

# Lothians Conservation Volunteers

In support of the Scottish Wildlife Trust

## puggled mucker

Summer 2010  
Issue 150



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**Lothians  
Conservation  
Volunteers**

The sun is shining, the birds are singing and I've just heard that the Voluntary Action Fund has given us a total of £1,000 towards the cost of getting our more recently qualified drivers the qualifications they need to drive the new bus. All in all, a promising start to my second year as LCV's Co-ordinator.

It's been a busy year with tasks and social events well attended, the purchase of a new van and the inauguration of our very own mains water supply. The committee have done a grand job and I'm happy to say that at our Annual General Meeting in early May they all agreed to serve another term.

Looking to the year ahead we have the popular summer residential coming up at a new site near Kyle of Lochalsh, bus-related training should be underway soon and we hope to rediscover our pub quiz winning streak before the summer is out. We also have plans to address the way the bus fits in the shed and make it altogether easier to shut those pesky garage doors.

Finally, LCV's 40th anniversary is but a few short months away and plans are afoot for a range of anniversary products and events. Read on!

[www.lcv.org.uk](http://www.lcv.org.uk)

*Louisa Martin—Co-ordinator*



## Lothians Conservation Volunteers

*We are a Scottish Charity, run entirely by volunteers, and we've been doing conservation work in and around Edinburgh for forty years.*

*We belong to the BTCV Community Network. Our funding comes from the clients that we work for, and also by grants from organisations like Scottish Wildlife Trust and Scottish Natural Heritage.*

Scottish charity number SC020384



Supported by grant aid from  
Scottish Natural Heritage.

## The Editor Writes...

This *Mucker* is as taut at the seams as a volunteer's rucksack on a summer residential. We have packed in all the usual essentials including a neatly bundled programme of tasks—thanks Matt—and an entertaining bag of social events—thanks Emma and Alexandra. In addition we have a *News* section that proved more unruly than a four season sleeping bag to wrestle into its allotted space. We had to loosen the straps to fit in our *2009 – 2010 Annual Review*, news of developments at the shed, a report from an urban pond party, details of a design competition, a call for 40th anniversary articles and, in our *Views* section, not just one but **two** reports from the Taynish residential. Unpack with care!

Did we mention that it's our 40th anniversary year? There are calls for your input—see pages 15 and 16—and there will be unmissable 40th anniversary celebrations at Vogrie Park in September—see page 19 for details.

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to this issue of the *Mucker*. This is your newsletter, and contributions from all LCV members are welcome. Most formats can be accommodated—handwritten, drawn, photographed, electronic. Just get in touch with me **by 12 August** if you have something you'd like to see included—perhaps a mini-memoir?—in our special bumper 40th anniversary issue.

# Task Programme

**June 13**

**Beecraigs Country Park: pathwork**

Beecraigs Country Park, near Linlithgow, is owned and managed by West Lothian Council. It spans 370 hectares over the Bathgate Hills and comprises a commercially active conifer plantation, a deer attraction, a loch, a caravan and camping site and a large play area. Beecraigs is navigable by several way marked trails and offers both the shelter of deep woodland and access to fantastic views over the Forth Valley. LCV has done a variety of tasks here, including tree planting and coppicing, drystone dyking, footpath work, boardwalk construction, bridge building and step building. On this occasion, we will be carrying out pathwork to improve access.



**June 20**

**Pishwantan: TBC**



This 24 hectare site is located 3 kilometres south of Gifford, near Haddington in East Lothian. The Life Science Trust was established in 1992 to research, teach and promote education methods that enable people to rediscover connections with the natural world and develop a partnership with their environment. It purchased the woods in 1996 and the site sits at 200 metres on the edge of the Lammermuir Hills. Occupation of the area dates back to prehistoric times and there is a large Iron Age burial mound. Research and teaching is carried out on a wide variety of topics—medicinal plant study, herb growing, land and craft skills and ecological building methods to name a few. On previous tasks, LCV has planted trees and cut gorse for weaving into a fence. This site can be wet so wellies are strongly recommended if you have them. For up-to-date information on the nature of this task please consult the LCV website at [www.lcv.org.uk](http://www.lcv.org.uk).

**June 27**

**Vogie Country Park: pathwork**

Vogie is a popular country park four kilometres south-east of Dalkeith run by Midlothian Council. About half the area is covered by woodland and scrub, with smaller patches of grassland, three ponds, an alder coppice and a conifer planta-

tion. Over the years we have carried out a variety of tasks, including clearing the ponds and sections of the River Tyne, cutting some of the grass on the meadow, repairing part of a drystone dyke, clearing scrub, coppicing alder and planting trees. On this task, we will be helping to improve access by carrying out path-work in the park.

