

THE GLENS OF ANTRIM

ISSUE FIFTEEN WINTER 2017/2018

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE HEART OF THE GLENS LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME



Heart of
the Glens
Landscape Partnership Scheme

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WELCOME TO THE FIFTEENTH ISSUE

We are rapidly approaching the end of another successful year of projects at the Heart of The Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme. Our summer events and workshops in partnership with organisations such as Ulster Wildlife, Glens Red Squirrel Group, and various other skilled members of the communities of the wonderful Glens of Antrim were a great success with most of them being oversubscribed. It is great to see so much interest in reviving our local traditions and celebrating the incredible heritage of The Glens of Antrim. We had a great turnout for our Exploring Cushendun Caves event in August with expert Dave Wall from Ulster Wildlife leading the numerous family groups on a rockpool ramble along the seashore and tour of the caves. Despite the wet morning we also had a great crowd at the Glens Red Squirrel walk at Glenariff Forest Park at the start of September led by Daniel McAfee from Red Squirrel Group and Liz o Connor from the Forest Service. Our Big Céilidh Fireside Stories event was a great success at Liz Weirs Ballyeamon Barn. We had members of the community playing traditional music, telling traditional stories about the local landscape and singing traditional songs of the area. A great celebration of the heritage and culture of The Glens!



HERITAGE TOUR GUIDE CELEBRATION

Myths and legends, history and archaeology, traditions and heritage, The Glens of Antrim is alive with it and has some of the most amazing landscapes and seascapes in the world. Due to these rich traditions, The Glens are gaining the reputation as the 'cultural heart of the causeway coastal route'. Until recently The Glens have remained largely untouched, but growing interest in the region has seen it become a must-see tourism destination. The training of local heritage tour guides has been a crucial step in opening The Glens of Antrim to visitors.

It was for this reason that Heart of The Glens LPS wanted to provide training for 14 local people to become fully recognised tour guides at OCN Level 2 and 9 local people at Level 3. This training has brought life to the stories of the local landscape, developed the capacity of local people, created a network of quality local guides for the area and provided income generating opportunities for local businesses.

We are delighted to have been able to support these new tour guides, many of which are already successfully leading a wide range of tours across the region. This scheme is a fantastic example of how the investment in our area by The Heritage Lottery Fund, through the Heart of The Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme is delivering a legacy that will continue to flourish long into the future. Quality tour guides can bring a landscape alive and with walking tours, food tours and much more, visitors are now able to experience the Glens in a personal way. We would also like to thank Colette McCafferty and Judith Boyle for delivering a challenging yet inspiring training programme, which was enjoyed immensely by the trainee tour guides'.

A celebration and presentation event of the successes of our new tour guides was held in the Old school House in Cushendall on Tuesday 29th of August in which The Deputy Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Cathal McLaughlin and Deputy Mayor of Mid & East Antrim Borough Council Cheryl Johnston, presented the certificates to the successful tour guides. We also had Brian Connolly from Tourism NI and Carol Long, Tourism Officer for Mid & East Antrim in attendance to show their support to the new heritage tour guides.



Angelina Fusco, Member of the HLF NI Committee who attended the celebration added "Landscapes are more than just beautiful scenery: they are the backdrop to a wealth of community and family heritage and stories. Thanks to National Lottery players, our Landscape Partnerships are helping to build partnerships and enable people to work together on interlinked projects to tackle the needs of their local landscapes. As this project demonstrates, it's not just the flora and fauna that benefit. Training local people to have the skills and confidence to gather and share the stories of their landscape is a vital part of helping everyone to connect with and enjoy these fabulous places".



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IN SEARCH OF THE YELLOW-RINGED CARPET

Murlough Bay is one of the most iconic places along the north coast and has a rich history. It is also a wonderful place for wildlife with its steep rocky cliffs, farmland and abundant broadleaf woodland offering a rich mosaic of habitats. It is well known as a home for the threatened peregrine falcon. Deer, buzzards and swallows are also common here. However, there is one other species that makes its home here that is not as well known - outside the world of 'mothing' that is. It is the Yellow-ringed Carpet (*Entephria flavicinctata*), a medium sized moth with grey banding and usually with a dusting of orange-golden colour.

