

TREES FOR LIFE ANNUAL REVIEW

2017/2018



a message from STEVE, CEO



The last year was a period of change and growth in Trees for Life. Now we are ready to fully achieve our vision of a restored Caledonian forest.

We now have ongoing support from some highly respected funders for significant projects which will enable more forest restoration and ensure we have a skilled workforce who can make rewilding happen in Scotland. We have also seen increased funding from individuals, foundations and businesses too. Every penny given helps us move ever closer to our vision of a restored wild forest in the Scottish Highlands. Thank you.

While we are scaling up our impact by developing new projects, the volunteering work that has involved thousands of people in forest restoration over the last 25+ years remains a vital element of what we do. Last year alone over 350 volunteers joined us for a Conservation Week to make their practical contribution to the wild forest. These weeks change people's lives by encouraging them to connect with nature and providing time for them to think about the future and what to do in life. Funding these weeks is challenging, but we are determined to develop and improve them so that more people can help grow the Caledonian Forest and get the most out of their experience.

With change comes a new approach. Trees for Life is now working more closely with other organisations, like Woodland Trust Scotland and Rewilding Europe, to create added momentum for rewilding. We cannot restore a huge forest on our own and we are determined that Trees for Life becomes a catalyst for change, enabling communities and landowners to transform Scotland for the better.

Steve Micklewright

Aspen 'persuaded' to produce seeds

Aspen trees rarely flower and set seed in Scotland, but with a bit of tough love we can significantly boost their numbers in the forest. Our grafted aspen were stressed to encourage them to flower and set seed. It worked and we have now grown over 1,000 new trees from seed.

62 more red squirrel pioneers

We translocated 62 red squirrels from their strongholds around the Moray Firth to establish new colonies in Plockton, Reraid and Inverewe. Squirrels previously translocated to other parts of the north west Highlands are thriving, and we have seen successful breeding and expansion around their new Highland homes.

5,000 hours planting

367 people volunteered on our Conservation Weeks and 120 joined our Conservation Days, together spending over 5,000 hours planting trees to restore the Caledonian Forest. Among them were volunteers from HARP and Greenbuds charities, helping them on the road to recovery from either periods of homelessness or mental health challenges.

Record breaking planting year

Last year we planted a record breaking 156,869 trees. 133,000 were planted in the Allt Ruadh enclosure at our Dundreggan Conservation Estate which means that over 500,000 trees have been planted on the estate.

Branching out with Woodland Trust Scotland

We've formed a partnership with Woodland Trust Scotland, ensuring we work together to support landowners in restoring woodlands on their land. We directly helped three major landowners formulate plans to increase woodland cover. Our partnership with the Woodland Trust Scotland will be a cornerstone of the Caledonian Pinewood Recovery Project (see section: The Future).

The Scottish Highlands – the next Yellowstone?

Trees for Life was invited to join the prestigious European Rewilding Network so we can share our experiences and learn from other projects across Europe about how to achieve rewilding. The Scottish Highlands have the potential to become a world-class rewilded landscape with outstanding wildlife offering amazing experiences for visitors from all over the world.

Remembering the Sikh Massacre

The Scottish Sikh community united to fundraise £10,000 to plant 1,984 trees at Dundreggan in commemoration of the 1984 Sikh Massacre, creating a living memorial. Many members of the Sikh community visited Dundreggan to remember victims and survivors and see the difference their fundraising had made to forest restoration.



Forest restoration at Dundreggan

We began planting rare willows and montane trees in the higher areas of the Allt Ruadh enclosure. We experimented to see which fertiliser treatments were the most effective in helping trees establish and will know the results in a year or so. Also, aspens were planted in an enclosure to create an outdoor seed stand so we can propagate more of this difficult to grow tree.

Go ahead – rewilding training programme

After over a year of planning and development, we were awarded £376,800 of highly sought-after funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund's 'Skills for the Future' programme. This will enable us to train 15 people over a three-year period in 'Skills for Rewilding' to help create the future workforce that will be needed to restore forest and rewild the Highlands.