### **July 3 SATURDAY**

### **Addiewell Bing: tree weeding**

Addiewell Bing is a long, narrow reserve of 21 hectares just south of Bathgate in West Lothian, which is leased and managed by the Scottish Wildlife Trust. It is an excellent example of how a derelict industrial site—part of the oil shale industry—can be converted into an important wildlife refuge.

Most of the reserve is covered by woodland and scrub, but there are also patches of bracken, heather, open grassland and marshy ground with a rich variety of plants and birds. Originally, the area was planted with lodgepole pine to help stabilise the steep sides of this old spoil heap.

More recently, these trees have been replaced with native species including oak and ash. In the past we have felled lodgepole pine, upgraded the footpath and cleared invading broom from areas of heather. On this visit we will be weeding around young trees to give them space to grow.



### **July 4**

### **Pishwanton: TBC**

See June 20 for a description of this site—which can be wet so wellies are strongly recommended if you have them. For up-to-date information on the nature of this task please consult the LCV website at [www.lcv.org.uk](http://www.lcv.org.uk).

### **July 11**

### **Wooplaw Wood: woodland maintenance**

Located on a minor road between Stow and Galashiels, this 40 hectare woodland was acquired in 1988 by Borders Community Woodland. Originally a badly neglected mature conifer woodland and bare land, the site now includes a small pond, birch thickets, a drystone dyke and areas of recently-planted broad-leaved trees. The local community are heavily involved in the wood and have built a log cabin, complete with stove. On previous visits LCV has thinned trees to prevent overcrowding, planted trees around a small pond and upgraded a small wooden

bridge crossing the Allen Water, using local materials. On this task, we will be maintaining the woodland.

## **July 18 – 24**

### **Lochalsh residential: pathwork**

Situated in a secluded corner of Lochalsh, Lochalsh Woodland Park is an area of mature mixed woodland and open grassland. With a large network of paths it is used extensively by local communities for recreation and as a site for large events and orienteering. In February 2005 the Lochalsh Woodland Park Steering Group was formed. It recently leased the land from the Forestry Commission Scotland and aims to encourage access for all while conserving the natural environment. The group plan to promote the area and its flora and fauna through a series of environmental education activities, guided walks and events.

On this residential task we will be working with the steering group to help achieve these aims with a mixture of path clearing/building, brash burning, the erection of signs, building a BBQ/fire site, ditch clearing and possibly even removing an old telephone box! Accommodation will be in the nearby Whitefalls Bunkhouse. Book your place with Debbie by Wednesday 14 July at the latest.



## **July 31 SATURDAY**

### **Addiewell Bing: tree weeding**

This task will be a continuation of the work begun on July 3.

## **August 1**

### **Pishwanton: TBC**

See June 20 for a description of this site—which can be wet so wellies are strongly recommended if you have them. For up-to-date information on the nature of this task please consult the LCV website at [www.lcv.org.uk](http://www.lcv.org.uk).

## **August 8**

### **TBC**

For up-to-date information on the location and nature of this task please consult the LCV website at [www.lcv.org.uk](http://www.lcv.org.uk).

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**August 21 SATURDAY****Addiewell Bing: tree weeding**

This task will be a continuation of the work begun on July 3.

**August 22****Pishwantan: TBC**

See June 20 for a description of this site—which can be wet so wellies are strongly recommended if you have them. For up-to-date information on the nature of this task please consult the LCV website at [www.lcv.org.uk](http://www.lcv.org.uk).

**August 28 SATURDAY****Roslin Glen: pathwork**

Roslin Glen is a 19 hectare reserve to the east of Roslin village and on the south bank of the River North Esk in Midlothian. The site is owned and managed by Midlothian Council. It is a relatively undisturbed mixed deciduous woodland largely made up of native sessile oak, wych-elm and ash, with a shrub layer of hazel and holly. There are also some introduced sycamore, beech and Norway spruce trees which are gradually being removed.

The area boasts a rich woodland flora which includes dog's mercury, ramsons, wood-rush and various ferns. Dippers and kingfishers can be seen in the fairly clean waters of the Esk. The area has been put under a Millennium Forest for Scotland grant scheme to return the woodland to a native mixture of trees such as ash, alder, oak, pine and birch. On this task we will be improving access by working on steps and paths in the glen.

**August 29**

**Roslin Glen: pathwork**

This task will be a continuation of the work begun on August 28.

**September 4 SATURDAY**

**Vogrie Country Park:  
LCV anniversary task TBC**



For a description of this site see June 27. As part of our 40th anniversary celebration weekend we will be working on some conservation tasks in the park on the Saturday. For up-to-date information on the nature of the task please consult the LCV website at [www.lcv.org.uk](http://www.lcv.org.uk).

**September 12**

**Roslin Glen: pathwork/meadow raking**

See August 28 for a description of this site. On this task, we will be improving access by working on steps and paths in the glen and raking up cut grass to continue the development of a wildflower meadow.

