

JOHN MUIR AWARD

wild places:
DISCOVER
EXPLORE
CONSERVE
SHARE

John Muir Award News Autumn 2014

The John Muir Award is the main educational initiative of the John Muir Trust. It encourages people to connect with, enjoy and care for wild places.



National Parks, Notional Parks
and the John Muir Award –
exploring natural potential

pages 2-5



National Parks and the John Muir Award

What are National Parks for?

From Dartmoor to the Cairngorms, National Parks protect and conserve some of our most special and unique landscapes, habitats and species. They are national assets. A key role is to promote understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities – to bring us closer to the wildness of the United Kingdom. Some, like the Peak District, are just a bus ride from millions of city-dwellers. Others prize serenity – Northumberland, for example, embracing ‘the most tranquil spot in England’.

The UK’s 15 National Parks are part of a global family of over 113,000 protected areas, covering 6% of the Earth’s surface. That’s quite something – and it all stems from the chopping down of a giant sequoia tree in California in 1853. This led to the *Yosemite Grant* bill protecting Yosemite Valley and Mariposa 150 years ago, which in turn paved the way for the first official National Park being established at Yellowstone. John Muir earned his moniker *Father of the National Parks* by influencing Congress to establish Yosemite as a National Park in 1890, famously achieving this through his friendship and camping exploits with President Roosevelt.

Why the history lesson? Well, National Parks in the UK today still stick pretty much to the same ethos, offering the chance for us all to get away from the ordinary and every day, to be totally immersed in a wild place that is cared for, to follow in the footsteps of Muir.

Why do National Parks use the Award?

The John Muir Award is now used by all 15 of our National Park Authorities, and by hundreds of resident and visiting groups. There’s a clear synergy. The Award can be used to help relate to a Park’s special qualities; it encourages a care, respect and conserve agenda; it can be a vehicle for learning. And our Parks – they’re called National because they have national value and are for all of us – offer wonderful settings for inspirational experiences.

Research into barriers to engagement with National Parks – such as awareness, understanding, relevance, priority and time⁽¹⁾ – found that *direct experience* is the most effective means of overcoming them, and that this can lead to ‘a sense of connection and a commitment to ongoing engagement’. Common ground, clearly. What helps, says the research, is a structure to support engagement, and importantly, recognise the efforts of those involved:

‘Amongst the strongest feedback from external partners was the value of Park Authorities providing well-structured experiences for those seeking to engage in the Parks. The use of existing award schemes such as the John Muir Award...provides a more structured basis upon which external organisations are able to build engagement’.

Our relationships with the dedicated staff of National Parks – for over a decade in some instances – have been a key part of our growth, and help to give the John Muir Trust a UK-wide presence it wouldn’t otherwise have. Working together enhances the experiences of thousands of people every year, and helps share the message that our National Parks are there for us all to enjoy, nurture and cherish.

(1) Scotland’s National Parks & National Nature Reserves – overcoming barriers to engagement 2009



Image: Rob Bushby



Did you know?
There are now 15 National Parks in the UK

Did you know?
There are over 113,000 protected areas worldwide

Main cover image: FSC Blencatra Centre

In Action in National Parks

From partnerships of over 12 years (Cairngorms) to our first joint activity in 2014 (New Forest), we're working together in new and exciting ways.

McLaren High School has improved biodiversity in school grounds; Strathyre Primary School has worked with Scottish Wildlife Trust on a Red Squirrels project.

All first and second year pupils at Grantown Grammar School undertake their Discovery and Explorer Awards as part of a school curriculum with outdoor learning at its heart. 600 children throughout the school learn all about Muir, the Cairngorms and why it is so special.



Image: Strathyre Primary School

Park Partnerships promote participation from people of all ages. School groups and families through to elderly adults – up to 100 years old in Pembrokeshire Coast! – get involved.

Constructive activity: iProject Outdoor Construction Group from Sussex Downs College, in partnership with South Downs National Park and Action in Rural Sussex, created an outdoor classroom and wildlife area, learning skills relevant for employment.



