

JOHN  
MUIR  
AWARD

*wild places:*  
DISCOVER  
EXPLORE  
CONSERVE  
SHARE

# John Muir Award News Spring 2012

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.



## Award in Action

The John Muir Award is about getting more people doing more outside more often – connecting with, enjoying, and caring for wild places.

Last year over 23,000 John Muir Awards were achieved across the UK, our highest ever level of activity. Over 800 different groups/organisations used the Award.

To reflect this wealth of activity, this newsletter focuses on 'Award in Action'. It looks at effects on wild places through a 2011 'Conserve Audit', 'impact' more generally, and highlights a range of on-the-ground examples of the John Muir Award.

## Wales Milestone

The 25,000th John Muir Award achieved in Wales was presented to Jade Codd in October 2011 at the Welsh Assembly building in Cardiff. The presentation was made by John Griffiths AM, the Welsh Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development, who said: "I applaud the work done by the John Muir Award in Wales and recognise the significant milestone that this represents. Congratulations to Jade on being a worthy recipient. It's very appropriate that the 25,000th Award should go to a local girl, and that this has helped her and others like her to discover what lies on their doorstep and to become ambassadors for other young people."



Rob Burshby

In July Jade took part in the Wildcamp programme, an annual diversionary scheme organised by Safer Pembrokeshire, Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and other partners for 16 and 17-years-olds.

## ...and Moving On

After 9 years as part-time John Muir Award Manager for Wales, Hugo Iffla is to focus fully on his other role as Project Director for Odyssey, a charity which runs 'survivorship' programmes for people with cancer. He has created a widespread network of Welsh Provider organisations, and done a fantastic job in supporting a Scottish-based Award scheme in many communities and organisations across Wales.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my time with the Award" said Hugo. "I wish my successor well and am sure the Award will go from strength to strength in Wales."

Phil Stubbington has been appointed as the new John Muir Award Manager for Wales and starts in March.

## Scottish Curriculum for Excellence Resource

This new resource looks at how the John Muir Award can contribute to the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence, and will also be of interest to educators from across the UK. Find out how the John Muir Award can be used to meet a range of educational needs, help deliver Experiences and Outcomes with themes across learning, and recognise achievement.

This resource includes examples of activities and topics used by John Muir Award groups that have helped take learning outdoors, made connections across subject areas, and promoted themes such as Sustainability, Global Citizenship, and Enterprise.

You can download a PDF version of the resource at [johnmuiraward.org](http://johnmuiraward.org)

or read an online version at [issuu.com/johnmuirtrust/docs/jmt\\_cfe\\_final](http://issuu.com/johnmuirtrust/docs/jmt_cfe_final)

"The John Muir Award encourages active learning which is real, first hand and impacts positively on young people."

Linda Watson,  
Deputy Head Teacher,  
Pitlochry High School



## Family Award

Sixty six families achieved a John Muir Award in 2011. To mark this increase in demand – and encourage more families to participate, a new version of our Discovery Award certificate has been produced. Families collectively engage with the 4 Challenges of the Award – Discover a wild place, actively Explore it, Conserve it, and Share their experiences – and receive a certificate with their name on. For examples, take a look at Case Studies at [johnmuiraward.org](http://johnmuiraward.org)



## Capturing Conserve Activity

Throughout 2011, John Muir Award groups were busy capturing and quantifying what they did to meet the Conserve Challenge and make a difference to wild places – one of four aspects of achieving an Award.

The 749 'audits' received represent the activities of 18,777 (81%) of participants (and 62% of groups involved), accounting for a stunning 138,531 hours of dedicated conservation volunteering – over 7 hours for each individual.

### Here's what some of the activity adds up to:

- 2464 homes created for great crested newts, barn owls, stag beetles, slow worms, bumble bees, frogs, otters, ants, birds and red squirrels...to name but a few of the newly accommodated species.
- 32,000 metres of footpaths maintained and created - equivalent to more than four tourist paths up Ben Nevis.
- Campaigns include Beach Watch, Rights of Way and Earth Hour; national surveys include water voles, butterflies, bugs, seaweed, OPAL.
- 18,967 trees of native species planted.

- An area the size of 100 football pitches was cleared of invasive species, including rhododendron, Himalayan balsam, ground elder, snowberry and sea buckthorn.

- 74,711m<sup>2</sup> of meadow created, raked, seeded or mowed.

- 82,451 bin bags of litter cleared, more than the number of seats in the Olympic Stadium.

Woodlands were the preferred activity location, with double the number of visits of other sites.

