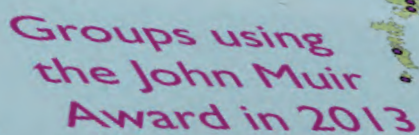


JOHN MUIR AWARD

wild places:
DISCOVER
EXPLORE
CONSERVE
SHARE

John Muir Award News Spring 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.



Groups using
the John Muir
Award in 2013

The Growth of the John Muir Award

In 2013, more people than ever before got involved in the John Muir Award.

In this issue we reflect on this growth and focus on partnerships in England.

We also take a look at:

Outdoor Learning, *pages 6-7*

John Muir Celebrations, *pages 8-9*

Wellbeing, *page 10*

John Muir Award: Taking Stock

Award for all

It's a very personal thing, connecting with nature. Many of us find our own pathways to the wild. But many also appreciate and value a little support along the way. It might be to help de-mystify 'the environment', the offer of resources and ideas, or a catalyst for new partnerships and fresh thinking. That, in essence, is the function of the John Muir Award.

To have progressed from working with 1,500 people and 70 groups in 2001, to a UK-wide network of 1,100 organisations helping over 29,000 people gain their own Award in 2013, is quite an achievement for the John Muir Trust, which runs the Award for free as a key part of its engagement work.

Behind the numbers lie thousands of personal stories, from a Cairngorms pupil rapping "Pick up ya littaaa!" to the Environment Minister and a Cumbrian primary school class counting 92 flying marsh fritillary butterflies, to the student on a recent Outward Bound expedition heard to comment: "Wow! That view across the Rois Bheinn is like something I would expect to find on a computer desktop!"

Origins and growth

The John Muir Award was established in response to a statistic from the early 1990s that only 0.1% of 5–24-year-olds were involved in environmental organisations.

It was launched in 1997 in Dunbar, where John Muir was born in 1838. From the outset, the Award has been tied closely to Muir's ethos – embracing connections, care, curiosity and creativity – and has kept Muir at its heart ever since. Its structure – spend time discovering wild places, explore them to encourage awareness and understanding, do something to conserve them, and share those experiences – invited participants to actively engage with this philosophy, and remains unchanged to this day.

Being open to all was also part of the ethos from the start – an aim that was codified in 2000 when the target was set for 25% of all Award participants to be from 'inclusion' backgrounds (a target that has been exceeded every year since). By 'inclusion' we mean organisations that work with people who experience some form of exclusion or disadvantage, which may be due to ethnicity, age, unemployment or disability.

The absence of age limitations has opened the Award up to all sorts of adult audiences. This approach incorporates peer learning – with teachers and outdoor leaders participating alongside their charges – and invites family shared experiences. It also embraces the interests of adult groups, from college adult education classes, to conservation volunteers and health walking groups, as well as drug and alcohol recovery services.

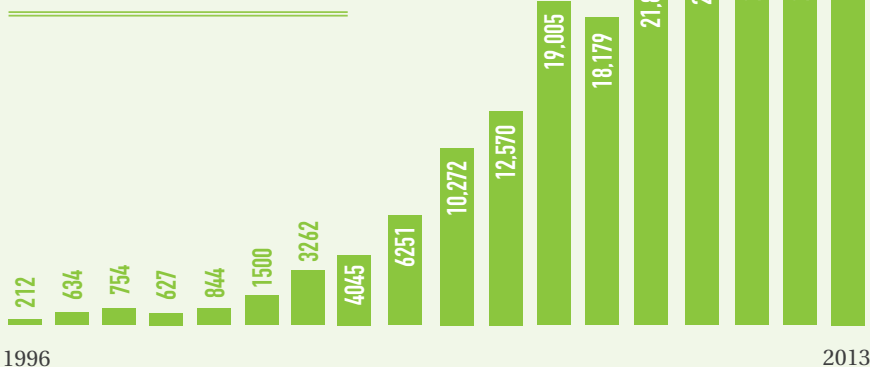
Why have so many people embraced the Award over the years? One reason is that it doesn't treat 'the environment' as a bolt-on, or the realm of specialists. Nor is it about competition, winners and losers, us and them. Instead, it works with people 'where they are at', letting them tell us how and where they want to get involved, in ways that suit them (whilst ensuring time requirements and criteria are met). The result is that we see the Award being used by music teachers as well as outdoor instructors, by lads and dads groups alongside asylum seekers, in a King's Cross nature park, at an open prison, and on the summit of Ben Nevis. People use it because they like a degree of structure and support, flexibility, ownership and recognition. Oh, and enjoyment too.

Outdoors writer and broadcaster Cameron McNeish once asked, rhetorically, in a magazine editorial, whether we needed 'a new John Muir'. His response was no, we needed thousands of John Muirs. The conservationists of the future need a first taste of wildness, and the value of what it can bring to their lives. Now something of a movement rather than simply a tool, the Award can be a starting point; it can add value to what groups already do; and it can be used to celebrate what people achieve.

