



**Outdoor & Woodland Learning Scotland Bulletin
November/December 2017**

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 Update:

OWL Scotland Networking Event 2018

Booking is now open for the OWL Scotland National Networking Event which will take place on Friday 23rd to Sunday 25th February which will be held at Kindrogan Field Studies Center in Perthshire. There will be the usual mix of exciting workshops, networking opportunities and fun. Workshops this year will include Maths and Numeracy Outdoors, The Physics of Fire, and Nothing to do Wands!

For more information please see the [booking form](#). Book early to avoid disappointment. Workshops are allocated on a first come first serve basis and priority booking is given to OWL Group members.

To check out what happened at last year's event you can see the [report](#) here.

OWL Scotland goes International

We were delighted to receive these photos and message from India.

Lok Jeevan Vikas Bharti is a Gandian ashram in a remote valley in the Garwhal area of Uttarakhand in the Indian Himalaya. The ashram works on gender equality and health issues in isolated villages, campaigns on environmental issues and runs a community tree planting programme. It also runs a residential school for 80 girls from remote villages, all nominated by local outreach workers- around a quarter are orphans, some have health issues and others are at risk in various ways. The girls learn self-sufficiency (including working in the ashram's fields) and are encouraged to get involved in local community issues. Conditions in the school are very basic with no resources at all- so a parcel of OWL resources-pictures, stickers and transfers, and magnifying

glasses- caused huge excitement! A whole week of teaching was based around a poster of a Scots Pine- and the magnifying glasses - used with every class- were treated with reverence and led to endless discussions and discoveries. Walnuts, turmeric leaves, fruit partly eaten by monkeys, giant spider webs....Thank you OWL!



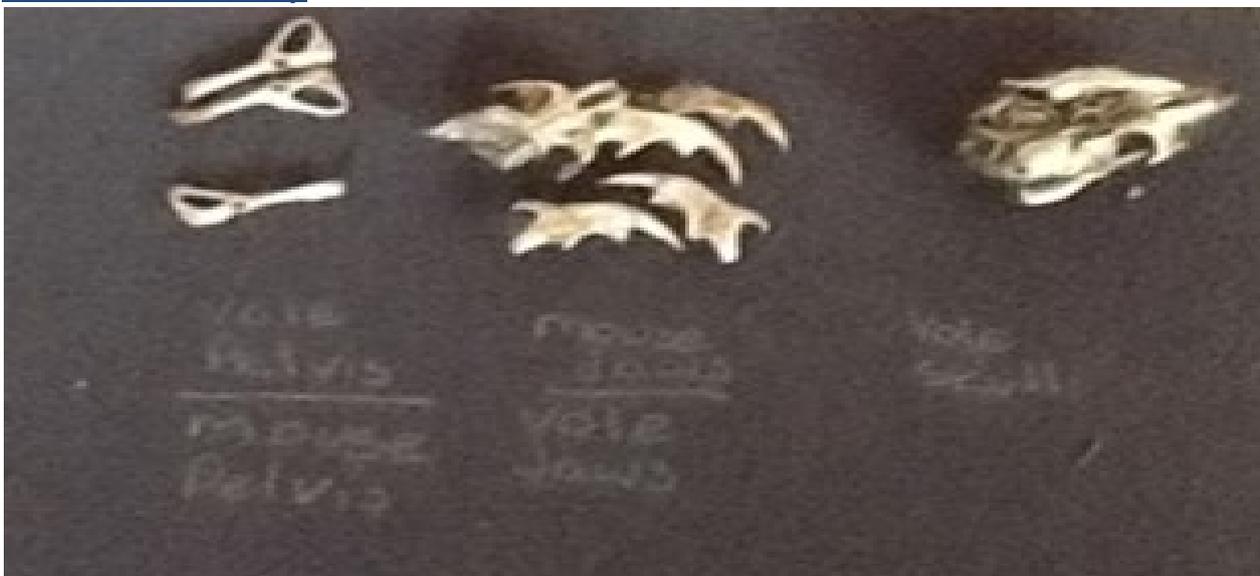
Local OWL Events and News:

MorayOWL Group



The Moray OWL Group held their AGM and skill share event at Duffus, near Elgin on Saturday 18th November. Activities included woodland crafts for early years and outdoor birdfeeder making.

West Fife OWL Group



Workshop: Investigating Owl Pellets

Date: Monday 29th January 2018

Time: 4pm to 5.30pm

Venue: SSERC, South Pitreavie Business Park, Dunfermline, KY11 8UU

NB – This workshop will take place indoors but will relate to outdoor environments.