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to the exercise – we hope you enjoy being part of such an impressive collaborative effort! A summary report is available at [johnmuiraward.org](http://johnmuiraward.org)

*"I couldn't believe how much the pupils enjoyed the practical stuff. They got properly immersed in what they were doing. Giving them a specific goal that they wanted to reach, focused their mind and gave them a sense of achievement."*  
*Dave Savage, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust*



Grangemouth High School



The Hidden Gardens



Ocean Youth Trust Scotland

## Measuring Impact

'More than ever before, and rightly so, charities are being asked to set aside the glossy Annual Review with its public relations emphasis and to strive to answer the most important question that anyone can ask...namely "Does what you do actually make a difference to the people you work with?"' So says Nick Barrett, Chief Executive of The Outward Bound Trust, introducing their second Social Impact Report, before describing the process as a "continuing journey... to both prove and improve our effectiveness."

'Proving and improving' is of interest to the John Muir Award. Training programmes are evaluated at over 90% approval ratings as a result of valued feedback; 'Conserve' outputs are highlighted above; and targeted regional surveys regularly inform local approaches.

In 2012 we're interested to capture evidence of impact that incorporates the John Muir Award, especially in partnership or collaborative work. In many cases it's

not possible (or realistic) to identify the Award as a single contributory factor – the issue of 'attributability' in evaluation work. In particular, we'd like to find out more about how the Award is used by others to promote values (impacting on behaviours, actions and attitudes), deliver Curriculum outcomes, and support employability.

### Here are a couple of recent examples:

**The Outward Bound Trust** wants its courses to increasingly deliver more positive outcomes for young people, with results monitored in relation to personal, emotional and social well-being, connection with the natural environment, and enthusiasm and confidence in learning. 'The John Muir Award is a positive indicator of the strength of what they've learnt [A new way to connect with the natural environment]' and in 2010 we doubled the number of young people achieving the Award to 1,980.' (This increased a further 43% in 2011 to 2,827).

For full report see [outwardboundtrust.org.uk/impact-report/index.html](http://outwardboundtrust.org.uk/impact-report/index.html)

### Perth and Kinross Council Ranger Service's 'Woods for Health' project

was the subject of a Social Return on Investment (SROI) study that showed for every £1 invested in the project there was a return of £9 in community benefits. The project was built around the framework of the John Muir Award: "£9.30 SROI for £1 spent was impressive. This owes a lot to the fact that the John Muir Award brought lots of important elements that are extremely cost effective in terms of what people get from it." reflected Fergus Cook, Countryside Ranger who delivered the project. Chris Nevin of Scottish Natural Heritage, who funded the Greenspace Scotland research, commented: "The report showed that outdoor activities provided in a community woodland improved health, increased social capacity and helped people with long term mental health problems find new skills. The analysis provides a way of putting a financial value on the social benefits of different outdoor activities."

## What is the Award in Action?

The John Muir Award is about first-hand experience, personal stories, people getting outside and doing things. It offers a framework – its 4 Challenges – rather than a set programme or syllabus. This lends itself to a wide range of activity being embraced within its structure – and is why it isn't set up as a formal 'accreditation' scheme. There's no 'one size fits all'. A John Muir Award is unique to each group and participant that gets involved.

Here's a taster of that diversity over the next five pages. You can see personal adventures, biodiversity awareness and action, curriculum links, creativity, healthy lifestyles, and lots of enjoyment of wild places from city centres to rural landscapes. Delivery through partnerships and collaborations is very much in evidence, across a range of sectors.

This is important stuff. It's community activism – by individual citizens, consumers, and (future) voters – increasingly recognised as essential for influencing values. 'Change', says Roger Scruton in *Green Philosophy: How to think seriously about the planet*, 'should emerge spontaneously from what ordinary people do.' We make a better planet for ourselves from the bottom up.

It makes sense for care, respect and responsibility to be an integral part of school, of play, of adventure, of work and of home life. And it makes sense to recognise achievements and celebrate experiences. We're delighted that more leaders, teachers, volunteers and families are using the John Muir Award year on year with their own students, members and young people to do just this.

**Rob Bushby**  
John Muir Award Manager

## Glasgow Hidden Gardens Sunshine

"The sun shines not on us, but in us."  
This John Muir quote – along with the garden itself – was the inspiration for a series of volunteer-led poetry workshops for the Hidden Gardens Taskforce group in Glasgow, culminating in the creation of 'a journey of discovery': an anthology of their writing.

Access the Anthology on the Case Studies page of the John Muir Award website.

### Rowan tree

A Scots tree, a wishing tree  
Flooded with berries means a hard winter  
Don't cut it or the witch's curse  
Will fall on you.  
*She grows me into her myths*  
*But I tell my own tale of roots and leaves*  
*Bird wing, bark and berry*  
*I tell it in season, seen or unseen by her*  
Penny Cole



The Hidden Gardens

## Newcastle Students Share Art Reflections

A group of international student volunteers from SCAN, Student Community Action Newcastle (University) has been visiting Rupert's Wood in Northumberland to create a rich natural playground for children visiting for day trips and overnight camps. Autumn colours and natural light were very much to the fore as the site's ancient pond became a canvas to share their reflective art.

