

The POP – Perth Outdoor Playgroup which is part of Tayside OWL Group had a den building session for families. 10 families attended and social distancing worked well.

Group Meetings are being held on Zoom – the next meeting will be on Tuesday 12th January at 7.30pm. Restrictions allowing there will be a face to face AGM on Saturday 6th February at 10am at the South Inch in Perth. For further information please contact the group.

Taysideowlgroup@gmail.com

West Fife OWL Group

We hope to continue our training as soon as we can and into 2021 to reoffer outdoor cooking and basis food hygiene run by Julia MacKay, Kelly Kettles – Jenny Ventham, How to pick and set up your outdoor learning site- Jenny Ventham. The First Foresters and Into The Wildwood – Marcia Cook.

West Fife OWL Group have 3 different resource kits which are available to borrow. Each kit contains enough materials for a class of up to 30 pupils and can be loaned out for an initial period of two weeks. One of our committee members has kindly offered to drop off and collect kits.

Den building Kit: contains a selection of tarpaulins, rope, string, bungees, tent pegs, clothes pegs- add some trees and you have everything you need for a team building challenge.

Fire Kit: contains a folding portable fire pit, Kelly Kettle, Fire steels, water container, fire blanket, fire proof gloves and first aid kit.

Pond Dipping Kit: contains 6 white plastic specimen trays, 6 long handled nets, a selection of pots to allow children to observe pond life in close-up and FSC Freshwater identification guides. Can also be

used in shallow streams and rock pools.
(Kit photos attached)

To borrow a kit, please email the group on westfifeowl@gmail.com giving your name, School, kit(s) wanted and date required.

NEWS

SAPOE Teaching Learning Outdoors

17 September, marks the launch and publication of SAPOE's Teaching Learning Outdoors (TLO) online resource.

The TLO course provides teachers with an opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to take learning outside the classroom. It supports the Scottish Government's aspirations that outdoor learning is consistently deployed as a relevant and effective method of education delivery across Curriculum for Excellence, particularly during the education recovery phase.

The development of the TLO course is the first of two resources with the second course, 'Supporting Learning Outdoors', will be available from October 2020.

The TLO course can be accessed [here](#) and more information is available on the [SAPOE website](#).

Resources

Outdoor Access Code resources.

New Scottish Outdoor Access Code resources have been launched by YoungScot and NatureScot. Here is the link [#KnowTheCode - refreshed](#)

Refreshed curriculum narrative for Curriculum for Excellence:

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/resources-to-support-the-refreshed-curriculum-for-excellence-narrative/>

SAPOE supporting learning outdoors resource

An interactive presentation about Supporting Learning Outdoors is now available in the Resources section of the website and on the News page: <https://www.sapoe.org.uk/resources/supporting-learning-outdoors-interactive-presentation/>

Finding greenspace for outdoor learning just got a whole lot easier

The [Greenspace Map for Outdoor Learning](#) has been developed by NatureScot (formerly Scottish Natural Heritage), in collaboration with Ordnance Survey and Esri UK, and allows teachers, educators and others to quickly identify greenspaces close to their education establishment that may provide outdoor learning potential. This new resource complements our [Beyond Your Boundary: easy steps to learning in local greenspace resource and associated Professional Learning](#)

Education Scotland Webinar

An Education Scotland webinar on outdoor learning is available via a YouTube link. I've signposted this via the OL Directory news [here](#).

Recipe of the month

Foil Bag Kabobs

Ingredients:

Beef or chicken, bell peppers, mushrooms, onion, small courgette, garlic
2-3 tbsp olive oil
Lemon or lime juice
Chicken seasoning - optional
Knob of butter
2 tbsp soy sauce
Pepper seasoning
Dill or similar herb



potatoes,

Preparation:

Boil potatoes for approximately 4-5 minutes depending on size.



They should still be firm and crisp, not mushy. They will finish cooking on the grill. Let potatoes cool completely before putting in foil bag. Chop bell peppers, onion and zucchini squash into large pieces.

Put chopped vegetables, potatoes and whole mushrooms into a large foil bag with garlic, olive oil, lemon or lime juice, soy sauce, butter, salt and pepper and herbs.

Cut meat into large stew size pieces. Put meat in a separate foil bag with 1/4 cup of olive oil, garlic, chicken seasonings, butter and 2 tablespoons of soy sauce. When using more than one kind of meat, put in separate bags.

To cook - grill over a campfire for 8-10 minutes, turning after 5-6 minutes. Let it cool before opening bags.

www.koa.com

Activity of the Month

Collect the Conkers

This game is a great excuse for getting everyone involved in collecting conkers! It's also a good hook for introducing tree identification skills and the properties of Horse Chestnut trees. Once you have the conkers you can play this again and again as a warm up or counting game.

You need a lot of conkers for this game.

Put the conkers into four heaps, at each corner of a large square, like rounders.

In teams, the children set off running, one at a time and try to pick up 5 conkers at each base.

If a conker is dropped, it may not be picked up.

The team with the most conkers collected in one run (max 20 per child) is the winner.

www.creativestarning.co.uk

Fact of the Month

Did you know lemons contain more sugar than strawberries?

Plant of the Month

Horse Chestnut Tree

It was introduced from Turkey in the late 16th century and widely in the UK. The sticky sap on horse chestnut buds protects them from damage and insects.

The leaf scars left on twigs after the leaves have fallen have a distinctive horseshoe shape, complete with seven "nails"



planted
frost

The Horse Chestnut is a stout tree up to 30 metres tall, with a huge domed canopy and grey-brown, fairly flaky bark. It has distinctive leaves, with five or more long leaflets. Large red-brown sticky buds are apparent in before leaf burst in April with clusters of white/pink flowers (not pink/red - that's a different species) from May that make it look like a huge candelabra. The big mahogany-brown conkers burst from a green spiky fruit (smooth cases tend to be the pink/red flowered species) from September to October with leaf drop in late October when leaves turn from orange to scarlet.

It is commonly found in parks, gardens, streets and village greens.

Uses:

- Although the seeds are slightly poisonous to many animals, causing sickness if eaten, they are a popular winter feed for deer and wild boar.
- Conker games are a childhood staple. The annual world conker championship has been held in the village of Ashton, Northants, since 1965 'Conker' is derived from the word conch, and the children's game was originally played with snail shells.
- You can make a soapy liquid by wetting the leaves or immersing them in a small bucket of water and then agitating it.

www.naturescalendar.org.uk

Collective noun of the month

A sounder of boars (wild boars)

Other news

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/>

Contact:

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

Or contact us:

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