**September 19**

**Red Moss: birch pulling**

The main feature of Red Moss, which is an Scottish Wildlife Reserve above Balerno, is a raised bog. Over time, the sphagnum moss has built up. It now acts like a sponge as the water level at the centre of the raised dome is considerably higher than the nearby Bavelaw reservoir. To prevent the bog drying out, over the past 15 years we have pulled up any birch which has self-seeded. This is an ideal task for people new to conservation work. We need lots of volunteers to form a line to work systematically across the bog. This site can be wet so wellies are recommended if you have them.



Situated on the coast, Aberlady Bay is a Local Nature Reserve owned and managed by East Lothian Council. It is a large area—580 hectares—made up of an open bay with sand and mudflats, as well as expanses of saltings, dunes and grassland. The area is best known for its birds, where over 200 species have been seen. There is also considerable botanical interest—you can see the full plant succession from mudflat to saltmarsh, to dune scrub and grassland. On this task, we will be clearing areas of invasive sea buckthorn. Sea buckthorn is quite prickly, so hard-wearing clothes are advisable.

**October 1–3****Moine Mhor residential: birch pulling**

Moine Mhor—the ‘Great Moss’—National Nature Reserve (NNR) is owned and managed by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). It is a spectacular example of a lowland raised bog—a truly wild and beautiful landscape where little has changed for thousands of years. It forms the wild heartland of Kilmartin Glen. It is home to plants and animals specially adapted to the water-logged conditions; there are glistening dragonflies in summer and graceful hen harriers all year round.

On this residential we will be working with the SNH NNR staff to help restore the bogland by pulling out birch trees which would otherwise contribute to the bog drying out.

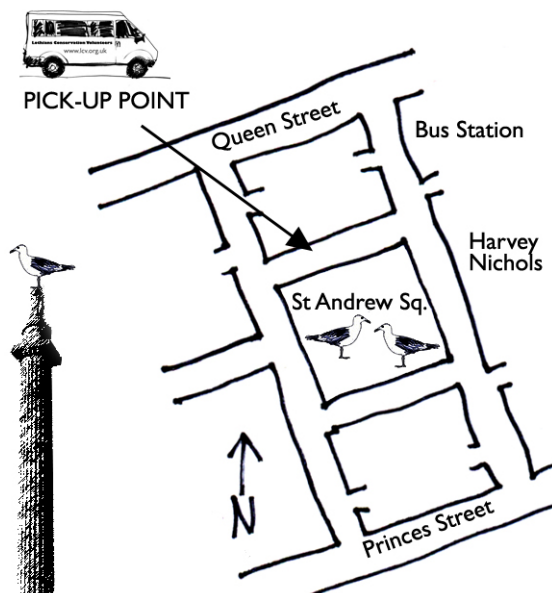
Accommodation is in the luxurious Kilmartin ‘bothy’ with cosy beds, en-suite showers and a useful ‘drying room’ for your gear in the event of rain. Duvets and pillows are provided, but please bring (single) bed linen with you. Book your place with Debbie by Wednesday 29 September at the latest.





# How to book and what to bring

## Day tasks



We meet on the north side of St. Andrew Square at 9.30 a.m. prompt—look out for our white minibus. We normally aim to return around 5.30 p.m. Bring waterproofs, a packed lunch and boots or wellies—steel toe-cap wear is recommended. If you have your own work gloves, you might want to bring them, though we do have gloves that anyone can borrow. On hot sunny days bring a sun hat, sunscreen and plenty of drinking water—1.5 to 2 litres is recommended as you will get thirsty. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided.

Transport is free, but please phone Debbie, the Transport Secretary, by the Friday evening before the task if you are coming—this is so that we know how many tools to take, whether there's room in the minibus and so that we don't go without you. Tasks are very popular, so you're advised to book early. We also only have 12 seats in the bus, so please come if you've booked, or someone else will miss out. If the bus is full, or it's easier for you, you can of course meet us at the site of the task, but again please inform the Transport Secretary, so we can let you know the meeting point and also when we expect to arrive.

Before you come on any task with us, please make sure that your tetanus vaccination is up to date. We don't cancel the task if it's raining.

## Residential Tasks

Residentials are great fun—see the reviews in the *Views* section—and they allow LCV to undertake larger tasks further from Edinburgh. They involve a weekend away to work on the Saturday and Sunday. We leave on Friday night and usually take in a chip shop on the way. We get back to Edinburgh on Sunday evening.

Regardless of the time of year, bring a complete change of clothing so that you can get out of your work clothes in the evening. Remember that the weather can be very changeable, so bring a warm jumper and hat and above all don't forget a waterproof jacket and trousers and sturdy footwear. A sturdy bottle for drinking water is recommended. Unless otherwise indicated you'll probably need to take a sleeping bag and, if sleeping on the floor, a Karrimat or air-bed.