To see more visit [rupertswood.co.uk/#/john-muir-award/4558096079](http://rupertswood.co.uk/#/john-muir-award/4558096079)



International student volunteers from Newcastle University

SCAN

## Julie achieves top Award

Julie McElroy, a determined young adventurer from Glasgow who has overcome severe disabilities to achieve the highest level of the John Muir Award, received recognition for her achievements from presenter and broadcaster Dougie Vipond in November. 25-year-old Julie was born with cerebral palsy resulting in mobility problems, walking difficulties and speech impairment along with manual dexterity problems. She is also profoundly deaf and wears two hearing aids, but refused to let these disabilities stop her completing her John Muir Conserver Award.

In the course of meeting the four challenges of her Award Julie has trekked in the Himalayas, joined the Lomond Mountain Rescue Team on manoeuvre, climbed Helvellyn, England's third highest mountain, paddled the length of Loch Shiel and led other disabled people on a three-day expedition on Arran. "I wanted to experience a totally new existence and challenges that are different from the ones I experience in everyday life," said Julie.

"I love the outdoors because it allows you to rebalance yourself as a person. I love coming up with new ideas and I wanted to lead by example. The buzz of the outdoors began for me when I was a child and I now want to unleash opportunities where other disabled people can climb a mountain, get involved in taking responsibility for the natural environment and most importantly enjoy the fun, adventure and exploration of the wild."

Broadcaster and presenter Dougie Vipond presented Julie with her certificate at the Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park Headquarters in Balloch. Dougie said: "Adventure is important. It challenges and stimulates us, and it can lead us to wonderful wild places we perhaps wouldn't normally visit. Julie's achievements are a reminder to us all that experiencing adventure and challenge in Scotland, and further afield, should be open to all regardless of age, ability or background.

Congratulations to Julie for demonstrating her drive and determination in completing her John Muir Conserver Award. Wild places and the spirit of adventure can only benefit from being championed by her."

**Toby Clark, John Muir Award Manager for Scotland**



Julie receives her award from Dougie Vipond

Rory Syme

## Creative Conservers

Pupils from Bellahouston Academy, Glasgow worked towards a Discovery Award as part of the Geography curriculum, making connections with other subjects such as Expressive Arts and Science. Pupils made use of their under-utilised school grounds; as well as carrying out a litter pick, pupils studied the effects of litter on wildlife, focused on recycling and kept a list of the unnatural items that they found. Pupils were asked to study a wild area near to where they lived, producing portfolios including poetry, drawing, leaf sketches, models, and slide shows.

"Some of the successful pupils were really creative in interpreting the tasks and challenges; we had a model made of John Muir complete with beard and boots, and a linear poem about litter wrapped round a Lucozade bottle found in the school grounds". *Murdo MacDonald, Geography Teacher, Bellahouston Academy*



A Bellahouston Academy pupil with her poem

Murdo MacDonald

## Case Studies

Find out more on the Case Studies page of the John Muir Award website. Organised in themes of Youth Sector, Schools and Colleges, Adult Groups, Individuals and Families, Biodiversity, they give a wide variety of examples of the Award in action. Gain ideas, be inspired, see how others do things and find out what works.

## Briardale Wardens LOVE Northumberland

'LOVE Northumberland – Caring for our county' is a campaign aimed at getting everyone in Northumberland involved in keeping the county clean and green. It captures the spirit of Briardale Young Environmental Wardens, who have teamed up with the Council housing department to get over 100 people involved in their John Muir Award around Blyth.



Aileen Barrass

Briardale Young Environmental Wardens

They cleared almost 100 bags of rubbish from Blyth Riverside, conducted an insect survey, led a bird watch and identified wild flowers, started to raise a tree canopy so people can view the river and worked with Sustrans to help clear the way for a cycle path. Northumberland County Councillor Tom Brechany said "These young people should be commended for the great work they are doing to improve their local environment, we are very pleased to work with and support them in their endeavours."

## Class Peat Bogs

The peat bogs of Northumberland National Park have been the focus of 12 Haltwhistle Campus students, involving Lookwide UK, a development arm of the Scouts association, linking survey work with science lessons. The Moorland Indicators of Climate Change Initiative (MICCI) has been operating for four years with children from all over the country braving the weather on some of the most remote moorlands to collect data on climate change.

Working towards their Discovery Award, the aim of the programme was to help increase self esteem and improve in-school behaviour whilst out exploring and protecting the Park. Lookwide UK Tutor Stewart Ellison said "They have enjoyed learning about the landscape right on their door step that they did not know existed. Our involvement with the Award has allowed us to access significant help in delivering a valuable educational experience. The group's work on Peat Bog surveys has also added to data collected to help improve wild places in the future."

## Cumbria Collaborations

The last 12 months has seen exciting developments for the John Muir Award in Cumbria, now a year into a 'hosting' partnership with the Lake District National Park Authority. Although there was already a lot of Award activity around Cumbria involving a wide range of organisations, little of this had obvious links to the National Park.

