# Caledonia Wild!

The magazine for members of Trees for Life

## Thanks a million!

Welcome to this special edition of *Caledonia Wild!*, which commemorates the planting of the millionth tree of our project. This major milestone will take place on 20th May at Dundreggan, when Gordon Buchanan, BBC wildlife cameraman and natural history film-maker, will pick up a spade and put the millionth tree in the ground since we first began planting, back in 1991. We're planning to make it a memorable day, with a range of activities planned for it, and I hope that as many of our members and supporters as possible will join us then.

When I had the inspiration to start the project, I didn't have any specific goals, except to help regenerate and restore the Caledonian Forest in what we now call our Project Area – about 1,000 square miles of land to the west of Inverness and Loch Ness. I certainly didn't think about numbers of trees, and initially at least the work was focussed on natural regeneration, rather than tree planting. However, in the course of reaching agreement with Forestry Commission Scotland for the initial regeneration area at Coille Ruigh in Glen Affric, the opportunity arose to assist with another scheme, for planting Scots pines at Athnamulloch, in the spring of 1991.

I was very moved by the experience of planting those trees in what was then a barren landscape, with a few stumps the only reminder of the forest that had previously flourished there. In the two decades since, as I've watched the trees grow and other life such as insects, birds and understorey plants spontaneously recolonise the new forest, I've come to appreciate the huge impact that 'the simple act of planting a tree' can have, in helping to heal the land in the Highlands.



*Scots pines planted at Athnamulloch in Glen Affric in 1991, seen here in 2007.*

Each tree has the potential to be a home and habitat for many other organisms, not just now, but, for a tree such as Scots pine, for several hundred years into the future. When I multiply that potential by a million, and extrapolate it for a century of two, the magnitude of the venture we are involved with comes more fully into perspective. I've often said that it will be the generations of people yet to be born who will fully benefit from the work we do today, as it will be they who see the forest in its maturity, and full of life. However, it's the thousands of volunteers, all our supporters, and everyone who's been part of the Trees for Life staff team, who have enabled us to reach this achievement of a million trees. I offer my heartfelt gratitude to them all for helping to make the vision of a restored Caledonian Forest a reality.

We're planning a couple of other major events to celebrate as well – a lecture tour that I'll do throughout the UK in March and April, and a sponsored Treelay event, of walking and cycling, to link up all the main sites where we've worked, and planted the million trees, over the past 21 years. More details about these are on the inside pages, so if you can't join us on 20th May, please support one of these other events, or send a donation towards our next million trees, and help us celebrate this tree-mend-us achievement!

***Alan Watson Featherstone***



*Alan planting a juniper at Dundreggan in May 2010.* PHOTO BY JULIE MCPHILIPS.

In this Spring 2012 issue: 21 years of tree planting • Treelay 2012 • Friends of Dundreggan
Lichens – the 'leaves' of winter • Millionth Tree Lecture tour • Wych elm species profile

# Restoring the Forest

## Special feature – The planting of a million trees

By Mick Drury



*Grant McFarlane, a volunteer on our first ever Work Week, planting one of our first trees - a Scots pine at Athnamulloch in April 1991.*

Working with volunteers, Trees for Life has planted some 998,000 trees over the past 21 years at a range of sites in our Project Area, contributing to the vision of restoring a large scale native forest in the West Highlands. Only 2,000 to go to meet our deadline for the millionth tree in May this year! Where have all these trees been planted?

### FCS Glen Affric

The early planting was focused on Glen Affric through agreement with Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) and with funding for some fences from the then Nature Conservancy Council. The groups were based at the remote Athnamulloch bothy, chopping wood and fetching water from the river, occasionally breaking the ice to splash the face in the morning!

The Athnamulloch 1 exclosure, an area of 63 ha, was planted over the 1991/92 period with 20,000 Scots pine. There was some scepticism at the time that planting pine this far west, where soils are poor and the climate so wet, would not be that successful without significant ground preparation methods. Pine grows better in the drier conditions to the east, e.g. in the Cairngorms. Michelle Crowell, from Cambridge University, studied the ecological processes affecting the new trees here for her doctoral thesis between 1995-98. She enquired whether the basic conditions required for tree seedling establishment persist at former forest sites, and are facilitated by low-impact planting. She found that drainage, competing vegetation, topography and nitrogen availability were all significant variables. Looking at the area 20 years later, the results have indeed been mixed, but this has led to trees growing at different rates thus enhancing the landscape appearance of a natural looking young forest. The more sheltered east facing slopes of the knolls within the exclosure, sheltered from the prevailing westerlies, have the better growth with trees now up to 8m in height. Many trees are now coning and providing seed for the wind to carry further afield.

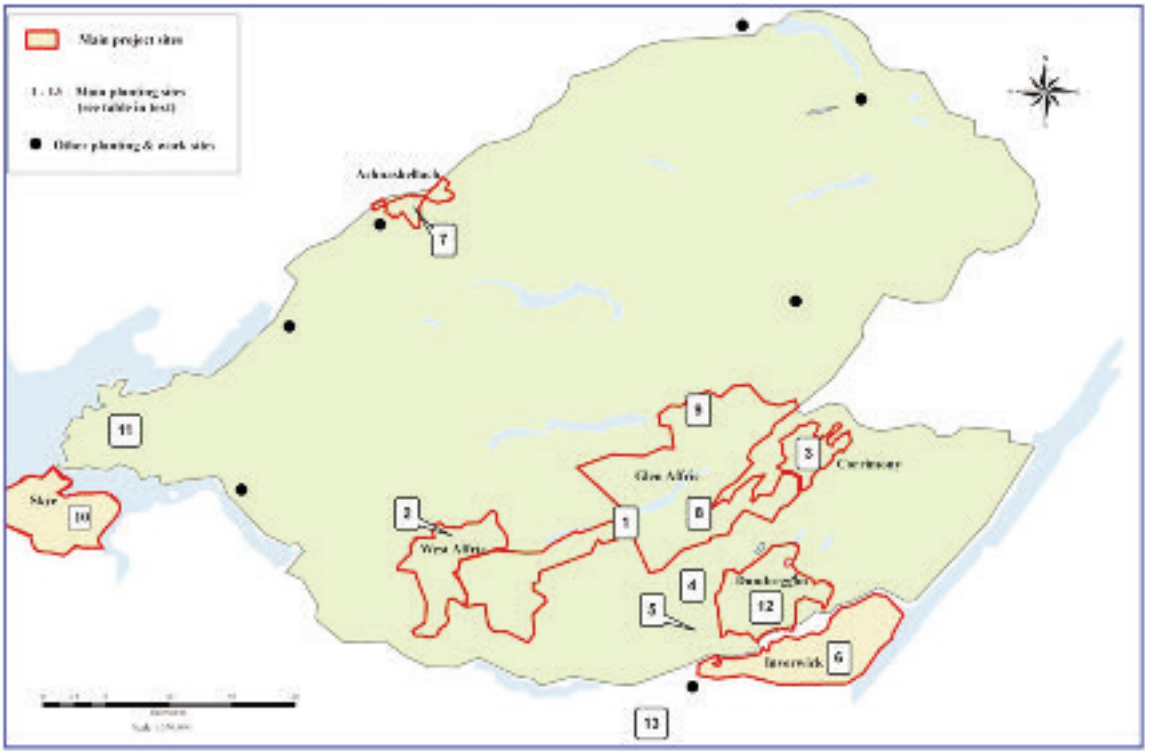
Michelle also questioned whether successful establishment of the trees would encourage the natural development of the other elements of the forest, including colonisation by native plants, animals and micro-organisms. This summer we hope to welcome a student from Imperial College who will return to examine how far these ecological processes have in fact

"I planted my first trees for life in Glen Affric in the early spring of 1996. Between us, my fellow volunteers and I planted thousands of trees over two weeks on the barren hillsides of Mullach Fraoch-Choire, but I have always remembered a particular rocky outcrop on which I worked. I carefully placed the little Scots pines amongst the rocks to give them as much protection from the wind as I could, and I dedicated them to friends and family. Ten years later, on a fine May morning, I returned to find a transformed landscape; the previously bare and eroded ground was covered in a deep and luscious carpet of heather, mosses and blaeberry, buzzing with the sound of insects. I found my rocky outcrop, atop which now stood a grove of healthy and maturing pines, some of which had outgrown me. It was a magical moment, and I had a real appreciation of the significance of what we did a decade ago to give nature a helping hand, and what hundreds of Trees for Life volunteers do every year".

