

SPRING 2011

# Wild Land News

Magazine of the Scottish Wild Land Group

Wild land threatened in Glen Lyon

Dunmaglass windfarm

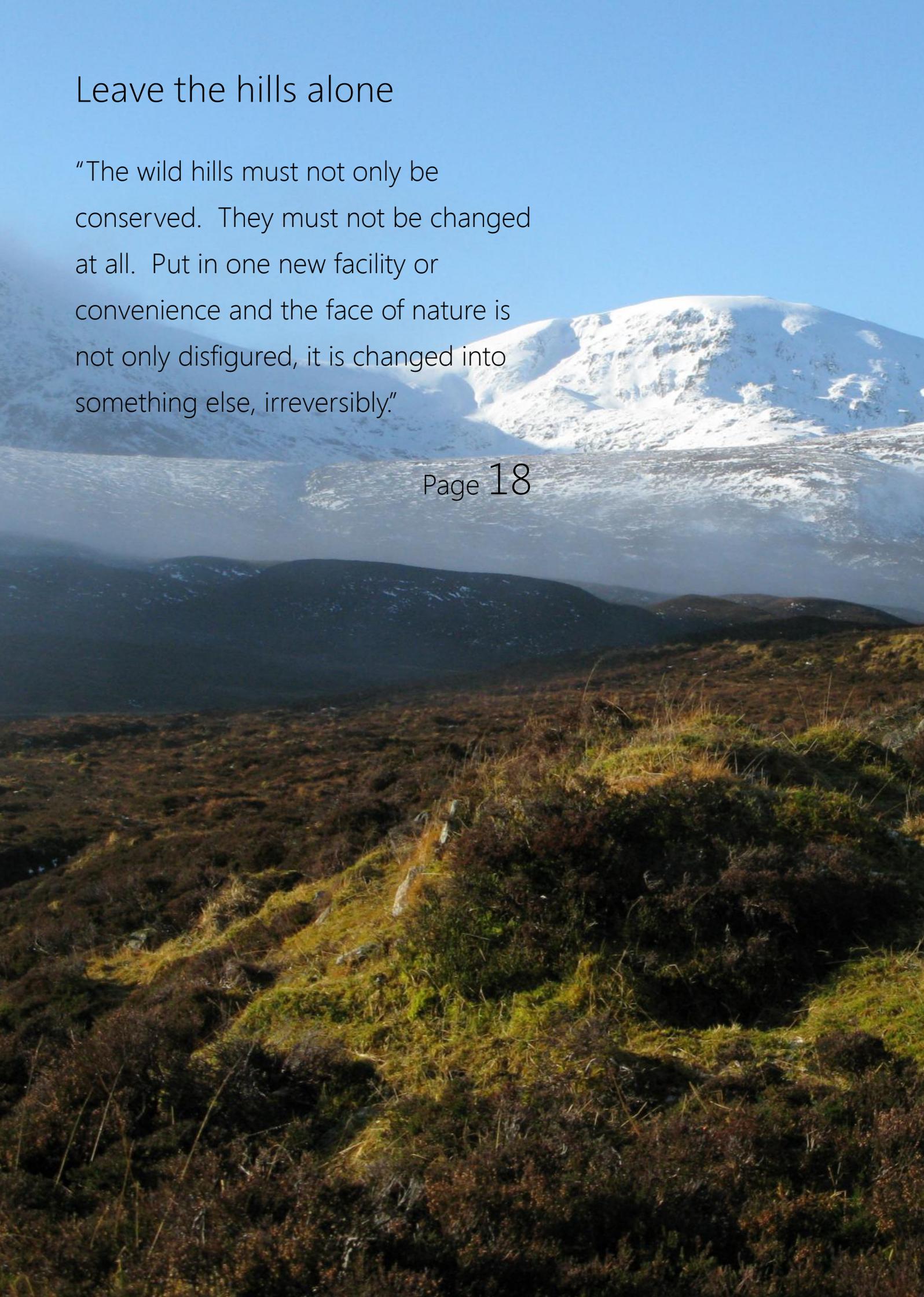
England's ancient woodlands:  
national treasures or charity cases?

Nature Kindergartens

## Leave the hills alone

“The wild hills must not only be conserved. They must not be changed at all. Put in one new facility or convenience and the face of nature is not only disfigured, it is changed into something else, irreversibly.”

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# Spring 2011

## **WILD LAND NEWS** **Spring 2011, Issue 78**

Magazine of the  
Scottish Wild Land Group

### **SWLG**

www.swlg.org.uk  
enquiries@swlg.org.uk  
64 (IF2) Pitt Street, Leith,  
Edinburgh EH6 4DA  
Tel: 07411850159  
Registered Charity No: SC004014

### **WLN Editor**

Calum Brown

### **SWLG Co-ordinator**

Rob Mc Morran

### **Membership Secretary**

Grant Cornwallis

### **Treasurer**

Tim Ambrose

### **Editorial**

Individual articles do not  
necessarily reflect the views of  
the SWLG Steering Team.  
Contributions should be sent to:  
Calum Brown  
editor@swlg.org.uk

### **Graphic Design**

Anna Kociolek

### **Gaelic Consultant**

Danny Rafferty

### **Printed by**

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This page: Meall a'Chrasgaidh (A. Kociolek)

“Thousands of tons of concrete to be dug into the sensitive environment of the Monadhliath moorland.”

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“The whole concept of sustainability relies on the idea that our children actually care – but if we don’t give them the opportunity to spend time outdoors or ‘teach’ them the value of nature, why would they?”

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"Who owns Scotland  
and how they got it"

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Calum Brown

## Comment from Calum, WLN Editor

Welcome to Wild Land News 78!

In the weeks since our last issue, where we considered the European context of Scotland's wild land, there have been several important – and worrying – developments. These follow a familiar pattern: windfarms proposed and accepted in environmentally sensitive areas; hydro-schemes threatening wild glens; public control of important natural areas being lost; and a widespread lack of apparent vision in the management of our countryside.

In this issue we focus on some of these, in articles that debate the importance and exploitation of wild land.

Beginning with a brief summary of recent news, we go on to look in detail at the Dunmaglass windfarm proposal, accepted in December by the Scottish Government and now poised to cause further unjustifiable damage to the embattled Monadhliaths. An important implication of this scheme's acceptance is that we often fail to value areas that have international environmental significance, instead

sacrificing them to short-term political or economic gain.

While most of the land in Scotland has been used by people for centuries – at times far more intensively and productively than it is now – it has also been treated with greater respect, as Jamie Grant illustrates with his article on Glenlyon. Here hydro-electricity schemes threaten the natural environment of a glen that has been revered and carefully preserved by its inhabitants for hundreds of years.

The inherent value of wild land is a theme that David Craig returns to later in this issue. First printed 15 years ago in *Wild Land News*, David's article is an affectionate tribute to some of Scotland's wildest places, as well as a plea that they be left intact for future generations. David views such places as necessary counterpoints to our more urbanised surroundings; a reminder of our links to the land around us. Are we in danger of losing sight of these links?