Adapted from an article written for the John Muir Trust Journal, Spring 2014, by UK John Muir Award Manager Rob Bushby.

The John Muir Award in Numbers

Awards Achieved Per Year



Total Number of Certificates

Since 1997

201,313

Similar to the population of Aberdeen or York

Certificates by Gender

Males

52.5%

Females

47.5%

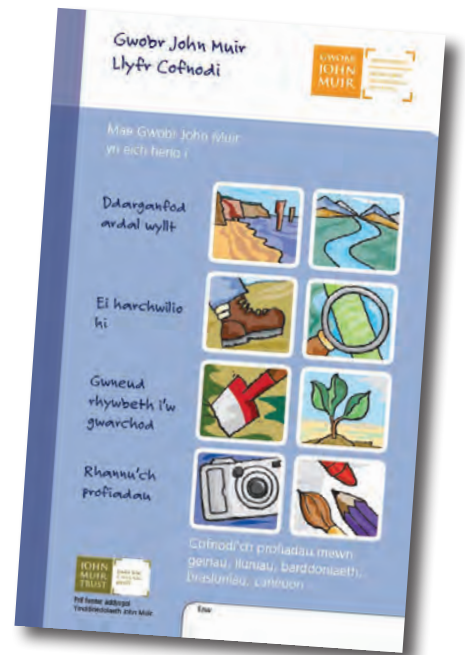
Gwobr John Muir – the Award in Wales

We've been using the Welsh language through the Award since 2001. According to Dave Thomas of Call of the Wild, "The John Muir Award helps to develop communication and extend Welsh Language vocabulary – learning words that people wouldn't come across in everyday life."

There were some notable milestones in 2013, including new Welsh language resources, a Leader Training event specifically for Welsh speakers, and an annual increase to over 750 Welsh speakers achieving and celebrating their Gwobr John Muir (John Muir Awards).

The People's Postcode Trust supported Welsh language Record Books designed to assist learners as well as teachers and leaders delivering the Award in Welsh. And a new collaboration between the John Muir Trust, Urdd Gobaith Cymru and Mission:Explore created a unique collection of 20 activities to inspire Welsh speakers to follow in the footsteps of John Muir. Mission:Explore John Muir Cymru is a free to download Welsh e-book that captures a variety of Muir's adventures and messages and turns them into fun accessible activities.

"It's a fantastic framework to connect participants with wild places, the Welsh countryside and its heritage. The Welsh Language Record Book is a great resource that is already being widely used with our participants." **Sion Lloyd, Head of Outdoor Education Outreach for The Urdd, the Welsh-medium youth movement**



Project Wild Thing Screenings – Birnam and Nevis

Project Wild Thing is a film-led movement to get more kids (and their folks!) outside and reconnecting with nature. (See Autumn 2013 Newsletter for more background). The film is an ambitious, feature-length documentary that takes a funny and revealing look at a complex issue – the increasingly disparate connection between children and nature.

Cairngorms National Park Authority and the John Muir Trust host a screening at Birnam Arts Centre, near Perth, on **Wednesday 23rd April at 7pm.**

As part of a weekend of Wild Screenings on **10-11 May**, the John Muir Trust will be co-ordinating screenings at the Glen Nevis Visitor Centre and Nevis Range Mountain Gondola. (Keep an eye on the film screenings page for details projectwildthing.com/film). The National Trust has a screening at Scafell Pike/Wasdale campsite, and Plas Y Brenin will show the film, both on **Saturday 10th May**, with an iPad being taken up Snowdon to show clips.

"Our Project Wild Thing screening was a huge hit! A good conversation starter and a powerfully motivating film."
Jenny Gerrans, The Longshaw Estate

For details on how to screen the film yourself, and a full range of viewings across the UK visit www.projectwildthing.com/film



New Proposal Form

In autumn we refreshed the John Muir Award Proposal Form – the 2 page document used to let us know what you plan to do to achieve your Award(s). The new version has updated descriptions of the four Award Challenges, and is set out in a more interconnecting way.

Thanks to all who have been using the new form. Feedback has been positive and we have seen a notable difference in how the Proposal Form is being used – with greater clarity around Award groups' activities and enhanced understanding of what's involved.

We have also recently created a new Four Challenge Review document. This follows the same layout as the Proposal Form, and includes refreshed questions to encourage reflection on what you've done in relation to these Challenges.

Both can be found on the 'forms' page at www.johnmuiraward.org

eBulletin sign-up

Every couple of months we send out an eBulletin of news and information. It lets us share up to date and timely material and opportunities that we think is of interest to people involved in the John Muir Award. If you would like to receive our eBulletin, please sign up by sending your name and email address to [Cristie at info@johnmuiraward.org](mailto:info@johnmuiraward.org). You can also access the latest edition from www.johnmuiraward.org. And by clicking on 'latest news' on the left hand menu you can catch...well, our latest news.

John Muir Award in England

In our Spring 2013 Newsletter we highlighted that we're now fully open for business in England.