Holding the 2011 John Muir Trust Annual Gathering near Penrith gave a great opportunity to showcase conservation work and the spectacular landscapes of the Lake District.

Since then lots of discussions have explored the potential for engaging people in the work of the Park through the John Muir Award. The aim is for Award Providers to find out more about the special qualities of the Lake District and how the Park Authority can help them, and National Park staff to involve Award groups in Park management and valuable conservation work.

A shining example of this closer working is in the Ullswater area where The Outward Bound Trust has worked on a number of projects such as Himalayan Balsam control and footpath maintenance, with the Area Park Management Ranger talking to Outward Bound staff during their training.

"There has been great enthusiasm for learning more about the Lake District National Park and for involving residential groups in local conservation work as

part of their John Muir Award. It's a significant help in the Ullswater valley and provides a clear demonstration of a strong commitment to put something back into the local community." *Graham Standring, Park Management Ranger*

"Our work with the John Muir Award has been significantly enhanced through the partnership between the Award and the National Park. A major part of our delivery was already about raising awareness of National Park issues and maintaining footpaths through the Fix the Fells Project. Closer working with Graham Standring and his LDNP colleagues has led to conservation work in a local wood, tree planting as well as some very well received staff training. We very much look forward to building on these foundations." *John Crosbie and Nick Austin, The Outward Bound Trust*

Similar links are being forged between local schools and National Park staff leading to involvement in Winderclean, Fix the Fells, school assembly projects, and more use of Brockhole visitor centre. The John Muir Award shapes the LDNP Young Rangers programme, and Windermere Reflections has its own John Muir Award club.

"The way the John Muir Award hit the ground running in its new relationship with the National Park, and then sprinted off in new and exciting directions, has been terrific." said Bob Cartwright, Director of Park Services. "It's been one of those 'why didn't we do this years ago?' moments. I can't wait for 2012 to unfold!"

**Graham Watson, John Muir Award  
Manager for Cumbria**



Ullswater – sailing, adventure and quiet travel

Charlie Headley/LDNP

## Thames Treasure: What will you find?

An especially unusual discovery was made by a group from Thames 21 and Marlborough School in Sidcup last Autumn. Whilst litter picking along the River Shuttle (a Thames tributary) they uncovered an old canvas bag with a rusty seal. They opened it to reveal a journal with papers and photographs dating back to the Second World War, along with a purse of coins.

Group Leader Joanne Bradley described the find: "It just looked like another piece of rubbish at first sight. It must have been in the water for some time, and had become wedged in rubbish that had built up in the middle of the stream. We found out that the bag was owned by a Mrs Hilda Jeffrey. Among the memories in the bag was a letter from her father who served in the First World War."

This was a genuine piece of treasure – 'a concentration of riches, often considered lost or forgotten until being rediscovered'. People find all kinds of treasure during their John Muir Award experiences, both man-made and natural. Discovering a new wild place can be like finding a treasure trove of sights and sounds, from wildlife and dramatic views, to stories of the human and natural history hidden within the landscape. This treasure can be close to home, and many people discover the wild places on their own 'doorstep' or local area, which they may not have known, or which they rediscover with fresh eyes.

Maybe some even uncover some buried treasure hidden inside themselves – a skill or passion they never knew they had, from a talent for rock climbing, to resilience when the going gets tough, to a sense of joy about the natural world. Others may create the treasure for others to enjoy, such as a revitalised patch of wasteland, a wildlife garden or allotment.

What might you or your group discover? How can you encourage a sense of intrigue and anticipation, creating experiences that may stay with them for life? One of my own fondest childhood memories is discovering a singular bee orchid on a Dorset cliff top, and returning each summer to see if it was still there.

John Muir, who wrote about 'The Treasures of Yosemite' (Century Magazine, 1890), certainly saw the natural world as a source of endless fascination and treasures. However, rather than plundering these riches, he encouraged the more respectful approach of taking care to tread lightly in our wild places. Without this there would be few natural treasures left to enjoy.

*"Down through the midst flows the crystal Merced - river of mercy - peacefully gliding, reflecting lilies and trees and the onlooking rocks, things frail and fleeting and types of endurance meeting here and blending in countless forms, as if into this one mountain mansion Nature had gathered her choicest treasures."*

John Muir, 1890

**Amy Boud, John Muir Award Manager for England**



Members of the Vole Patrol

Darrel Robinson

## Yorkshire Vole Patrol

The Vole Patrol is a partnership project between Wakefield YDSS and the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, currently taking place in St Wilfred's Catholic High School, Featherstone with young people who opted for the activity as part of an 'off-curriculum' guided learning experience.

It helps them to understand and make a positive impact on the environment and includes exploring the local area, learning about water voles and humane trapping of small mammals, managing trees and shrubs and building feeding rafts to create habitat, studying tracks and making plaster casts of footprints, discussing the life of John Muir, completing personal journals and blogs. The project is part of a larger scheme being undertaken by the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust.