Christiane Valluri thinks so, and identifies the roots of the problem in the detachment of children from the

natural world. She advocates Nature Kindergartens, which her own daughter attends, as a way of preserving an innate environmental appreciation.

Whether or not we feel a direct connection to natural areas, we may be in danger of losing much of the control that we currently have over their management. Ken Brown considers recent UK Government proposals to sell off England's woodlands to charities and private companies, tracing their wider significance in minimising the role of the state in safeguarding nationally important environments, and reducing democratic accountability. Although these plans applied only to England, their implications were general, and may be seen as a continuation of long-term loss of public control that has been most marked in Scotland.

John Digney focuses on this as he reviews Andy Wightman's new book *The Poor Had no Lawyers*, which details the appropriation of Scotland's land by powerful - and legally

dominant - interests. That Scotland has a uniquely concentrated pattern of land ownership is well-known, but John finds its historical development makes for a fascinating and troubling read. However, it is not all bleak. Nick Kempe finds much to be optimistic about in his review of *The Carrifran Wildwood Story*, as he looks into one of the most ambitious and successful rewilding projects in the UK. Following a visit to Carrifran, Nick relates the objectives and methods of the project to on-the-ground changes in the valley.

We're grateful to all those who have contributed to this edition of *Wild Land News*, and hope that you'll enjoy reading it - and perhaps even feel inspired to add your own opinion in a future issue! As ever, we welcome comments, letters and articles from members, so please get in touch and let us know what you think.

Photo: C. Brown



Calum Brown

## DUNMAGLASS Windfarm

In 1992 a single wind turbine was constructed, without planning permission, on Dunmaglass estate near Inverness. Standing at 670m on the summit ridge of Beinn Dubhcharaidh - a shapely and conspicuous hill on the northern edge of the Monadhliaths - it overlooked much of the Nairn valley and the country around Loch Ness. Sir Jack Hayward, the Bahamas-based owner of the estate, maintained that the turbine was an agricultural development and therefore exempt from planning laws (under the same

Permitted Development rights that allow hill tracks to be bulldozed throughout Scotland). Highland Council disagreed, but rather than dedicate its limited resources to pursuing an extremely wealthy man through the law courts, capitulated.

Immediately upon its completion the turbine was struck by a bolt of lightning and had to be extensively rebuilt. Since then it has been beset by mechanical problems, generally remaining stubbornly motionless and failing to generate electricity – or,

Photo:  
Windfarm, Fintry hills  
A.Kociolek



presumably, to fulfil its mysterious agricultural purpose. Instead it stands over the surrounding countryside and villages like an ostentatious threat that local people, planning departments, and even divine intervention cannot save the Monadhliaths from the ill-conceived whims of absentee landowners.

This December, with a little help from the Scottish Government, the threat was made good with the approval of the Dunmaglass windfarm. A scheme involving 33 turbines, each nearly 400ft high, the windfarm will require 32.5km of access tracks and thousands of tons of concrete to be dug into the sensitive environment of the Monadhliath moorland. The area is currently prime habitat for birds of prey including Golden eagles but current population levels have been artificially depressed by years of persecution in the surrounding region. At an earlier stage, when the windfarm was to have 36 shorter turbines, the developer's cursory models nevertheless suggested that 11 eagles alone could be killed; their

Non-Technical Summary now refers only to 'no significant impact'.

Rather than dwelling on these troubling issues, the Scottish Government trumpets the 55 construction jobs and 99MW (at peak production) that will be generated. Supposedly capable of meeting the electricity requirements of 46,000 homes, the scheme inspired Energy Minister Jim Mather to pronounce 2010 "another tremendous year for renewables", with the approval representing "another step on the road to a low carbon Scotland".

If so, it is a very small step. The practised opacity of the official press releases obscures the fact that domestic electricity consumption is a hopelessly short scale on which to measure carbon emissions. It is not, as it might be tempting to think, equivalent to the average total *power* consumption of the occupants of a home, which is about 24 times larger. In fact, the electricity needs of all the homes in the UK account for only around 4% of emissions. And that's without considering the carbon

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released by the industrialisation of large areas of Scotland's moorland.

Of course these arguments are often made, with little apparent impression on policy-makers. Dazzled by short-term economics, they seem to view the environment as something to be repeatedly traded off against political and financial gain; a hindrance to growth with a price but not a value. As a result, public subsidies are being used to generate estimated profits of £120 million for RES, the company behind the scheme, £9 million for Sir Jack Hayward, and up to £4 million for local communities. This money comes directly from a premium which we all pay on our energy bills. After the coldest December on record, with energy prices already rocketing, with over a third of Scottish households in fuel poverty and the number of Scottish pensioners killed by cold in the thousands every winter, the government is still taking this money on a massive scale and unilaterally redistributing it to highly profitable power companies, extremely rich landowners who live overseas, and a few select villages. Surely our priorities need to change – and surely we can make better use of Scotland's remarkable environments.

In any case, the future of the Monadhliaths looks grim. Overshadowed by their more dramatic Cairngorm neighbours, they do not inspire the popular support necessary to fend off developments and are one of Highland Council's preferred areas for renewable energy

projects. While a few enlightened estates like Coignafearn strive to demonstrate the ecological *and* economic possibilities of a well-managed environment, too many are scrambling towards state-sponsored environmental degradation. The Dunmaglass windfarm will join many others being built or planned on this unique mountain range already humbled by the £150 million, 100MW Glendoe hydro scheme which, also beset by problems, has so far generated very little except political photo opportunities.

On the other side of the Cairngorm National Park, just four miles from its border, another windfarm proposal was accepted in December for Clashindarroch Forest. The Cairngorms are recognised – and designated – as one of the most environmentally precious areas in Europe. Like the rest of our wild land, however, they are less celebrated than besieged.

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“The future of the Monadhliaths looks grim. Overshadowed by their more dramatic Cairngorm neighbours, they do not inspire the popular support necessary to fend off developments.”





Jamie Grant

## WILD LAND threatened in Glenlyon

Jamie Grant is a freelance writer and photographer dedicated to environmental issues. He lives in Glenlyon, Perthshire.

Glenlyon, lying discreetly between Loch Tay and the brooding solitude of Rannoch Moor, is by far my favourite wild place in the Highlands. It winds for 26 long miles through the Breadalbane mountains, rising through woods and fertile farmland onto high moor. Dotted with archaeological remains, Glenlyon is also known in Gaelic as Gleann Dubh nan Garbh Clach, the crooked Glen of the Stones.

Looking back over the countless days that I have spent walking in Glenlyon there is one area that has captured my imagination more than any other. To reach it you have to drive to the road's end at Pubil, where the Lubreoch hydro-electric dam holds back the waters of Loch Lyon. From here a small track skirts the north shore of the loch, into the Glen's most westerly marches.

This area between Loch Lyon and the Bridge of Orchy feels truly wild. Here the mountains, scored with tumbling burns, take complete hold over the landscape. Scramble to the summit of Beinn á Chreachin and you can survey all of Rannoch Moor, with Glen Coe and the humped cap of Ben Nevis beyond.