Image: Sussex iProject

Over 3100 school pupils learned about the special qualities of the three Welsh National Parks through the John Muir Award in 2014. Here, school groups at Arthog Outdoor Education Centre help clean up Snowdonia National Park.

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs Biodiversity Strategy, *Tales from our Wild Park*, as well as quoting Muir prominently, references the John Muir Award as a way to *experience its wild side*.



Image: Alison Cush



Image: Stuart Evans, Arthog OEC

Award groups contribute to major conservation projects, such as Outward Bound groups' involvement with Fix the Fells in the Lake District.

Keswick School pupils work with Fell Futures Lake District National Park Authority apprentices.

Brecon Beacons: A School Ambassadors scheme uses the John Muir Award as a framework for connecting with and taking responsibility for their local National Park.

Not near a National Park? Don't worry...

- Visit other parks that aren't national but have their own special qualities *regional parks, geoparks, nature parks, city parks...*
- Think about the special qualities of where you are
- Create your own mini National Park
- Find out more about the concept of a National Park City (see p4)
- See what places are campaigning to become National Parks such as cities (see p4) and the Mourne Mountains, Northern Ireland. Or in England and Wales see the Campaign for National Parks www.cnp.org.uk.

Realising London's Natural Potential

“During the summer I walked from south London to north London, avoiding roads and taking photos every three seconds to make an experimental time-lapse film⁽¹⁾. I passed through parks and woodlands – using the London LOOP, Capital Ring, London Green Chain, Thames Footpath and the Dollis Valley Green Walk. Despite it being the school holidays, I didn't see a single child playing in the woods. We all know it's vitally important that young people, families, and communities have the opportunity to discover, explore, conserve and share wild places. Reflecting on this experience, and inspired by John Muir and the John Muir Award, we've instigated the Greater London National Park*, which could help millions of people to develop new relationships with nature.”

Daniel Raven-Ellison, on the thinking behind a proposal for a new National Park City



London is an incredibly diverse place. Not only its 8.3 million humans speaking 300 languages, but also the 13,000 wild species that also share the city.

You might think there's not much space for this variety and quantity of Londoners, but 60% of London is open land and 47% of Greater London is green. As well as the 3,000 parks, 142 local nature reserves, 36 sites of special scientific interest, 4 UNESCO World Heritage Sites and 2 National Nature Reserves within the city's limits, there are 3.8 million private gardens.

For its size, London is one of the very greenest cities in the world – something to celebrate and nurture.

The Greater London National Park* would be a new kind park, a 'National Park City', with the potential to improve biodiversity, recreation, health, planning and design across the capital. It would allow for new thinking, solutions and opportunities, with the power to transform how we look after London's environment, educate our children, design our gardens and much, much more.

Find out more

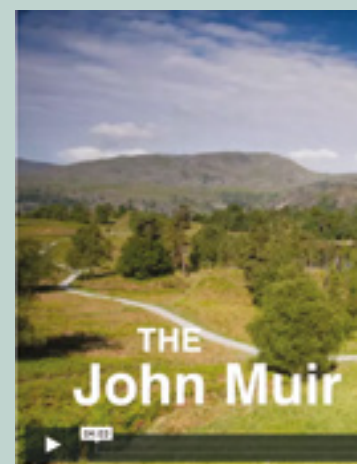
National Perks

Our relationships with National Parks feature in the Autumn edition of the John Muir Trust Journal, in an article by Richard Rowe. There's a pdf version on the Resources page at johnmuiraward.org.



'The John Muir Award in our National Parks' – on your small screen...

Set in the Lake District, this spectacular four minute film celebrates how people can experience the wonderful places found in National Parks across the UK – through conversations with teachers, pupils, volunteers and Park staff as well as some stop motion animation of John Muir. It explores the links between Muir, and his ethos of enjoying, understanding and caring for wild places and our National Parks. Click on the film button at johnmuiraward.org.