On residential tasks, breakfasts, lunches and the evening meal are organised by a volunteer. Everyone helps to prepare the food. The fare is usually vegetarian and there is plenty of it. Food for a weekend usually works out at £6 – £7 each. Pick-up is from St. Andrew Square at 7.30 p.m. on Friday, unless otherwise stated. If you want to go on a residential task, please book with the Transport Secretary. Normally, bookings will be accepted for weekend residential tasks up to the preceding Wednesday evening.

Before you come on any task with us, please make sure that your tetanus vaccination is up to date.

## Monthly committee meetings

Every second Tuesday of the month, we have a meeting at 16 Forth Street, off Broughton Street, at 7.30 p.m. We leave a notice near the door with a mobile number to call so we can let you in. You are welcome to join us while we discuss LCV business. We often go for a drink in a local pub afterwards.



# News

## Review of the year 2009-2010

This is a shortened version of the *Annual Report*—the full report and accounts will shortly be available on the LCV website or on request.

### Work carried out

In the year to April 2010, LCV ran 54 tasks for 20 different clients at 26 different sites. In total, we did 621 days of voluntary work (2009: 654, 2008: 594) for conservation projects in Scotland. We had an average of 10.8 volunteers on each task (2009: 10.7, 2008: 11.6). Scottish Wildlife Trust (SWT) was again our biggest client, receiving 138 (2008: 178) of our total workdays. We continue to maintain a close relationship with the Lothians Members Centre of SWT, as shown by the number of different local SWT sites that we visited. Midlothian Council was our second biggest client, receiving 90 workdays (2009: Midlothian Council, 103). The residential week in summer was well attended. We went to Aline Community Woodland for the first time, where we built a boardwalk. A series of day tasks at Addiewell Bing replaced the usual New Year residential and were spent tree felling.

### LCV Minibus

LCV runs a minibus that is used to transport tools and volunteers to the work sites. The minibus is used exclusively for the purposes of the group, and this year it was driven 3,157 miles (2009: 3,175) on task. The minibus is vital for our operation: it allows us to welcome volunteers who do not have their own transport, and gives us the means to transport bulky tools in safety. In 2009 we replaced our minibus with a new one, with grant aid from National Lottery Awards for All, Scottish Natural Heritage, The Robertson Trust and News International. We plan to replace this bus with a new one in 2019.

### Tool store and garage

LCV owns a wide variety of tools. One of the strengths of the group is that we can provide the client with volunteers who are fully equipped for the task. This year has seen a continuing investment in new tools and safety equipment to

ensure that our volunteers have everything they need to do an excellent job. We are grateful to Scottish Natural Heritage for part-funding of these new tools.

During the year we began the installation of a tap in our garage. The work was completed in early April 2010. The total cost for this was £2,679 (the majority of which will appear in next year's accounts). This tap represents a significant commitment for the group in both capital expenditure and ongoing maintenance, but provides major advantages in efficiency and safety from having a source of drinking water on site.

## **Publicity**

A total of 45 new volunteers (2009: 54) came on their first task with us during the year. The decline in numbers is due to a lack of available spaces rather than a decline in interest. Our web site is responsible for the majority of new recruits. During the year the site was visited 22,035 times (2009: 21,064), and in March 2010 received 873 unique visitors. We also attract a significant number of volunteers from the Edinburgh Volunteer Centre and by word of mouth. Publicity continued throughout the year with attendance at local volunteer fairs and flyers distributed quarterly to a range of city locations.

## **Tree Nursery**

LCV runs a tree nursery in which we grow native trees of known provenance. Our Tree Nursery Manager plans the planting in the nursery in consultation with our clients to enable us to provide trees that they require. Being able to provide quality trees of known provenance is important for tree planting projects. It can take up to four years to grow a tree from seed to a size that is suitable for planting on a reserve, and the Tree Nursery thus represents a considerable investment of volunteer time and effort. We are grateful to the City of Edinburgh Council for providing us with a site for our tree nursery.

## **Conclusion**

It has been another busy year for the group. We have again run a wide variety of tasks to maintain the enthusiasm of both long-standing and new volunteers, and our residential tasks have been popular and well-attended. Retaining new volunteers continues to be our biggest challenge in the year ahead. The committee focus on planning to ensure that there is a supply of volunteers willing to take on senior roles in the group as they become vacant.

## LCV turns on the waterworks



It's been rumbling in the pipeline for three years but at last it's here... We are delighted to report the arrival of a mains water supply to the tool shed—thanks to the hard work and persistence of Ken Humphreys.

A small group of LCVers enjoyed a brief 'tap inauguration event' at 8.30 a.m. on Sunday 19 May. Ken cut a hastily improvised red ribbon, sprayed bubbly wine at the shiny new pipework and, with a wide grin, declared the tap well and truly open. There wasn't a dry eye in the house. All present had a drink—water optional—to celebrate. Cheers!