Award activity has been supported in England for over 10 years by temporary and part time staff, working with hundreds of Providers to deliver thousands of Awards each year. With support from the Heritage Lottery Fund we've now expanded to two full time managers, Andy Naylor and Anna Hormigo, as well as a part time administrator, Julie Morris, to support and increase our presence. In addition, a full time manager in Cumbria, Graham Watson, leads our work with the Lake District National Park Authority.

Here we look at some of the key partnerships we're involved in. They give a flavour of the breadth of activity in England and show how some larger organisations are integrating the Award into what they do. These complement – and often directly support - the numerous groups we work with from Cornwall to Northumberland.

Getting involved

Our England Managers are here to support interest in the John Muir Award.

In the first instance you can go online to:

- Watch a 10 minute introductory film
- Download an Information Handbook – a 'one stop' guide to running the Award
- Read Case Studies – see the Award in action in a wide range of settings
- Download Resource Guides on: Campaigning; Biodiversity; Wildlife Gardening; John Muir; Surveys; Outdoor Access; National Parks; Outdoor Learning.
- Find out about John Muir at www.discoverjohnmuir.com

To discuss ways in which the Award could work with your organisation in England contact:

England (general): Andy Naylor,
01629 584457 andy@johnmuiraward.org
England Education: Anna Hormigo,
01629 584457 anna@johnmuiraward.org
Cumbria: Graham Watson, 01539 792 653
cumbria@johnmuiraward.org
For full contact details see back page.

The Outward Bound Trust

One of our longest-standing partnerships is with The Outward Bound Trust, operating across their four bases in England, Scotland and Wales. There's plenty of common ground in our ethos and the value placed on first-hand experience of wild places.

Our educational and environmental approaches are complementary, encouraging awareness and care for the natural environment within programmes of adventurous outdoor activity and learning. Schools' Adventure and Challenge residentials and 3-week long Classic Courses offer ideal opportunities for integration. Regular staff training inputs, jointly branded certificates and materials, and impact measurement projects are all features of a prospering partnership. See a one-year summary *Four Challenge Review* of how Outward Bound courses related to the Award in our online case studies.

"It's helped Outward Bound develop its environmental perspective. We're always working in 'the environment', to explore our relationships with each other. Now we discuss our relationships with the environment as well."

Nick Austin, Deputy Head of Centre, Ullswater



National Citizen Service

The National Citizen Service (NCS) is a Government initiative open to all 16 and 17-year-olds in England. It brings together young people from different backgrounds and helps develop greater confidence, self-awareness and responsibility. It encourages personal and social development by working on skills like leadership, teamwork and communication.

This is a great fit with the John Muir Award and its ethos. A number of NCS Providers are now using the Award as part of their NCS delivery – if you would like to do the same, we'd love to hear from you.

"We aim to use the John Muir Award again...to inspire our young people with the wild places that surround them in Northumberland and help them to achieve their full potential."

Paul Kirkpatrick, Northumberland Targeted Adolescent Service



John Muir Award in England

National Parks

John Muir is often referenced as the founder of the National Park movement. (For the story of the origins of National Parks see the information page at www.discoverjohnmuir.com). So it's fitting that Award activity takes place in all of the UK's National Parks. Its flexibility means that it can be used differently to meet key outcomes across a range of locations.

The Lake District, Cairngorms, and Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authorities all invest in dedicated members of staff to promote and manage the John Muir Award. It helps them to deliver statutory objectives – in particular to *Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of National Parks by the public.*

Others, such as South Downs, have written the Award into job descriptions and created a web resource to share expertise and local information. Dartmoor, Exmoor, Peak District and others use it directly with groups they work with.

For more information see the Resources page at www.johnmuiraward.org

“It’s a really useful and usable format to help develop deeper ‘family learning’ and links with Dartmoor National Park. Our evaluations show that young people respond to opportunities to explore, have fun, learn about wildlife and contribute

through conservation tasks. Parents value the opportunity for interpersonal learning, both with their children and other adults, and are often surprised at their own journeys both cognitively and emotionally.”

Orlando Rutter, Senior Learning & Outreach Officer, Dartmoor National Park Authority



Natural Connections

Natural Connections is one of the largest outdoor learning projects in the UK. It is targeting over 200 schools and between 200-500 volunteers across South West England with the aim of significantly increasing the number of children benefitting from learning in natural environments.

The John Muir Award is involved as one of the tools available to help promote outdoor learning. In addition, the Award team is providing training for teachers to *Take Learning Outdoors*, initially focused on the Natural Connections North Somerset learning hub.

“It’s a key way to support schools and individuals in developing unique and valuable experience in nature. It works so well because it is flexible and can meet the needs of different individuals and groups and also help deliver the curriculum.”

Jon Attwood, Forest of Avon Trust and lead at Natural Connections North Somerset hub

Youth Hostel Association

Mention the initials YHA and most people think of buildings and bunk beds. But read its charitable objective and the links with the John Muir Trust are easier to spot: “To help all, especially young people of limited means, to a greater knowledge, love and care of the countryside... particularly by providing youth hostels or other accommodation for them in their travels, and thus to promote their health, recreation and education.”