"The work has been very successful. Initially we were only finding scant evidence of the water vole population, now we are seeing them on a regular basis with new burrows being spotted each time we visit the site. This week there was a young water vole running near our feet as we explored the bank. The group were very excited about seeing a vole scampering around and were careful not to harm it with wellies. 30 young people have achieved the Discovery Award with 16 more involved – it's a great way of recognising their achievements. We are now proposing to take the project in to the local community with a presentation evening and an invite to local families to explore the site with a view to running the project with these families."

*Darrel Robinson, Senior Youth Worker YDSS – Five Towns Area Activity and Support Team*



Joanne Bradley of Thames 21 with the World War II find

Kent photonews – Sidcup

# Award in Action

## Staff Award

Not to be left out the John Muir Award staff team embarked upon their own Discovery Award over the last year, based on the themes of:

- Enjoying wild places close to home and on journeys to work
- Active participation in UK-wide initiatives we've been promoting

Here's a compilation – a '4 Challenge Review' – of what the staff team have been up to (collectively!) across the UK.

### Discover – what wild places did we Discover?

Meeting Venues – Glen Feshie, Derwentwater and Cat Bells, Arthur's Seat. Wild Ennerdale woodlands, Forth and Clyde Canal, Water of Leith, Knock of Braemoray, Lossiemouth West Beach, Isle of Gigha, Shores of Loch Maree, Rosebank, Warriston and Leith cemeteries, Firth of Forth, Flowerdale falls, Loch Faskally / Butterstone Loch

### Explore – how did we Explore wild places?

Collating Simple Pleasures images. Linking sounds, poems, music, actions to place via MP3 players. Geocaching round Leith – 7 caches in 500m radius. Fixed point photography – Winter to Spring. Simple Pleasures camping. Running – day and night time. Walking home along Loch Maree (12km) – seeing the islands from a different angle. Walking in the snow. Guided walk with ranger. Journey to work from Cockermouth to Threlkeld by bike in all weathers. Looking at flowers and birds with family. Beach-combing and guddling in pools. Cycling. Exploring cemeteries – reading gravestones, finding out histories. Watching the Northern Lights whilst walking home from work.

### Conserve – how did we take responsibility for wild places?

Picking litter. OPAL earthworm and bug count surveys. Butterfly survey. 125 trees planted at Friends of the Lake District volunteer day (2020VISION epledge). Cycling to work – 1800 miles since Jan '11. Growing trees from seed – hazel, oak and whitebeam, for planting next year. Research assistant surveying moss heights. Himalayan balsam pulling on Leith cycle network. Ecological Footprinting.

### Share – how have we shared our experiences of wild places with others?

Reviews/stories/sharing journeys at staff meetings. Collating Simple Pleasures photos (see right). BBC Wildlife to Work week contribution. 2020VISION displays. Reading Alexander McCall Smith's Winter Poem (as a team, at meeting). Muir Play Glasgow (a Play, a Pie and a Pint). Referencing our Staff Award with Providers and at training events.



Simple Pleasures...

## John Muir Award Training UK-wide dates 2012

Training isn't essential to deliver the John Muir Award – reading the Information Handbook and looking at examples online is often enough (see website Resources and Links page). However, two-day residential courses give a thorough introduction to the John Muir Award.

27-28 March	Once Brewed Youth Hostel, Northumberland – FULLY BOOKED
31 March-1 April	Langdale Youth Hostel, Lake District National Park, Cumbria
18-19 April	Wiston Lodge, Biggar, South Lanarkshire
28-29 April	Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park, Callander
3-4 Sept	Patterdale Hall, Cumbria
12-13 Sept	Comrie Croft, Comrie, Perthshire
15-16 Sept	Broomley Grange, Northumberland
24-25 Nov	Badaguish Outdoor Centre, Aviemore, Cairngorms National Park
Date TBC	South West England – email us to register your interest

Cost: £120 for two days, including food and accommodation (reduced rate of £80 for charity representatives and those attending in an individual capacity).  
How to Book: email [info@johnmuiraward.org](mailto:info@johnmuiraward.org) with the date and venue to confirm that spaces are available. For more information on Leader Training visit the website.

## Trust approach to wild land management

The John Muir Trust has launched a new Wild Land Management Standards website [wildlandmanagement.org.uk](http://wildlandmanagement.org.uk) which illustrates the principles that guide its management of wild land.

Aimed at anyone interested in managing land with a focus on improving habitats and encouraging wildlife in a natural way, the site offers a range of resources including a Wild Land Management Standards Handbook and links to useful online resources.

“We hope this website will help to demonstrate the ecosystem approach we take to managing the properties we own and be an inspiration and help to others,” said Mike Daniels, Head of Land and Science at the John Muir Trust. “Wild land management simply means managing land in a way that unlocks natural processes and helps preserve or restore its wild land characteristics. We'd love to see the majority of the UK's wild land supporting natural habitats and species, and see widespread ecological damage reversed.”