**Paul Knights**



BELOW: *Mick Drury (right) and a volunteer planting a birch on the slopes of Mullach Fraoch-Choire in Glen Affric in May 2005.*




**Map showing the locations where we've planted the million trees since 1991.**

| Site | | Trees planted |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Glen Affric | 243,000 |
| 2 | West Affric | 206,000 |
| 3 | Corrimony | 115,000 |
| 4 | Balnacarn | 71,000 |
| 5 | Allt na Muic | 11,000 |
| 6 | Glen Moriston | 61,000 |
| 7 | Achnashellach | 46,000 |
| 8 | Glen Cannich | 88,000 |
| 9 | Cougie | |
| 10 | Skye | 28,000 |
| 11 | West coast sites* | 29,000 |
| 12 | Dundreggan | 86,000 |
| 13 | Glen Garry | 12,000 |
| Other sites | | 2,000 |
| Total trees at January 2012 | | 998,000 |

* The west coast sites are at South Strome, Achnahinich, Balmacara

developed over the last 20 years. There have surely been dramatic changes, as can be seen from photos of the site at www.treesforlife.org.uk/tfl.athnamulloch.html. Having been out there myself several times in recent years, it's gratifying to see the differences compared to the degraded land outside the fence, to hear the birdsong of willow warblers and, last year, to spot the distinctive flash of white wing bars as a male black grouse flew off.

"The most exciting moments for me were the establishment of regular work weeks at the bothy to plant the Athnamulloch exclosure. Trying to work out how densely to plant our trees, what ground was the best, which to leave unplanted in order to create a natural forest, rather than a plantation. It was also inspiring to live with our volunteers in primitive conditions, a real wilderness experience in the heart of the Highlands, quite wonderfully transformative for some of us. Ending a wet day with wonderful candle lit suppers, created through experimental recipes, followed by story-telling and musical offerings ... it all made for an unforgettable week."

**Fay Blackburn**



During the 1990s a further eight exclosures were planted on FCS land in Glen Affric; two of these, at Meallan and Glac Daraich, involved fundraising for new fencing. Others, at Gleann na Ciche and above the bothy at Doire Carnoch, involved the felling of young plantations which had been inappropriately sited there during the 1970s. A ninth, at Ghubhais, was created for natural regeneration, but with the limited success achieved through this method, subsequent planting was arranged during the 2004-07 period. The half-millionth tree, an aspen, was planted there in June 2005. In total, some 243,000 trees were planted by volunteers within these ten exclosures, covering 786 ha, predominantly Scots pine and downy birch, but with small numbers of other species where appropriate, including alder, rowan and eared willow. We are still working in some of these areas, with the attention now more focused on removing the regenerating former plantation non-native species, lodgepole pine and Sitka spruce.

"I have good memories of running Trees for Life work projects in Glen Affric in the early 1990s. I remember planting an area west of the Athnamulloch bothy and was delighted to visit the same place 10 years later and see that the trees were all doing well. The summer work projects could be quite hot and midgey and at the end of a hard day's physical exertion we all always used to look forward to going for a refreshing dip in the falls on the Allt na Ciche burn just above the bothy."

**Jonathan Preston**



LEFT: *Trees for Life Patron Muriel Gray planting an aspen as the half millionth tree of our project in Glen Affric, June 2005.* PHOTO BY BARBARA COATES.

FAR LEFT: *Fay Blackburn and Adam Powell with one of the first aspen trees we planted, at Glac Daraich in Glen Affric in 1993.*

"I still have vivid memories of my first planting with Adam Powell and Bryan Cosgrove in Gleann na Ciche in March 1999, mainly Scots pines on a rather snowy slope. We were very wet by the end of the day and getting everyone's outdoor gear dried out in the bothy was quite a feat. I liked the idea that we were planting pine in clusters so that over time the area would develop as a mixed age stand."

**Joan Fairhurst**



ABOVE: *A volunteer with a newly-planted Scots pine beside an old pine stump in Gleann na Ciche in Glen Affric.*

## NTS West Affric

During the period 1996-2000 TfL was also busy further west in Glen Affric on the West Affric Estate, at that time recently acquired by the National Trust for Scotland (NTS). The Trust bought this land in part through a donation from Chris Brasher, of Brasher boots fame, and he asked that TfL be involved with woodland restoration work on the ground. Adam Powell, who left TfL after 18 years in 2011, did a lot of work to map out potential exclosures, both for planting and natural regeneration, and to secure grant aid for them through the Woodland Grant Scheme which operated then. He has stories of travelling out there frequently during that period, undertaking surveys and then meeting fencing contractors; it's a remote area, but has the youth hostel sited there which was useful for volunteer accommodation. A total of ten exclosures were erected, ranging in size from 10-52 ha, the smaller areas being for regeneration and with the larger five exclosures planted. Altogether, 192,000 trees were planted, predominantly a mix of broadleaves, mainly downy birch, eared willow and alder, with a small number of Scots pine at Carnach Mor, the most easterly of the areas. Volunteers stayed at the youth hostel, walking out each day to the planting sites, sometimes several kilometres away.

"I have always felt a special affinity to West Affric, the beauty, majesty and stillness of this wild place touched my heart and I returned year after year to the estate. On summer evenings, when work was finished for the day, just to sit behind the hostel and watch the sun dip down behind the hills was the perfect ending to a perfect day. For me those weeks are full of memories of enjoyable and worthwhile work, special friendships and most of all the remoteness and beauty of the area."

**Elaine Dempsey**

RIGHT: *One of the Scots pines planted at the Allt na Muic site on the Tomchrasky Estate in 2001, seen here in April 2005.*

BELOW: *Alan Watson Featherstone in May 2011, with some of the first pines we planted at Athnamulloch 20 years previously, in 1991.*



West Affric is important as a potential link in a forest habitat network towards the west coast and we've been back in recent years to 'beat up' the planting with a further 14,000 trees and to add fertiliser. This is a very demanding area for tree establishment, due to climate and poor soils. Further, in some years there have been high numbers of voles, which gnaw the bark of young trees, and NTS has also had problems with winter snow damage to some fences, allowing deer in to browse, again causing damage. So it's a slower process than elsewhere, with ongoing work to consolidate what's been done, a lesson in patience and taking the long view! We hope that, in the not too distant future, FCS will be looking at further woodland creation from here southwards to Cluanie in Glen Shiel.

## Glen Moriston: Out of Affric

The late 90's also saw TfL venture out of Affric for the first significant project in Glen Moriston, with a private landowner at Meall Cuileig on the Balnacarn Estate. Volunteers stayed in the landowner's converted barn down in the glen, and had a tough walk up the hill each day carrying trees and spades. Some 71,000 trees were planted here, a mix of Scots pine and broadleaves, as the first step in a potential forest network, linking into dwarf birch protection work, between the glens. Later, in 2001 the concept was developed into the Allt na Muic Forest Corridor project, with a further site on the neighbouring Tomchrasky Estate where 11,000 trees were planted. Again, Adam worked on these schemes, from initial surveys, through grant applications and managing delivery on the ground.

We also started work with FCS in Glen Moriston, with a variety of work, including planting at Inverwick on the south side of the glen. Some aspen enrichment had already been achieved here, along the Allt Phocaichain, and with the removal of some of the plantation crop, we worked to replant the site. Many of these sites are Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) and therefore are listed as priorities for native woodland restoration once the crop is removed. Colin and I worked here in May 2008, during a blistering hot week (well, for Scotland!) Some 61,000 trees have been planted up here and elsewhere in the glen.



## Corrimony

The RSPB bought Corrimony in 1997 to restore native pinewood, principally for black grouse, with conservation of the other specialist pinewood birds, the crested tit and Scottish crossbill, also an aim. The Scottish crossbill is our only endemic bird, (found nowhere else), but difficult to distinguish from the 'regular' crossbill. We began work there

"One of my most memorable days on Corrimony was planting alder and willow in an area beside a small river (Strath Marsley). It stands out in my mind because we had knee-deep snow to contend with! We had to dig through the snow, make sure it was a good spot and then plant. It took a bit more time than usual, but was worth for the opportunity to be in such a stunning landscape."

**Dan Puplett**



Left: *Simon McLaughlin, the RSPB's manager for Corrimony (left), and Colin Hall in February 2012 with some of the Scots pines our volunteers have planted at Corrimony.* Photo by Mick Drury.

in 1999 with fence removal and felling plantation species, with planting started in 2001, and we've worked there for several weeks each spring and autumn since. Again, a lot of work has been done to restructure former plantations. With a total of 115,000 trees, the planting work is slowly coming to an end at Corrimony but we hope to continue our involvement there with other work into the future. For some, including one of our leaders, Heather Hunt, this has been their favourite site, given the mix of majesty and intimacy of the landscape. In 2008 I recall working on the reserve during the first visit of the Homeless Action Resource Project (HARP) group, folk from a homeless hostel in Southend, a tough but rewarding experience for them. "Best week of my life" one of them said afterwards.