But it isn't just the views and rare arctic-alpine habitats that make this

area so special. Tucked away in Gleann Cailliche, a hidden glen of boggy heath and mist, is the ancient shrine of Taigh nam Bodach. The shrine is made up of a modest stone structure that houses a family of bell shaped water stones from the river bed of the Lyon. The largest of these stones represents the Cailleach (old woman), accompanied by the Bodach (old man) and their daughter, Nighean.

The Taigh nam Bodach is recognized as the oldest uninterrupted pagan ritual in Britain. For centuries the family of stones have been taken out of their house on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May every year and stood facing down the Glen. At the beginning of November they are carefully shut back up inside their house, where they shelter through the winter. The ritual coincides with the two great Celtic fire festivals, Bealltainn and Samhain, and once echoed the annual migrations of the Highland cattle to and from the summer shielings. The shielings may be long abandoned, but the practice of tending to the stones is still observed to this day.

A Cailleach can also be a divine goddess; a potent force in Celtic mythology. First recorded as the

Cailleach Bhéarra of the Beara peninsula in southern Ireland, she was once revered across Ireland and Scotland. Commonly associated with wild nature and landscape, the Cailleach is credited with creating Scotland's elemental fringes (including the Hebrides). A local legend says that Loch Tay was formed when she forgot to leave a flagstone lid on a magical spring well.

A fearsome Cailleach was said to live on Perthshire's Beinn à Ghlotha. In legend she was a terrifying hag that could take the form of any wild animal and loved nothing more than drowning travellers in pools of water with the lure of false treasure. Glenlyon's Cailleach is more benign, remembered for looking over the cattle that once grazed these high grounds. 'Strange and terrible' things

are said to happen to anyone who dares disturb her wintering grounds in Gleann Cailliche.

In January planning permission was lodged for four hydro electric schemes on the Auch Estate that will transform Gleann Cailliche and its surrounding landscape. Although final plans have not been released at the time of writing, the scoping reports make for sombre reading. They tell of permanent roads, borrow pits, power houses and as many as 16 new access tracks being cut deep into the steep ground to reach intake weirs. They even raise the possibility of exporting the electricity generated via an overground pylon line.

In a sensible world these proposals would be quickly quashed. But it is hard to imagine planners being able to resist the siren call for renewable

it is hard to imagine planners being able to resist the siren call for renewable energy that is currently echoing out of Holyrood, regardless of the true cost to wild land.

Photo: J. Grant



The shrine is made up of a modest stone structure that houses a family of bell shaped water stones from the river bed of the Lyon. The largest of these stones represents the Cailleach (old woman), accompanied by the Bodach (old man) and their daughter, Nighean.

Photo: The Taigh nam Bodach in Gleann Cailliche  
A.D. Smith

energy that is currently echoing out of Holyrood, regardless of the true cost to wild land. I am convinced that we all need to switch to a low carbon economy if we have any chance of tackling the urgent threat of climate change. But shouldn't this green revolution be sustainable? This is clearly a case where the damage to the environment, landscape and our cultural heritage far outweighs the amount of renewable energy that these relatively small schemes will produce.

And what will become of the Taigh nam Bodach? I imagine that some archaeologist in Edinburgh will earn his or her salary by insisting that the stones aren't touched. The shrine will be cordoned off with a strip of high visibility tape while the diggers work the surrounding ground. What the archaeologist and planners are unlikely to appreciate, for all their cleverly worded 'mitigation

measures,' is that the Cailleach represents the whole landscape.

We would do well to remember that in Celtic legends the goddess of the wilds was not immortal. In one old tale from Mull the Cailleach immersed herself in the waters of Loch Bà every 100 years to replenish her youth and beauty. As she descended one morning out of the hills to take the loch's elixir of life she heard the bark of a shepherd's collie (representing the domestication of animals and landscape). Pausing to listen, her hundred years timed out and she stumbled and died just short of the water's edge.

To me the development that has finally reached the Taigh nam Bodach after centuries of seclusion in these remote hills is symptomatic of what is happening across Scotland. Listen carefully and you might just hear the collie's bark in The Crooked Glen of the Stones.



## England's woodland for sale?

The huge scale of public hostility to the UK government's ill-fated plans to sacrifice England's Forestry Commission estate to the market highlighted important aspects of the growth of environmental awareness over the past quarter century. One is increased popular recognition that the value of our national heritage is not reducible to the accountant's bottom line. Another is that modern technology made possible an immediate collective response to that proposal. Indeed, vigorous petitioning by so many community organizations and individuals must have been seen by the government as an unwelcome variation on its 'Big Society' theme.

Furthermore, a once often deprecated Forestry Commission is now properly recognized as the bedrock on which a series of vitally important conservation initiatives have been founded - and on which they continue to depend. Woodlands and forests require long term management. Even viewed from a narrow cost-benefit perspective, their potential will be realized in a sustainable manner only by expert stewardship of the kind ensured by a publicly accountable agency like the Commission. After all, market forces left Britain the least wooded of all the major countries of Europe. The rationale for the creation of the Forestry Commission in 1917 was, as Lloyd George said, that Britain nearly faced defeat in World War I for

lack of timber rather than shortage of food.

That original requirement for a strategic timber reserve has receded along with the prospects of a naval blockade by other EU member states. So, too, has the need for rectilinear coniferous monocultures that seemed to reflect the military backgrounds of an earlier generation of senior foresters as much as the need for effective management. But forest design has matured since those days. The rationale for having woodlands and forests has changed and, with it, their character and their place in public perception. They retain important economic values as sources of biomass, agricultural shelter and timber, and as tourist venues - to say nothing of their crucial roles in conserving biodiversity, providing recreation and enhancing some of our most prized landscapes.

The government sought to appease opponents with the claim that England's most precious FC woodlands would be managed by charitable foundations in the public interest rather than for short term profit. That response proved unpersuasive. It seems to have been calculated to divert attention away from numerous lesser known but locally valued FC woodlands that would have been off-loaded and then managed according to a cold

Ken Brown was the first Co-ordinator of Coed Cymru, a 25 year old campaign initially spearheaded by the Forestry Commission, the Nature Conservancy Council, the Countryside Commission and local and national park authorities to protect the broadleaved and native woodlands of Wales. He researched the environmental implications of the Crofter Forestry Act 1991 for SNH and worked with the FC and SNH on native woodland conservation initiatives in the Highlands. For the past 7 years he taught politics with the University of the Highlands and Islands, and is a long-standing member of the SWLG.

calculation of market values - and towards a few nationally well-known heritage woodlands like the Forest of Dean. As the 'state' was rolled back, government funding would have evaporated. Charities and community groups would have been left to jostle each other for their place in a steadily diminishing patch of sunlight while key public resources were transferred to unaccountable corporate oligarchies.

The proposed privatization of the FC estate also ignored other crucial requirements of sustainable conservation management: scale and scope. The Commission provides a nation-wide framework within which community organizations and NGOs can realize their aspirations.