How?

By applying National Park principles to a city context, it will amplify the good work that goes on, be a catalyst for more activity, and promote collective achievement at a city level. A National Park City will:

- Conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage within a defined city boundary
- Promote opportunities for understanding and enjoyment of the special natural qualities of a city
- Foster the economic and social wellbeing of local communities within a city – via its natural potential

It wouldn't only benefit London. It would act as an urban gateway for the current family of National Parks, and stimulate interest in people who would not usually get involved with them.



Friends are important

Over 70 organisations are already Friends of the Greater London National Park* campaign, including the John Muir Trust. Over 1000 people have signed the petition. The Park may be notional for now, but with your support it could become a reality.

Please take a moment to:

- Join your organisation up as a friend of the Greater London National Park*
- Become a Founder – sign the petition. Share it via Twitter, Facebook, in a blog or newsletter.
- Connect with [@LondonNP](#). share your [#GLNP](#) events, stories and [#WildLondoner](#) photos with [@LondonNP](#).
- We are planning a special event in central London on February 24th 2015. Save the date!
- Keep your eyes open for a sister initiative in Scotland.

*officially a Notional Park

(1) <http://ravenellison.com/2014/06/08/children-are-like-an-endangered-species-in-many-of-londons-woods/>

Resource Guide – National Parks

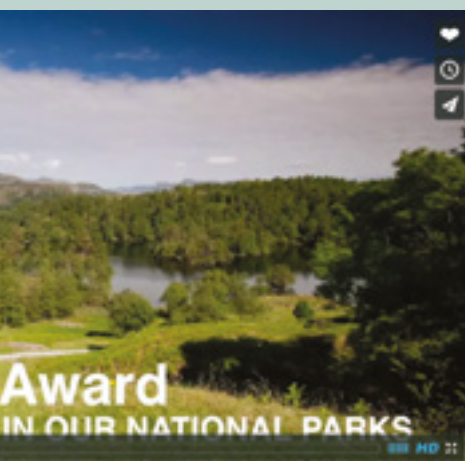
For further information and websites take a look at resources page at johnmuiraward.org – it's one of a suite of 8 Resource Guides available.

Learning in National Parks

National Park Education Teams are here to help you – from advice on where to go and what to do, to leading a field trip, to supplying materials to use in your classroom. www.nationalparks.gov.uk/learningabout

Local weblinks

Increasingly, individual National Parks are using their own websites to integrate Award information, offer their support and resources, and highlight local activity. Search for John Muir Award and: South Downs, Lake District, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs and Cairngorms National Parks websites.



Can the John Muir Award contribute to learning in schools?

A new resource for English schools shows how.

Use of the John Muir Award is spreading fast in England's schools and academies as teachers, pupils and parents see the multiple benefits of integrating it with school-based activity.

The Award can be used to support schools to deliver learning outcomes in creative and practical ways based on real experiences. It provides a context for applying the curriculum outside the classroom – and can lead to improved school grounds and local wildlife. This new resource shows how using the Award can also contribute to meeting requirements of the new KS2 and KS3 National Curriculum in England.

The Four Challenges of the John Muir Award – Discover, Explore, Conserve and Share – provide an excellent framework to help meet curriculum requirements. And pupils get a

real sense of achievement from gaining a nationally recognised award.

The publication provides short case studies to demonstrate how schools use the John Muir Award to meet specific curriculum requirements, known as Programmes of Study; the case studies also show how the Award can be used to support broader themes such as improving communication skills, building self-confidence and encouraging team work.

The Award provides a framework that can include existing activities, and it can be used as a catalyst for new ideas. A colourful and easily accessible double-page spread illustrates how the John Muir Award already helps take learning outdoors and encourages connections across the curriculum, with examples of over ninety activities listed under different subject headings.

It also complements other Award schemes and learning programmes such as Forest Schools, ASDAN, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and Eco-Schools. This resource provides examples of schools using the Award in different ways and demonstrates an extensive range of possibilities.