YHA has used the Award since 2007 to enhance the experience of participants at its summer camps. There was no discernible environmental element prior to this, whereas in 2010 we measured the value of over 9,000 hours of Conserve volunteering activity through Award involvement at £57,144 – through habitat creation (including ‘frogits’), invasive species clearance, heather seed planting, and footpath work - as an integrated part of the YHA experience.

This year YHA is broadening the reach of the Award to include school groups and families. If you’re planning a stay at a YHA you might consider how this could contribute towards your own John Muir Award.

‘It gives structure and purpose to activities, offers focus to evening activities and time-fillers, provides clear discussion topics for time spent walking or travelling, and encourages positive action - responsibility, active citizenship, behavioural change.’

YHA summer camps leader



Photo: Amy Boud

Outdoor Learning

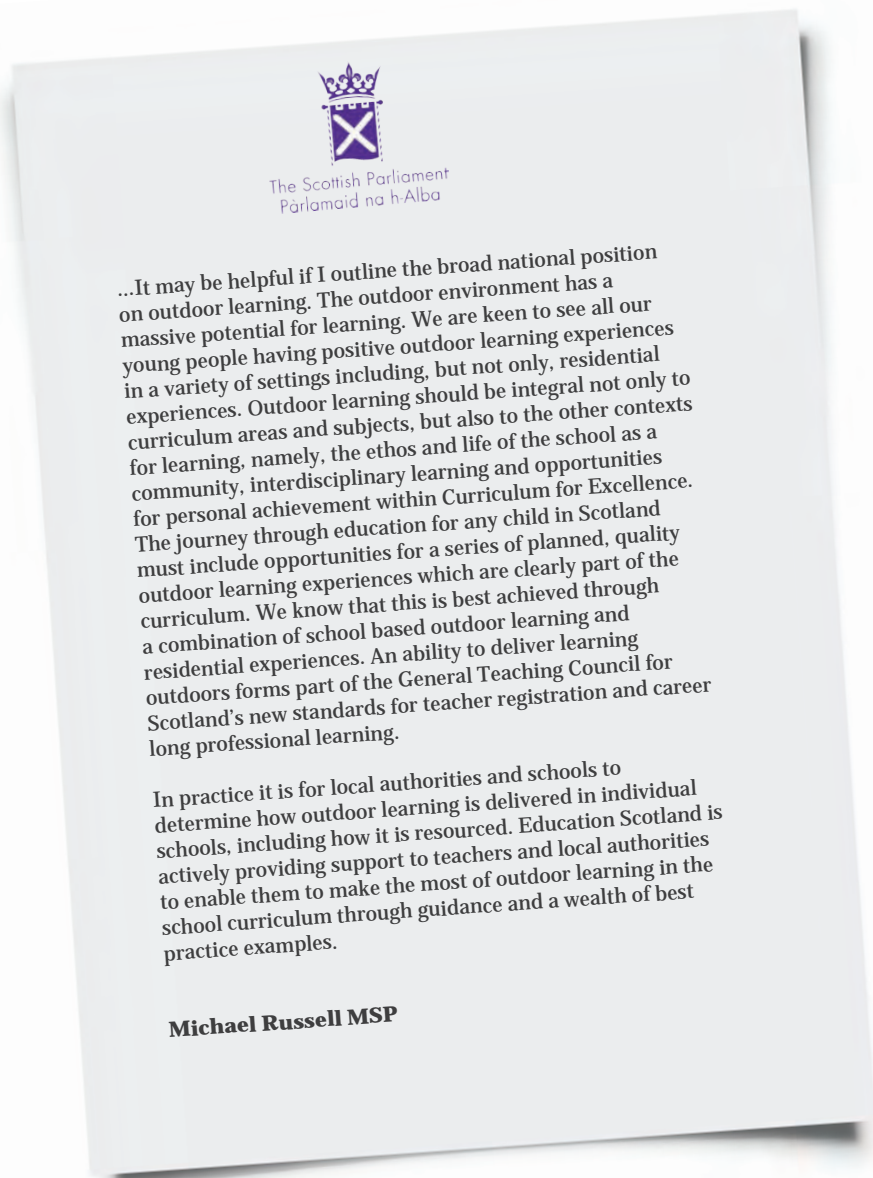
In England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, the John Muir Award is increasingly used as a framework for experiential practical learning both within the curriculum, in extracurricular activities, and in youth work settings. Across the UK there is political interest in the potential of the outdoors to deliver learning outcomes.

Here, we highlight a variety of ways in which Outdoor Learning is receiving support.

Read on to see how both Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning Michael Russell MSP, and Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove MP, have made clear their backing for Outdoor Learning.

See the 'ten priorities for the future' identified by the Field Studies Council, and 30 contributions collated by Scotland's Youth Work Agency around the theme. Find out more through our new Resource Guide.