Workshop description:

This hands-on workshop will provide the opportunity to develop science inquiry and investigative skills while examining real-life evidence of a food chain and learning how to identify the prey species in an owl's diet. While this workshop will take place indoors it will relate to outdoor environments and the course content will complement a range of outdoor learning activities, specifically those linked to food chains and food webs as well as activities that explore animal adaptations for survival. The activities in this workshop will help to address: **SCN 1-01a, SCN 2-01a, SCN 1-02a, SCN 2-02a** as well as offering suggestions to link to Literacy and Numeracy Experiences & Outcomes.

This course is organised and funded by West Fife OWL Group. Places are limited. To apply for a place on this course, please e-mail westfifeowl@gmail.com by Monday 15th January 2018.

[Greater Glasgow OWL Group \(GROWL\)](#)

Upcoming GROWL Events

Glasgow Region OWL are planning a few events for 2018, if you're interested in attending any please send us an email at hello@glasgowowl.com OR message us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/OWLScotland/>

First up we've got an **Outdoor First Aid course February 17-18th 2018 at Pollok Country Park in affiliation with BASP.**

Then on **March 24th 2018** we're hosting a **Networking day at Auchengillan Outdoor Centre.**

We've booked the pods for anyone who'd like to stay overnight. We'll have use of the fire pit and Tipi too.

If you've a skill to share or would like to lead a workshop, we'd love to hear from you!

We're also organising a couple of CPD events for later in the year:

Tracking - April/May 2018

Foraging - Autumn 2018.

Look out for more details on these in the new year!

Monthly Meetings

We hold monthly GROWL meetings around the 8th of each month, from around 7pm, and everyone is welcome to attend. Our November meeting was fireside at the Pollok Country Park Forest School site and we were treated to clear starry skies. Look out for the latest meeting details on our Facebook page. Our next meeting will be January 2018.

Please contact us if you'd be interested in hosting a meeting at your site, we'd love to visit!

Wishing all our fellow OWLs a fun festive season, a very Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year. Here's to a fabulous year of outdoor learning in 2018!!



South Highland OWL Group

South Highland OWL Group CPD Courses Programme for winter 2017 and spring 2018

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 in the area. All workshops are **FREE** and counts for **CPD** time for all teachers.

Choose from the list on the right and:

Send name(s) & establishment to: julietpcrobinson@gmail.com.



I will then send a confirmation and location map for each workshop.

Follow our **FACEBOOK page on:**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/SouthHighlandOWL>

1. Magical Kavads

Join us for a creative writing workshop, using inspirational props with Trish Matthews, adult learning co-ordinator, Sutherland.

Saturday 24 February 2018 at Abriachan Forest Trust from 1000 – 1300.

2. Wildlife Gardens

A collection of simple wildlife garden ideas to help Give Nature a Home in your school garden with Sarah Walker of RSPB

Saturday 3 March 2018 at Carrbridge Primary School from 1000 – 1300

3. Art of Pewter Casting

Join Lara Greene for an intensive day of working with Pewter drop casting. You will use lead free pewter, which looks like silver and discover the ancient method of cuttlefish bone casting and much more!

Saturday 21 April 2018 from 1000 – 1530. Location TBC in Central Highlands

Places are limited with a max number of 12.

4. Gaelic in the woods

Join Gaelic-speaking journalist Roddy Mclean to learn some Gaelic names for native plants, place names and Highland lore connected to them.

Saturday 2 June 2018 at Craig Phadraig woods, Inverness from 1000 - 1300

Argyll and Bute OWL Group

The group recently held a photographic competition for an Argyll and Bute OWL Group calendar. Plenty of entries were received and the judging was very difficult. A ballot was held to establish the winners. Here is the winner of the 16 and over category by Mrs Blake from Clachan Primary School.



New Resources:

We have recently published 2 new guidance resources further to requests from the OWL groups:

[Tool Use Guidance](#) for OWL Groups and
[Fire Guidance](#) for OWL Groups.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the content of the resources. We hope you like them! They are currently available for download only.
Coming Soon... a new Guidance Note on Health and Hygiene for Outdoor Cooking.

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>

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

Plantlife Scotland Celtic Rainforest Resource



'Plantlife Scotland have brought out a new educational resource primarily for National 3 – 5 level based on the Celtic Rainforests of the West of Scotland.

The resource takes the form of a woodland survey (with pre- and post- survey activities, including a citizen science element in conjunction with RBGE), where students score the botanical value of their survey woodland through a range of criteria, including presence of lichens and mosses. It is ideally to be carried out in the west of Scotland, but not exclusively, as comparison surveys can be undertaken in other woodlands.

The resource can be downloaded for free from the link below:

<http://www.wildaboutplants.org.uk/scotland/projects/celtic-rainforests/#resources>

There are 3 parts to download (1) background educator notes 2) student survey scorecard 3) Scottish Curriculum links), and a small questionnaire to fill in for each download – please bear with these! – they are for evaluation and reporting purposes.