## Skye and the West

The opportunity to work further west arose with funding for restoration work on Skye, through the Scottish Forest Alliance at the FCS Kyleakin and Kinloch Hills site. This is Atlantic oakwood rather than pinewood territory, working close to sea level. Early weeks here involved a boat trip from the mainland and camping close to the shore near the abandoned village of Leitir Fura. Now the groups stay in a local hostel; these weeks are always popular with volunteers and indeed it's a gorgeous part of the island, especially when the sun shines! A total of 28,000 trees have been planted there so far.

FCS also began work around the millennium on pinewood restoration at Achnashellach, in Glen Carron, where important remnant pines and ancient woodland features remained amongst the plantations. Again this work is ongoing and although we're not running weeks there this year we hope to return again in the future. Some 46,000 trees have been planted and I was impressed to see much of the recent planting doing well last autumn, in particular the downy birch, which can sometimes struggle to get established.

Other FCS sites in the west where we've worked include South Strome where 16,000 trees went in, and currently an oakwood restoration project at Balmacara where the first 1,000 trees were planted last year. During 2008/09 we also worked with a private landowner at Achnahinich, not far from Plockton, on a scheme with a more varied planting mix than usual, including oak, ash, gean and bird cherry … 12,000 trees added to the total.



Above: *Trees for Life staff, volunteers and Forestry Commission Scotland staff, at the planting of the quarter millionth tree of our project in Glen Affric in June 1999. Finlay MacRae, former head forester in Glen Affric, who planted the tree, is in the back row (wearing the cap).*

## Back to Affric

In recent years we've returned to the wider Glen Affric National Nature Reserve, to Glen Cannich and Cougie, working with FCS on planting pine and birch, plus smaller numbers of other species.

I was out in Glen Cannich last November, with Colin, looking at how the pines are establishing, on a beautiful cold frosty day. Once the sun reached us our fingers warmed up enough to use the tape measure and record our findings. It's interesting looking back at the earlier years' work, dating back to 2006 here, and note how well many of these trees are now doing, some with 15cm growth evident in 2011. There is also a substantial amount of natural regeneration, especially of birch, so that the lower slopes are already becoming young woodland. Total planting at Cannich and Cougie amounts to some 88,000 trees, with more work continuing.



Left: *Roy Turnbull and another volunteer in July 2011 repairing a stock fence protecting some aspens that were planted in Glen Affric in 2000.*

"My first attempt at tree-planting with Trees for Life was in April 1994 in the Meallan exclosure, but the snow was so deep that we gave up after half an hour and collected pine cones instead. My second was in Athnamulluch Two in May 1995 and my diary tells me it was hot and sunny and we had a swim in the river afterwards. In general, planting in stormy conditions has its advantages: then you come to appreciate what the young tree has to face and are encouraged to plant it in sheltered nooks, such as behind boulders, that it might flourish."

**Roy Turnbull**



*Scots pines at Athnamulloch, planted in 1991 and seen here in September 2007. Note the irregular pattern and density of the planting.*

Below: *Sally Kendall planting a hazel from our nursery in Glen Affric in November 2004.*

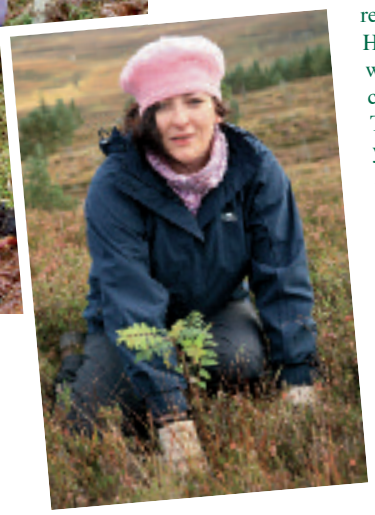


Right: *Susan Shaw of Standard Life planting a rowan tree at Corrimony in September 2007. This was one of 162,500 tree seedlings that we purchased with funds donated by Standard Life and planted at several Forestry Commission sites, Corrimony and Dundreggan between 2005-2011.*

Far right: *A volunteer planting a birch tree in the riparian area at Dundreggan in November 2009 – this was the first significant planting we did on the estate.*

## Glen Garry

With the departure of Kenneth Knott from FCS Inverness District to take up a new post in their Lochaber District office, we were invited to look at working in Glen Garry, another large scale pinewood restoration project across the hills to the south of Dundreggan. With a dramatic setting above Loch Garry, and lots of features of interest including oakwood remnants and the use of Highland cattle as woodland grazers, we could only say 'yes'. This will be our third year working there and we have now planted 12,000 trees, including a small number of dwarf birch on the upper slopes in 2011. Here restoration of the tree-line woodland is being considered as an important objective for site management.



"Search for a spot, not squelchy wet, not impossibly rocky. Dig a little hole, pop in a tree, heel it closed. A quick tug to check it's in tight. *Search. Plant. Tug.* A new patch of Caledonian Forest in the making. It's tedious. *Search. Plant. Tug.* It's exhausting, clambering about in the steep heather. *Search. Plant. Tug.* Maybe hell is like this, though probably not raining so hard. *Search. Plant. Tug...* did I really plant that whole bundle of trees? In a few years they'll be producing seed and planting more trees all by themselves. I think I just started a forest. I'll grab another bundle. I'm in heaven."

**Rob Pedley**

## Dundreggan

Last but not least, 2008 finally saw the realisation of a long held TfL ambition, to acquire land for demonstration purposes, with the purchase of the Dundreggan Estate in Glen Moriston. This coincided with the launch of a new grant aid scheme favourable towards native woodland creation, the Scottish Rural Development Programme, and we were able to get grant towards new planting at two locations, plus a contribution towards our wild boar experiment based on natural regeneration. The last 3 years have seen 86,000 trees planted on the Estate, and 2012 begins with work on a new 150 ha grant-aided scheme, around the Allt Fearna, in the centre-east of the estate.



## Thanks

To all the volunteers, and focalisers (leaders) who have worked on these projects over the last 21 years, a huge thanks is due. The forest couldn't have done it without you! And thanks also to the managers in partner organisations and those landowners who have trusted in the vision of a return of native woodland on a larger scale.

"At that time nothing felt more right than standing on the side of a Scottish mountain, spade in one hand, pine sapling in the other and working with a team of other volunteers to plant a native woodland. I look back on those days, staying at a remote bothy with no electricity, running water, mobiles, TVs or radios, and remember them as uniquely perfect. A memory that is quite precious."

**Jennie Martin**

# The Forest Frontline

## By Colin Hall

***Make a Conservation Holiday booking before March 31st and receive a 15% discount!***
*Just enter the code 'early15' in the promotions box on our bookings page, or quote it over the phone. For more details on the dates and locations available, visit the Conservation Holiday pages on our website or call Rosie on 0845 6027386.*

This year is a momentous one for Trees for Life with the major achievement of planting our 1 millionth tree as its highlight.

It is only the massive commitment of time and energy from over 4,000 volunteers and almost 100 focalisers over the last 21 years that has made reaching this milestone possible.

It is milestone rather than a target and we won't be resting on our laurels but using this as a springboard to launch into planting the next million trees, engaging and inspiring thousands more volunteers in our continuing vision to restore the Caledonian Forest and other natural habitats of the Highlands of Scotland.