Take the initiative of 1985 to protect and enhance the declining broadleaved and native woodlands of Wales: *Coed Cymru*. The Forestry Commission, the (former) Countryside Commission and the (former) Nature Conservancy Council for Wales provided the impetus and the organizational structure. Supported by county councils and national park authorities, the department of agriculture, the Agricultural Training Board and voluntary conservation bodies, that campaign surmounted indifference and scepticism amongst a farming community who usually did not realize their woods were dying - and who often did not care when so informed. Close links between the statutory agencies and the farming unions delivered the campaign to virtually every farmer in Wales.

After its first three years, *Coed Cymru* had woodland officers in all 8 county

council planning departments and all 3 national parks, a farm woodland research project and several hundred woodland management projects on its books. A key strategy was to promote sensitive economic management and the marketing of woodland products wherever appropriate and also to provide training for contractors in the theory and practice of conservation management. Now a fully-fledged charity, though still with the support of the Forestry Commission and other statutory agencies, *Coed Cymru* has prepared nearly 7,000 management plans covering about a quarter of the total woodland area in Wales, of which roughly half is classified as 'ancient and semi-natural'. The point is that the original initiative by statutory agencies was the necessary condition for this significant achievement.

The proposed sell off of forest estates applied to England only. Moreover, forests and woodlands are now far from definitive of 'wild land' in Scotland, despite such notable examples as the Forestry Commission estate in Glen Affric and cooperation with *Trees for Life* in their ambitious rewilding project on the 4,000 hectare Dundreggan estate. But woodlands must have their place and there is a strong case for constructing bold, over-arching visions of how they should fit into Scottish wild land, generally.

David Jarman (WLN, Spring 2009) proposed a simple, fourfold categorization of land as 'developed', 'improved farmland', 'commercial forestry' and, 'the rest' (namely, 'wild land'), and rightly suggested that

conservation effort should focus on this generous, strategically defensible conception rather than accept debilitating skirmishes over numerous isolated fragments of landscape. One encouraging implication of this idea is the scope for substantial peripheral areas for the eventual economic management of native tree species. The North American idea of 'buffer zones' provides for economic activities like sensitive woodland management around wilderness boundaries and for corridors between them. This recognizes the intimate connection of 'wildness' with extent

and with gradient; in terms of perception; to provide scope for species to migrate and multiply, and to provide smooth transitions between more and less developed land.

In Scotland that more holistic, proactive approach would require research, feasibility studies and the kind of comprehensive promotional and campaigning activity that could succeed only with the support of expert, well-resourced agencies like the Forestry Commission.

Photo: Woodland  
A.Kociolek



Many of the issues covered in *Wild Land News* during 1996 remain all too familiar 15 years on: the spread of wind farms; environmentally insensitive hydro scheme proposals; worrying developments in and around the Cairngorms; and mismanagement of some of Scotland's finest land. These and other concerns prompted David Craig to write a compelling personal appeal that wild land be valued for its own sake and – most importantly – left alone. It is an appeal that retains all of its relevance in 2011, and the article, originally included in *WLN 39* (Autumn 1996) is reprinted here with the kind permission of the author.

David Craig

## Leave the hills alone

David Craig is the author of several books about social and natural history in Scotland, including *Native Stones*, *Glens of Silence* and, most recently, *On the Crofter's Trail*. He has taught literature and social history in schools and universities in Britain and abroad, and lives in Cumbria.

On July 29 I walked up into the Cairngorms with Chris Culshaw, my oldest rock-climbing partner, by way of Gleann an t-Slugain – 'the Sluggan' to generations of Aberdeen hillclimbers. As rain came on, we camped beside the burn on a wee turf embroidered with bugloss and milkwort, eyebright, thyme, and tormentil. In the gloaming a few deer eyed us from both skylines as though to say, 'how dare you keep us off our favourite night-pasture?' Their small, fine silhouettes looked like images scratched on ivory by Inuit artists.

In the morning we moved up to the headwaters of the Quoich and pitched the tent again at a bubbling and rushing confluence of two burns, eighty metres below Clach a'Chlèirich, the stone of the minister. Then we climbed up past that handsome 'pulpit', making for the sneck beside Leabaidh an Daimh Buidhe, the bed of the yellow stag, where Ben Avon meets Beinn a'Bhuird.

Our goal was in the Garbh Choire, rough corrie, and rough it was. We had to wade and claw up two hundred metres of barely-stable scree clattered with coarse sand in order to reach Tom Patey's superb rock-climb of the Fifties, Squareface. Windblown showers had left it damp where it wasn't gleaming wet. As we brewed up under a boulder and discussed tactics, the rain came blinding up from southward through Glen Clunie, across the Dee, and up Glen Quoich, as though hellbent on drowning us. Thick grey cloud poured down from the plateau and shrouded the buttress to the lowest stance. I climbed up twenty-five metres experimentally, in my big boots, and when my fingers curled uncontrollably we gave up for the day and steered back over the summit to the tent and a compass bearing. Later we heard that the wind had risen to Force 6 and the temperature dropped to 46°F.

Although I'm a rock-climbing addict, I felt little regret. To be in the Cairngorms for the first time in a year was enough. As Carn Eag Dubh and Carn Fiaclach had folded in around us, like great brown bears settling in for some timeless hibernation, that old sense of rightness had stolen over me. Comfort even when trudging under a heavy load. At-home-ness even amongst peat and granite where I couldn't survive for three days without resources brought in from civilisation.

These hills and waters issued from the hand of nature and precious little has been done to them ever since. Some stripes of muirburn. Thin grooves in the heather made by booted feet and the spades of Victorian estate workers. Invisible secondary clauses like the clearance of forest in the straths that drove the deer up high and made them small as they subsist on scant, sub-Arctic grazing.

If I could not find such a cradling and encompassing wilderness somewhere in my own country, I would not want to live here at all.

I first went into these places fifty-two years ago, by the Fungle and Glen Tanar, Glen Muick and Loch Callater, Glen Luibeg and the Lairig Ghru. Forty-four years ago I first found Torridon, going in by bus from Achnasheen, on foot by Badachro, Opinan, and Craig, by crab-boat via Diabaig and Inveralligin. A second Highland paradise opened out as I walked between Liathach and Beinn Eighe and through by Glen Grudie to Loch Maree. Climbed Baosbheinn on my honeymoon before coming back to Arrowsdale to catch plaice and haddock with handlines for the pot. Climbed all the beautiful monsters, the great single sandstone and quartzite

structures, and held the children high above my head on Beinn Dearg so that they could call out, 'I'm at 3000 feet!'

On one tranced summer day, under a pale sultry sky where solitary clouds put down curly filaments like Portugese men-of-war, I went with my dog up An Ruadh Mheallan, broad russet top, and sat for hours among the summit reefs and boulders. They were as beautiful as pieces by Henry Moore. I looked out over the Shieldaig Forest, with its three lochs like three bright eyes and its maze of waters springing and running through the miles of deer's-hair sedge, heather, and bog-cotton, and felt I was seeing into the very source-land of our country.

Not a trace of the human species was to be seen. We – I had better say I – do wholly need that utterly natural space, the other pole to civilisation. It calms and steadies me. It refreshes me to the core.