The John Muir Award and the National Curriculum

The John Muir Award is a UK-wide environmental award scheme focused on wild places. It supports experiential learning outside the classroom, and acknowledges and celebrates the achievement of young people in and beyond formal education.

England's National Curriculum (Sept 2014) provides an outline of core knowledge around which teachers can develop exciting and stimulating lessons. It aims to promote the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills while also providing time and space within the school day to range beyond the National Curriculum.

Pupil achievement and enjoyment of learning plays a key part in school inspections. It is recognised that outdoor learning experiences contribute to a varied and enriching curriculum. Use of the John Muir Award can support teachers to deliver learning outcomes through practical, creative and engaging approaches that are beneficial to all.

"Hands-on learning outside the classroom activities led to improved outcomes for pupils and students, including better achievement, standards, motivation, personal development and behaviour." (Learning Outside the Classroom: How far should you go? (Ofsted 2016))

The John Muir Award can help individuals to gain a greater awareness and understanding of relationships with natural environments. These can help them to participate in decisions about the way we do things, individually and collectively, locally and globally that will improve quality of life now without damaging the planet in the future. (Sustainable development in learning and skills inspections, (Ofsted 2013))

"The new curriculum allows us more freedom to design learning in a way which we feel suits our school and pupils – so we're heading outdoors! The John Muir Award will really enhance what we've got planned."

Teacher, Garrett Hall Primary School

How can the John Muir Award contribute to learning in schools?

Use this document to find out more about the John Muir Award and how it can be used to:

- Support a wide range of outdoor events
- Contribute to learning and teaching across all subject areas
- Recognise achievement and deliver whole school initiatives

www.johnmuiraward.org

Illustration: Emma

"The new curriculum allows us more freedom to design learning in a way which suits our school and pupils – so we're heading outdoors!"
Teacher, Garrett Hall Primary School

National Curriculum in Wales / Y Cwriwclwm Cenedlaethol yng Nghymru

Learning in Wales' schools is also set to change, with a consultation into education, assessment and the National Curriculum currently under way.

The John Muir Trust has supported the development of a new National Curriculum in Wales, submitting evidence to both first and second stages of the consultation. This is a unique opportunity to support significant changes in how and what school pupils across Wales will be taught.

"We hope that our input, alongside other organisations and schools and colleges, will allow greater flexibility for teachers and the opportunity to embed out of classroom learning firmly within the National Curriculum".

Phil Stubbington, John Muir Award Manager for Wales

Education in Scotland embraces the wild

There has been a 50% increase in the number of pupils achieving their John Muir Award through school activity in Scotland over the last 3 years, with nearly 12,500 John Muir Awards achieved in the academic year 2013-14.

Ian Menzies, of Education Scotland said: "It is valued across the education sector and is helping children, young people and practitioners connect with issues relating to sustainability, values, citizenship and discovery of the natural world. Schools appreciate the flexibility of the Award and the different ways it can be used to support the curriculum. It is clearly proving to be popular as a result."

And three quarters of Scotland's 27 further education colleges now use the John Muir Award – a 30% year on year growth over the past four years. A wide variety of college departments and disciplines get involved, using the Award to support curriculum delivery for school leavers to adult learners.

- Art and Design students at West College Scotland presented a gallery of Inverclyde's wildlife through painting and drawing displayed at Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park.
- Conservation Management students at Scotland's Rural College developed practical pathwork skills volunteering at the Trust's Sandwood Bay property.



Image: Chris Goodman

- Childcare and Education students at Dumfries and Galloway College shared their Award experiences by leading woodland learning sessions with their pupils.

See more on both stories at johnmuiraward.org/news

Inclusion, wild places and the John Muir Award

Engaging with people from all backgrounds has been at the heart of the John Muir Award since its beginnings in 1997.