*Ed.*



Early morning celebrations at the shed—photos Ed.



## Pond Party

Sharon and I are regular volunteers with LCV and earlier this year we sent out an invitation on the LCV newsgroup asking if we could have some help digging a pond in our new city garden. We hoped to have it wildlife friendly in time for frogs coming out of hibernation. We also needed some extra muscle to remove a sixteen metre rhododendron and conifer hedge in order to replace it with one made of mixed native species.

Our plan was to tempt people to come on a 'working social' with the offer of a home made lentil dahl lunch, cups of tea and Bara Brith cake—see recipe on page 25—and, at the end of the day, a glass or two of real ale and wine.

On the agreed date there was fresh snow on the ground but in true LCV style eleven volunteers turned up, enthusiastic for a day of digging. The rhododendron root system proved stubborn to remove to the point that we needed a winch to rip it out!



Pond digging for wildlife—photo Martin Brownjohn

A common frog visited in March and sat in the pond for a couple of days then, for reasons best known to itself, left. Perhaps it will be back next year. In late May we sat out and watched a mayfly mating swarm dancing above the water—it has at last become a wildlife pond. Thanks to everyone for all the hard work.

*Martin Brownjohn.*

## **Calling Creative Conservationists: LCV Anniversary Logo Competition—win a T-shirt.**

Have you heard that LCV is 40 this year? To commemorate this we want to make some special 40th anniversary merchandise. We're asking you to whip out your crayons and design a 40th anniversary logo for reproduction on a T-shirt or sweatshirt. It does not have to be based on the welly and mouse theme of our traditional logo but should contain the letters 'LCV' and be relevant to LCV activities. You can submit as many designs as you like.

Your logo design should measure no less than 20x20 centimetres and no more than 40x30 centimetres. Works in any 2D media accepted. You can use up to four different colours. Bear in mind that your design might well be scaled down to be printed on the garments, so make sure that any tadpoles you're considering drawing are distinct enough to be seen at reduced size. Bold, simple designs often work best—avoid fiddly fine detail.



The winner will receive a free T-shirt bearing their design to show off to friends and family. The LCV Committee will vote for the winning design at the monthly meeting on 13 July 2010. All entries must have been received by 12 July in order to be considered—unless you bring your design in person to the meeting at 7.30 p.m. on 13 July.

Please send your designs to Mark Herron our Membership Secretary, contact details in the *Contact Us* section of the LCV website.

## Forty Years of LCV—write us a mini-memoir for the *Mucker*...

*Remember the time...*

We are going to put together a special anniversary issue of the *Mucker* for the autumn and would like you to provide us with some short pieces of writing—a selection of memorable LCV moments that span the past 40 years. Due to space limitations we are asking for pieces that are 100 – 200 words long—a challenge we know but we reckon you are up to penning some short yet entertaining anecdotes—we hope to get lots of concentrated snippets describing LCV activity from 1970 onwards.

We'd really like to hear from old LCVerS—that'd be old in the sense of well-seasoned, wise and experienced—with tales of LCV from the early days.

Perhaps you can remember a particularly stunning wildlife encounter, a trying tussle with the LCV kettle on a damp day, a uniquely unusual task, a memorable journey, an unforgettable pudding, the first time you felled a tree, or the time you... The scope is only limited by your imagination and the dredging powers of your memory.

We ask that you keep in mind that the *Mucker* is read by a wide range of existing and prospective clients as well as regular and prospective members. Here are a few of our existing generic *Mucker* guidelines for your reference:

- Exclamation marks are rationed!!!! One exclamation mark per 200 words is extremely generous by *Mucker* standards so use one wisely if at all!!
- Nothing slanderous, thanks.
- Please make sure your piece would make sense to 'everyreader' i.e. someone with none of your insider LCV knowledge.
- Photos would be good—just make sure that everyone featured in your picture is happy to be included; remember the *Mucker* is both printed in hard copy and published online.

Please have some fun and get writing—send your piece to the Newsletter Editor—contact details in the *Contact Us* section of the LCV website—by 12 August, although sooner is always better.

## Leading tasks and driving for LCV

We are always looking for new volunteers to lead tasks. There is a description of how to lead a task on the LCV website—look under 'how to'—and training



courses are run from time to time. Normally an experienced leader would be around for backup for the first few tasks. If you might be interested in leading tasks for LCV, please get in touch with our Leader/Driver organiser—contact details inside the back cover. Minibus drivers are also needed—if you are a relatively experienced driver, the first step is to get in touch with our Minibus Officer—contact details inside the back cover. Our aim is that all LCV drivers will also receive MiDAS training, which involves theoretical and practical aspects of safe driving. We can also arrange DI training for those who need it.

