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**

**National Networking Event 2020**
The ever popular OWL Scotland National Networking Event for 2020 will be held on February Friday 21\textsuperscript{st} 6pm to February 23\textsuperscript{rd} 12 noon at Dounans Centre, Aberfoyle, Stirlingshire. The event is now FULLY BOOKED!

We are planning on holding a Networking Event with an Early Years theme on 3/4\textsuperscript{th} May 2020. Watch this space for more information….
Local OWL Events and News:

Greater Glasgow OWL Group (GROWL)

Upcoming GROWL courses, workshops and events:

CPD for Outdoor Educators

Intro to Toolwork for Teachers/Early Years staff/Educators Sat 7 Dec 2-5pm (course full but waiting list available)

Public workshops - Making a Sustainable Christmas

All workshops £25 + booking fee

Seasonal Wreath Making with Sophie Kyle Sat 30 Nov 6-8pm

Homemade Bath Salts, Natural Packaging and Printing with Lauren Lochrie Sunday 8 Dec 10am-12pm

Eco Christmas Decoration Making with Joni Mackay Sunday 8 Dec 4-6pm

Also, we are potentially going to run an Outdoor First Aid course before the end of the year. Email hello@glasgowowl.com for more info.

Dumfries and Galloway OWL Group

Next skill share will be on 8th December – Venue and topic to be decided.

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

Moray OWL Group

Workshop Calendar 2019

All workshops are FREE - 10:00am-12:00noon (unless stated otherwise) and should be booked in advance with the contact details given below for each workshop.
On Saturday 5th October 2019, members of Outdoor Woodland Learning Scotland North East Group (OWLNEG) held an Outdoor Woodland Learning Taster Day event at Haughton Park, Alford in West Aberdeenshire. There were five 1 ½ hour workshops which were delivered twice throughout the day and were attended by 22 participants. The workshops were all delivered by Level 3 Forest School Practitioners all of whom were either members or partners of OWLNEG. This event was aimed at anyone working with Early Years and Primary-aged children, to come along to gain new skills and knowledge and connect with like-minded individuals.

Workshop topics included:
- Literacy & Numeracy in the Outdoors
- Connecting with the Outdoors through Forest School Crafts
- Animal Senses Games and Owl Pellet Dissection
- Fire and Food
- Bushcraft and Woodcraft Activities

The day went very well despite the cold and rainy weather. We received permission from Aberdeenshire Council to use Haughton Park as the venue for the event. We had toilet facilities nearby and plenty of lovely mixed woodland areas to use for the different workshops.
South Highland OWL Group

Outdoor learning through the seasons: Sharing and Developing Good Practice

Programme for Winter/Spring
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.

Choose from the list on the right and send your name & establishment to julietpcrobinson@gmail.com who will then send a confirmation and location map for each workshop. Please bring your own lunch & outdoor clothing, we will provide hot drinks!

Follow our FACEBOOK page:  [www.facebook.com/groups/SouthHighlandOWL/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/SouthHighlandOWL/)

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1. **Wildlife tracks & signs in the woods**
   Join Dan Puplett who is a naturalist, outdoor educator and certified wildlife tracker.

   Tracking is an ancient skill that engages all our senses and helps to develop observation, memory, empathy and deduction abilities. Once we start to unravel a tracking mystery we find ourselves becoming aware of, and understanding more about, mammals, birds, trees, insects, weather and many other aspects of the natural world.

   In this workshop you will learn how to identify a wide range of animal tracks and signs, and will also come away with some tracking games and activities that support outdoor learning.

   Saturday 15 February 2020 in Inverness (exact location tbc) from 1000 – 1600.

2. **Woodland beastie hunt**
   Join Sarah Walker of RSPB to get some ideas for some low cost beastie hunting activities which are suitable for groups of all ages and hone your identification skills. Come dressed for the weather and bring your own lunch.

   Saturday 21 March in Strathspey (exact location tbc) from 1000 – 1300.
**Tayside OWL Group**

**Event Calendar**

We will hold our AGM on 25th January. We will also have a woodland work out and a campfire cook out.

Our final event of the 2019/20 session will be a networking session on 25th April 2020 with more information coming out nearer the time.

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**Argyll Outdoor and Woodland Learning Group**

The Argyll Outdoor and Woodland Learning Group were visited by Matt Ritchie for an introduction to the First Foresters. Matt Ritchie is the archaeologist for Scotland’s newest agency, Forestry and Land Scotland. He is talked about The First Foresters – and the Mesolithic prequel Into the Wildwood (in development) – collaborating with archaeologists, ecologists, artists, designers and photographers to create a fresh take on our deep past. He was also behind Outdoor Archaeological Learning, and works to promote creative archaeological visualisation. He gave an entertaining illustrated talk, looking behind the scenes of the development of this collaborative work.
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](mailto:westfifeowl@gmail.com) giving your name, School, kit(s) wanted and date required.

During 2018-19 we ran several twilight workshops on a variety of topics: Worms & Soils; Risks & Benefits of Outdoor Play; Tools; Kelly Kettles; Seashore; Managing Landscapes and Natural Weaving. Here are a few photos from the Natural Weaving workshop with local Fife artist Bethany Snaddon.
**NEWS**

**Links with Higher or Further Education Institutions**
The Scottish Outdoor Learning Research Hub group are keen to develop and share outdoor learning research and practice across the network in Scotland. Are you an OWL Group which has active links with, or is close to a Further/Higher Education Institution? If so, please get in touch with Penny Martin (Outdoor Learning Advisor SNH) E: Penny.Martin@nature.scot

**Events**

Urban forests are vibrant places with multifaceted activities spanning health and well-being through to the urban bio-economy. They are already a major and very often the preeminent nature-based solution for many cities. Urban Forests are a great opportunity to tackle the climate emergency upon us by making urban areas more resilient. In recognition of this the conference theme for 2020 is: Urban Forestry for a Resilient Future.