The website details 28 wild management standards falling into six categories: management planning; soil, carbon, water; biodiversity & woodland; deer & livestock; facilities & heritage; communities, visitors & awareness.



# 2011 Gatherings – Enjoying Wild Places

John Muir Award Provider Gatherings are annual events that offer a chance to network, share good practice, and explore new ways of getting involved. They are for all involved in delivering the John Muir Award.

Five John Muir Award Gatherings took place last Autumn from Shepton Mallet, Somerset to Kinraig, over 500 miles to the north in the Cairngorms – via Windermere, Peterlee and Arthur's Seat, Edinburgh. Over 100 Provider representatives and supporters came together to explore the theme 'Enjoying Wild Places', taking the opportunity to learn about and try out initiatives that inspire enjoyment.

*"I thought this was a fantastic event – probably the best training opportunity I've been on for the last few years. I learnt masses and it was really well delivered. Thank you!"*

Providers – organisations that deliver the John Muir Award – represented a broad range of schools, youth groups, outdoor educators, National Parks and Wildlife Trusts.

This year, besides highlighting a range of examples of Award activity, the events gave a chance to get 'hands-on' with three key initiatives regularly highlighted by Award staff:

*"Loads and loads of practical exercises to make learning outdoors fun."*



Rob Bushby

Inaugural SW England Gathering at Somerset Earth Science Centre

## 2020VISION

[2020v.org](http://2020v.org)

'2020VISION is thought provoking and eye-catching... a good 'hook' to get people to think some more about values of wild environments. I'd like to use this in work with schools and other groups'. *Outdoor Centre Senior Instructor*

*All venues created site-specific 'postcards' inspired by 2020VISION messaging*

Community connector. Big sky frame. History lesson.



More than just Hadrian's Wall

Roger Clegg

'The Young Champion input was inspiring – great to see an interpretation of a really urban place [Cumbernauld]. Well-structured talk, and some 'wow' images – it drew together a number of strands from the day, including Providers' case studies.' *John Muir Award staff member*

See more on page 10

## Mission:Explore

[missionexplore.net](http://missionexplore.net)

'Really love the way the missions work and also how easy they are. I can see us using them in lots of areas such as Wildlife Watch groups. As well as using the website we will be buying the books as I can see them being really useful.' *Wildlife Trust Education Outreach Manager*

See more on page 11



Graham Watson

Mission:Explore – horizontal climbing(!) at Brockhole

## Simple Pleasures, Easily Found

[snh.gov.uk/enjoying-the-outdoors/simple-pleasures](http://snh.gov.uk/enjoying-the-outdoors/simple-pleasures)

'This gave me a different perspective on how to enjoy the outdoors, I found it very easy, informative and enjoyable. I would look to use it with all my classes to get them to look at things differently and perhaps make them reflect on what they used to enjoy in the outdoors before Xboxes and PlayStations arrived.' *College Lecturer*



SNH

'Great! Lovely ideas! We often forget about the simple things like blowing a blade of grass to make a whistle or making daisy chains – things we've done as children but we forget to pass on. Good to have up our sleeve as ongoing activities throughout the entire John Muir Award process. If we finish an activity 5 minutes early, what do we do with that 5 minutes? I'll have ideas with me in future!' *BTCV Manager*

*"It was so inspiring to hear about the John Muir Award being used in such a variety of different settings. It's come such a long way!"*



Sam Finn

North East England Gathering

# 2020VISION – Young Champion Profile

2020VISION uses powerful visual imagery to motivate fresh thinking about our dependence upon wild nature. Its pro-photographers are mentoring young people around the country to help spread its message. Here's Cumbria-based Rosie Watson's recent blog...



Four days of a constant (seriously, I mean constant) repetition of The Killers, computer breakdowns (ok, deep breaths) and movie maker magic (finally!), and my mini-presentation to the local John Muir Award Gathering at Brockhole is ready to go. Phew.

Morning (too soon), and an audience of about 20 people receive the full benefit of my 5 minute work-in-progress presentation aimed to entice young people (like me!) to enjoy the outdoors and appreciate the famously beautiful landscape that surrounds them. How to do this? Take the things we all love doing (in short, spending time with friends) and take it outside. The result? Fun photos to a quality song that is relatable to and can be put into the context of every one of our lives.

Stunning, breathtaking and technically correct photos are...well, stunning and breathtaking! They can have a great effect, tell a story, make you think 'Wow, what a wonderful world, that is obviously an amazing place'. As a student I have seen a few of these, and although they can inspire you to take part in a project like this for example, or travel the world as I would also love to do, the effect is mostly short-lived. You go home and carry on your everyday



life, so far away from that misty dawn peak or soaring bird that the relevance of it now seems unimportant. I know this because I see it in my friends as well as myself. Everyday life can be all-consuming – you can forget in a matter of days the wonders that are out there and how precious they are, even when it is right under your nose.