A new resource - 'Inclusion, wild places and the John Muir Award' - demonstrates how it does this. It showcases examples from different sectors (from Colleges to mental health support) and illustrates how over 300 Providers who work with people experiencing some form of disadvantage use the John Muir Award and outdoor environments to great effect.

The document can be used to find out:

- Who is using the Award in relation to inclusion themes
- Why it is used to support people experiencing disadvantage
- How the Award contributes to national policy

'Inclusion, wild places and the John Muir Award' can be read in full at <http://bit.ly/1n1CGeT> or a PDF version can be downloaded from the Resources page of johnmuiraward.org

"I am a lot fitter, I have lost weight and I love that... It has been a brilliant way to spend time with my boys. The best thing about it is just to see the smile on their faces."

Michelle, mum and participant on Family John Muir Award, Midlothian Council Community Learning and Development

Building positive relationships and giving new experiences

The John Muir Award is recognised as an effective framework to give family groups opportunities to spend time together and work towards a shared goal. For families who have not had much access to wild places, often from the most economically deprived sectors of society, it offers ideas and impetus for new and positive experiences. Feedback from organisations working with families, including National Parks, Community Learning and Development teams, and family support charities, has shown improvements in parent/child relationships, increased sense of self-worth from parents and, quite simply, enjoyment of activities outdoors together.



Inclusion, wild places and the John Muir Award

How we engage with people from all backgrounds

A key aim of the John Muir Award is to ensure that social circumstances aren't a barrier to opportunities to experience wild places. Engaging with people from all backgrounds has been at the heart of the Award, the main engagement initiative of the John Muir Trust, since its beginnings in 1997. Even with substantial UK-wide year on year growth, at least one in four Awards achieved are by people experiencing some form of disadvantage.

We recognised the need to offer focused support and development for this work in 2009 and a full time 3 year funded post was created under the banner 'Is it a sheep or a cow?' This heading recalled an exclamation from a 12 year old boy in London who was surprised to see a cow in Cambridgeshire and seeing sheep for the first time. It highlights the absence of any meaningful contact with nature for many people.

Today 48% more people from disadvantaged backgrounds are experiencing wild places through the John Muir Award compared to figures from 2010.

Across the UK 300 organisations dedicated to supporting people who experience some form of disadvantage use the John Muir Award. This disadvantage may be related to age, ethnicity, health, unemployment or other factors (referred to as 'inclusion organisations' in this document). Indicators and working relationships with these organisations help us to improve 'inclusion'. Government statistics are used: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and English Indices of Deprivation, and data on free school meals.

Use this document to find out more about the John Muir Award and

- who is using it in relation to inclusion themes
- why it is used to support people experiencing disadvantage
- examples from inclusion sectors on how the Award works
- how it contributes to national policy
- how to get involved

Who uses the John Muir Award?

Its capacity to be used by diverse audiences is a key strength of the John Muir Award. It is used across a wide range of sectors which aim to improve inclusion - from youth work to mental health support, from addiction recovery to engaging with at-risk families. It is used in both public and third sector arenas. It is used in their work with disadvantaged people, ex-offenders, people with disabilities and the elderly.

From behind the four walls of prisons and inner-city wildlife gardens to isolated island communities, it is a tool to reach out to hard to reach audiences across the spectrum.

www.johnmuiraward.org

"This is a really great publication, really accessible and engaging."

Alison Cush, Education and Inclusion Adviser, Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority

At-risk families Building positive relationships and giving new experiences

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Michelle, mum and participant on Family John Muir Award, Midlothian Council Community Learning and Development



Introducing the Award and John Muir

New Leaflet

We've produced a new pocket-sized leaflet to introduce the John Muir Award. It offers basic information on what it is, who it's for, why people use it, and how it works.

There's also a brief introduction to Muir and the work of the John Muir Trust.

If you'd like some to help with your work ask a member of staff or contact katrina@johnmuiraward.org.



Introducing John Muir

Doing the John Muir Award is all about experiencing wild places. It's about meeting four Challenges – Discovering somewhere with natural character, Exploring it, doing something to Conserve it, and Sharing these experiences.