This year the Forum is being held in the dynamic City of Manchester in North West England. With strong roots in its industrial past, Manchester has evolved to become a youthful city of innovators, entrepreneurs and urban design. However, the city region faces similar challenges to almost everywhere else in adapting to climate change.

Since 1992 Manchester has been a key focus for community forestry firstly through Red Rose Community Forest and more recently Manchester City of Trees. Together with the European Forest Institute, Manchester City of Trees are the key partners in EFUF 2020.

Submit your abstract now

**Funding**

We are delighted to announce that the [Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority Grant Scheme](http://example.com) 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](http://example.com) listed in the [National Park Partnership Plan](http://example.com).

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](http://example.com) to hold an 'Intro to Angling' event for young people in Callander to learn more about fishing and bankside safety.

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.

Quote of the month
"Fill your life with adventures, not things. Have stories to tell, not stuff to show. Unknown"

Activity of the Month Supplies:
Wool and Stick Christmas Trees

You will need:
Small sticks
Glue gun and glue Green wool
Decorations e.g. leaf confetti, mini pom poms, buttons UHU Glue
Yellow card
Scissors

- Make a stick tree shape by breaking twigs into 2 long side pieces, 1 short crosspiece and a little trunk.
- More able learners could square lash the triangle shape together or using the glue gun to fix them in place.
- Cut a long length of green wool and tie one end onto the tree.
- Wrap the wool around the tree repeatedly going from side to side and working your way up and down.
- When you have built up a green middle to the tree, tie the loose end of yarn.
- Glue or thread your tree decorations onto the strands of wool. You can use natural materials or any mini bits and bobs.
- Cut a golden star from yellow card and stick to the top of your tree
- Use an extra piece of wool to make a loop at the top of the tree so that it can be hung up.

www.kidscraftroom.com
Fact of the Month

Did you know that in the Ukraine, Christmas trees are often decorated with fake spiderwebs? It is believed that seeing a spiderweb on Christmas morning brings good luck. This belief comes from the story of a poor lady who could not afford to decorate her Christmas tree. On Christmas morning, she awoke to find spiders had decorated it with webs, and when the first rays of light touched the spiderwebs, they turned into gold and silver.

Recipe of the month

Camping Fondue

Fondue may be attributed to fancy dinners and restaurants, but you can do it camping too! A great way to use up Christmas chocolate.

Ingredients:
220g block of chocolate (or bag of choc chips) A dash of milk (add to desired consistency) Fruit or marshmallows (for dipping)

Method:
Heat a heavy saucepan over the camp fire and add chocolate. When the chocolate has melted, add milk and mix until combined. Remove the pan from the fire. Being careful of the hot pan - you could pour into another container if you can use it before it solidifies - use skewers, forks or sticks to dip fruit or marshmallows in the chocolate.

www.campsaustraliawide.com
Species of the Month
Sparrowhawk/Accipter nisus
The Eurasian sparrowhawk, also known as the northern sparrowhawk or simply the sparrowhawk, is a small bird of prey in the family Accipitridae.

Sparrowhawks are broad-winged raptors with long tails and long, thin yellow legs. Adult males have slate-grey upperparts and fine rufous barring underneath. Females have brownish-grey upperparts and less rufous barring than the male. They have a more prominent white line above the eye.

Sparrowhawks are specialist hunters of more than 120 species of bird, ranging in size from goldcrest to pheasant. Despite this preference for feathered prey, they have been recorded taking a wide variety of small mammals, including bats captured in flight. Many of their victims are plucked and eaten while still alive. Contrary to popular belief, sparrowhawks do not control the numbers of their prey, but the numbers of prey control the number of sparrowhawk. Sparrowhawk ensure the health of their prey population by weeding out the sick and unwary. They hunt by surprise, but frequently crash into windows when pursuing their prey.

Sparrowhawks frequently fall prey themselves to goshawks, who will not tolerate the smaller birds in their territory. Tawny owls are also major predators of young sparrowhawks.

Female sparrowhawks are typically 25% larger than males, but often twice as heavy. Because of the size difference, male sparrowhawks court the females with caution, as the female can kill her suitor. The female is dependent on extra food provided by the male to produce enough fat to allow her to lay eggs.

In medieval falconry, the sparrowhawk was deemed to be a bird for a priest. In falconry the male spar has long been known as the musket. The name was later used for the small handgun used by soldiers (hence musketeers).

Like all birds of prey, sparrowhawks are vulnerable to pesticide poisoning. The species was virtually wiped out in Eastern England in the 1960s due to DDT either killing them or rendering them infertile. During the sparrowhawk’s absence, no obvious increase appeared in songbird breeding numbers, nor was there an obvious decline when hawk numbers recovered.

Most young sparrowhawks will breed within 20km of where they were raised. Birds which use the same nesting territory in successive years will usually also have the same mate. British sparrowhawks are largely resident, but migrants from northern Europe both pass through and winter here.
A male sparrowhawk can survive for two or three days with food, but the larger female can last for up to six days. While a male sparrowhawk can live to seven or eight, the female may survive until she is ten or 11. Sparrowhawks gained full protection in Britain in 1961.

www.livingwithbirds.com

1. **Collective noun of the month**
   An aurora of polar bears

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**Contact:**

To contact your local OWL group please go to the OWL Scotland website

**Or contact us:**

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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!)