Murlough Bay is the only known place on the island of Ireland where this moth has been recorded. The first modern record was in 1995 when Bernard Skinner found caterpillars. The first adult record followed this in 1997. There is one other old record (c1914) from Glen Wood near Florence Court in Co Fermanagh although this has not been verified.

In August 2016, which is its flight season, (it overwinters as a larva) the Glens of Antrim Pollinator Group surveyed different areas within the Bay using light traps. Until then all records were daytime observations. We didn't really have very high expectations of catching one given how rarely they have been recorded up to now. This added to the excitement when on only the second night of trapping a fresh adult ended up in our trap (all moths are returned safe and unharmed the next morning). Two weeks later an older more worn specimen was also caught at the same location. This year (2017) Geoff Campbell, also a member of the Glens of Antrim Pollinator Group, recorded a beautiful specimen taking the total number of records in Ireland to fifteen.

These records are only the start of what is required to help build up a better picture of the size and health of the population here. The Glens of Antrim Pollinator Group hope to build on these records in the future, adding to the knowledge of this species, so that we can conserve it as an integral part of this special landscape.



PRESENTATION OF THE GLENS INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES SURVEY

In October, we presented the results of the invasive species report for the Glens of Antrim in Cushendall. A wide range of organisations were represented, as well as members from the public, to hear about this truly global problem, which has some very serious local implications. At the end of the presentation we had a good discussion about ways we can start to tackle it. One of the main conclusions was that we need to adopt a strategic approach to eradicate it and that all the different landowners / stakeholders should work together and not in isolation. We also need to re-think policy surrounding listed invasive species. For example, it seems completely crazy that we spend millions trying to remove certain plant species only for those same species to be freely available to buy in any garden centre!

To view the full report just go to:

<http://www.heartoftheglens.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Invasive-Species-Survey-of-The-Glens-Report-2.pdf>

Or to see the summary report:

<http://www.heartoftheglens.org/glens-antrim-heart-glens-lps-newsletter-issue-13-summer-2017/>



IMPROVING ACCESS IN THE GLENS

In November, we upgraded some of the essential trail infrastructure along three important walking routes in the Glens; the Moyle Way, Cushendall Riverside Path and Glenariff Riverside Path. Works included fencing, waymarker posts, stiles, seating and more. A special word of thanks to all the volunteers who carry out audits of these walks so that they can be kept in good condition for everybody to enjoy.

ARTISAN CONNECT PROGRAMME

The Glens of Antrim and the Causeway Coast has become renowned for its artisan craft and foods. The Naturally North Coast and Glens Artisan Market has provided an important outlet for local creativity, stimulating new businesses and enhancing the overall image of the region and an artisan hub.

There has been a considerable increase in demand for locally produced quality ingredients and products, however local outlets often have difficulty finding producers

The purpose of the 'artisan connect programme' will focus on 4 principal areas:

1. Understanding the demands of business outlets (shops, restaurants, hotels, etc.) for local produce.
2. Making initial contact with business outlets on behalf of local producers so they can further explore their business opportunities together.
3. Compiling a list of products that are in demand by local businesses but which are not currently being produced locally
4. To connect artisan producers with NNCG and promote the advantages of using the market services offered (i.e. market trading)

OUTCOMES:

It is envisaged that the Artisan Connect Programme will act as a catalyst for internal business and creative connections which will add value to local businesses.

Increasing the availability of indigenous products and services available to both locals and tourists will add to the reputation of the region as quality destination.



LAUNCH OF ARTISAN MARKET

Traditional artisan skills have thankfully seen somewhat of a revival of late across the country thanks in no small part to the dedicated crafts people who have helped keep them alive throughout the years. Since 2012 towns in and around the North Coast and Glens region have had the opportunity to experience their very own unique artisan market aimed at reviving and supporting new artisans in the area – Naturally North Coast and Glens.

