

**PRESS RELEASE:**

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## **Adventure grant helps early career ecologist document rare plants**

A Perthshire woman will discover and document rare plants at locations around Scotland with funding support from the Des Rubens and Bill Wallace Grant.

Leah Farquharson, 30, from Perth, an early career ecologist and recent graduate in Environmental Protection from Stirling University, will visit multiple sites throughout Scotland over a 2-year period trekking, kayaking, cycling and climbing to reach wild and remote locations to find rare native plants as well as more common species. She will document her journey and discoveries using photography and film to create a cinematographic, educational docu-series.

On receiving the news of the grant offer Leah said: "Thank you so much for the award! So delighted and cannot wait to get out adventuring again!!"

Rosie Simpson of the John Muir Trust, who administers the Des Rubens and Bill Wallace Grant said: "We have wanted to support adventures closer to home this year and Leah's project, with an itinerary that takes her around Scotland to document lesser-known native plants, demonstrates adventures can support wild places without travelling to far flung places."

Leah is one of six successful applicants to the Des Rubens and Bill Wallace Grant. This grant was established to give people the opportunity to seek out life-changing experiences in wild places in ways which will benefit both the person, and the wild places themselves.

## **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

### **ABOUT THE DES RUBENS AND BILL WALLACE GRANT**

The John Muir Trust administers the Des Rubens and Bill Wallace Grant for free. The grant was set up in honour of Bill Wallace, who died of heart failure in February 2007 while skiing in the Alps at the age of 73 with two artificial hips, and Des Rubens, a popular teacher at Craigroyston High School in Edinburgh who was killed in June 2016 in an Alpine climbing accident at the age of 63.

Since the grant was established in 2007, initially in honour of Bill Wallace, it has supported almost 60 people from all walks of life, from students to scientists, from grandmothers to gardeners, take part in life-changing adventures of educational or scientific value in some of the wildest places in the world.

Grants of £200 to £2,000 are awarded annually on merit to individuals who wish to experience wild places in the spirit of Des Rubens and Bill Wallace and meet the grant criteria.

### **ABOUT THE JOHN MUIR TRUST**

The John Muir Trust is a membership based conservation charity dedicated to the experience, protection and repair of wild places. The Trust was founded in 1983 and was inspired by the life and works of John Muir (1838-1914), the Scots-born founding father of modern conservation and the inspiration behind national parks. We operate in Scotland, England and Wales and are the guardians of some of the finest wild places in the UK including Ben Nevis, Helvellyn and Schiehallion.

#### **For more info about the Des Rubens and Bill Wallace Grant, contact:**

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<https://www.johnmuirtrust.org/grants-and-awards/the-bill-wallace-grant>