This resource forms part of our ‘Secrets of the Celtic Rainforest’ project aimed to highlight the importance of Scotland’s temperate rainforest (rarer than tropical rainforest!) and the internationally important lichens and mosses that grow within them’.

Beyond the Boundary



Beyond your Boundary
easy steps to learning in local greenspace

click this icon to start
Main Menu

Scottish Natural Heritage
Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba
All of nature for all of Scotland
Teacher an fheadh mhòran Alba an fheadh

BIG STEPS FOR NATURE
MEETING THE 2030 CHALLENGE
FOR SCOTLAND'S BIODIVERSITY

www.beyondyourboundary.scot

Have you discovered the learning potential in your local greenspace?

Your pupils have an entitlement to Learning for Sustainability, which includes outdoor learning and daily contact with nature. Learning in green or natural spaces can lead to greater engagement and challenge and enjoyment. Outdoor learning can help raise attainment and have positive impacts on physical and mental health.

Beyond your Boundary: easy steps to learning in local greenspace will help you to find, access and use your local greenspace for learning. It also offers support to help you improve your greenspace and spread and embed learning in local greenspace in your establishment. It is for educators in all schools, of any subject, working with pupils of all stages.

Be it an unloved grassy area, a woodland owned by a neighbour, a large local authority park, or anything in between, taking learning in to local greenspace can open up almost endless possibilities!

- "I can't believe we have existed so closely to this place and never made use of it... I felt that the curricular areas were endless." *P1 teacher, North Lanarkshire*
- "After the first visit my brain was buzzing with ideas... I think this will have a very memorable impact on the class." *S3 teacher, Fife*
- "I didn't know how close I live to nature." *S5 pupil, Clydebank*

The resource has been designed to be viewed onscreen, reducing printing costs for schools and offering clickable links to other sources of support. The resource will evolve; incorporating the experiences of schools that are learning in local greenspace, including those taking part in the [Learning in local greenspace project](#) part of Scotland's Biodiversity: a Route Map to 2020.

#beyondyourboundary

Outdoor Access Practical Guide for Teachers

In response to teachers saying how hard they found it to find the relevant information on the SOAC website about their rights and responsibilities when taking groups outdoors, an 'Outdoor Learning' tab has been added to the website.

www.outdooraccess-scotland.com/Practical-guide/public/outdoor-learning

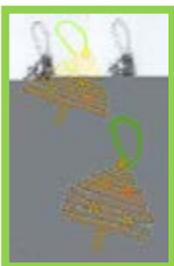
Quote of the month

"The man who asks a question is a fool for a minute. The man who does not ask, is a fool for life."
Confucius

Fact of the Month

Did you know that Winter is caused by the axis of the Earth in our hemisphere being oriented away from the Sun?

Activity of the Month



Lollypop Stick and Twigs Christmas Tree Ornaments

You'll need:

- o craft lollypop sticks
- o twigs and branches
- o white school glue
- o scissors
- o wool/string
- o sequins or other decorations

Start with a lovely walk in the nature collecting all kinds of twigs.

If the twigs aren't dry, dry them first (you can dry them at a low temperature in the oven).

Break up the twigs to get different lengths.

Apply a generous amount of glue along 3/4 of popsicle stick.

Start gluing on the twigs starting with the smallest on the top, adding larger ones till bottom.

Let them dry completely.

Glue wool or string on the back side if you wish to hang this ornament.

You can leave them as they are or take it a step further and decorate with sequin, pom poms, etc.

Plant of the Month

Nordmann Fir / Abies Nordmanniana

The species is named after Finnish zoologist Alexander von Nordmann (1803-1866).

Also known as the Caucasian fir, it is a fir indigenous to the mountains south and east of the Black Sea, in Turkey, Georgia, Russian Caucasus, north Armenia and northwest Azerbaijan.

It is a powerful, large growing forest tree attaining up to 60m (197 ft) tall and with a trunk diameter of up to 2m (almost 7 ft). In Russia, some specimens have been reported to be 85m (279 ft) tall and are thought to be the tallest trees in Europe.



It is also a popular ornamental tree in parks and large gardens, its dense formal shape, dependable dark green foliage and wide cultural adaptability make the Nordmann Fir a stately lawn specimen. Branches are densely clad with flattened, glossy dark green needles these have two white stomatal bands underneath.



This variety is also the preferred choice of Christmas Tree in the UK as the tree benefits from its ability to retain its needles for longer in an indoor environment. Most of these trees are grown on plantations especially for the Christmas market. The British Christmas Tree Growers Association estimate about 80% of the trees

sold are Nordmann Fir. This tree will usually last around four weeks in good condition before it begins to dry out

It is estimated that each acre of Christmas trees produces enough oxygen to meet the needs of 16 people. Real Christmas trees are generally better for the environment than artificial trees because they do not use non-biodegradable plastics and metals, and can be recycled through chipping for use in gardens.