Market visitors will have every sense tantalised through the colourful art and crafts, the delicious smell and taste of fresh food produce and the sound of musicians providing a backdrop to the buzz of traders and customers chatting and laughing.

This is a true community market where the emphasis is on local support, fresh food and produce, and handmade merchandise crafted with love by dedicated artisans who are passionate about what they do and love to talk about their unique wares.

The Heritage Lottery funded, Heart of The Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme, has been delighted to work closely with and help support the initial set-up of the market over the last three years.



LAUNCH OF CUSHENDALL MURAL

We were delighted to partner with several local community groups in Cushendall over the summer to get the mural in the town renewed, which reflects the sporting and mythological heritage of the area. A big thanks to our project partners Ruairí Óg CLG Hurling and Camogie Club, Cushendall Development Group and Comhaltas Ghlinnte Aontroma and to the artists who carried out the work. A special thanks to Angelina Fusco from The Heritage Lottery Fund who joined us for the event.



TRADITIONAL HEDGE CHAIR MAKING

A major element of the Heart of The Glens Landscape Partnership scheme is the revival and continuation of the local heritage skills of the people of The Glens of Antrim and wider Ireland.

Last weekend saw the revival of an old tradition of making hedge chairs in The Glens of Antrim. Expert Glenn White guided a group of people through the process of making their own wooden chair, from marking out the wood for cutting, to the final polishing of the end product. These traditional chairs are known as hedge chairs as people in years gone by would have used any material they could find in nearby hedges as trees were scarce. Another name for these chairs was the Irish 'creepie' as they would have had 3 legs and during traditional Irish Ceilidhs the musicians would have been dancing along to the music from their chairs and as a result of this movement, would have crept along the floor.

Using a myriad of traditional tools such as drawknives, carving gouges, spokeshave and scorps and also some modern tools such as hand drills and saws, each participant got to take home their own traditional hedge chair that they made themselves. One of the most important pieces of equipment was the saw horse which was the centrepiece for carrying out all the different tasks. The chairs were made of different woods including oak, elm and sycamore. Traditionally people would have used a bit of everything that was available to them at the time which gave the chair a bit of character! The traditional way of making furniture for the home began to die out in the 1950s when factory made furniture started to increase in popularity as this form of chair making used cheaper materials such as plywood which came to replace the vernacular styles.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed this training and were very pleased getting to take home their own hand made chair.

If you are interested in learning how to make your own traditional wooden chair please register your interest by emailing laura@lps.ccght.org or call us on 028 2075 2100. Spaces are limited so please register your interest early to avoid disappointment.

TRADITIONAL ROUND STONE PILLAR BUILDING TRAINING

Our 5 day traditional round pillar building training course took place in the middle of August at a site in Glenarm. This course was well attended with both men and women getting stuck in and learning this new traditional skill. Many thanks to Johnny O'Loan for providing yet another fantastic training course and passing on his vast knowledge and expertise in this dwindling skill.

Thanks also to Hugh Marcus for allowing us to use his site for the training.

We will be running our final pillar building training course in 2018. If you would like to learn how to build your own stone pillar or dry stone wall please get in touch with Laura by emailing laura@lps.ccght.org or call 028 2075 2100.



TRADITIONAL HEDGE LAYING TRAINING

Great enthusiasm shown by the people of The Glens during our hedge laying training day on Friday 24th November in Carey despite the freezing temperatures and sleety showers! Many thanks to expert hedge layer Robert Birtwhistle for delivering yet another inspiring talk and training workshop on hedgerow management and hedge laying.

Our final hedge laying training course will be held in Autumn 2018. If you would like to learn how to lay your own hedges please get in touch with Laura by emailing laura@lps.ccght.org or call 028 2075 2100.

For further details about our projects and events visit www.heartoftheglens.org or our Facebook and Twitter pages.