Extract from a letter to the Education and Culture Committee from Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning Michael Russell MSP



...It may be helpful if I outline the broad national position on outdoor learning. The outdoor environment has a massive potential for learning. We are keen to see all our young people having positive outdoor learning experiences in a variety of settings including, but not only, residential experiences. Outdoor learning should be integral not only to curriculum areas and subjects, but also to the other contexts for learning, namely, the ethos and life of the school as a community, interdisciplinary learning and opportunities for personal achievement within Curriculum for Excellence. The journey through education for any child in Scotland must include opportunities for a series of planned, quality outdoor learning experiences which are clearly part of the curriculum. We know that this is best achieved through a combination of school based outdoor learning and residential experiences. An ability to deliver learning outdoors forms part of the General Teaching Council for Scotland's new standards for teacher registration and career long professional learning.

In practice it is for local authorities and schools to determine how outdoor learning is delivered in individual schools, including how it is resourced. Education Scotland is actively providing support to teachers and local authorities to enable them to make the most of outdoor learning in the school curriculum through guidance and a wealth of best practice examples.

Michael Russell MSP

Outdoor Learning Resource Guide

“Being outside teaches you things you don't get taught anywhere else.” (Ofsted Report: Improving teaching and learning using the outdoor environment 2009).

Our new Resource Guide summarises the many benefits of Outdoor Learning – it's on the Resources page at www.johnmuiraward.org. The John Muir Award is used by a diverse range of organisations delivering activities that combine adventure, the environment, and personal development to participants of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

“[Outdoor Learning] can be fun, adventurous, exhilarating, challenging and creative. It can offer formative experiences that inspire confidence, awareness and appreciation, values and responsibility...”
Resource Guide extract



Reaching into the Outside

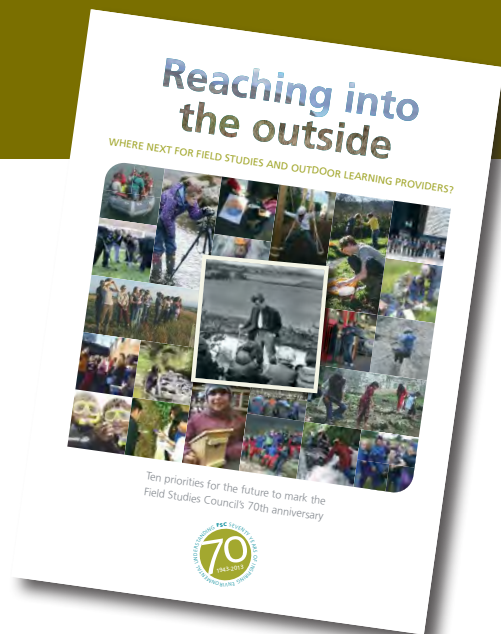
To celebrate 70 years of inspiring young people and the general public the Field Studies Council brought together some of the UK's foremost education and environmental organisations to forecast the future for the Outdoor Learning sector.

Ten priorities for the future for Field Studies and Outdoor Learning providers were published in Reaching into the Outside, and are summarised as:

- Everybody does it
- It happens everywhere
- It happens everyday
- All schools and colleges use it
- All communities take pride in it
- It supports sustainable lifestyles
- It leads to healthier lives
- Parents worry less about it
- Screen time supports it
- We all work together at it

Speaking at the Westminster launch Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Education, endorsed these with passionate and personal perspectives, saying: 'How can you know how this land was shaped and formed, and how choices that people made in the past determine the lives we live now, unless you'd had the chance to study geography and spend some time seeing how the natural world shaped the plan? I don't believe that any of us can grow up properly in this country unless we've had the chance to feel and have communicated to us direct the passion for the natural world that the best teachers can bring.'

For more information and listen to the full speech go to www.field-studies-council.org/about/fsc-70th-anniversary.aspx



National agency for youth work backs outdoor learning

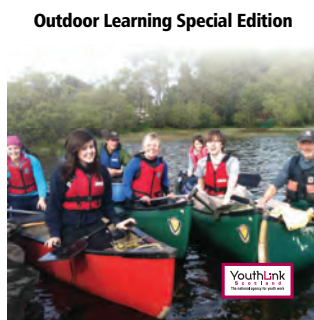
'Between every two pines is a doorway to a new world' writes Jim Sweeney, quoting John Muir to introduce YouthLink Scotland's Outdoor Learning special edition of their Link Magazine.

As the national agency for youth work in Scotland, YouthLink has a powerful voice and a broad reach. As Jim says, Outdoor Learning 'has been an integral part of youth work practice for over 100 years and provides so many growth and learning opportunities for young people. It is a rite of passage...to explore the countryside and wildernesses in Scotland and beyond'.

This new publication, launched in March 2014, includes articles from 30 organisations that support, deliver or fund youth work in the outdoors – from uniformed organisations to family and arts projects.