So this is my idea-in-process. To most young people (like me), getting up hours before dawn and walking for two hours up a mountain in the pouring rain, just for the slight chance of a spectacular sunrise breakthrough is not the best idea of fun. Seriously, there is no place like a warm bed when it's dark and cold outside. A sunny day jumping off the pier down by the lake, a walk up the river, a day of sledging on the mountain side, a joint sprint into the deep blue sea and a good bowl of chips – that's sounding a bit better. So this is what I aim to do with my photos: give people some ideas, kind of like a guide to the area from a different perspective. That valley leading to nowhere you see from your window – its river holds a still deep pool that gets direct sunlight in summer, complete with jacuzzi waterfall and rocky diving board. That beach you sometimes go past walking the dog – venture a little further round and there's a cave perfect and undisturbed for a summer night camp with some friends. Basically, have an amazing time, enjoy the world around you and take care of it along the way.

So that is what I told my Gathering audience, what I have been doing and what I intend to do next. I am not a great photographer, a year ago was the first time I picked up a camera bigger than a matchbox. But hopefully the basic message of the photos I will be able to portray: that pretty picture on the screen – it's a great place to go.

Thankfully, my wonderful audience managed to understand where I was going with this, and even gave some suggestions throughout the rest of the day. My super-pro mentor Joe Cornish was also there and gave a great explanation of the 2020VISION project, as well as sparking some interesting discussions about photography. Overall, a successful day, no technical breakdowns or musical failures, and just the start of spreading the message further: watch this space!

For more of what Rosie's been up to visit [facebook.com/groups/318385234863035](https://facebook.com/groups/318385234863035)

For information and photographer portfolios visit [2020v.org](http://2020v.org)

For weekly blogs from around the UK visit [blog.2020v.org](http://blog.2020v.org)

[joecornishgallery.co.uk](http://joecornishgallery.co.uk)

## Get Involved

A flagship book and touring exhibition is currently being created. 2020VISION wants to hear why your favourite place (it can be a forest, saltmarsh or even local park) is important to you. They only need one sentence but it needs to be from your heart! The best will be included in the book and for the very best, the exhibition too! You can e-mail or fill in a form via [2020v.org](http://2020v.org)

Get a brand new 2020VISION image every day at [2020v.org](http://2020v.org). You'll be able to download the image as wallpaper or you might just prefer to check in each morning (with a nice cup of tea) and brighten up your day. The image will also appear on the 2020VISION Facebook page so if you don't want to go searching, just 'like' it at [facebook.com/2020v](https://facebook.com/2020v)



## Mission:Explore – enjoy places in a new way

Mission:Explore is all about challenging people to try new things. It's about exploring in fun ways, asking questions and searching for answers. 1000s of activities or 'missions' relate to geography, nature and environmental themes - all designed to help young people learn with curiosity and enjoyment. Missions are fast paced, some are silly, some offer more thought provoking challenges.

Based on an award winning series of books, Mission:Explore launches its new website in March. Developed by The Geography Collective and The Workshop, it's been created to:

- help young people learn about places
- encourage curiosity about the world
- have a good deal of playful fun

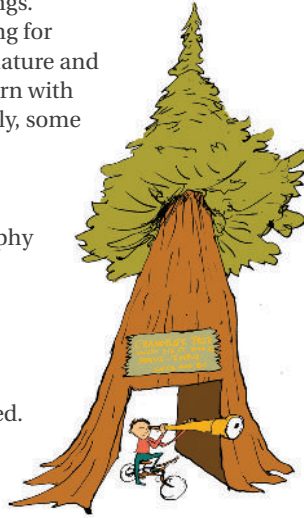
Participants can track progress and use the Mission:Explore rewards system to gain points and badges for missions completed.

### Make your own missions

The Mission:Explore website can be used by charities and public sector organisations to create their own learning activities and challenges. These Missions can be mapped to specific places, used within a nature or heritage trail, or can simply be done 'anywhere'. They can be turned into a game or scavenger hunt, and make use of the Mission:Explore rewards system to offer points and badges. Free Challenger accounts are available - Ordnance Survey, National Geographic Education, Planet Science and OPAL are just some of the organisations currently creating Missions for the site.

Daniel Raven-Ellison from Mission:Explore explains: "We want to work collaboratively with as many organisations as possible to create a patch-work of playful outdoor learning opportunities across the UK and beyond. We're here to help with the website, and we can offer training and writing camps too. We see the John Muir Award as a great framework for getting involved."

For more information and to request a free Challenger account visit [missionexplore.net](http://missionexplore.net) or email [daniel@missionexplore.net](mailto:daniel@missionexplore.net)



## An invitation to participate in Creative Climate

Creative Climate is a long-term web diary project that aims to inform and inspire people through stories of imagination, determination and change. We are inviting you to start a diary on the website, and every six months, in the run up to midwinter and midsummer, we will ask you to update it with news about the progress of your thinking and action on environmental issues.