OUTDOOR LEARNING PROJECT WITH GLENS PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Our outdoor learning project with local primary schools has been a huge success with 11 schools getting involved and wanting to enrich the learning experience for their pupils.

It may seem unthinkable that even in one of Ireland's most beautiful landscapes, children still do not have a deep connection with the outdoors. However, even in The Glens the impacts of technology, lifestyle changes and the health and safety culture has, for many children, reduced the centuries old connection between young people and the natural world.

International research has shown that there is a continuing disconnection between children and the environment which is set to have long term negative implications for children's health and wellbeing. A recent National Trust study in the UK cites alarming figures for children "the growing disassociation of children from the natural world and internment in the 'cotton wool culture' of indoor parental guidance impairs their capacity to learn through experience."



Conversations with teachers has informed us that they often feel that they themselves are barriers to the incorporation of outside learning into the curriculum. The main perceived barriers include a lack of basic knowledge in biodiversity issues, health and safety issues for children outside the classroom, costs for travel to access nature and finding ways of bringing outdoor learning into the school curriculum.

The main aims of this project are to engage young people in understanding the range of important sites, habitats and species around them, and to encourage interaction with the natural environment within their own school grounds and further afield. It is also hoped that this project will help to overcome the perceived barriers for teachers with regards to outdoor learning.



TEACHERS RESOURCE

Confidence amongst teachers, has been identified by experts and by teachers themselves as the major obstacle in developing outdoor learning. The final piece of work in this project was the creation of a resource to enable teachers to develop ideas and lesson plans for working in their new outdoor learning zones and beyond. Plans were created which can be customised to suit each school environment, pupils age and individual school curriculum.

School teachers from primary schools across The Glens attended regular meetings over an 18 month period to work collaboratively and share ideas on outdoor learning. The teachers themselves decided that the best way forward was to work together to create a resource that could be used by all schools. Schools came up with various lesson plans and several teachers from different schools came together to compile these lesson plans into one shared teachers resource.

POND INSTALLATION AT GLENRAVEL

The last pond has now been installed within the St Marys Queen of Peace Parish grounds in Glenravel which can be used as a shared resource for the local St Marys Queen of Peace primary school and also by members of the community.

This project has now been completed with the launch of the Outdoor Learning Teachers Resource held on Wednesday 22nd November at St Patricks Primary School in Glenariff. Many thanks to all the schools who got involved, especially St Patricks and Gealscoil an Chaistil who kindly hosted the teachers meetings and training sessions.



INTERVIEW WITH ASHLEIGH MORAN

SEAVIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL, GLENARM



Tell us a bit about your role as a teacher at Seaview primary school

This is my second year at Seaview Primary School as the P.1 & 2 teacher. I have a special bond with this school as this is where I attended and my father and grandfather before me. The passion I have for Seaview, also extends to the village of Glenarm and the wider environment as a whole; stretching back as far as 2001 when I won 'Environmentalism of the Year' in Garron Tower!

What do you enjoy most about teaching outdoors?

I love my local area and even though I've explored Glenarm River, the beach and the meadows countless times I always see something new or from a different perspective. My own love of the outdoors has carried into my teaching, and exploring a new experience with my pupils has deepened the bond and rapport with my pupils. I also love to see another side of my pupils where they are less restricted and inhibited and I find they are able to problem solve and work in a team much easier in an outdoors capacity.

Why is outdoor learning so important?

I feel outdoor learning sparks and develops a passion for nature and the environment and this in turn will foster a respect for the earth. This respect will encourage the children to be proactive in the areas of climate change, waste and keeping local environments pristine.

Outdoor learning has a positive impact on their education in many ways. Their communication skills are developed, problem solving skills tested and they engage in more physical activity. As well as improving their knowledge of local flora and fauna; they improve their confidence.