Now they are planning to link the three lochs there, Loch a' Bhealaich, Loch a' Ghobhainn, and Loch Gaineamhach, in an unnecessary hydroelectricity scheme. It will alter their beaches, change the flow of the Abhainn Braigh-horrisdale, and invade that glen where there is now only a stony track. Bulldozers, trucks, piping, concrete. And what can now stop the further injuring of Cairn Gorm when they implant ninety-four pillars for the funicular, a bigger visitor centre and café, more and more people, more and more carrion crows eating ptarmigan eggs when the crisps and crusts have all been gobbled up?

We go to the mountains to be outwith society, for a time. Force-pump society into them and what we go there for will no longer be there for us.

Photo (next page):  
Beinn Liath Bheag  
A. Kociolek





Not everyone can go everywhere. Some fastnesses require you to be fit, and it's partly because you have to make a gruelling effort to get into that far corrie, or that deep cave or frozen mountain, that they feel so paradisaal when at last you make it.

The wild hills must not only be conserved. They must not be changed at all. Put in one new facility or convenience and the face of nature is not only disfigured, it is changed into something else, irreversibly. I saw this from the top of Uluru (Ayers Rock) in the Northern Territory of Australia. From the summit, which is folded like some colossal brain, you look out over miles of spinifex and mulga – twenty-five miles west, for example, to the other great inselberg of Katatjuta (the Olgas), which rests on the desert like a clutch of giant roseate eggs. Sand, salt-pans, bush – the tranquillity of unaltered nature, flowering here and there into the most beautiful rocks in the world. A foreign body comes into focus – bright white blotches where everything else is terracotta, cinnamon, dun. It's the resort of Yulara (where I stayed), a high-tech precinct whose streets and shops and flowerbeds are shaded by huge awnings rigged on alloy masts. They pride themselves on how it has been 'tastefully designed to blend in with the landscape' – and they have made the fabric white! Not tawny or ochre or any of the other colours of the place itself. Spotless white, so that from Uluru it looks like the camp of an invading army. Which it is.

If the awnings had toned in it would still have been an invasion. The Aboriginal people settled for that, for the sake of their cut of tourist income and because they knew that so famous a place in their wilderness just could not be preserved, not perfectly. The same argument applies to the building of stone staircases up Cumbrian fells and in Snowdonia, the laying of

duckboard and sleeper trackways up the Three Peaks in Yorkshire or into Coire Ardair, Creag Meagaidh.

Sometimes we have to bow to the force of numbers. People *will* come and trample the wetland pathways into a mire, the scree into an erosion channel. Some artifice is needed to save still worse destruction. It should be a last resort, a barely-tolerated exception.

There is a counter-argument to this principle, that people who cannot physically get to the wild places should be helped. My wife has said to me, 'When you're crippled by a stroke and can't get your wheelchair up to the Cairn Gorm ridge, then you can come to me and say you are still against aided access...'

I hope that by then I'll be able to resign myself to looking at the wilderness from a distance. Not everyone can go everywhere. Some fastnesses require you to be fit, and it's partly because you have to make a gruelling effort to get into that far corrie, or that deep cave or frozen mountain, that they feel so paradisaal when at last you make it. My knees, these days, would never get me back down off Everest, or even the Matterhorn. I still don't want helipads on the world's most desirable summits, or roads up to base-camp (with concessions for OAPs?).

The headwaters of the Quoich and the Dee, the hidden lochs of Shildaig, are perfectly inspiring because they are (almost) perfectly wild. If we denature them, we will have robbed our descendants of one of the most renewing experiences in the world.





## NATURE Kindergartens

“Imagine a place where the carpet changes every day, the ceiling is a myriad of different colours, light, shadow and movement. The feelings and movement completely surround you, sometimes breezy, sometimes cold, others warm. Unexpected wonders fly by, sometimes full of colour and sometimes full of noise and movement. If we really want children to thrive we need to let their connection to nature nurture them”

(*Nurture through Nature*, Claire Warden 2007)

There is nothing my two year-old daughter Maia likes better than jumping up and down in puddles and poking sticks in mud - well, I could think of a few alternatives like sitting in front of a warm fire with a cup o’ tea, but she does absolutely love being outside in all weathers exploring nature. It is great to see her marvel at the smallest things. This is why I have decided to put her into a Nature Kindergarten.

Nature Kindergartens offer the best of all worlds: a secure natural indoors space; a gently challenging outdoor investigation zone which supports young children’s development of emotional confidence and skills; and then the wild wood where they can feel the freedom of a fully natural environment. Of course wild nature is not only found in woods, and can also include places such as mountains, beaches, fields and meadows - anywhere where children can explore and value the elements of nature first hand.

But what, you might think, is the connection to wild land? Following on from previous *My Wild Land* articles, I decided to write this on Maia’s behalf.

Seeing her so happy only stresses the importance of letting kids connect to nature right from the start – if you care about something you don’t want to ‘hurt’ or ‘break’ it (to use Maia’s words). The whole concept of sustainability relies on the idea that our children actually care – but if we don’t give them the opportunity to spend time outdoors or ‘teach’ them the value of nature, why would they? ‘Teaching’ might even be the wrong word, because I believe that we are inherently connected to the natural world; a connection we lose or forget through being told that it is something ‘out there’ rather than part of our everyday life.

I would therefore like to take the opportunity to introduce a children’s section to the Scottish Wild Land Group. We are planning some family events this summer and it would be great if some of you would join us! Wild land for us might be found after a two-day hike into Knoydart, but for your little ones it will be your very backyard.

If you are interested in getting involved, or to find out more about Nature Kindergartens, please get in touch with me at [chrissievalluri@gmail.com](mailto:chrissievalluri@gmail.com)

In this issue we have two book reviews, both by SWLG members, on recently published works by Andy Wightman and Myrtle and Philip Ashmole. The first, reviewed by John Digney, deals with the history of land ownership in Scotland and how it has led to the unique and challenging system we have today. The second concerns efforts to restore a large area of native woodland at Carrifran, which Nick Kempe relates to his own experiences of visiting the glen. We're grateful to John and Nick for their articles, and welcome reviews of books that might be of interest to members.



John Digney

## 'The poor had no lawyers: who owns Scotland (and how they got it)'

A review of Andy Wightman's new book

John Digney was a member of the SWLG Steering Team for nineteen years and was editor of WLN from 1994-2008. Over the years he has campaigned for reform to the system of land tenure, believing that the power of land monopoly is the greatest obstacle to re-establishing the public interest in our common heritage. He lives in the Trossachs and is involved in various local footpath projects.

It was back in 1999 that Andy Wightman and Robin Callander appeared as guest speakers at the SWLG AGM. The Scottish Parliament had just been established with land reform as one of its priorities, and Wightman's book "Who Owns Scotland" and Callander's "How Scotland is Owned" had done much to fuel the debate. Legislation was enacted in the early years of the new millennium, but the "ongoing process" that we were led to expect by the late Donald Dewar largely failed to materialise under Labour, while the subsequent SNP administration have shown little interest in pursuing the matter.

