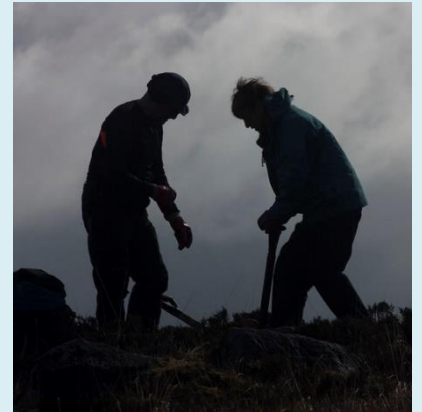




Conservation Work Parties 2017



Planting trees on North Harris

Members and non-members can join our conservation work parties. They take place on John Muir Trust properties and on our partnership properties. Participants arrange their own food, travel and accommodation.

These events are designed to enable our members and others to:



Path work on Huishinis to Cravadale path

- *contribute to the practical work of the John Muir Trust on Trust and partnership properties*
- *learn about the John Muir Trust and partnership properties and how they are managed*
- *practice some of the skills of conservation management*
- *meet other members and John Muir Trust staff*
- *experience and have contact with wild places*

"Do something for wildness and make the mountains glad"
(John Muir, 1892)



Above painting a bench at White Shore beach in Culag Woodland, below (l) laying grass at Talla na Mara community centre in West Harris, below (r) collecting alder seed in the Ettrick Valley for Glenlude tree nursery



Overview

In 2017 there were thirty four organised work parties planned (although four were cancelled before running), plus a wide range of volunteering by individuals and groups such as the John Muir Trust local members groups as well as ad hoc volunteering on Trust properties such as the regular Thursday work days at Glenlude. For the first time the amount of volunteering carried out on our partners properties slightly outstripped that done on Trust properties. In total one hundred and forty different volunteers donated six hundred and forty nine days. Visits were made to partners and like-minded properties including the **Coigach and Assynt Living Landscape (CALL) project** that we are a member of, community owned estates that we have been involved with such as **Knoydart Foundation** and the **North** and **West Harris** estates as well as the likeminded estate of **Corrour** where the Trust has been assisting with the conservation management - in total coming to three hundred and twenty six days of volunteering.

The number of work days achieved in the main programme was very similar to 2016 with an average work party consisting of ten people but due to the informal way that they are run (people look after their own travel and accommodation) people do drop in and out, usually to fit in hill walks or bags!



above Preparing to clear bracken around trees at Li & Coire Dhorrcail below path maintenance on East Schiehallion

What was achieved?

- **Pathwork**
 - **Sandwood**; In August a new section of 4 m of pitching close to the Bay was built, a cross drain added, around 15m of path re-laid , 20m of ditching dug and the whole path maintained
 - **East Schiehallion**; the built path continues to deteriorate badly, the path was maintained along its length 3 times, 6 anchor bars built, 25m of surface re-laid and six water bars rebuilt/repaired in the lower





section. Path to Dun Coilich cleared of bracken.

- **Harris;**

maintenance on 1km of the Maraig to Urgha path with reditching and opening up of lets, 10m of the Huishinis to Cravadale path completely rebuilt with 5 new pitching and almost a ton of surfacing excavated & laid, 3 days on the postman's path from Reinigadal to Urgha with 3 new water bars, 6 anchor



bars 50m of ditching, 6 culverts reopened and 10m of surface re-laid

- **Quinag;** a section of the path below the bealach rebuilt with several new cross drains some deroughening and a ton of surface material excavated and laid. Several



river crossing on an ATV track to the north of Quinag were rebuilt to make deer extraction by quad bike easier.

- **CALL partnership;** sections of path on Isle Martin cleared of vegetation ditched and rebuilt , Tanera Mor - repairs to paths above Rosslyn, Culag Woodland paths maintained.

- **Skye;** Blaven lower path maintained once with a few repairs,

two days maintenance on Sligachan glen path.

- **Nevis;** Steal Gorge & Upper Ben paths maintained, 25 metre section of path rebuilt at Old Steall
- **Knoydart Foundation;** 3 days rebuilding a 50 m section of the Ladhar Bheinn pony track

- **Rubbish**

- Beaches cleaned included 4 cleaned twice at **Sandwood** (Sandwood Bay, Polin, Dromin & Oldshoremore) also White Shore and area in **Culag Woodland** as well as 3 beaches on Tanera Mor. Huishinis & Traigh Mheilín beaches on **Harris** cleaned.

Top path work on East Schiehallion (l) and Sligachan, Skye (r) middle, Sandwood Bay bottom, beach cleaning on Tanera Mor (l) Sandwood Bay (r)



- Mountain top rubbish is still a reducing problem on **Nevis** helped by an increased number of other groups helping out during the year but around 10 bags of rubbish were removed by work parties in the year
- Used tree tubes at **Glenlude** were collected up to be sent for recycling
- **Invasives**
 - Rhododendrons were removed on **Knoydart Foundation** land by hand pulling as well as around the new nature trail at Glencanisp and on Isle Martin
 - Non-native Sitka was removed from large sections of ancient woodland on **Corrour Estate**
 - Gorse was cut by hand at Glencanisp around the new nature trail

- **Woodland**

- Treeplanting; 1500 trees at Cliasmol on **Harris**, 250 trees on **Tanera Mor**, 1500 trees on **Corrour** near the Lodge, around a thousand trees planted in brash hedges and along the burn at **Glenlude**, 2 fenced enclosures by the tourist path up **Ben Nevis** planted, 150 scots pine planted by road to Airor with **Knoydart Foundation**.
- 2 brash hedges built at Corrour, top brash hedge 2 compartments finished at **Glenlude** and all the hedges maintained.
- Seed collection was carried out at **Glenlude** and for the CALL nursery