Tell us a bit about the work you are doing with the Heart of The Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme

The Heart of the Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme have developed our school grounds into a rich playground for exploring native species. Our newly installed pond has allowed us to study tadpoles. We have meditated in the meadow and enjoyed reading spring books outside. The bird boxes, swift boxes and bat boxes have all given us new stimulus and learning experiences in our classrooms, I took part in the writing and collating of the Outdoor Learning Resource. This experience both encouraged me, as I was already doing so many of the right things and challenged me to extend my outdoor learning further particularly within using numeracy outdoors. I hope the resource is useful to all other teachers and they find themselves venturing out into the Great Outdoors more and more.



COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION AT CLOGHANCOR MEGALITH

All primary schools within The Glens of Antrim got the chance to take part in this year's excavation at Cloghancor Megalith in the Glen of Glenballyeamon just above Cushendall.

This year the pupils got the chance to take part in some excavating, find out about the history of the site and also got the chance to make their own ancient Neolithic pots.

Big thanks to Queens University Belfast Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork who carried out this excavation and also thanks to the many volunteers who took part over the 3 weeks in September.

A special thanks to the landowners Pat Quinn and John Stephens for allowing us access to this fantastic site. Without their kind permission this excavation wouldn't have been possible.

Lead Archaeologist Brian Sloan will be delivering a talk on the excavation on Monday 11th December at 7pm in the Old School House in Cushendall. If you would like to come along please book your place with laura@lps.ccght.org or call us on 028 2075 2100.





CHRISTMAS WISHES FROM THE HEART OF THE GLENS LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME
ALL THE STAFF AT THE HEART OF THE GLENS LPS WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO WISH EVERYONE A
VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday 11th December

7pm
The Old School House, Cushendall

CLOGHANCOR EXCAVATION – Join Archaeologist Brian Sloan from Queens CAF to find out about the discoveries made during the excavation at Cloghancor Megalith in September.

Wednesday 13th December

7pm – 9pm
Glenlough Community Centre,
Carnlough

CHRISTMAS BAKES & EDIBLE TREATS – Join local expert Edel Healy for an evening of fun, baking a range of treats such as chocolate bark, coconut ices, fudges etc. Learn how to make these in your own home using limited equipment. These can be little treats for yourself or as Christmas presents for that special someone. Cost £5pp.

TRAINING



Wednesday 13th December

11am
Causeway Coast & Glens
Heritage Trust, Armoy

FESTIVALS SUPPORT FUND APPLICATION WRITING – The final round of our Festival Support Fund will be launched in early 2018. Join us to find out more about the Application process for this Support Fund.

Monday 5th – Monday 26th February

7pm – 9pm
Venue TBC

TRADITIONAL GLENS BAKING TRAINING – During this 4 week programme local expert Edel Healy will teach you how to make a range of traditional breads and treats such as wheaten bread, soda bread, cakes and much more. Cost £10pp.

Date TBC

Venue TBC

INTRODUCTION TO STONE ENGRAVING – Come along on this introductory training course on letter cutting. The course will involve 2 evening sessions from 7-9pm. Cost £20pp. Contact Laura on 028 2075 2100 or email laura@lps.ccght.org to register your interest.

Saturday 7th April 2018

8am
Murlough Bay (bottom car park)

OUR NATURAL LANDSCAPE THROUGH A LENS – Join Northcoast Nature Photography & Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust for a practical outdoor photography workshop capturing the stunning surroundings. Cost £40pp.

VOLUNTEERING

Date TBC

Venue TBC

TREE PLANTING – Big Conservation Task. Come along and meet new people, improve your CV, and reconnect with the great outdoors. Please bring a spade if you have one.

ABOUT THE HEART OF THE GLENS

The Heart of the Glens Landscape Partnership Scheme is made up of 21 exciting different projects over five years and covers a large area from Ballycastle to Glenarm. This Scheme is focused on and for the benefit of the communities and beautiful landscape of the Glens.

- TO CONSERVE AND ENHANCE THE BUILT, NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE
- TO ENGAGE AND INSPIRE COMMUNITIES
- TO IMPROVE ACCESS AND LEARNING IN THE AREA
- TO OFFER HERITAGE SKILLS AND TRAINING

Heart of the Glens
Landscape Partnership Scheme



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