## **LCV clothing**

Image Scotland is a company based in Musselburgh that supplies a good range of branded outdoor clothing. See [www.imagescotland.com](http://www.imagescotland.com) for their catalogue. They have a large green screen printed version of the LCV logo on their database that works well on anything from T-shirts to high visibility jackets, along with a smaller multicoloured embroidery version that is better for fleeces, hats etc. Phone Mark Herron our Membership Secretary—contact details inside the back cover of the Mucker—if you would like to purchase a garment branded with the LCV logo for your outdoor activities.

## **Hard Copy Newsletter subscriptions**

If you would like to receive a hard copy of the quarterly *Puggled Mucker* newsletter the cost to cover printing and postage is £4 per year. Please send a cheque payable to 'Lothians Conservation Volunteers' to Mark Herron—address inside the back cover—and let him know if your contact details change.

## **LCV Online**

Don't forget that you can check the task and social programme online at [www.lcv.org.uk](http://www.lcv.org.uk). The website is a mine of useful information for leading tasks, working the kettle and catering for large groups on residential.

## **Keep up with LCV news**

Join our Yahoo! online discussion group, where we publish LCV news, discussions about LCV activities and social events. To subscribe contact David Nutter, LCV Webmaster—contact details in the *Contact Us* section of the LCV website.

# Social Events

For all events it is better to book beforehand by emailing either Alexandra or Emma, social convenors—contact details in the *Contact Us* section of the LCV website—this way you can be updated if there is a change in arrangements. But, if you are not sure what you're doing until the last minute, for most events it is possible to just turn up. Updates on social events are sometimes circulated on LCV News our online newsgroup, see page 17 for details. The previously advertised walk in the Pentlands has been re-scheduled for the evening of July 9 and moved to the Hermitage—apologies for any inconvenience.



**Mon 21 June**

**Pub Quiz at The Cumberland Bar**

In light of our recent victory, come along and join team LCV at this pub quiz. It is free to enter and the quiz starts at 8.30, so meet in the bar at 7.45 p.m. You can turn up on the night but if you could let Emma and Alexandra know if you wish to attend it would be helpful as teams are restricted to seven members.



**Wed 30 June**

**Cinema Night**

Louisa is organising this event. The cinema night will be held from 7.00 p.m. in the Filmhouse on Lothian Road. Louisa will send out information via the LCV newsgroup nearer the time.



## **Fri July 9**

## **Evening Walk at the Hermitage of Braid**

Meet for an evening walk through the Hermitage and over Blackford Hill. The walk should last two hours or so. Meet at 7 p.m. at the Braid Road entrance. If you are interested then e-mail Emma.

Getting to the Hermitage of Braid: From Edinburgh City Centre the best bus routes to take are the Lothian Buses numbers 11, 15, 15A and 16 from the south, that is the Edinburgh Castle side, of Princes Street. These routes pass through shopping areas of Bruntsfield and Morningside and you should get out on Comiston Road near its junction with Greenbank Crescent. Head one block west to Braid Road along Braidburn Terrace and look for the main entrance to the Hermitage of Braid at the dip in the road. This is the western entrance to the Hermitage of Braid and Blackford Hill Local Nature Reserve.



## **TBC August**

## **Festival Event TBC**

More details about this event to follow on the LCV online newsgroup.

## **3 – 5 September**

## **Anniversary Event in Vogrie Park**

We're extending a warm invitation to anyone who has volunteered with LCV over the years to join us to celebrate LCV's 40th anniversary this year. A celebration task and social events will take place over the weekend of 3 – 5 September 2010 at Vogrie Country Park. We'd like you to join us for all or part of the weekend. Children are welcome\*.

We've hired a self-catering bunkhouse within the park, 'The Brownie House', which is located just behind Vogrie House. It includes bunk beds for 30 people, showers, kitchen, dining facilities etc. There is also a campsite adjacent to the house if people prefer to camp. The Brownie house has disabled access. If you stay the night you will need to pay £5 per person per night for the bunkhouse, payable on the day. We'll also ask people to pay towards food costs and electricity. Spaces in the Brownie House will be allocated on a first come, first served basis so the sooner you book the better!

Ideally we'd like you to let us know which of the weekend activities you'd like to

take part in so we can guesstimate numbers. See below for a draft outline of the weekend with approximate timings:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Event</b>
Fri 3rd	From 7 p.m.	Brownie House, Vogrie Park	General get-together (catering to be confirmed)
Sat 4th	10 a.m.	Meet at car park behind Vogrie House	LCV task. All training will be provided on the day
Sat 4th	From 6 p.m.	Brownie House, Vogrie Park	LCV 40th celebration party. All food provided on the weekend will be vegetarian.
Sun 5th	No set time	Vogrie Park	A purely social day with the option of walks in the park, pond dipping, bird watching etc.