If anything can change that, it is this splendid new book by Andy Wightman. The main title, a simple but telling quote from the historian,

Cosmo Innes, gives a good clue to the content. Ownership of the land has always been the key to political clout and social and economic dominance. Power-hungry individuals have conspired to rig the legislation to suit their own selfish objectives while the landless lower orders, until relatively recently denied even the right to vote, were left helpless with no-one to fight their corner.

The story begins in the 12<sup>th</sup> century with the origins of feudalism and continues right up to the present day. The early chapters chronicle a series of land grabs that progressively gave power and wealth to the few, and laid the foundations for today's notoriously concentrated pattern of ownership. It is a saga of cynical connivance, deceit and brutal self-interest. Although Wightman covers

the so-called 'Balmorality' era and the evolution of the sporting estate, he avoids re-telling the story of the Clearances, preferring to examine the devious methods by which the landowners acquired their power rather than the ruthless way they wielded it.

With the lawyers in their pockets, the landed classes have always been assiduous in perpetuating their privileges, and Wightman examines the legislation that was constructed to ensure the concentration of ownership was not diluted. He cites the laws of succession as the major factor, while the system of entail, which protected land from creditors even in the event of bankruptcy, was only abolished in 2004 along with the rest of the feudal system. It seems that land law is riddled with mechanisms which, if subjected to scrutiny by a society with the power to veto them, would never have seen the light of day.

Wightman's arguments are passionate but impeccably reasoned, and his research is meticulous. The book is thoroughly referenced and the text punctuated with passages from documents old and new that speak for themselves, sometimes with little comment from the author. But he is candid and uncompromising in his observations, not least in his assessment of present-day and recent politicians, and especially lawyer-politicians, whom he thinks should have done more. Donald Dewar, Jim Wallace and Fergus Ewing all take direct hits for falling short when squaring up to landed interests.

One of the book's 32 chapters is entirely devoted to the fiasco over the

attempted sale of the Cuillin by John McLeod in 2000. McLeod's claim to ownership was based on the device known as prescription which is, in Wightman's words, legalised theft. He uses the Cuillin episode to lambast the Crown Estate Commission, contrasting their reluctance to challenge an aristocrat with the high-handed way they have sometimes dealt with local communities.

The book is peppered with jaw-dropping examples of corruption and manipulation. With only those enjoying certain landowning credentials allowed to vote, elections could readily be rigged, and the practice was sufficiently widespread for a Select Committee on Fictitious Votes in Scotland to be established in 1837 to look into it. Against such a background one can see why reform was so hard to achieve. Unrest in the Highlands finally led tocrofting legislation in 1886, and a seismic shift would have taken place across the UK in 1909 had it not been for landowners in the House of Lords scuppering Lloyd George's People's Budget, which was to pave the way for land taxes.

Demand for reform re-surfaced towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when subsidies and tax-breaks in the farming and forestry industries were seen to be encouraging yet another breed of opportunist absentee landowner. The community buy-out in Assynt in 1992 caught the public imagination, by which time Wightman was a regular commentator in the media. The Scottish Parliament immediately set to work with a programme of reform that the book examines in detail. The flagship

Ownership of the land has always been the key to political clout and social and economic dominance. Power-hungry individuals have conspired to rig the legislation to suit their own selfish objectives while the landless lower orders, until relatively recently denied even the right to vote, were left helpless with no-one to fight their corner.

community right-to-buy was implemented, promising the empowerment of communities and a rapid change in the ownership pattern. Despite being branded by opponents as a Mugabe-style land grab it achieved very little, and Wightman notes that after five years, only in nine cases have communities successfully negotiated its complex processes and purchased land. He quotes a briefing from an Edinburgh law firm offering advice to landowners on how to thwart community bids.

There is, however a glimmer of hope, and Wightman devotes one of his final chapters to land value taxation, which is gaining acceptance in many quarters, notably in Scotland. This would redress the balance of power and wealth, and restore the public interest in the land resource without expropriation or mandatory redistribution of the land itself. At the same time as writing the book Wightman was working on a report for the Scottish Green Party on land value taxation as an alternative to the

Council Tax, and he quotes some of his findings in the book.

By the end of the book one has a sense of the sheer scale of the fraud that has been perpetrated against the bulk of society. Such things as benefit cheating or MPs' false expenses pale into insignificance alongside it, yet these are the issues that grab the headlines. Most people felt distanced from the Scottish Parliament's land reform programme, which explicitly concentrated on rural areas and largely ignored the land on which the majority of people live and work. But Wightman covers the lot, whether it be Buccleuch Estates' 241,000 acres, a shopping mall in Princes Street, or the Atlantic outcrop of Rockall. While we cannot undo the past we can certainly shape the future, but unless there is much more public awareness of the issues there will be no serious challenge to the established order. That is why this extraordinary book is of such great importance.

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Nick Kempe

## The Carrifran Wildwood Story by Myrtle and Philip Ashmole

A review of The *Carrifran Wildwood Story* book

Carrifran is not a place you are likely to visit or see unintentionally. While the glen lies between Hartfell and White Coomb, you will hardly see it if you

tramp the ridges between these two hills, while it is partially shielded from the A708 by glacial debris. On the map it is not as striking as its two

neighbours, Black Hope and the Grey Mare's Tail. I had never walked there, despite several visits to the Moffat Hills, until I was prompted to do so by Philip Ashmole's article about the Carrifran re-wilding project in *Wild Land News* 75.

It was the beginning of May and, as I followed the track up the glen, what I found more striking than the trees, which were not yet in leaf, was the profusion of wild flowers – they were everywhere and continued all the way up the pleasant scramble up Games Gill onto Rotten Bottom and over into the high hanging valley of Firth Hope. The contrast with when I stepped over the boundary fence onto the National Trust for Scotland property near White Coomb could not have been greater – hardly a flower in sight despite the land also being part of the Moffat Hills Site of Special Scientific Interest and partly designated for its rare plants. But then there were sheep – noted by SNH as the biggest single adverse factor affecting the conservation health of the SSSI.

It is well worth while reading the Carrifran Wildwood Story – it has helped me to understand better how a relatively small group of people, without any obvious power except for their own determination, have achieved far more in ten years in terms of re-wilding than many other areas of land in so-called conservation ownership. Part of the explanation I think lies in the strength of the vision: to recreate a natural environment akin to that at the end of the last ice age. This has helped keep them on course even though they have taken what I would describe as a pragmatic rather than purist approach to re-wilding. For example, they quickly decided that natural regeneration would take far too long, and would probably not re-establish species they knew were present in the

past from the evidence of pollen records in the peat at Rotten Bottom. The Wildwood Group have re-introduced not just trees, but plants including the rare fern *Oblong woodsia*.