The John Muir Award is proud to be featured, 'as a scheme to help people of all backgrounds connect with, enjoy, and care for wild places – and a vehicle for outdoor learning', and support the partnership working it promotes. Over two thirds of the youth work organisations included already use the Award as part of their own approaches to outdoor learning.

'It's fantastic to see YouthLink Scotland bringing together such a wealth of experience and opportunity, focused around outdoor learning' said Rob Bushby, UK John Muir Award Manager. 'A big part of the reason the John Muir Trust set up the John Muir Award was to help bridge a gap between youth work and meaningful connections with the outdoors. This document shows that youth work has a vital role and that outdoor learning has, as Jim Sweeney says, 'something for everyone.'



You can find an online link to the magazine in the Award News on 17 March

WILD10 Resolution



The John Muir Trust generated a resolution of support from the WILD10 Global Wilderness Congress last October for Scottish Government's lead in this area which resolved:

- To support Education Scotland in its efforts to implement the recommendations of the Learning for Sustainability report.
- To encourage other governments, particularly in Europe, to consider the lead taken and its applicability to their own educational policies for the integration of outdoor learning, and the role of wild places, wilderness and wild land in education.

See www.wild10.org/resolutions for more information

Celebrating 100 Years of Muir's Legacy

2014 is the centenary of John Muir's death. Here are some of the ways that people are celebrating the relevance of Muir's legacy. You're invited to get involved.

Homecoming
Scotland
2014

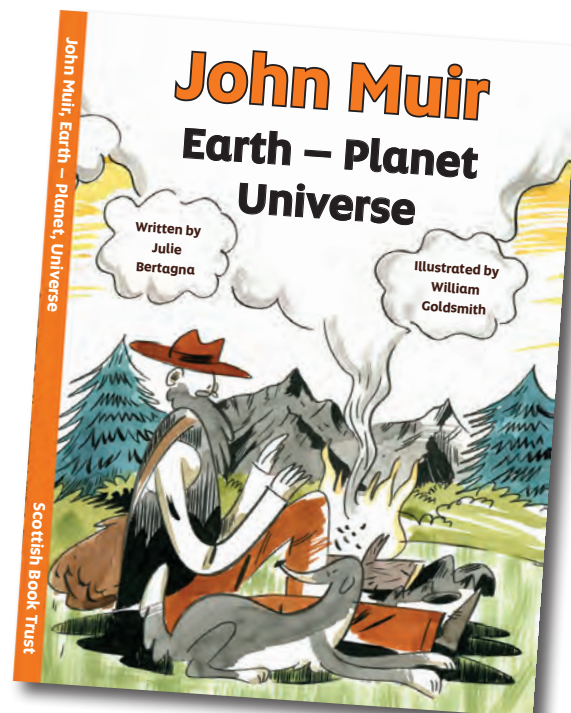
John Muir, Earth – Planet, Universe

A graphic novel (tr. illustrated book) based upon the life of John Muir has been produced by Scottish Book Trust, with free copies going to every secondary school in Scotland.

The Scottish born inventor, naturalist, artist, mountaineer, geologist, glaciologist and writer, spent his life exploring wild places. Written by award-winning author Julie Bertagna and illustrated by Glasgow-based artist William Goldsmith, the novel brings his story to a new audience and is intended to help develop a deeper understanding and awareness of the natural environment and the importance of protecting wild places.

The novel was developed in partnership with John Muir Trust, Creative Scotland, Education Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage and in consultation with teachers and school pupils. It combines environmental studies with literacy in an innovative way, and is supported by online resources for teachers. As well as literacy, the novel will cover many other curricular aspects, such as citizenship, outdoor learning and health and well-being.

A pdf version of John Muir, Earth – Planet, Universe is available to download from www.scottishbooktrust.com/johnmuir as well as teaching support notes and pupil activities which accompany the book.



John Muir Festival 17-26 April

The John Muir Festival 2014 celebrates the life and legacy of John Muir and marks the opening of the new national long distance route, the John Muir Way.

There are over 70 scheduled events across the length of the John Muir Way, most of which are artist led, free public performances which do not require pre booking.

Visit www.johnmuirfestival.com for more information and to find out what's happening near you.



Wild Places: The John Muir Film Festival

'Wild Places' is a festival of films focussing on themes of landscape and open spaces, presented by The Brunton, Musselburgh, working in partnership with other cinemas along the John Muir Way. The Film Festival reflects Muir's passion for wild places and the environment and explores his legacy of engagement with the Natural World as part of the John Muir Festival 2014.

Screenings at The Brunton are accompanied by a series of pre-screening talks with experts from nature and the arts including Countryfile's Tom Heap, stand-up comedian and mountaineer Andy Kirkpatrick, Creative Scotland's Scott Donaldson and Edinburgh Makar Ron Butlin. Films are also screened at: Lomond School Helensburgh, Macrobert Stirling, Hippodrome Bo'ness, Filmhouse Edinburgh and Dunbar Film Society at West Barns Village Hall.