Talking beaver

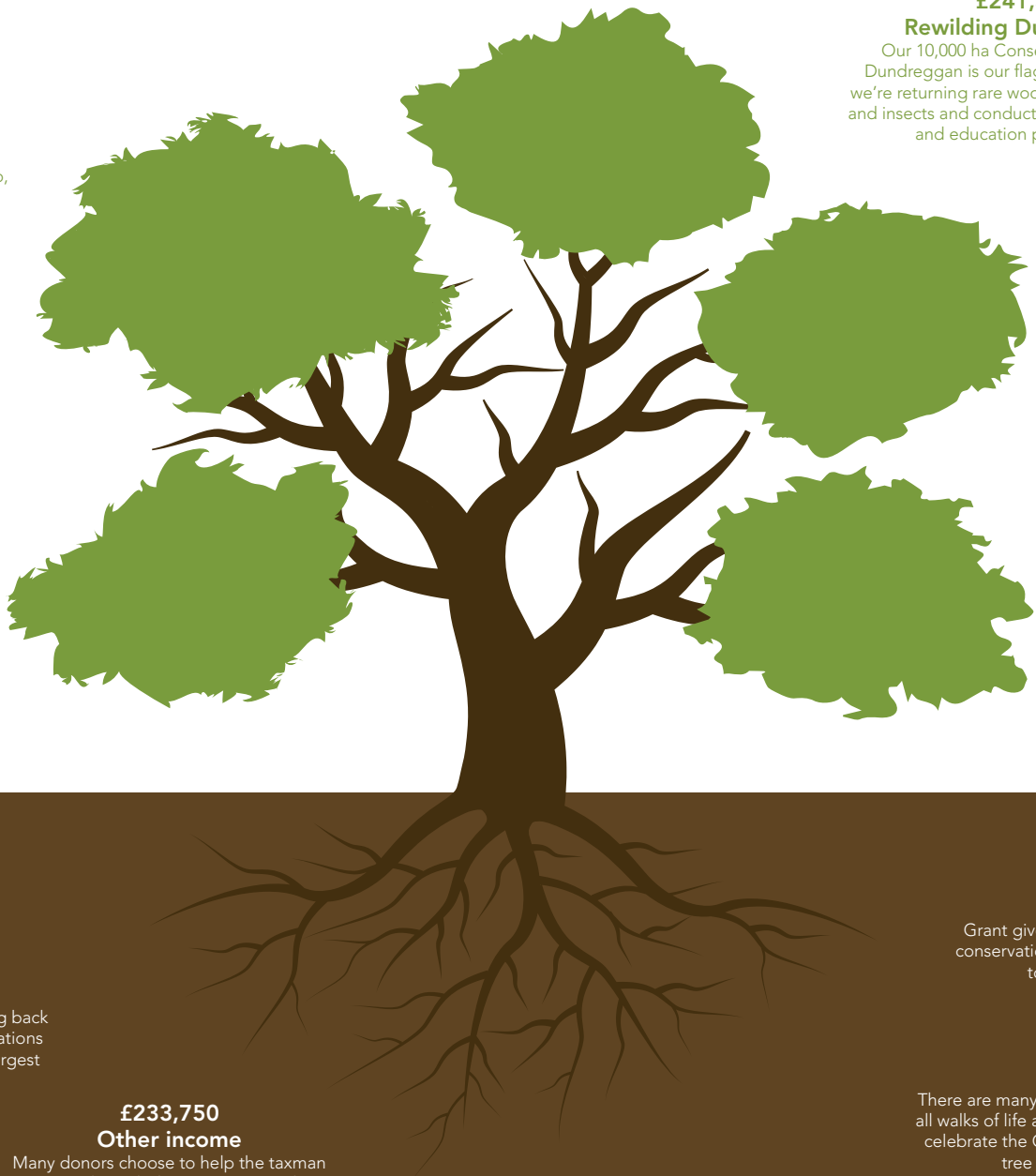
As part of our long-term plan to reintroduce beavers to the Highlands, we held several public consultation events involving landowners, farmers, fishers, green businesses and local residents to gauge whether there was support for reintroduction. Having identified widespread support and manageable concerns, we are well placed to apply for a reintroduction licence when the time is right.

Expenditure

£1,008,250 total

Income

£1,367,250 total



£141,750

Generating income

Including our work to enable members and supporters to help save the Caledonian Forest and it's wildlife through donations, appeals, membership, merchandise and applications for grant funding.

£173,750

Supporting volunteers and trainees

People from all walks of life are helping the wild forest to grow and developing their 'rewilding' skills at the same time. We think they are wonderful!

£241,500

Rewilding Dundreggan

Our 10,000 ha Conservation Estate at Dundreggan is our flagship project where we're returning rare woodland wildlife, plants and insects and conducting scientific research and education programmes.

