

Scientific research on the ecology of the Loch Lomond area and the National Park

Description

SCOTTISH CENTRE FOR ECOLOGY AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

PUBLIC EVENT - Kilmaronock Millennium Hall, Gartocharn

Tuesday, 19th November 2024 at 7pm.

LOCH LOMONDSIDE

Introduction to The Scottish Centre for Ecology & the Natural Environment.

Ms Jemma Guthrie - The lepidoptera of east Loch Lomond.

Prof Chris Harrod - How does Loch Lomond function as an ecosystem?

Prof Colin Adams - How do Atlantic salmon navigate during their migration through Loch Lomond?

Dr Jess Rodger - The marine migration of salmon in the coastal waters of the UK and Ireland.

Tea and Coffee/glass of wine will be served. Donations to Balloch Castle Country Park

Park Regeneration Group, SC052675.



The Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority (LLTNPA), while recently oft proclaiming its concern about the collapse of nature, has appeared completely uninterested in the excellent ecological research that is taking place in its area, let alone promoting it to the general public.

A recent example of this a comment made on my first post on the proposed sale of Cashel Forest ([see here](#)). In it Chris McNerny, who will be known to readers of Scottish Birds magazine for his amazing fieldwork, gave links to research he had undertaken at Cashel. This deserves to be widely known. I had stumbled across Chris' research on adders ([see here](#)) but not that on slow worms and common lizards ([see here](#)) and had no idea it was home to the largest crab apple (by girth not height) in the UK ([see here](#)).



Fig. 2. The trunk of a crab apple (*Malus sylvestris*) growing on the shores of Loch Lomond, 23rd April 2017. Its girth of 410 cm, measured at 0.5 m above ground level (a.g.l), makes it the largest recorded example of the species in Scotland and the Champion Tree of its species for Britain and Ireland, as listed by the Tree Register of the British Isles (TROBI) (2017). (Photo: C. McNerny)

Screenshot credit Glasgow Naturalist

Chris, whom I had never had any contact with before his comment, went on to state: "Other fauna, including moths, butterflies, birds, mammals and bugs (including Glowworms) all thrive at this site" and it "is one of the richest for flora and fauna in the Loch Lomond area".

All of this is very relevant to the future of Cashel and the role of our National Parks. The LLTNPA could be using information like this to promote Cashel as a place to visit (something the Royal Scottish Forestry Society has struggled with) and to make the case for Cashel remaining in conservation ownership and being funded properly. Instead, its silence has been deafening.

At a broader scale and even more extraordinary is the lack of interest shown by the LLTNPA in Glasgow University's Scottish Centre for Ecology and the Natural Environment ([see here](#)). This is located on the shores of Loch Lomond just north of Cashel. There is, for example, not a mention of SCENE or its work on the Park's website. The potential for SCENE's research to inform the work the LLTNPA and its public partners should be doing and to help local communities and conservation organisations is immense.

It is fantastic therefore that the Balloch Country Park Regeneration Group ([see here](#)) has taken a lead and invited scientists from SCENE to talk about their work a public meeting on 19th November. The talks should not only be very interesting but the meeting provides a great opportunity for local communities around Loch Lomond to make links with professional ecologists. It will be interesting to see if any LLTNPA staff attend!

Category

1. Loch Lomond and Trossachs

Tags

1. conservation
2. LLTNPA

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