As part of our ongoing efforts to keep improving the Conservation Holiday experience for our volunteers we ask them for their feedback and over 90% of them regularly say they will come back again and recommend us to their friends. Many volunteers enjoy their experience so much that they come back year after year and have planted countless trees over numerous weeks right across our Project Area. Some comments that volunteers have made over the years are:

*"I thought my experience was truly uplifting and am thankful for meeting such a knowledgeable, friendly and interesting bunch of people"* Ed, Cambs

*"I felt like I made a difference"* Michael, Fife

*" I really appreciated the friendly and supportive atmosphere, this experience has changed the way I see the countryside."* John, Leeds

*"I don't think I could have hoped for more."* Alex, Kent

*"A very positive and uplifting experience"* Danielle, Holland

*"I've learnt so much, I'd never expected this to be as rewarding as it has been"* Gillian, Elgin

*"A wonderful happy week full of good humour, sharing, caring and friendship"* John, Fife

*"It was so refreshing to feel like I was putting something back"* Sandy, Motherwell

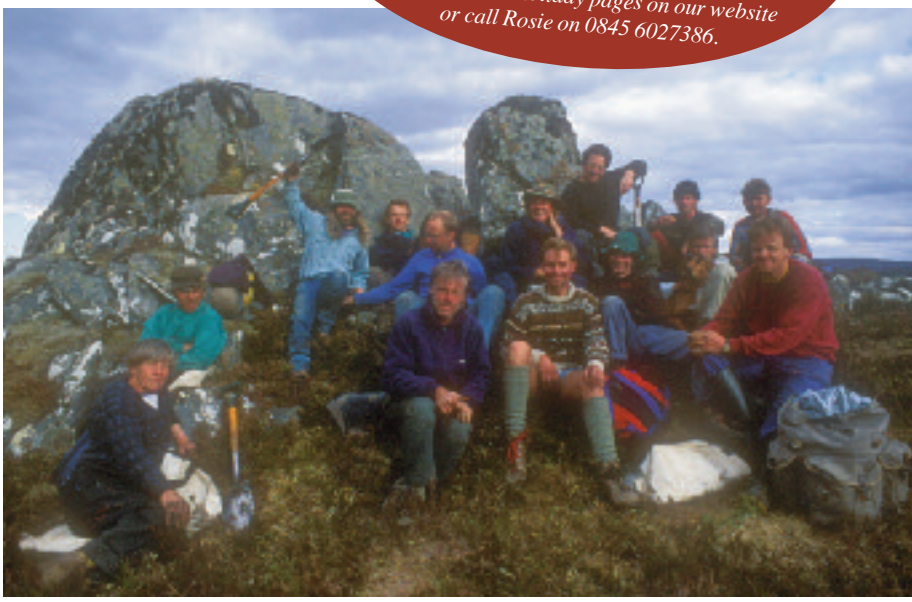
*"Great opportunity to reconnect with nature"* Kirsten, Nairn

*"A great way to have a relaxing, active holiday amongst a friendly group of people"* Adrian, Surrey

Although the focus at this time is on the tree planting, and we have planted 16 different species of native trees, the other work we undertake is equally important to restore the woodland and open ground habitats to their natural state. This work includes the removal of non-native species, dismantling of redundant fences, blocking ditches to restore bogs, nursery work and surveys.

If you live in London or Scotland and would like to come and volunteer with us there is a bursary scheme available to help with your expenses. The Wave of Friendship Grant gives up to £500 to encourage volunteering between London and Scotland and up to £100 for people living in Scotland who wish to take up a volunteering experience in other parts of the country. Expenses can be used to cover things like travel, accommodation and food.

You can apply as an individual or as part of a group and the application process is very easy. We have already had a number of volunteers who have taken advantage of this generous opportunity. Please visit their website at www.peoplemakingwaves.org.uk?pages/volunteerbursaries for more details.



ABOVE: *A volunteer Work Week group at the Glac Daraich site on FCS land Glen Affric in 1993. Volunteers planted a total of 23,500 Scots pines there in 1993 and 1994.*

We are very grateful for the continued generous support of Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS), the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and a number of individual Trust bodies without which the vital work we do with volunteers would not be possible.

This year we are running Conservation Holidays from mid-March to the end of May and from the beginning of September to the start of November. We are also running a week in the summer for the first time, at our new nursery at Dundreggan in early July.

If you feel that you would like to join us on any of these weeks and discover what a wonderful experience a Conservation Holiday can be, as well as help to start planting towards our next million trees target, then please look on our website at www.treesforlife.org.uk/tfl.ww.html, read our brochure or contact Rosie in the office on 0845 602 7386. You are invited to come as an individual, with a friend or partner or if you want to come with a large group and fill the week up then we would be pleased to welcome you and your contribution to this inspiring and worthwhile project.



BELOW LEFT: *A recent group of volunteers at the RSPB's Corrimony Nature Reserve.* PHOTO BY IAN DAVIDSON.

# Dundregg



*Steve Morris and a naturally regenerating juniper in the Allt Fearna exclosure.*

January 2012 saw the first trees planted in the new Allt Fearna site, a dramatic location north of Binnilidh Mhor, adjacent to the ancient birch woodland there, and also adjoining a young native woodland area planted by the previous owners of Dundreggan and a mature Forestry Commission plantation. Regular readers of *Caledonia Wild!* will be aware that this project has been in the planning stage for some time so it is great to see trees in the ground. 150 hectares have been deer fenced, around half of which will be planted with native trees. 15 hectares were planted by contractors this winter, and this will be supplemented with trees planted by volunteers in the spring. Tracked excavators will return in the summer to prepare the ground for planting the next section, which will take place in autumn 2012 and spring 2013.

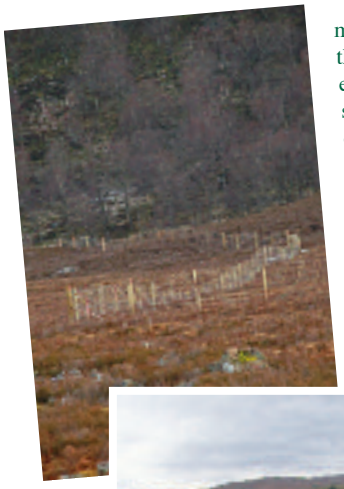
BOTTOM RIGHT: *Jill Hodge in October 2011 beside one of the birches planted in spring 2010 in the new native woodland area we've established in the northwest of Dundreggan, showing how well these trees have become established.* PHOTO BY STEVE MORRIS.

BELOW: *Part of the fence line of the Allt Fearna exclosure, with the ancient birchwood on the north side of Binnilidh Mhor visible behind.*

BOTTOM: *Ground preparation in the riparian exclosure at Dundreggan, showing the inverted mound technique that Steve has developed. Note the irregular spacing.*

## The importance of ground preparation

Volunteers who have planted trees at Dundreggan will be familiar with the inverted mound technique we have been experimenting with. Ground preparation is a vital element in ensuring the survival and rapid establishment of newly planted trees. For many decades foresters establishing plantations used large forestry ploughs to turn over the soil and produce regimented rows of conifers. As well as the negative impacts on landscape and biodiversity, ploughing had a number of other drawbacks, often resulting in soil erosion and wind throw.



In more recent years foresters have created individual mounds for trees. There are different options for achieving the mound but by far the most common is with an excavator bucket digging a hole and tipping the resulting soil beside it. Why do foresters go to all this work and expense? The reasons are multi-fold, chief amongst them being that it works! There are a number of advantages: the young tree benefits from localised drainage and lack of competition for moisture and nutrients from other vegetation. Turning of the soil has the effect of mobilising minerals in the soil, making them available to the roots of the growing tree – this is vital on nutrient-poor sites. The soil temperature regime also benefits from exposing bare soil (especially dark soils) – experiments have demonstrated that bare soil patches warm up considerably faster and stay warm for longer than ground with an insulating layer of vegetation, which results in stronger growth. The bare soil patches also increase the young transplants' uptake of rock phosphate fertiliser when it is applied directly to bare soil. The risk of potentially fatal damage from field voles and insect pests such as the pine weevil *Hylobius abietis* (a significant problem in plantations), both of which can kill young trees by stripping bark near the base of the tree, is greatly reduced, as they prefer to operate under cover of vegetation to avoid predators. The combination of these factors has led to the forester's mantra of: 'a raised, weed-free planting position'.





*Old birch trees on Dundreggan in February. The vivid green of*

There is one significant disadvantage of mounds and that is, in order to create a mound, one must also create a hole. Anyone who has had to walk across a mounded site knows how tricky it can be negotiating all the mounds and holes, which often fill with water (a situation made worse on a site which has been cleared of trees by the presence of stumps, harvesting debris, drains etc.). To alleviate this problem I have been working closely with the contractors to develop inverted mounds where the upturned soil is returned to the same hole and gently compacted by the bucket to ensure there are no trapped air pockets. Cultivation of the site in this way enables an experienced machine operator to select suitable planting positions by mixing layers of shallow peat with mineral layers below, while avoiding areas of deep peat, which are unsuitable for trees.

In areas of better soils I encourage the operators to produce more mounds, and the tree planters to plant at higher densities. The SRDP funding requires an average tree density of 1,600 trees per hectare, which can result in uniform planting patterns. At Dundreggan the financial support we receive from individual and corporate supporters allows us to plant extra trees at much higher densities, up to 5,000 trees per hectare, mimicking the density of natural regeneration, which can be much higher than this. The variable planting densities combined with random mound placements and no holes produces a much more 'natural' look and feel to the new native woodlands.