Because it carries the name of John Muir, and aims to share the ethos of the conservation pioneer, it makes sense to know at least something about who he was and what he did. There's no need for this to be dry, dull, academic, or a history lesson. It can be interactive, creative, technology based, active...

Here are ways that Award Providers enjoy doing this, and places to find more information:



John Muir: Back to the Future

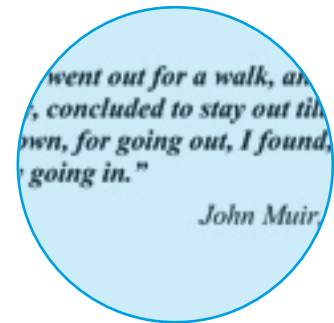
A 5 minute film asking young people if Muir is relevant today. Use it to kick off discussions about who inspires us, who has something to say.



John Muir, Earth-Planet, Universe

A graphic novel, plus pupil activities and teaching notes, telling Muir's life story in a colourful, accessible way.

Free to download



Muir Quotes

Print out quote cards (or find your own) to stimulate discussion.



John Muir Resource Guide

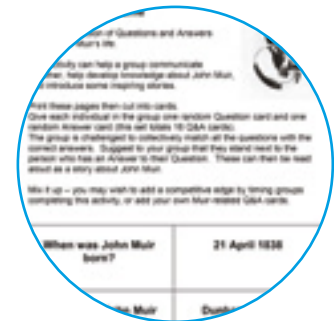
An overview of resources and links available, including a brief biography, quotes and a bibliography.



Mission: Explore John Muir

A free e-book with a variety of activities that challenge people of all ages to discover the world around them.

200,000 web hits to date



John Muir Card Game

An interactive activity with Q&A cards to match up and find out more about John Muir.

Find all of these easily at discoverjohnmuir.com, and see examples of how others have linked Muir into their activities.

Providers and Getting Involved

John Muir Award Providers

We term groups or organisations that successfully deliver the Award *Providers*. 'Successful delivery' means that we've agreed a Proposal Form, registered activity, and approved a Certificate Request. This process creates an informal agreement between a Provider and the John Muir Award.

What you can expect of us:

To seek to ensure the best quality of experience of the John Muir Award for each participant, the John Muir Award will freely provide:

- Support, guidance and advice on the delivery of the Award.
- Promotional material and resources as appropriate.
- Certificates to all individuals who successfully complete each Award level by meeting its stated Criteria.

- An annual Certificate to recognise Award Provider status.
- Opportunities to access John Muir Award Training programmes and events (varied costs).

We expect Award Providers to:

- Promote the ethos of the John Muir Award.
- Ensure that all individuals for whom a Certificate is requested fulfil Award Criteria.
- Use John Muir Award processes, documents and timeframes to ensure effective registration and confirmation, and maintain relevant records.

- In conjunction with the John Muir Award, provide suitable information, guidance and training opportunities for their staff/volunteers.
- Ensure open communication with John Muir Award staff (phone/email).
- Ensure that adequate Health and Safety measures are in place, and be covered by appropriate public liability and personal accident insurance.
- Share good practice in-house, and with other organisations, as appropriate.

How to get involved in the John Muir Award

For information

Visit johnmuiraward.org to:

- watch a 10 minute introductory film
- download an Information Handbook – the place to go for detailed guidance on delivering the John Muir Award
- see a wide range of case studies and supporting information
- find out more about John Muir via discoverjohnmuir.com

What next?

- Plan your activities and fill in a Proposal Form. Download from the website, or ask staff for one, and send it to us. We'll discuss this with you, agree it, and register it.
- Get started, get outside and get active!
- Send us a Certificate Request Form as you complete your activity. You'll be contacted to discuss or confirm this.
- Celebrate, and present your Awards.

You can find a full description of each stage of this process on our website, or ask a member of staff.