Above Weeding at the CALL (Coigach Assynt Living Landscape) tree nursery, middle planting a brash hedge at Corrour, below hanging a gate on the Corrour brash hedge



hundreds

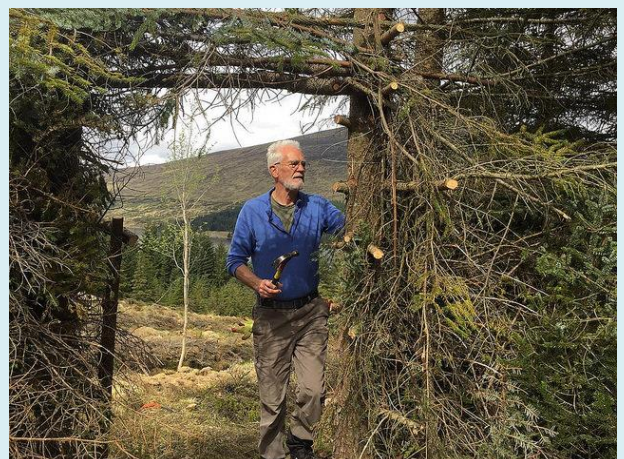
of tree tubes were checked at **Glenlude** with mesh extensions added or removed if the trees have outgrown them.

- Many days of work were carried out at the **Glenlude** nursery, processing seeds, pricking them out and weeding. 2 days heling at the **CALL** tree nursery at Little Assynt

- Over 10,000 trees were weeded

around (mostly of bracken) at **Li & Coire Dhorrcail** and tree nursery at Inbhir Dhorrcail weeded

- At **Glenlude** the new wood processor area was built including a wood store with turf roof.
- At **Glen Nevis** along with the Nevis Partnership two test enclosures set up to monitor browsing impact
- A section of brash at Keppoch on **Skye** was cleared following felling on the Strathaird estate.



- **Monitoring**

- Various species were monitored including mountain ringlet butterflies and water voles at **Nevis**, red squirrels and adders at **Glenlude**
- Vegetation monitoring was carried out at **Glenlude**
- 2 Owl boxes were erected in Glen Nevis in a project with the **Nevis Partnership**



Above installing an owl box in Glen Nevis below (!) getting public to help carry rubbish out from Sandwood Bay (r) drystone wall repairs on Tanera Mor

- **Estate management**

- 3m wall on Tanera Mor were stripped down and rebuilt
- at **Sandwood** the Blairmore end gate & signage repainted
- at Culag Woodland in the **CALL** partnership the picnic benches were repainted
- in **West Harris** a day was spent laying grass and a further day clearing the site and preparing for some drystone dyking around An Talla Mor the new Community Enterprise Centre at Rubha Romagaidh, Horgabost also more Marram grass transplanting at the Golf Course.
- in **North Harris** a day was spent fencing and landscaping around the new campervan sites that are part of the new Gateway at Huishinis



Local Members Groups

The most active group again was the North East Scotland group. The Yorkshire Members group also held several work parties in the Yorkshire Dales. (See reports elsewhere on John Muir Trust website)

Photographs of activities in 2017

You can see photos of all of these work parties on the Flickr sites listed below



- Western Isles www.flickr.com/groups/westernislesworkparties/
- East Schiehallion www.flickr.com/groups/schiehallionworkparties/
- Glen Nevis & Ben Nevis www.flickr.com/groups/nevisworkparties/

- Glenlude www.flickr.com/groups/glenludeworkparties/
- Sandwood, Quinag and our partners in the Coigach Assynt partnership (CALL) www.flickr.com/groups/sandwoodquinagcallworkparties/
- Skye and Knoydart (including the Knoydart Foundation and Li & Coire Dhorrcail) www.flickr.com/groups/skyeknoydartworkparties/
- Local member group volunteers www.flickr.com/groups/2463314@N25/

All the photos in this report are taken from the flickr sites where you can see credits for photographers and descriptions of where they were taken.

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The programme for volunteering in 2018 appears at the John Muir Website at www.johnmuirtrust.org/support-us/volunteer/conservation-volunteering

location	2017 dates
Glen Nevis	Jan 14-15
Glenlude	Feb 10-12
Glenlude	Mar 10-12
East Schiehallion	Mar-19
Skye	Apr 7-10
Sandwood	Apr 15-17
Western Isles	Apr 24-28
Li & Coire Dhorrcail (Knoydart)	May 6-12
East Schiehallion	May 13-14
Corroul Estate	May 15-19
Knoydart Foundation (Inverie)	May 22-27
Li & Coire Dhorrcail (Knoydart)	Jun 2-4
Ben Nevis	Jun-10
Glenlude	Jun 16-18
Quinag & CALL project	Jun 19-23
Li & Coire Dhorrcail (Knoydart)	Jul 7-9
Glen Nevis	Jul 14-17
East Schiehallion	Jul 29-30
Sandwood	Aug 1-5
Ben Nevis	Aug-19
Quinag & CALL project	Aug 21-25
Western Isles	Sep 4-8
Ben Nevis	Sep-16
CALL project (Summer Isles)	Sep 18-22
East Schiehallion	Sep 23-24
Glenlude	Oct 6-8
Glenlude	Nov 17-19