# gan News



*the mossy boulders provides a harbinger of spring still to come.*

## Nursery development and monitoring regeneration

In other news, we have been successful in gaining an Awards for All grant to develop the tree nursery at Dundreggan so we are pushing ahead with plans to set up 2 more polytunnels, installing the misting units for Aspen propagation and expanding areas of hard standing to set out containerised trees. Jill has made a significant impression to the interior and exterior of the lodge with the addition of houseplants and by planting wild flowers in the garden. The Robertson Trust have also provided funding to help monitor the impact of deer browsing, particularly on the margins of the birch woodland where regeneration is trying to establish. With that in mind, we have set up plots to measure the number and height of regenerating seedlings and will soon be purchasing some camera traps to set up in the woodland, to monitor when grazing by deer is taking place.

***Steve Morris***

## Biodiversity news

We've been getting the first reports in from the biodiversity surveys carried out at Dundreggan last year, and there are some new and interesting discoveries amongst them, which we featured in a press release in January, to mark the end of International Year of Forests in 2011. These include a species of *Amauronematus* sawfly whose larvae were feeding on dwarf birch (*Betula nana*) that is very unlikely to have been recorded in Britain before. The larvae were provisionally identified as *Amauronematus sempersolis*, which is known from Finland, Norway and Russia, although this identification needs to be confirmed by further study – hopefully that will happen in 2012. We were also able to confirm the identity of a tar spot fungus (*Atopospora betulina*) that has been found on the dwarf birch on Dundreggan – there are very few records of that fungus in Scotland.





*Birch tree on Dundreggan at sunset in winter.*

Other species of note that were found include the second-ever British record of a waxfly (*Helicoconis hirtinervis*), which was first confirmed as present in Britain earlier in 2011 from a single specimen found in Sutherland, the Red Data Book-listed Caledonian sac spider (*Clubiona subsultans*) and what may be the first British record of a cranefly (*Dicranomyia halterella*) in 10 years.

The second year of the dragonfly survey conducted by Jonathan Willet mapped the Red Data Book species, the azure hawker (*Aeshna caerulea*), which is classified as Vulnerable and under-recorded in Scotland. The study suggests that Dundreggan has the largest known single area of contiguous breeding habitat for the azure hawker in Scotland – although other areas of potentially suitable habitat have yet to be thoroughly surveyed.

These results add to the biodiversity value of the estate, and we're looking forward to another year of further surveys and possible discoveries in 2012, with specialists lined up to come and look for aphids, fungus gnats, slime moulds, sawflies and other groups of organisms. The staff from Plymouth University who did some canopy research last year are planning to return in June with a larger group of students and for a longer period, so this promises to be a busy year for studies and surveys.

BELOW: *Tar spot fungus (*Atopospora betulina*) on the leaves of a dwarf birch plant on Dundreggan.*





ABOVE: *Azure hawker dragonfly (*Aeshna caerulea*) on Dundreggan.*

## Funding update

On the fundraising front, we've had a series of grants approved recently for various projects at Dundreggan. As Steve mentions above, we've received a grant of £9,940 from Awards for All for the establishment of the tree nursery at Dundreggan, and another Lottery grant, from the Big Lottery Fund's Investing in Ideas scheme, has been approved for funding a feasibility study into the possible establishment of a Field Centre at Dundreggan. The People's Postcode Trust has also approved a grant of £10,000 for the purchase of tree seedlings, as part of the drive to reach the planting of our millionth tree on 20th May at Dundreggan, and we've also received approval from the British Ecological Society for a grant of £2,000 for an event entitled *'Exploring the lost world of biodiversity at Dundreggan in the Scottish Highlands'*, as part of the celebrations of their centenary in June 2013. Finally, we're delighted that the Audrey and JJ Martindale Foundation is continuing their significant funding for our work at Dundreggan this year.

***Alan Watson Featherstone***

FAR LEFT: *Larva of a sawfly (*Amauronematus sp.*) feeding on dwarf birch (*Betula nana*) on Dundreggan.*

BELOW LEFT: *Hoar frost and a frozen raindrop on a juniper twig on Dundreggan in January.*



AWARDS FOR ALL SCOTLAND
LOTTERY FUNDED

LOTTERY FUNDED

PEOPLE'S POSTCODE LOTTERY

# Treelay 2012

As part of the events to celebrate the planting of our Millionth Tree in May, we are organising an innovative and exciting Treelay Event for the two weeks leading up to the planting of the millionth tree itself on 20th May.

The Treelay consists of a relay of walking and cycling that links up the main areas where most of Trees for Life's practical work has been carried out since 1989. This will be both a literal and symbolic representation of our long term vision of linking up the woodland remnants in our Project Area to create a large area of native forest, and the route includes visits to all the main Caledonian Forest remnants there.

The Treelay is also planned as a fundraising and publicity-generating event, to raise awareness and funds for the next stage of our work, and towards the planting of the next million trees. Each walker or cyclist is asked to raise a minimum of £100 in sponsorship for the event, with all funds going to further our work.

*The Treelay participant who raises the most sponsorship will receive a Pájaro jacket like this, kindly donated by outdoor clothing company Páramo.*



## Event details

The Treelay will begin at Dundreggan on the morning of Saturday 5th May, taking an anti-clockwise route around our Project Area, and arriving back at Dundreggan on the afternoon of 19th May, the day before the Millionth Tree planting itself, on Sunday 20th May. It consists of 12 individual legs, 11 of which will involve walking, with the other one being a cycling route.

The tree that will be planted as the millionth tree, or a representation of it, will be carried by the walkers/cyclists, functioning as the relay object that makes the whole journey over the two week period. Walkers will also carry some seeds from native trees and shrubs for scattering along the route, as a symbolic act of seeding the future forest that we aim to restore there.

Each leg will be walked by a minimum of two people, and we expect that larger numbers will take part in some of the legs. Each leg will include at least one person who is well-experienced in hill walking in the Highlands, and who is confident in navigating with a compass and map etc. A first aid kit will be carried at all times, and a satellite phone will be carried on every leg, for use if emergency assistance is required.

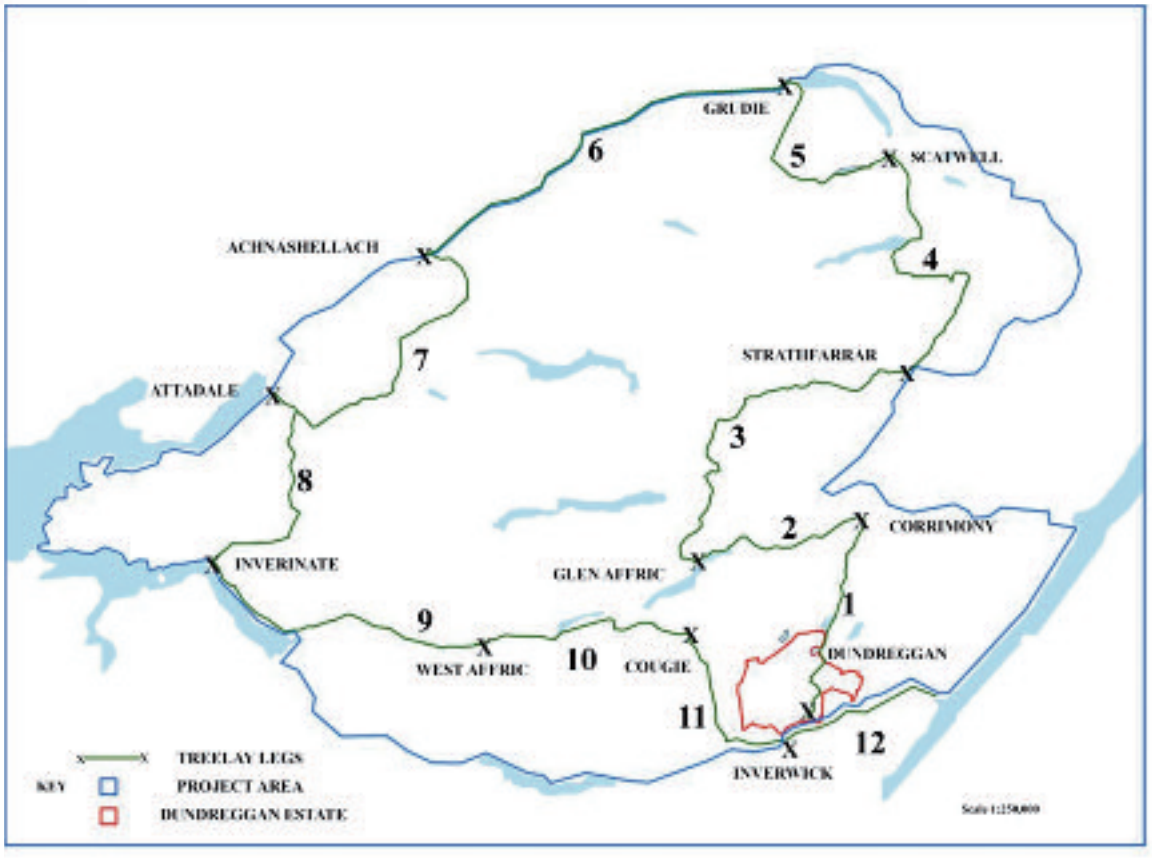
Trees for Life will organise transport for walkers/cyclists from Inverness to the start of each leg, and back again to Inverness after each leg. With some legs, there will be an option for the walkers to do a day's practical work with a group of Trees for Life staff and volunteers on the day after the leg is completed, prior to returning to Inverness.