The book explains how this pragmatic approach has developed, often after considerable debate about principles. So, the Wildwood Group collected seed from remnants of natural woodland and have tried to plant saplings only in soils and places appropriate for that species; the trees have all been planted by hand, rather than mechanical devices; herbicides were used initially to prevent the trees being strangled by grasses and tall herbs which have flourished since the exclusion of sheep; vole guards have been used because of the absence of predators, but are later removed; and, most controversially, some fertiliser has been used in higher areas to give the montane scrub a better chance. On reading the book I was sceptical about some of this, but having been there and seen for myself, I think most of their approach is justified - though it will be interesting to see what happens with the attempt to re-create a montane scrub zone.

The strongest principle to come out of the book is the commitment of the Wildwood Group to withdraw and let natural processes take over as re-wilding develops, even if this means loss of some of the species they have tried to reintroduce. The biggest challenge in this respect is grazing pressure. The sheep fence will not keep out roe deer and the Group is clear that the long-term solution to deer pressure would be reintroduction of the Lynx – but this will require, as the Group recognises, a far bigger area than just Carrifran to be rewilded. The purchase of Corehead, north of Moffat, by the Borders Forest Trust is presented in the book as an opportunity to do this.

In my view this does not go far enough, and highlights the one weakness of the book and the approach of the Wildwood Group: their failure to tackle wider land ownership issues. In order to buy Carrifran they had to win over the local farmer, and this included paying more for the land than they knew it was worth agriculturally. It has, I would guess, restricted what they can say publicly, though it does not explain why the book does not say anything about the NTS's management of Grey Mare's Tail.

So, having shown what can be done where there is the determination to do

it, what else is needed to achieve the vision of the Wildwood Group for the re-wilding of a significant area in the Southern Uplands? First, I think there is a need to pressurise NTS to take a far more proactive approach to conservation at Grey Mare's Tail, the first step of which would be to terminate the lease for grazing. This would enable the sheep fence that borders the two properties to be removed, although other new fencing might be required. At a stroke this would double the area of land that was being re-wilded and would improve the conservation status of the SSSI.



Second, the Forestry Commission has a considerable landholding in the area and, while I have been unable to check whether the land between Carrifran and Grey Mare's Tail is still in FC ownership, they do own Craigieburn Forest above Moffat which runs to within 3 km of Carrifran and Corehead. Third, and hardest of all, a way needs to be found of removing sheep from the Blackhope Valley that runs South of Hart Fell, which is part of the SSSI and is scenically far grander than Carrifran. This would almost certainly mean buying out the farmer – a possible test for our land reform legislation.

If you have not been to Carrifran, I would recommend you do so and, unless you are a far better naturalist than I am, I think you will get much more out of your visit if you have read *The Carrifran Wildwood Story*. It provides a lot of ideas about what to look out for, and is well produced. It is available from [www.bordersforestrust.org](http://www.bordersforestrust.org), costs £15, and all proceeds go to Carrifran.

Photo: The impact of the sheep fence on vegetation can clearly be seen at Rotten Bottom, the broad high ridge between Hartfell and White Coomb  
N.Kempe



Holly Deary

## NEWS

### **The Dunmaglass development**

The Dunmaglass Estate, under the management of absentee landowner Sir Jack Hayward, has been approved for a large scale, insensitive wind farm development in conjunction with Renewable Energy Systems. The estate on the

northern edge of the Monadhliath mountains will be home to almost three dozen wind turbines

([www.cameronmcneish.co.uk/2010/12/the-dunmaglass-disaster/#comment-29944](http://www.cameronmcneish.co.uk/2010/12/the-dunmaglass-disaster/#comment-29944)).

### **Mountain-top protest**

The Press and Journal have reported on an unusual demonstration due to take place in May in which protesters will carry a coffin up to the point of the highest proposed wind turbine in the recently approved Dunmaglass development.

Lead by seasoned hill walker Alan Sloman, the protest will hold a 'wake for wilderness' on the mountain top ([www.wind-watch.org/news/2011/01/10/hillwalkers-taking-protest-to-the-top-wake-for-loss-of-wild-to-wind-turbines/](http://www.wind-watch.org/news/2011/01/10/hillwalkers-taking-protest-to-the-top-wake-for-loss-of-wild-to-wind-turbines/)).

### **SNH's windfarm footprints maps**

SNH has produced a set of 'windfarm footprint' maps which provide an overview of windfarm developments in Scotland. They include any windfarms at the installed, consented, planning or scoping stage.

Maps are available from: [www.snh.gov.uk/planning-and-development/renewable-energy/research-data-and-trends/trendsandstats/windfarm-footprint-maps/](http://www.snh.gov.uk/planning-and-development/renewable-energy/research-data-and-trends/trendsandstats/windfarm-footprint-maps/).

### **New lobby group launched**

The new 'Windfarm Action Group' has recently been launched in response to the ever-increasing proliferation of wind farm proposals in the Highlands. With high profile support from

influential individuals such as ecologist Sir John Lister-Kaye and botanist Dr David Bellamy they are calling for a moratorium on windfarm development ([www.windfarmaction.com](http://www.windfarmaction.com)).

## **Argyll Array proposal**

The proposed Argyll Array windfarm has been at the centre of an ongoing controversy. The development, just offshore from Tiree, would be almost four times the size of the island itself and is set to jeopardize the future of Tiree's tourist industry, which is founded upon the uncompromised beauty of the area. The Scottish Parliament has been strongly criticised for trying

to rush a number of proposals such as this through before the end of the Scottish Parliamentary Session. As the planned development is offshore it is not required to go through the local planning system ([www.wind-watch.org/news/2011/01/22/david-battles-goliath-as-island-takes-on-offshore-wind-farm/](http://www.wind-watch.org/news/2011/01/22/david-battles-goliath-as-island-takes-on-offshore-wind-farm/)).

## **John Muir Trust petition**

The John Muir Trust has presented a petition to the Scottish Parliament demanding action for the protection of wild land. The petition of over 3,500 signatures calls for a new national

environmental designation to improve protection for the best areas of wild land in Scotland. Currently, only 49.6% of Scotland's best wild land is covered by any environmental designation.

## **Wild land in Parliament**

Wild land has been a recent topic of discussion in Parliament, and Roseanna Cunningham has acknowledged the importance and significance of work carried out by SNH and the Wild Land

Research Institute on mapping wildness, which presents a far better representation than the current indicative 'search areas of wild land'.

## **SNH beaver recapture**

SNH has consulted the National Species Reintroduction Forum for advice on how to handle a number of escapee beavers into the wild in Tayside. SNH is now acting on this guidance and aims to recapture the beavers due to a lack of either public consultation or a license

for their release, and uncertainty as to whether they are the appropriate beaver species for Scotland. A Facebook campaign has been set up to try and save them ([www.facebook.com/home.php?sk=group\\_167712896595304&ap=1](https://www.facebook.com/home.php?sk=group_167712896595304&ap=1)).

### **Wild land Research Institute report**

The Wild Land Research Institute (Leeds University) has published a report reviewing the status and conservation of wild land in Europe. It maps the extent of wild land and assesses the

best options for protecting wildness. The full report is available on the Scottish Government website ([www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/1051/0109251.pdf](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/1051/0109251.pdf)).