£243,000

Restoring the forest

Our wider conservation efforts are recreating wilderness in some of the most remote and beautiful parts of the Highlands, such as Glen Affric.

£208,250

Propagating the forest

We grow around 60,000 trees per year at our tree nursery, including rare and hard to propagate native species such as aspen and species of willow.

£551,750

Grants and trusts

Grant givers continued to support our programme of volunteer conservation weeks and red squirrel translocations and helped us to complete our Glen Affric bothy renovations.

£231,250

Products

There are many different ways in which people from all walks of life and locations can help to restore and celebrate the Caledonian Forest – from planting a tree to buying a wall calendar.

£241,500

Membership and individual donations

We have more than 1600 members from around the world and many hundreds of other supporters who show their care for the future of the wild forest in Scotland through generous donations. Thank you!

£233,750

Other income

Many donors choose to help the taxman restore the Caledonian Forest too by consenting to Gift Aid. We were also privileged and grateful to receive a significant legacy.

£109,250

Companies

Many companies are helping to bring back the wild forest through general donations or tree planting. Moody's was our largest corporate donor last year.

The Reds Return

Following the success of our Red Squirrel Reintroduction Project in the north west Highlands, we are developing the next stage of this work where we plan to help red squirrels to return to the far north of Scotland where there is plenty of great forest for reds. They need our help to cross the large areas of open country.

Skills for Rewilding training to begin

Five trainees will learn the skills needed for rewilding thanks to funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. With support from our staff, trainees will specialise in either horticulture, deer and estate management, forestry and landscape planning or community engagement – all skills which will become increasingly important as rewilding projects begin to happen across Scotland.

Trees for Life Woodland Services

Trees for Life is launching its own consultancy company to assist private landowners in native forest restoration. Our consultants will survey land holdings, develop tree planting proposals and apply for the grants that will enable forest restoration to take place across more land than ever before. All profits from the business will be covenanted to the charity.

Caledonian Pinewoods in Recovery

With support from funders, including the highly respected Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and in partnership with Woodland Trust Scotland our project to help the recovery of approximately 50 'at risk' pinewoods will soon be yielding results. We will examine pinewood remnants and work with landowners to understand what might be preventing forest recovery on their land and support them to help bring their iconic pinewoods back from the brink.

TREES FOR LIFE in the spotlight

377 MEDIA FEATURES: **346** print/online **18** radio **13** TV

Beavers get Scots' Approval
BBC Wildlife Magazine

Return of the
red squirrel is a
welcome sight
after 50-year
absence

The Scotsman

Project aims to stop lone Scots
pines being last of ice age lineage

The Herald

EOC 129: The Human Wolf Packs
of Scotland with Doug Gilbert
and Lisa Marley

Eyes on Conservation Podcast

Discovery sows seed for
aspen's revival

The Times

TREES FOR LIFE online



2,888,000 views



I have just got back from
spending the week with
trees for life. It was a week I
will never forget. It is a truly
beautiful place with great
people that do great work
to restore the Highlands ...
Thank you Trees for Life
Alan Smith review



1,373,000 views

Please support the
wonderful @treesforlifeuk
as they work to bring back
beavers to the Scottish
Highlands...
George Monbiot



1,107,000 website views
13,200 hours browsing

It's a very good website. Well
laid out, all the important
things (membership,
donations, volunteering, the
sites you manage, reasons)
are all easy to find
Anonymous website feedback

TREES FOR LIFE working with people

We have been working with mental health charities to bring groups on
Conservation Weeks. The positive feedback (see below) we get from
participants with these groups gives an idea of why the weeks are so
rewarding for them.

HARP is a charity from Southend
which provides support for
homeless people in their local area.

Thank you for last week in Glen
Affric. For me it wasn't a holiday,
it was emergency 1st aid on a
completely crushed and flattened
brain. I arrived virtually dysfunctional
and at a dead stop but thanks to
the magic of Glen Affric, and with
the assistance of the two amazing
people who ran it and a group that
by the end of the week really did
feel like family, I have managed to
get home in a functional state and
standing upright again.

Greenbuds focus on supporting
individuals to access the outdoors
to improve mental wellbeing.

While at Dundreggan my worries
and thoughts faded away... I was
very relaxed, calm and just very
comfortable in the environments
both the wilderness and surprisingly
around the fellow volunteers.
This also allowed me to develop
friendships with some of the
other volunteers and was able to,
surprisingly open up to them. It is
and will probably remain the best
week of the year and one of the
defining experiences of my life.



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