Full listings and tickets are at www.thebrunton.co.uk

Celebrating 100 Years of Muir's Legacy



John Muir Way

The new John Muir Way opens in spring this year. Stretching 133 miles across Scotland's heartland, it runs between Dunbar in the east through to Helensburgh in the west – from where Muir was born to where he departed for America, aged 10.

It's a long distance trail with a difference. The new path encourages exploration of the nature and landscapes of Central Scotland on bike and on foot. It passes through Scotland's first National Park, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs, and connects with great transport links.

To find out where the route goes and what's along the way, have a look at the John Muir Way website. (NB the John Muir Way isn't part of the John Muir Trust).

Celebrate Muir's love of adventure anywhere. Why not...

Create your own 1000 mile journey?
<http://tinyurl.com/pagsda6>

Find a path near you?
www.ramblers.org.uk/go-walking/find-a-walk.aspx

Walk sections of other long distance routes? www.ldwa.org.uk/

John Muir Conference, 12-13 May, Perth

John Muir was a conservation visionary and his legacy has helped to shape the development of national parks and protected areas around the world.

Scotland's National Parks and other conservation bodies, including the John Muir Trust, have come together to create a one-off conference. Inspirational speakers will share their approaches to protecting, engaging and developing sensitive landscapes in the UK, and will look at the relevance of John Muir's principles today.

For information, or to book tickets, visit www.johnmuir100.com



Mission: Explore John Muir

Mission: Explore John Muir is a unique set of activities to inspire people to follow in the footsteps of John Muir. Suitable for young people of all ages, they will help you (re)discover our world and learn about places in a creative way.

Your free e-book is available via www.johnmuiraward.org (also available in Welsh and Gaelic versions).

Our gob has been pretty well smacked that it has had 150,000 online hits in less than a year!

Intrepid explorers can find many more missions at missionexplore.net that can be done at any time in any place.



discoverjohnmuir.com

Looking for Muir-related information, activities or examples? We've pulled them together and put them in one handy place – www.discoverjohnmuir.com

Have a look to be informed and inspired.



Five Ways to Wellbeing

Evidence suggests that a small improvement in wellbeing can help people to flourish. The centre for wellbeing at nef (the new economics foundation) has developed 'Five Ways to Wellbeing': a set of evidence-based actions to improve personal wellbeing. For more details search for 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' at www.issuu.com

We think there is lots of opportunity across all sectors to use this simple model. We've outlined these 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' below, and illustrated how schools, mental health support groups, and outdoor centres have used the John Muir Award to help promote these themes.

nef descriptions				
<p>Connect... Connect with the people around you. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.</p>	<p>Be Active... Discover a physical activity you enjoy and one that suits your level of mobility and fitness.</p>	<p>Take Notice... Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflect on your experiences and appreciate what matters to you.</p>	<p>Keep Learning... Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun.</p>	<p>Give... Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.</p>
Schools				
<p>Participating in whole class (and whole year) projects to engage in peer learning. Engaging in collaborative work with teaching staff. Talking to parents/carers and family about experiences.</p>	<p>Exploring school grounds on a scavenger hunt. Rhododendron bashing – cutting, chopping, dragging. Orienteering.</p>	<p>Using Mission: Explore activities. Taking before-and-after and seasonal photos. Keeping a personal Award Record Book. Painting with mud, mapping sounds, and making smelly cocktails.</p>	<p>Producing a photo-journal – learning photography and creative writing skills. Presenting and public speaking. Learning about local biodiversity through nature study.</p>	<p>Creating and tending a wildlife garden. Adopting a beach, as part of a UK-wide initiative. Contributing to a citizen science survey. Presenting Award certificates and saying why they are deserved.</p>
Mental health support groups				
<p>Meeting new people and building a community of shared interests and shared purpose. Bonding through common experiences – walks, eating together, discussions.</p>	<p>Walking in new places, experiencing local pathways and nature spots. Woodland tai chi. Outdoor cooking.</p>	<p>Focusing on senses – walking in silence, picking out 5 different smells Listing wildlife identified on a walk. Group reflective discussions on experiences and feelings that arise.</p>	<p>Building confidence through learning new skills and using tools – willow weaving and woodwork. Writing poems in new, creative formats eg haiku. Learning to work with others through conservation tasks.</p>	<p>Supporting and looking out for each other. Looking after a local wild place, active stewardship for it. Discussing our place in the world around us. Sharing opinions on values and lifestyle choices.</p>
Outdoor centres				
<p>Having shared experiences and tackling challenges together, in new and stimulating surroundings. Focusing on teamwork. Trusting each other, in consequential situations such as belaying. Spending time with instructors and seeing them as role models. Participating as equals with teachers. Living together in close quarters – dorms and tents. Sharing meals both inside and outdoors.</p>	<p>Participating in many and varied activities! Hiking and camping amongst mountains, forests, rivers and coasts. Climbing, at various grades. Canoeing, cycling, gorge walking. Working with a 'challenge by choice' ethos.</p>	<p>Weather watching, cloud spotting and stargazing. Finding quiet spots, taking solo time. Increasing awareness of the needs, contributions and achievements of self and others. All contributing to a Group diary. Discussing a communal 4 Challenge Review. Reflecting around the camp fire.</p>	<p>Meeting personal and group challenges – physical, social and emotional. Learning to (support others to) overcome fears. Managing risk, both real and perceived. Learning and improving skills associated with activities. Taking responsibilities for goal-setting, planning and decision-making.</p>	<p>Considering the context of the Conserve challenge and reasons to care for the environment whilst immersed in the outdoors. Actively applying minimum impact/leave no trace principles, considering access rights & responsibilities. Contributing to an in-groups 'bio-blitz'. Giving (and receiving) personal feedback during and at the end of the week.</p>