To give us an idea of numbers please tell us if you would like to:

<b>Would you:</b>	<b>Yes/No/Maybe</b>
Stay overnight on Fri 3 Sep?	
Join the LCV task on Sat 4 Sep?	
Attend the party on Sat 4 Sep?	
Stay overnight on Sat 4 Sep?	
Attend social day on Sun 5 Sep?	

Can you please RSVP, indicating your responses to the above, to Edel—one of our Anniversary Celebrations organisers—contact details in the *Contact Us* section of the LCV website.

\* A reminder of LCV's policy for under-16s on the work day—we can't take them in our van and each child needs to be supervised by one adult; remember all our gloves and tools are 'adult-sized'. Please contact us to discuss accommodation arrangements for children.

# Views

## **Spring at Glasdrum Wood and Tainish National Nature Reserves (NNRs)**

In March this year several LCV volunteers enjoyed a weekend of conservation work in Argyll. We'd like to thank the task leader Debbie Tribiak and our client, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) Reserve Manager John Halliday, for providing the following twin views of our spring residential.

### **A Volunteer's View**

Our weekend working with SNH proved to be as popular as ever, with ten eager volunteers looking forward to a mixture of coppicing hazel at Glasdrum and an introduction to the construction of hazel hurdles at Tainish. Once again we were staying at the luxurious bothy in Kilmartin.

On Saturday morning everyone was ready bright and early as we'd arranged to meet the SNH staff—John Halliday, Gordon Campbell and Doug Bartholomew—for an early departure at 8.30am. The scenic drive to Glasdrum took ninety minutes and after unpacking our gear and a steep climb to the worksite John explained why we were clearing the hazel from this area—for details please refer to John's article below.

The weather was glorious and it wasn't long before everyone had peeled off a layer of clothing. We worked our way up and across the hillside clearing a large area of hazel scrub until we had amassed huge piles of hazel stems. These were then bundled up and carried down the hill. Some of us only managed a few exhausting journeys down and back up the hill but a few hardy souls did lots more – though I believe they did suffer aches and pains for days afterwards! By the end of the day the trailer was fully laden with hazel stems which Gordon and Doug were to transport to Tainish for Sunday's work. By the time we got back to the bothy it was time for our chef, Trevor, to don his apron and prepare the three course evening meal – soup, veggie bangers and mash followed by fruit crumble and custard. After a busy day and with full bellies it wasn't long before folk headed to bed.

On Sunday we set off for Tainish where Peter Quelch led a workshop on the making of a wattle hurdle. The wattle hurdle has a dense weave, making a windproof barrier that is good for sheep pens and general garden use. Hazel is the best material to use, being pliable, strong and durable. The hurdles

were to be used at Tainish for rustic stock fencing in parts of the wood. An experienced green woodworker, Peter demonstrated the various skilled steps involved: splitting a rod, doubling—the technique of bending and twisting a rod back on itself—and weaving. As wattle hurdle novices we were saved from the potential embarrassment of first-time rod splitting attempts when Peter decided that many of the Tainish hazel stems were too twisted to be readily split and an alternative method was in order. After some discussion it was decided that a rustic fence built by weaving the hazel stems around existing and new posts would provide a simple yet effective solution. You can see how successful this was below.



Weaving hazel stems to create a rustic fence at Tainish—photo John Halliday.

After completing the fence we cleared an area of gorse to allow SNH staff access to a dyke which is scheduled to be rebuilt this summer. Our tasks complete it was time to make the long journey back to Edinburgh with the usual chippie stop in Inveraray.

My thanks to Trevor, Willie and Sarah for driving, Trevor and helpers for cooking and washing up, and last but not least to Tony for hoovering. A big thank you to Edel, Louisa, David, Ian, Nicola, Trevor, Willie, Sarah and Tony for all their hard



work over the weekend. A huge thank you to John, Doug and Gordon and also the dogs—Jock and Katy—I must give them a mention! Finally, thanks to Peter for his introduction to green woodworking and SNH for giving us the opportunity to work in such a beautiful part of the country. It's always a pleasure and I'm certainly looking forward to our next trip.

*Debbie Tribiak*

*And many thanks to Debbie for leading this task—Ed.*

## **A Client's View**

The survival of our native woodlands is often threatened by the presence of too many sheep and deer. Not so at Glasdrum Wood National Nature Reserve, where a combination of low grazing levels and rich soil conditions has resulted in abundant regeneration of native trees. Here many of the sheltered open glades within the woodland, which are so important for some of our rarest butterfly species like chequered skipper and pearl-bordered fritillary, are filling up with birch and hazel scrub.



Clearing hazel scrub at Glasdrum—photo John Halliday.

Ensuring natural woodland regeneration while maintaining open glades for butterflies is our challenge at Glasdrum! We are now actively managing some of the woodland clearings at Glasdrum which have been identified for their butter-

fly and lichen interest. Lichens growing on the trunks of mature trees often require more open conditions where light can penetrate.