## Participants wanted!

We are looking for fit and healthy participants to undertake a leg of the relay and raise at least £100 sponsorship each … and there will be a prize for the most funds raised! Páramo, one of our corporate supporters, have generously donated a jacket from their Pájaro range, worth £270, for this. In addition, anyone who raises over £150 will receive an exclusive Millionth Tree t-shirt, and there will be a Millionth Tree hooded sweatshirt for anyone who raises over £200.

You can set up your own sponsorship page for the Treelay on the Just Giving website, by visiting: www.justgiving.com/trees-for-life and then get all your family, friends and colleagues etc to sponsor you there. Alternatively, we can provide you with a sponsor form to collect sponsorship yourself. If you can't participate yourself, you can still sponsor Alan Watson Featherstone, or one of the other walkers/cyclists.

For more information, and details on how to participate, please see our website at: www.treesforlife.org.uk/millionthtree/treelay_route.html or contact Fiona on 0845 458 3505, or by email at fiona@treesforlife.org.uk.




**Map showing the route of the Treelay around our Project Area.**



LEFT: *Walkers fording a burn during one of our Sponsored Walks in Glen Affric. Please join us for the Treelay in May, and help us link up all the sites where we've worked during the past 21 years.*

## Route details

The numbers here correspond to those in the map.

**1. Dundreggan to Corrimony — May 5 — 19 km**

The Treelay starts from the lodge at Dundreggan, going up the hill and past our new tree planting exclosure along the Allt Fearna, leaving the estate at Loch na Stac, and following a track through the RSPB's Corrimony Nature Reserve, alongside many Scots pines planted by TFL, to end at Corrimony Cairn. Accommodation at the Bearnock Hostel.

**2. Corrimony to Coille Ruigh in Glen Affric — May 6 — 16 km**

From Corrimony Cairn, the route goes along Strath Marsley and past Carn Bingally, dropping down into Tomich. From there, follow forest tracks in the Affric National Nature Reserve to Dog Falls in Glen Affric, then along the road to Coille Ruigh, our first major project, for natural regeneration, in 1990. End at the car park. Accommodation in Cannich.

**3. Coille Ruigh to Strathfarrar — May 7-8 — 30 km (2 days with bivvy)**

From Coille Ruigh, the route climbs up through Doire Mhor ('Big Wood', no longer any trees!) and across the watershed at 880m., descending into Glen Cannich near the Loch Mullardoch dam. Heading east, follow the burn up the Liatrie pinewood SSSI to the watershed divide at 600m., descending into Strathfarrar, passing Culligran Wood where our latest project will happen in 2012, reaching the road at Struy. Accommodation in Cannich.

**4. Strathfarrar to Scatwell — May 9-10 — 43 km (2 days with bivvy)**

From Struy the route follows forest and then hill tracks to the dam at the head of the Orrin Reservoir. From there, it goes across open country towards Loch Aradaidh, where a path and then a track lead down into Strathconon. Then it's a short walk to Scatwell where we've done regeneration work in a large aspen stand, and then 8 km on the minor road into Contin. Accommodation in Contin B & B.

**5. Scatwell to Grudie — May 11 — 24 km**

From Scatwell, the route goes along the shore of Loch Meig through Strathconon, then on a track north west following the Allt Feith a' Bhadain, past Carn Garbh, and north into Strath Bran. Crossing the bridge at the head of Loch a' Chuilinn, it's along the road to Lochluichart, passing Grudie Oakwood en route. Accommodation in Lochluichart B & B.

**6. Grudie to Achnashellach — May 12 — 34 km**

This is the cycling route, along the road from Strath Bran to Achnasheen, then down Glen Carron to finish at Craig. It includes a stop at Coille Mhoruisge, above Loch Sgamhain, to survey native woodland there with Trees for Life staff. Accommodation at Gerry's Hostel at Achnashellach.

**7. Achnashellach to Attadale — May 13-14 — 26 km (2 days with bivvy)**

From Craig, the route goes SE via Sloc Mor through Achnashellach Forest, following the track to Pollan Buidhe. Turning SW along the burn, it crosses the watershed at around 600m at the Bealach Bhearnais, then follows a path beneath Coire Beithe towards Loch an Laoigh and Bendronaig Lodge, then by good track down Strath Feith a' Mhadaidh to Attadale. Accommodation at Attadale B & B.

**8. Attadale to Inverinate — May 15th — 23 km**

From Attadale, the route follows a forest track near Loch an Droighinn, and then down into Glen Ling, where a good track leads to Killilan. A minor road goes to Camas-luinie and then a path along the River Glennan to Bundalloch, finally another minor road goes above Loch Duich and Eilean Donan Castle to Carr Brae, ending at Inverinate. Accommodation at Inverinate B & B or Rattigan Hostel.

**9. Inverinate to West Affric — May 16th — 21 km**

From Inverinate follow a forest track above Loch Duich, along the minor road to Morvich, then on paths along Gleann Choinneachain, across the bealach at around 500m and down Gleann Gniomhaidh, passing some of our planting exclosures on NTS land, to the hostel at West Affric. Accommodation at Alltbeithe Youth Hostel.

**10. West Affric to Cougie — May 17th — 17 km**

From the hostel, head east along Glen Affric, looking across towards the early Athnamulloch exclosures on FCS ground, continuing through the Ghubhais exclosure alongside Loch Affric. Turning south up the Allt Garbh to about 450m, the path picks up forest tracks leading east towards Cougie. Accommodation at Cougie.

*NB For reasons of practicality, legs 9 and 10 will need to be walked by the same people.*

**11. Cougie to Inverwick — May 18th — 13 km**

At Cougie, where we've planted some 50,000 trees, the route goes onto the Guisachan Estate and then south across open hill to the Meall Cuileig exclosure that we planted on Balnacarn in the 1990s and the Allt na Muic exclosure on the Tomchrasky Estate. Head east in Glen Moriston on the minor road to Torgoyle Bridge. Accommodation at Dundreggan cottage.

**12. Inverwick to Dundreggan — May 19th — 13 km**

The home straight! From the Torgoyle Bridge, take the minor road south of the river Moriston eastwards, crossing the Allt Phocaichain into Inverwick Forest. From there, forest tracks go all the way to Invermoriston. Meet here and return to Dundreggan in vehicle. Accommodation at Dundreggan cottage.

BELOW: *The route of the Treelay passes through outstanding landscapes and scenery, such as this in Glen Affric, west of Loch Affric.*



# Millionth Tree Lecture Tour
## in March and April

"A million trees and counting – the journey to restore the Caledonian Forest"

In one of the key events to celebrate the planting of our Millionth Tree in May, Trees for Life Founder and Executive Director Alan Watson Featherstone will be travelling the length and breadth of Britain, from Ullapool to Devon, throughout March and April, informing and inspiring audiences with The Millionth Tree lecture tour.

The lectures will feature stunning photographs of the Caledonian Forest and its species, and dramatic 'before and after' images will show the changes that have taken place as the ancient forest returns. They will also Illustrate the significant positive effects that volunteers can achieve in helping to reverse forest loss – one of the critical environmental problems of our time. The tour is also planned to draw in further support for the next stage of Trees for Life's work, both on our Dundreggan Estate and at other sites in the Highlands. A list of confirmed dates on the tour at the time of going to press is provided below. The dates for further lectures are still to be confirmed, so please check our website at www.treesforlife.org.uk/millionthtree/lecture_tour.html for the latest schedule.

For anyone who can't make it up to Scotland, either to take part in one of our Conservation Holidays, or the other Millionth Tree events – the planting itself on 20th May, or the Treelay from 5th – 19th May – the tour offers an ideal opportunity to celebrate this achievement with us. We hope that as many of our members and supporters as possible will come along to the talks. We're also looking for help in promoting and publicising the tour, so if you can support us with this – by putting up posters in your local area, by providing email lists we can send information to, or by helping to sell memberships, merchandise etc. at the talks themselves, please contact Fiona at 0845 458 3505, or by email at: fiona@treesforlife.org.uk .