### **Mapping wild places seminar**

SNH are holding their 'On the Wild Side' seminar on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March to discuss the recent mapping of wildness in Scotland and to provide

opportunities to discuss how best such maps may be used. Details can be found at [www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A497690.pdf](http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A497690.pdf).

### **Harris National Park Proposal**

The Scottish Government will not support attempts to designate Scotland's third National Park on the island of Harris. A lack of support from the local council and funding from the

government has stalled the plan, which is supported by the majority of residents. A full report is available at [www.hebrides-news.com/harris-national-park-21111.html](http://www.hebrides-news.com/harris-national-park-21111.html)



## Renew Your Membership!

Please do renew your membership for this year (and send any late renewals for 2010). We very much hope that all of our existing members will choose to stay with us, and that you feel that we are doing a good job. Without your help we will not be able to continue our efforts to save Scottish Wild Land.

Payment details are on the back page.

Early subscription allows us to plan ahead and with 4 issues of Wild Land News anticipated this year, we really *do* need your continued support. Funds are also required for campaigning and raising SWLG's public profile.

## Volunteer for Scottish Wild Land

Do you have skills which you could volunteer to help the Scottish Wild Land Group grow? In particular, we would very much welcome help with: *website development, grant fundraising and organising events*

If you are a professional with some of these skills and a little spare time then please get in touch! What seems like a molehill to you might be more of a mountain to us, so a little help could go a long way.

Also, if you're willing to help out in a less specialised way, perhaps you would consider **doing a little fundraising** (we can send you a fundraisers pack), **giving a talk** (we can send you materials) or **distributing some of our leaflets**. May we take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to everyone who has already volunteered help in these areas!

## Easy Fundraising

You can now help raise funds for the SWLG from the comfort of your own armchair. We've signed up to several websites which will allow our members to generate funds for the group without costing them a penny.

[www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk)

You can use this site every time you shop online. Not only will you raise money for the group when you make a purchase via this website, but you might also receive a discount!

[www.easysearch.org.uk](http://www.easysearch.org.uk)

Use this instead of your usual search engine (e.g. Google) and a donation will be made to the group each time you do.

[www.missionfish.org.uk](http://www.missionfish.org.uk)

Use this when you trade on *ebay* and a donation will be made to the group.

Watch this space....there is more on the way!

Glyn Jones

## Grizzly Adams and me

I suppose I first started thinking about wild land when I was about six, during a particularly good episode of 'Grizzly Adams'. I vividly remember the opening sequence where Grizzly is walking along a knife edge ridge with his best friend Ben, a bear which he rescued as a cub and then tamed. The ridge that Grizzly was walking on was razor sharp and rocky but also had some trees growing on it, and the surrounding hills were also covered in trees. For some reason I was captivated by this ridge - all I wanted to do was walk on a ridge like this (and own a pet grizzly bear of course!).

I lived on Anglesey at this time and from our landing window I could see Snowdon and what looked like knife edge ridges leading up to the summit. I often used to gaze out of the window and yearn to stand on the summit or stride along the ridges. I have no idea why I wanted to be in these high places; I just did. My family weren't great outdoors folk, although we rambled or cycled around Anglesey most weekends. So it wasn't until the age of about fifteen that I was allowed to start exploring Snowdonia. Every opportunity I had I would be in the mountains. On one visit to Pen-y-Pass I saw a National Park Warden sitting in a land rover having a cup of tea and I recall thinking

– "I could do that!" After finishing school and University I started working for the National Trust and the RSPB.

During my early contracts for the RSPB I often found myself on off-shore islands undertaking species protection and monitoring work. The lumps of rock on which I lived gave a fantastic sense of isolation and wildness; particularly during the evenings when looking across at mainland lights or when the sea was rough. The lack of basic facilities added to the sense of excitement and remoteness. The feelings of isolation and wildness that I experienced on these rocks have never been surpassed when working in the hills.

However, I loved Northern Snowdonia, and my first real job was as a National Trust Warden on the Carneddau and Glyderau Estate. For Wales, the Carneddau and Glyderau are fairly wild places, with 10 summits over 3,000 feet; in the heart of the Carneddau you're as far away from a road as it is possible to get in Wales. The main detractor of the wildness of these areas was the massive number of visitors. You would always have to share the hill with someone. At busy weekends you would be sharing the hill with dozens or often hundreds of others.

During the foot and mouth outbreak of 2001 when access restrictions were in place for the general public, I was allowed to stride across the Carneddau ridge on my own. I was only allowed to do this on one day and I can't recollect exactly why. The Carneddau were alive that day - skylarks and meadow pipits were nesting right next to paths, and I even spotted a pair of ravens nesting on a popular climbing crag which they had never used in the past. The Carneddau felt like a completely different mountain range to the one normally occupied by dozens of other walkers.

After a few years working in Wales, the Scottish hills were calling me and I soon found myself working as a ranger on Lochnagar. Most weekdays and particularly during the winter I can be alone on the hill, and again I feel that this adds to the sense of wildness, along with the sheer scale of the place and the arctic conditions.

These wild places certainly need protection and I believe that the pleasure and benefit we gain from experiencing them can never be quantified or recognised. However, I also believe that giving them the 'wild land' tag would sadly result in greater numbers of visitors wanting to access them. A wild land designation that takes a zoning approach and limits access to key core areas, as is common in many overseas countries, would be the only way to give adequate protection in my opinion. I realise this would be politically impossible in this country, however.

I now find I need ever-increasing wilderness experiences to satisfy me and this has led to trips to the Amazon, the Alps, Patagonia, the Altai Mountains and this year the Rockies. I feel in awe and exhilarated by these landscapes but often have difficulty relating to them. At

first sight they appear true wilderness, but as is the case in the areas that I am more familiar with, they are highly managed areas of wilderness.

James Capen "Grizzly" Adams did exist. He really was a famous mountain man and trainer of grizzly bears and other animals. In fact, he had been struck on the head so often by a bear of his by the name of General Fremont that part of his skull had been dislodged and his brain was left permanently exposed! He eventually died in 1860 after contracting meningitis following an attack to his head whilst training a monkey for P.T. Barnum. Apparently, extensive market testing had been undertaken to produce the TV series, which showed that audiences liked stories about men and animals living in harmony in the wilderness, that bears were favourite wilderness animals, and that grizzlies were the favourite type of bear.

No doubt my relationship and understanding of wild land will continue to evolve. I have another 25 years ahead of me on the hills and in 'wild land'.



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If you pay UK income tax, you can increase the value of your subscription to the group by completing a gift aid declaration. Signing this does not cost you anything. If you pay tax at the higher rate, you can claim higher rate relief for your subscription on your own tax return. You can cancel this declaration at any time.

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# Give Scotland's wild land a unique and passionate voice

Join the Scottish Wild Land Group - a Scottish environmental charity run wholly by volunteers

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... sustainable deer management that brings deer populations into balance with wider highland ecology



... introduction of planning regulations which control the development of hill tracks and avoid the degradation of wild areas



... restoration and rewilding of wild landscapes and the reintroduction of missing species



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[www.swlg.org.uk](http://www.swlg.org.uk)



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