What next?

Why not map your own John Muir Award experiences against the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' (or SHANARRI)?

Download the Five Ways to Wellbeing app from Google Play, set activities to help you improve your wellbeing and track your progress.

¹Five ways to wellbeing' is used by health boards across England. Its themes are comparable to those identified by the Scottish Government as essential for the wellbeing of children and young people: that every child should be Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/well-being>

Mission: Explore Water

'This book will change the way you think about water forever. Do not go any further if you are afraid of going on adventures or trying new things. There is also a 99.999% certainty that you will get wet.'

Inside Mission: Explore Water you will find 51 water-related missions, covering Rain, Rivers & Flow, Harvesting & Using Water, Waste. This free printable eBook and accompanying teacher notes show how Missions can be linked to every subject in the curriculum. It has already had a torrent of gushing praise: 'Water top resource!' 'Very current!' 'Another tide-y eBook from Mission: Explore'.

The eBook can be downloaded for free from www.johnmuiraward.org via the Mission: Explore John Muir link.



The Wild Network



Over 1000 organisations and nearly 5,000 individuals have now signed up to The Wild Network to show their commitment to getting more connections with the natural world on our doorsteps.

The Wild Network is creating more political presence, and recently made a submission to the Commons Education Select Committee making the link between spending time in nature and wellbeing. Supporters include Chris Packham, who said: "The love that fuels a lifetimes interest in wild things comes from the heart, not the hard drive, and what ignites it is contact. The tickle of tadpoles on the palm of a tiny hand, the surprising shriek of an urban fox or the smell of a wet woodland on a misty morning, all free, all still available, all just around your corner. Please don't deny your children a taste of wildlife."

See www.projectwildthing.com/thewildnetwork for news and blog items.

Learning Away – Brilliant Residentials



The main aim of Learning Away is to encourage schools across the UK to make a significant shift in their commitment to providing high quality residential learning experiences for their pupils.

'We want more schools to commit to the concept of brilliant residentials – experiences that benefit all of their pupils, involve more teachers in developing their practice and help to transform schools.'

At www.learningaway.org.uk you'll find background and evidence, guidance on achieving impact, tips on practicalities, and free resources.

ECOVER BLUE MILE

Go on. Do something amazing for our seas. Ecover Blue Mile would love your group or school to join in a national event to celebrate our 'blue' environment. More information is at www.thebluemile.com

Go Blue! is a great opportunity from Friday 6th – Sunday 8th June to celebrate our seas! Why not join in and remind others why our lives on land could not be what they are without healthy and diverse seas. You might decide to do a sporty activity, help with cleaning local beaches or discover inventive and fun ways to learn more about our seas, shores and wildlife. In support of the Marine Conservation Society.

There are also cross curriculum Blue Mile activities that encourage children of all ages to develop an interest in the natural world around us. If you would like your school to organise a 'Blue Mile' for your pupils, check out their information pack.

Scotland's Nature Festival 17-25 May

Scotland's Nature Festival, organised by Scottish Natural Heritage and partner organisations, highlights and celebrates Scotland's wildlife and landscapes. Every year there are a wide range of events on offer: guided walks, pond-dipping for children, story-telling events, seashore safaris, nature photography, and lots more.

For more information visit www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk/area/naturefestival/about/week/



A World in One Cubic Foot



Nature photographer David Liittschwager took a bright green metal cube — measuring precisely one cubic foot — and set it in various ecosystems around the world, from the upper branches of a Strangler fig tree in Costa Rica to a cornfield in Iowa. Working with local scientists, he measured what moved through that small space in a period of twenty-four hours. He then photographed the cube's setting and the plant, animal, and insect life

inside it — anything visible to the naked eye. The result is a stunning portrait of the amazing diversity that can be found in ecosystems around the globe.

A World in One Cubic Foot puts the world accessibly in our hands and allows us to see the magic of an ecosystem in miniature. Liittschwager's photographs take us to places both familiar and exotic and instil new awareness of the life that abounds all around.

Search online for the book and images, and for an article 'Cornstalks Everywhere But Nothing Else, Not Even A Bee'.



David Liittschwager

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