You can respond to the invitation to make a diary in whatever way you choose: writing, audio, video, photos or a mixture. We offer a few questions that can guide you on the website and also have a body of 200 examples that you can browse. You can start a diary at <http://bit.ly/t3SINH>

The diaries lie at the core of the project, but the website also links to free learning materials, and broadcast radio, TV and web content linked to the project that we have commissioned in partnership with the BBC. These include the BBC World Service Climate Connection series, and six documentary films on BBC World. We have also commissioned leading student filmmaking talent to make short films for the web <http://bit.ly/vTpyjR>

We welcome collaboration and actively encourage people to use the diary and other content to support their own work. Please get in touch with any queries or comments you have or to join the mailing list via [obu-creative-climate@open.ac.uk](mailto:obu-creative-climate@open.ac.uk)

Humanity's journey with environmental change issues is likely to be a long and demanding one, but sharing ideas and experiences will speed the way. We hope you will join us.

Yours, The Creative Climate team at The Open University

[open.ac.uk/creativeclimate](http://open.ac.uk/creativeclimate)



## Cairngorms National Park Outdoor Learning Competition

This biennial competition is for any educational establishment that has experienced the Cairngorms National Park in the last 12 months – such as schools, youth clubs/groups, and outdoor centres. It's free to enter, and pupils and participants are encouraged to be bold and creative when demonstrating their activities (such as visits, projects, or the John Muir Award) undertaken in the Park. Winners and runners-up of each age category (3-7, 8-11, 12-16 years old) will receive prize grants of £300 and £150 respectively. Entries should include how you intend to use the grant to further develop outdoor learning opportunities.

For further information contact Alan Smith at the CNPA by calling 01479 870518 or email [alansmith@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:alansmith@cairngorms.co.uk)

Closing date for entries end of April 2012



# London 2012 Olympic & Paralympic Games – Get Involved!

It's coming, whether you're ready or not, the sporting extravaganza that is the Olympics. And here are some great ways you can make it a part of your John Muir Award...



## Uncover the mysteries of the Great Glen

Spring 2012 will see the launch of an exciting new way to explore the Great Glen in Scotland through Discover Explore, a web-based game that helps children and their families to discover many of the hidden and extraordinary stories and places that lie along the Great Glen. The project is the third major commission from Discovering Places – the Cultural Olympiad campaign to inspire communities across the UK to discover their local environment.

Would-be explorers and their families create an online account and use the Discover Explore website to find missions in exciting locations. They then head off on adventures set along the Great Glen between Fort William and Inverness to experience over 400 million years of natural wonders and human tales. Explorers can earn rewards in the form of badges by correctly answering questions about the missions online.

The game focuses on several key locations along the Great Glen, some well-known

and others less familiar. Discover Explore has been working with key partners such as Historic Scotland, John Muir Trust, National Trust for Scotland and Abriachan Forest Trust among others to develop exciting missions at each location.

**Discover Explore launches on 20th March.** Sign up now at [discoverexplore.co.uk](http://discoverexplore.co.uk) for updates.

There's still time for more heritage and natural environment organisations in the Great Glen areas to showcase their sites through Discover Explore. Contact [anna@discoveringplaces.co.uk](mailto:anna@discoveringplaces.co.uk) for more details.

## Walk the World

Explore the 206 Olympic and Paralympic Nations without leaving the UK, and help discover links to some – or all – 206 nations in your local community.



Delivered in partnership with The Royal Geographic Society and Discovering Places, Walk the World helps you find, explore and walk your way through street names, place names, common foods, memorial plaques, buildings and spaces to uncover the Olympic or Paralympic nations in your neighbourhood.

See [walktheworld.org.uk](http://walktheworld.org.uk) for more details. Create walks with a 'wild places' theme. Link a Eucalyptus tree (Australia) with an eagle (America) with coffee (Brazil) or tea (India).

## Garden for the Games

Get ready to celebrate the Games through all things green fingered. Take pride in your patch



– it might be your garden, street or your community allotments:

- Plant golden flowers to make your street shine for the Olympic Torch Relay
- Grow a bee-friendly wild flower meadow like the one in the Olympic Park
- Grow your greens for your Super Saturday in August
- Plant your team colours

Sign up as a Garden for the Games Local Leader now and receive updates with promotional material and gardening design ideas, or visit the website.

[london2012.com/get-involved/local-leaders/garden-for-the-games/](http://london2012.com/get-involved/local-leaders/garden-for-the-games/)

## Local Leaders

If you want to plan a celebration for the Games, look no further. Sign up to be a Local Leader and whether you invite three friends or your whole community, you can get the tools to make your celebration one to remember. It's really simple. Just pick an occasion and get planning. You can also check out tools and tips to get you started planning your event.

Whatever you decide to do, sign up for Local Leader emails and over the next few months you'll get planning guides, 'Save the date' cards, decoration ideas, exclusive offers and more.

[london2012.com/get-involved/local-leaders/](http://london2012.com/get-involved/local-leaders/)

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