

Newsletter

Aberdeenshire Forest District



Welcome to the July and August newsletter

What's in this edition:

- Summer
- New ranger for the district
- Tree harvesting work
- What We Do!
- Huntly peregrine centre update
- Events

Summer

As the summer holidays approach, we look forward to warmer weather and a lingering dusk stretching far into the night. At this time of year the evening light turns leaf tips to gold and provides a beautiful stage for our local **wildlife**.

Out and about in the woods on a long, summer evening you might be lucky enough to catch sight of some of our most hard-to-glimpse mammals.

As the light begins to fade, **badgers**, **foxes** and **bats** all emerge from their sets, dens and roosts for an evening of activity. Bats are particularly easy to spot whilst they swoop and glide using echo-location to catch their fill of

Update on the Huntly Peregrine Wildwatch Centre

Have you been to see the Peregrines yet?

Since opening for the 2008 season in March, the **Peregrine Centre** near Huntly has been very busy, with three new birds proving a big draw. We have two male and one female **peregrine chicks** that are all healthy and are being well looked after by their parents. The chicks were ringed on 5th June and should be flying around the eyrie in July.

The Centre has already featured on local radio and on STV but why not come along to the centre and view the chicks on CCTV for yourself.

You can also keep up to date with the chicks' progress on <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/huntlyperegrines>.

Events

There are always loads of things going on in the woods for you to take part in. Here is a selection of what's coming up.

Thursday Evening Walks at Countesswells, near Aberdeen - 3, 10,

flying insect prey.

Why not come along with your family or a friend or join us on one of our series of **evening walks** to explore your local woodland this summer?

Scottish summers aren't always so sunny - but don't let that spoil a plan for a trip to the forest. Trees offer great cover from rain - you'll be surprised how dry you will stay - and you'll have a great chance of spotting wildlife. So grab a warm drink and, whatever the weather, let the forest environment provide you with a magical experience.

So get active, get some fresh air and have a great time - and remember to take your rubbish home and to leave the forest just as you found it.



New Ranger for the District

This month we welcome **Julia Truscott**, our new Community & Education Ranger, who will be running events in the south of the district.

Julia has a lot of experience organising and leading environmental education events for school children through the Wildlife Trust and her own local venture, Muddy Feet. She is excited by the wider diversity of her new role and the opportunity to meet people of all ages.

Julia said:

"We are so lucky to have such accessible wild spaces that are right on our own doorstep. Sharing that enjoyment with other people makes a trip to the forest even more rewarding.

"Nature is like a book I can never stop reading, there is so much to learn and discover and something different to surprise you every time.

"Come and explore the Countesswells, Dunottar & Cambus O'May Forests with me this summer.

17, 24 July

Thursday Evening Walks at Cambus O'May, near Ballater - 7, 14, 21, 28 August

Thursday Evening Walks at The Bin, near Huntly - 21 and 28 August

These sets of walks will take place from 7-9pm. With each walk being longer than the one before it, your level of fitness will soon improve.

As well as helping you to get fitter these walks will help you find out more about your local woods.

The events are free but booking is required so contact the local office on **01466 794161**.

Summer Holiday Events for Children - Go Wild in the Woods

Children aged five and over can enjoy a ranger-led afternoon event every Wednesday in the summer holidays. There are lots of activities to choose from:

9 July - Mini-beast hunt - Back O' Bennachie (near Inverurie) and Countesswells (near Aberdeen)

16 July - Making objects from wood - Cambus O' May (near Ballater) and Donview (near Monymusk)

23 July - Treasure hunt - Countesswells, Dunnyduff (near Keith) and Delgaty (near Turriff)

30 July - Shelter building - The Bin (near Huntly) and Countesswells

Art Attack in the woods - Delgaty

6 August - Wooden games - Tyrebagger (near Aberdeen)

13 August - Mini-beast hunt - Dunnottar (Stonehaven) and The Bin

Booking is required so contact the local office on **01466 794161**. These activities are free.

Round The World Safari

How would you like to take part in a woodland safari?

Ramshackle Theatre Company's amazing puppet animals will be centre stage in a fun event for all the family throughout July.

Tree Harvesting Work

From time to time we have to close woods and trails due to tree felling operations which can be dangerous if you get too close. Here is a list of our current closures.

Fetteresso Forest, near Banchory/
Stonehaven:

Parts of Fetteresso Forest will be closed in July. This will affect a number of the waymarked trails. It is vitally important that people pay attention to warning signs and stay away from machinery during this time.

What We Do!

This month's featured member of staff is **Ewan Reid**, District Forester for Planning, Social and Environment. His work includes:

- Overview of all Forest Management Plans including annual production figures for Operations teams
- Lead role for all Recreation & Tourism infrastructure in the district
- Lead role for all Community, Education and Social agenda in the district
- Lead role for all Conservation, Biodiversity and Heritage delivery

Ewan said:

"I have a wide ranging and very challenging role. There are times that variety is both positive and frustrating in equal measure, as there never seems to be enough hours in the day to get round to everything we'd like to do in this ever changing world.

"I couldn't hope to achieve a fraction of the work I do without the dedication, support and experience of my team, colleagues, our stakeholders and community partners alike.



With six venues each staging three performances daily (10.30am, 1.00pm and 3.30pm) there are plenty of opportunities to catch this fantastic event. The safaris will be about a mile long on easy surfaces.

Friday 18 July - Cambus O' May near Ballater.

Sat 19 July - Dunnottar wood near Stonehaven.

Sunday 20 July - Bennachie Centre, near Inverurie (tickets also available at centre).

Monday 21 July - Countesswells wood near Aberdeen.

Tuesday 22 July - Winding walks near Fochabers (Moray Forest District).

Thursday 24 July - Culbin Forest near Nairn (Moray Forest District).

Tickets can be purchased in advanced by contacting **01466 794161** or online <http://www.thebooth.co.uk>. Costs £5.00 for adults and £3.50 for Children.



If you want to know more about these events, others happening later in the year or how to book, look on the Forestry Commission website www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland

Until next time - best wishes from the Aberdeenshire team.