Christmas tree growers usually replant two or three seedlings for every Christmas tree that is harvested to begin the cycle of growing, fixing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen again straight away.

www.treeseedonline.com

www.bctga.co.uk

Recipe of the month

Hot Chocolate Station

For a bit of a luxury indulgence how about this slow cooker hot chocolate drink? Just add mugs, ladles, and toppings of your choice such as small marshmallows, chocolate buttons, etc. and let everyone help themselves.

300g drinking chocolate powder
2 big spoonfuls of chocolate and hazelnut spread
1 small carton of single cream
4 pints of milk
2 spoons of sugar (optional)

Add ingredients together.



Stir well with an electric whisk.

Cook on high in a slow cooker for 2 hours, stirring occasionally.

www.facebook.com/swordsandsnoodles

Species of the Month

(European) Turtle Dove / Streptoelia turtur



The turtle dove is Britain's only migratory pigeon or dove. It is also the smallest native pigeon, weighing between 100 and 180gm, less than half the weight of a wood pigeon and could be confused with Collared Dove, which is larger and essentially pale buffy grey all over.

The Turtle Dove has a darker, shorter tail than Collared's with white sides, broken white terminal band with inner border black. Centre of the tail is grey, this runs up the doves back, mantle and onto the head, getting paler as it travels up. The wings are chequered and spangled with dark centres and orangey –brown edges to the feathers. The head is pale grey; eye is red and the neck shows a patch of black and white stripes. The throat and breast is a very pale apricot and belly is white. The bill is black and dainty, legs dark pink and eye orange-red with dark pink bare skin eye ring.

Turtle doves have always been rare in both Scotland and Ireland, but they have now largely disappeared from Wales, too, with the bulk of the remaining population in southern and eastern England. Suffolk and Kent are the top counties for finding these doves.

Turtle doves arrive on their breeding grounds in southern and eastern England at the end of April and early May, returning to their wintering grounds in West Africa in late summer and early autumn.

UK turtle doves winter mainly in the semi-arid region of Senegal and Guinea.

Birds from eastern European countries winter in Sudan and Ethiopia.

Birds on migration have long been subject to strong hunting pressure as they pass through the Mediterranean countries. Today only Malta has a legal spring shooting season for these doves but they are still shot illegally elsewhere.

However, though Britain's breeding population has declined by an alarming 91% in the last 10 years, the decrease is thought to be due largely to problems on the wintering and breeding grounds rather than hunting.

Weed seeds are the favoured food of turtle doves in England; increasingly tidy, weed-free farming is almost certainly a major factor in the dove's decline. One of the turtle dove's favourite food plants is fumitory, which favours light, dry soils. A study made 50 years ago showed that fumitory seeds accounted for 30-50% of the bird's diet.

The turtle dove's song is a gentle, soporific purring, usually delivered from cover. In the Bible, the Song of Solomon states: "the voice of the turtle is heard in our land". This is a reference to the purring of turtle doves.

Turtle doves like to nest in thick hedgerows, usually building their simple platform nest rather low and seldom above 3m. Only two white eggs are laid in each clutch but it was, until recently, usual for the doves to have three nesting attempts each summer. Today lack of food has led to the doves nesting later, usually only making two breeding attempts a year.

The RSPB's Operation Turtle Dove is working hard to reverse the dove's decline in the UK. In 2014 the RSPB caught a turtle dove in a Suffolk garden and fitted it with a satellite tag. Called Titan, this dove returned in the summer of 2015, giving unprecedented information about doves' migration routes.

We now know that turtle doves migrate largely at night, covering up to 700km in one flight, and flying at speeds of around 60kph.

www.livingwithbirds.com

www.twootz.com



Collective noun of the month

A worm of Robins

Funding

Grounds for Learning

The new small grants scheme is open

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

Community Fund

The FCS Community Fund supports community groups and organisations that encourage people to use woods more. The guidance document can be found [here](#).

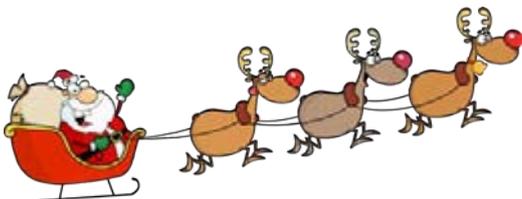
Themes Announced – International Day of Forests – 21st March

The Themes for the International Day of Forests are:

2018 - "Forests and Sustainable Cities"

2019 - "Forests and Education".

THANKS



Thank you all for all your hard work and contributions to OWL Scotland over the year. The next bulletin will come out at the end of January. Wishing you all a very happy festive season. Yo ho ho from Bonnie

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.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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