RIGHT: *Alan giving a talk at the 'Forestry in the Highlands' conference held in Inverness in September 2011.* PHOTO BY MICK DRURY.

BELOW: *Alan giving a presentation at the 'Wild, Free and Coming Back?' conference that Trees for Life co-hosted with the Wildland Network at Findhorn in 2008.* PHOTO BY MICK DRURY.



### March:

**16** **Ullapool, 7.30 pm.** Venue: MacPhail Centre, Ullapool High School, IV26 2UN. Organiser: Lochbroom Field Club. Contact: Bruce Ing, myxoking@btinternet.com

**19** **Perth, 7 – 8.30 pm.** Venue: Brahan Lecture Theatre, Perth College UHI, Crieff Road, Perth, PH1 2NX.

**20** **Edinburgh, 11 am – 12.30 pm.** Venue: Edinburgh University.

**21** **Aberdeen, 6.30 – 8 pm.** Venue: Kings Conference Centre, University of Aberdeen, Kings College, Aberdeen, AB24 3FX. Contact: Mark Paterson, mark.paterson@abdn.ac.uk

**27** **Glasgow, 7 – 8.30 pm.** Venue: Quaker Meeting House, 38 Elmbank Crescent, Glasgow, G2 4PS.

### April:

**9** **Machynlleth, 5 pm.** Venue: Sheppard Lecture Theatre, Centre for Alternative Technology, Llwyngwern Quarry, Pantperthog, Machynlleth, Powys SY20 9AZ. Contact: Peter Harper, peter.harper@cat.org.uk

**10** **Shrewsbury, 7 – 8.30 pm.** Venue: Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND.

**11** **Hereford, 7.30 – 9 pm.** Venue: Shire Hall, Union Street, Hereford, HR1 2HX. Contact: Kyrle du Heaume, kyrle@wyrdweb.com

**13** **Worcester, 7.30 – 9 pm.** Venue: Worcestershire Wildlife Trust Lower Smite Farm, Smite Hill, Hindlip, Worcester WR3 8SZ. Contact: Chris Finlay, christine@worcestershirewildlifetrust.org

**14** **Stroud, 3 – 4.30 pm.** Venue: Landsdown Hall & Gallery, Lansdown, Stroud GL5 1BN.

**17** **Totnes, 8 pm.** Venue: Schumacher College, The Old Postern, Darlington, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 6EA. Contact: Jonathan Dawson, jonathan.dawson@schumachercollege.org.uk

**19** **Brighton, 7.30 – 9.00 pm.** Venue: Lecture theatre, Friends Meeting House, Ship Street, Brighton, BN1 1AF.

**20** **London, 7.30 – 9 pm.** Venue: Burgh House, New End Square, Hampstead, London, NW3 1LT.

**21** **Norwich, 4 – 5.30 pm.** Venue: The Forum, Millennium Plain, Bethel Street, Norwich, NR2 1TF.

**23/24** **Leeds** Venue: Leeds University. Contact: Steve Carver, S.J.Carver@leeds.ac.uk

**25** **Sheffield, 7 – 8.30 pm.** Venue: Quaker Meeting House, 10 St James Street, Sheffield S1 2EW.

**For more details of talks at venues without a specific contact above, please check our website for updates, or contact Fiona in our office at fiona@treesforlife.org.uk**

# Please become a Friend of Dundreggan

## By Fiona Limbrey

*We are very pleased to announce the winner of our Prize Draw to win a week's holiday at Dundreggan Lodge this summer. Anyone who signed up as a new Friend between October and December 2011 was automatically entered into the draw and the Lucky Winner is: James McLardy. Congratulations James, we look forward to welcoming you to the Estate later in the year!*



RIGHT: *Rainbow over birches and Scots pines at Dundreggan. Friends of Dundreggan play a key role in supporting our work to restore and expand the forest there.*

Dundreggan is at the centre of Trees for Life's conservation work. It supports a wide array of rare species, such as the strawberry spider, small pearl-bordered fritillary butterfly and lesser butterfly-orchid, amongst others. Our volunteers have now started restoring Dundreggan's woodlands and higher mountain slopes to bring our native woodlands and their species back from the brink.

So why are we asking you to help? It's simply because our conservation work at Dundreggan is not a short-term project, and we can't deliver it without a regular source of funding. That's why we have set up Friends of Dundreggan. As a member of Trees for Life, we deeply value your commitment to us and we hope you will now be able to further your support for this most rewarding project.

Friends of Dundreggan make a personal contribution to the restoration of Dundreggan through an annual donation of £1,000. You could either give this as a one-off payment, or as a direct debit for £84 per month. However you choose to give your support, you will be directly helping to restore one of the finest wilderness forests in Scotland.

We urge you to become a Friend of Dundreggan and support the lost world of Dundreggan with us. All of our Friends receive an exclusive signed photographic print of Dundreggan when they join, as well as a copy of the outstanding book, 'Caledonia: Scotland's Heart of Pine'. We will also keep you in touch with the work you are helping to fund through regular Friends' email updates.

Also, match funding from the Audrey and JJ Martindale Foundation will triple the value of your donation – they are giving us £2 for every £1 we raise for Dundreggan, so your annual subscription of £1,000 will enable us to claim another £2,000, making it worth £3,000 to us altogether.

To join our group of Friends, either with an annual payment or a monthly Direct Debit of just £84, please visit our website: www.treesforlife.org.uk/dundreggan/become_friend.html or contact me by phone at 0845 458 3505 or by email: fiona@treesforlife.org.uk.



*Rob Pedley, during a Conservation Holiday week on Skye in April 2011.* PHOTO BY JULIE MCPHILIPS.

*"Dundreggan Estate is a brilliant base for Trees for Life. It has examples of most of the habitats of the Caledonian Forest and gives us the opportunity to try out different restoration and management techniques. Long term monitoring surveys will give us solid information about the effectiveness of different activities. Sharing that with other land managers will be a major contribution to the Caledonian Forest restoration project across the whole region. Dundreggan is also an inspiring place to spend some time. The ancient birch and pine woods, wild open hills and hidden burns keep drawing me back. I find some new magical spot every time I visit."*

**Rob Pedley (Friend of Dundreggan)**

### A personal message from Muriel Gray



When Trees For Life took over Dundreggan Estate I knew it would be exciting and challenging, but nothing prepared me for how utterly thrilling the project is becoming.

The work being done to preserve and expand the remnants of our unique woodland heritage is quite outstanding, and on my last visit the changes and improvements that have already taken place were very impressive. From the happily snorting wild boar doing their bit to reduce the bracken and prepare the land for natural seeding, to the pathways, visitor information and continuing discovery of the remarkable biodiversity present on the Estate, there are so many things happening that are already marking the project a resounding success.

All of this is made possible by the fantastically generous financial contributions made by Friends and supporters of TFL.

We really need that to continue, to keep the restoration of our wonderful woodland moving forward, for the benefit of everyone now and that of generations to come, so we're asking you to become a special and valued Friend of Dundreggan.

By joining us as a Friend you'll be doing something truly important, that will last a lifetime and beyond. What's been done so far is blooming brilliant. Just imagine what we can do with a little more help...

**Muriel Gray**, Trees for Life Patron

# Funding the Forest

By Celia Brady

## It's never been easier to choose your Conservation Holiday



*A volunteer with a juniper seedling at Dundreggan in September 2011. Come and join us on a Conservation Holiday this spring!*

### Spring into action

Why not sign up for fantastic Highland locations and rewarding conservation work on our Spring 2012 Conservation Holidays? See black grouse on the RSPB's Corrimony Nature Reserve, enjoy the spectacular Glen Affric National Nature Reserve, visit the island of Skye, or appreciate the lost world of biodiversity at Dundreggan.

The season runs from March 17th until the 2nd June 2012, and we still have good availability. Make sure you don't miss out!

### Spring discount for early birds

We have a special spring discount for early birds. Book a place on any of our Conservation Holidays before March 31st and receive a 15 % early booking discount! Just enter the promotional code 'early15' on our bookings page, www.treesforlife.org.uk/conservation_holidays_2012.php, or mention it over the phone if you call us on 0845 602 7386.

### Bursaries for volunteers from London and Scotland

People Making Waves is offering bursaries to anyone living in Scotland and London who'd like to volunteer with a Scottish charity. Scottish volunteers can apply for £100 to help them volunteer in Scotland. People from London can apply for up to £500 to volunteer in Scotland.