Contact details

We've recently overhauled our contacts database – exciting stuff! Many thanks for your co-operation as we try to be efficient and accurate in what we send to who.

Please let us know of any changes to your contact details or mailing preferences, or if you would like to receive our bi-monthly ebulletin, via info@johnmuiraward.org.

You can receive:

- a John Muir Award newsletter (6 monthly) – hard copy, electronically, or both
- a John Muir Award e-bulletin (approx. 5 per year)
- a John Muir Trust e-news (monthly)

You can unsubscribe at any point. The John Muir Trust will not share your details with anyone else.

It's our world

It's Our World is a mass participation arts project that aims to create the UK's largest online collection of artwork that celebrates the environment, as seen through the eyes of its future custodians, aged 4–19 years.

The purpose is to inspire children and young people to speak out for positive environmental action by creating artworks to bring their local landscape, townscape, coastline or neighbourhood to life. Participants are also encouraged to consider their environmental impact and to take the lead in living more sustainably, with online resources available from itisourworld.org.

From October onwards, over 1,000 events are being held in museums and galleries across the UK, and The Campaign for Drawing has made It's Our World this year's Big Draw theme (register at www.thebigdraw.org). 32,000 schools and partners across the UK will shortly receive their invitation to join in, signed by It's Our World Ambassador Simon King OBE (BBC Spring/Autumn Watch), to coincide with the opening of the Online Gallery and the start of the Big Draw.

The letter will include a unique PIN code to enable secure access to the Gallery and to upload It's Our World artworks.

Subject matter can be approached in a variety of ways including observation, outdoor learning, multiple perspectives that reflect local landmarks and neighbourhoods, critical thinking about environmental impacts and ways in which to lead more sustainable lives.

Artworks can include close up studies of natural forms, sweeping landscapes or studies of urban environments, in any medium including watercolour, acrylics, textiles, print and photography. Use of recycled and natural materials is especially encouraged in creating collages, mosaics and 3D artworks.

Link It's Our World to your John Muir Award

It offers a fantastic way for John Muir Award participants to be creative, share the places that inspire them, and be part of a huge collaborative project. Get involved with It's Our World to help meet the Share part of your Award.



Action

Register now at itisourworld.org

30 September Gallery Opens!

Get uploading by using your school's/ group's unique PIN code (issued on registration). Closing date: **31 May 2015**, to coincide with UN World Environment Day.

[#ItsOurWorld](https://twitter.com/ItsOurWorld)

Be inspired

For inspiration on how art can be integrated into a John Muir Award...

Art and Design students at West College Scotland took their creativity outdoors and presented a gallery of Inverclyde's wildlife through painting and drawing displayed at Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park.

www.flickr.com/photos/raytons and select the 'John Muir Award Artwork' album.



Publications



Microadventures – Alastair Humphreys' new book

Alastair Humphreys' mission in *Microadventures* is to not only share the benefits and enjoyment he derives from adventures and time in the wild but to get as many people as possible 'out there' too. The USP of his concept is that a microadventure takes place close to home, is cheap, simple and short – yet 'still captures the essence of big adventures, the challenge, the fun, the escapism, the learning experiences and the excitement.' He sets about convincing us that an Adventurer and a Normal Person aren't mutually exclusive by packaging nearly 40 of his close-to-home anecdotes along with guidance on 'How to have your own Microadventures'.

If you're a John Muir Award Provider working with groups/individuals who may not normally have the opportunity or inclination to experience their own microadventures and would appreciate some inspiration, get in touch with us. Al has kindly donated a couple of signed copies of his book to the John Muir Award, to be shared with a non-traditional audience. We would love to hear from people who would like to try a microadventure as part of their Award activity. alastairhumphreys.com/books/microadventures