The grants cover all volunteer expenses. For Londoners, you can apply for the full cost of a Conservation Holiday (£300) and travel to Inverness. Grants are only available until September, so don't delay – apply as soon as possible at www.peoplemakingwaves.org.uk

For more information on the holidays and a full list of dates and locations available, visit the Conservation Holiday pages on our website at www.treesforlife.org.uk/conservation_holidays_2012.php .

RIGHT: *We still need to raise another £1,300 to fully fund the fence that will allow this pinewood in Strathfarrar to regenerate.*

### Thank You!

We would like to thank the following organisations and individuals who have made notable contributions towards our work in recent months:

### Charitable Trusts

Gunter Charitable Trust, James Thin Charitable Trust, Margaret Murdoch Charitable Trust, Tay Charitable Trust, Yews Charitable Trust, Sir James Miller Edinburgh Trust, Gordon Fraser Charitable Trust, People's Postcode Trust, Mitchell Trust, Richard Fraser Charitable Trust.

### Individuals

Trevor Jones, Duncan Ford, friends and family of David Forrest, Allan Cortéz, Timothy Kaye, Janet Stone, Dr. Moira Robertson, Kenneth Campbell, Pieter van der Boon, Alan Kemp, Peter Cornish, Matt Dalby, Evelyn Low, Louise Lamonby, I. J. Burgess, Mai Loughran.

### Groves over £500 each

The Memorial Grove for Elizabeth Ann South.
Memorial Grove: Gerry's grove.
The Celebration Grove for Coventry University IDC Society.

### Companies and Organisations

Phoenix Community Stores, Phoenix Trading, Giveacar Ltd, Standard Life, Meeting Media Company, Spark Etail, AIRO Ltd., Missionfish, About Argyll Walking Holidays, Paramo, AstraZeneca plc, Elliott Group Ltd, Timber Design, Timberbush Tours, SECC Glasgow, Haycock & Jay, GS UK Ltd, ISRA Eco Chalet, VMWare, Gentlemen's Groom Room, TreeTwist, CBES Ltd, Mozolowski & Murray, Recycle 4 Charity, Haliburton, Adventures with Wilderness Scotland, Awards for All, Big Lottery Fund.

### New Life Members

Diana Brockbank, Florian Hecht, Dora Elliott.

### New Friends of Dundreggan

Brian McLeish, Hamish McRae.

### Regeneration in Strathfarrar Appeal

Many thanks also to everyone who has donated to our Regeneration in Strathfarrar Appeal – we've raised over £5,100 so far, so we're most of the way to our target of £6,400. If you're inspired to support this project, please make a donation online at www.treesforlife.org.uk/tfl.appeal_strathfarrar.html and help us reach our goal!



# And it's never been easier to fund the forest

## Donate by text message to *pine09*



A new and easy way to conserve forests and wildlife is to send your donation by text message. It's quick, simple and instant, and 100% of your donation will be used to fund our conservation work.

The number to send your text donation to is 70070. You can donate £1, £2, £3, £4, £5 or £10 per text. Simply text pine09 followed by the amount you wish to give. For example, your text message to 70070 might look like this: pine09 £5 to donate £5 directly to Trees for Life.

You can give a maximum of £30 per month by text message. You will also have the chance to increase the value of your donation by 25% by Gift Aid. Just follow the instructions in the reply text which you'll receive following your donation.

## Just Giving for your sponsored event

Trees for Life is now a registered charity with Just Giving: www.justgiving.com/trees-for-life.

If you are planning to take part in a fundraising event for Trees for Life, Just Giving makes it easy to ask friends to sponsor you. You can create your own fundraising page on the Just Giving website and share it with your friends and family. It's easy and completely free, and can be set up within minutes.

Your friends can donate on your fundraising page, which means you don't need to chase anyone for sponsorship. Just Giving will transfer the money you raise directly to Trees for Life. If you would like more information about raising funds through a sponsored event, please contact Fiona at Trees for Life on 0845 458 3505 or by email at: fiona@treesforlife.org.uk.

## Treelay

We are inviting members and supporters to join our sponsored walk and cycle relay around the beautiful Trees for Life Project Area from the 5th to the 19th May 2012.

Treelay consists of 12 individual legs over two weeks. Walkers and cyclists can sign up for one or more days of the route – please see page 10 of this edition of *Caledonia Wild!* and our website at www.treesforlife.org.uk/millionthtree/treelay_route.html for more details.

We are asking participants to raise £100 or more to join Treelay. An easy way to raise sponsorship is to set up a fundraising page on the Just Giving website, as outlined above. For more information and to join Treelay, please contact Fiona at Trees for Life.



## See your money grow

The best way to support Trees for Life is by Direct Debit - just a small sum every month. It's quick. It's easy. You will soon see your regular donations grow into forests.

Why not pick up the phone and call us on 0845 458 3505 or set up your Direct Debit at www.treesforlife.org.uk.

LEFT: *It's very easy to donate to us by text message now – this is all you need to do!*



## International Artworks for sale

In November 2011, Trevor Jones organised an international art exhibition in Edinburgh, which was a great success, raising over £5,000 for Trees for Life. The artworks were all donated by the artists, and the remaining ones are still available for sale at just £45 each. They can all be seen and purchased from our website, at www.treesforlife.org.uk/tflmerchandise_art.php, with all the proceeds going directly to support our work of restoring the Caledonian Forest. We're very grateful to Trevor for the tremendous amount of energy, inspiration and work he put into making the exhibition such a success. For details and photographs from the Opening Night, please see Alan's blog at: www.treesforlife.org.uk/alansblog/?p=451.

ABOVE: *This original watercolour, by English artist Dawn Jones, is one of those still available for sale via our website for just £45.*

BELOW LEFT: *If you join us on the Treelay event in May, you'll get to walk through landscapes like this, while raising funds for our work.*




## Get in the Grove!

Last year we planted an incredible 6,500 trees as a result of funding we received from Grove donations from our members and supporters.

People from all parts of the UK have started Groves on our website to celebrate events such as weddings and births, or lasting memorials to a loved one.

If you have a special occasion planned for 2012, starting your own Grove is easy - just visit www.treesforlife.org.uk/groves . Equally, if you have already set up a Grove, why not grow your Grove in 2012 – you can plant as many trees as you like on your Grove web page.

# Arboreal lichens – the 'leaves' of winter

In sheltered, humid sites in the Caledonian Forest, the high moisture content in the air encourages the growth of a profusion of lichens on tree trunks and branches. Easy to overlook in summer, when they are hidden by the trees' leaves, they are much more conspicuous in winter. These lichens act like leaves, using the sun's energy for photosynthesis, although that is for their own benefit, not the trees.

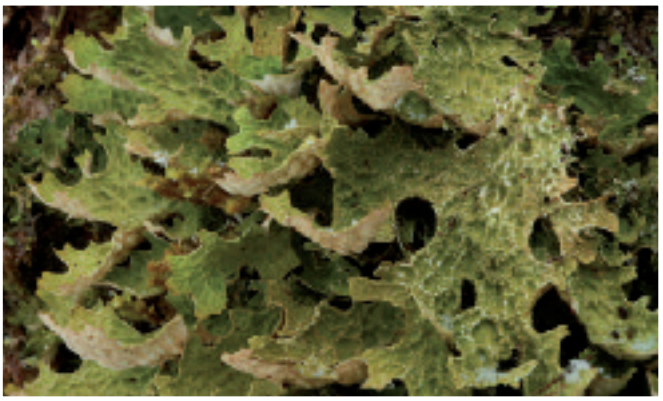


ABOVE: Lichens, including beard lichen (*Usnea filipendula*), oakmoss lichen (*Evernia prunastri*), ragged lichen (*Platismatia glauca*) and heather rags lichen (*Hypogymnia physodes*), on a hazel tree (*Corylus avellana*) near Dundreggan Lodge.

RIGHT: With its large, green-lobed form, the foliose lichen, tree lungwort (*Lobaria pulmonaria*), seen here on the trunk of a rowan tree near Dog Falls in Glen Affric, is the most leaf-like of the lichens in the Caledonian Forest.



ABOVE: Beard lichen , heather rags lichen and ragged lichen on the trunks of silver birch trees near Dog Falls in Glen Affric.





BELOW: Beard lichen (*Usnea filipendula*) and other lichens on the branches of birch trees in the gorge of the Affric River in Glen Affric.



ABOVE: Lichen-covered branches of oak trees (*Quercus petraea*) on Dundreggan, with birch trees behind.

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Restoring the Caledonian Forest