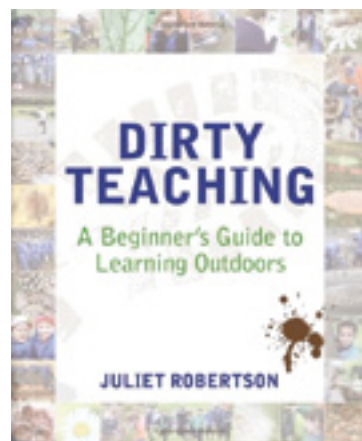
#microadventure

Dirty Teaching - A Beginner's Guide to Learning Outdoors

Juliet Robertson offers a guide for teachers to help overcome perceived barriers and develop confident outdoor practice. Juliet looks to support teachers who are beginning to appreciate the potential for learning outdoors by simply encouraging them to take their existing skills and enthusiasm outside.

Subject chapters that include *Golden Principles of Teaching Outdoors*, *Before You Go Outside*, *Caring for Nature*, and *Nagging Doubts, Fears and Worries*, encourage readers to either dip in and out, or follow a clear cover to cover path.

The accessibility of *Dirty Teaching* makes it of interest to all planning on (or currently) using the outdoors as an approach to learning. Youth workers, community educators, parents and carers as well as teachers will find value in it. That Juliet has written such a helpful and incisive guide will make all those who have been touched by the 'special nature of the outdoors' glad that it exists – regardless of whether we teach or not. [Available on Amazon](https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/1851967000) | £16.65



Expansion of OPAL

FREE Outdoor Learning and Resources!

OPAL (Open Air Laboratories) is a BIG Lottery funded project now being expanded throughout England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. It encourages everyone to engage with nature and collect information about their local environments and wildlife.

A team of 'Community Scientists' are distributing survey packs and helping primary and secondary schools, community groups and community learning groups run a selection of scientific surveys in urban and rural areas. Any data collected is uploaded to the nationwide OPAL network and interpreted by data analysts, researchers and scientists.

Which OPAL survey could you do?

There are 6 OPAL surveys, each with links to curriculum areas -- all are great for working towards a John Muir Award.

Water Quality assess the water quality in your local river, pond or lake by seeing what lives there.

Air Quality assess the quality of the air around you by identifying pollution-sensitive lichens.

Biodiversity identify invertebrates and assess the variety of life in your local hedgerows.

Bugs Count identify mini-beasts in different natural and man-made habitats in your local area.

Tree Health observe and inspect your local trees to look for signs of diseases and/or parasites.

Soil and Earthworm assess soil characteristics and identify earthworm species in your local area.

To request resources or organise a visit from an OPAL Community Scientist contact OPAL at opal@imperial.ac.uk. For more information and to download resources visit opalexplornature.org



Support the John Muir Trust's engagement work

The John Muir Award Appeal



Since it was established in 1983, the John Muir Trust has always been about wild places and people.

Our nature engagement activity came into sharper focus 20 years ago, as we looked to encourage more people – especially the younger generation – to get involved in conservation. It came with the realisation that this was an essential key route to protecting wild places - because we value them.

Since then, primarily through the John Muir Award, the Trust has become a leading influence in outdoor learning, supporting nature connections with hard-to-reach audiences, and helping people put something back into the natural world.

We've actively interpreted John Muir's ethos and kept it inspiring and relevant for today: to protect wild places, we need people to enjoy and make meaningful connections with them. It's been a core part of our work for more than a decade.

Working in partnership with more than 1,200 diverse organisations across the UK each year, we have seen well over 200,000 people of all ages and from all backgrounds participate in John Muir Award activity. It's an inspiring and wide-ranging collaboration that generates in excess of £1million of conservation volunteering each year.

Thanks to the generosity of members and friends we have a tremendous track record for our appeals to date – for property purchases, land management and specific campaigns. As we consolidate our John Muir Award activity in Scotland and Wales, and build our presence in England (with Heritage Lottery Fund support), this autumn we plan to launch the first ever public appeal for this vital aspect of our work – and strengthen our ability to protect wild places for future generations.

Look out for more information from November, as well as at johnmuirtrust.org

Stuart Brooks, John Muir Trust Chief Executive

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