A keen group of volunteers from Edinburgh, Lothians Conservation Volunteers, spent a weekend at Glasdrum and Taynish recently. The first day was spent at Glasdrum clearing hazel scrub in a butterfly glade and around mature ash trees rich in lichens. The straightest hazel stems were selected for use at Taynish the following day.



Peter Quelch introduces green woodworking techniques—photo John Halliday.

At Taynish we are currently installing new fencing and restoring old drystone dykes with a view to extending cattle grazing into parts of the woodland. Hopefully this will help to maintain open conditions for butterflies and lichens. The volunteers were introduced to the traditional woodland craft of hurdle making by a renowned green woodworker, Peter Quelch. The hazel stems were then woven into rustic hurdle-type fencing to fill a gap between two old dykes.

Hopefully this innovative project will make a small contribution to maintaining biodiversity at two of our finest woodland NNRs.

*John Halliday*



## Sharon and Martin's Bara Brith

Thanks to Sharon and Martin for this unusual cake recipe—one of the delicacies they prepared for a hungry band of LCVERS at their 'pond party' in February—see page 14.

### Notes:

This Welsh fruit cake is called *bara* or bread because it looks like a bread loaf—and it's pretty healthy too! If catering for ten volunteers bake two for a hearty pudding or just one if it's for a slice each with a cup of tea.

On a weekend residential don't forget to soak the fruit on the Friday night for cake on Saturday and you'll need a couple of large loaf tins or equivalent.

### Ingredients:

280g mixed dried fruit  
400ml hot black tea  
85g soft brown sugar  
Grated rind of 1 lemon  
340g self raising wholemeal flour  
1 tsp of cinnamon  
1 tsp of cloves  
1 large egg



### Method:

- 1** Soak the mixed dried fruit in the hot tea, cover and leave to stand overnight.
- 2** Next day, set the oven to 180C/Gas Mark 4 and grease and line a 2lb loaf tin.
- 3** Strain the fruit and reserve the liquid. Mix together the fruit with the other ingredients in a bowl, adding the reserved liquid a little at a time until a soft, dropping consistency is achieved.
- 4** Pour the mixture into a tin and bake for 45-55 minutes until risen and firm to the touch.
- 5** Cool and serve sliced and butter if you wish, or as a pudding perhaps serve with custard, ice cream or creme fraiche.

*If you are willing to share your vegetarian culinary secrets send a recipe—for ten—to the Newsletter Editor—contact details in the Contact Us section of the LCV website and we'll pull one out of the pot for the next Mucker—Ed.*

# Task locations



# LCV People

You will find contact details in the *Contact Us* section of the LCV website for the following LCV people:

**Louisa Martin**

**Co-ordinator**

**David Monaghan**

**Treasurer**

**Matt McCabe**

**Task Organiser**

**Debbie Tribak**

**Transport Secretary**

**Mark Herron**

**Membership Secretary**

**Simon Bonsall**

**Leader/Driver Organiser**

**Martin Brownjohn**

**Publicity**

**Alexandra Costello  
Emma Brown**

**Social Organisers**

**Tony Irving**

**Tree Nursery**

**David Nutter**

**Fundraiser and Webmaster**

**William McSporran**

**Minibus Officer**

**Peter Gilbert**

**Training Organiser**

**Ken Humphreys**

**Toolshed**

**Nicola Murray**

**Newsletter Editor**

# Conservation Tasks

June	Sun 13	Beecraigs Country Park	Pathwork	
	Sun 20	Pishwanton	TBC	
	Sun 27	Vogrie Country Park	Path work and step maintenance	
July	<b>SAT 3</b>	Addiewell Bing	Tree weeding	
	Sun 4	Pishwanton	TBC	
	Sun 11	Wooplaw	Woodland maintenance	
	<b>18 – 24</b>	<b>Lochalsh residential</b>	Woodland maintenance/pathwork	
August	Sat 31	Addiewell Bing	Tree weeding	
	Sun 1	Pishwanton	TBC	
	Sun 8	Linhouse Glen	Bracken bashing	
	Sun 15	Leadburn	Tree clearance	
	<b>SAT 21</b>	Addiewell Bing	Tree weeding	
	Sun 22	Pishwanton	TBC	
	<b>SAT 28</b>	Roslin Glen	Step/pathwork	
	Sun 29	Roslin Glen	Step/pathwork	
	September	<b>SAT 4</b>	Vogrie Country Park	TBC. This task is part of our LCV 40th anniversary weekend at Vogrie.
		Sun 12	Roslin Glen	Meadow raking/pathwork
Sun 19		Red Moss	Birch pulling	
Sun 26		Aberlady Bay	Sea Buckthorn clearance	
October	<b>1 – 3</b>	<b>Moine Mhor residential</b>	Birch pulling	

## Other Events



June	Mon 21	7.45 p.m.	Pub Quiz at Cumberland Bar
	Wed 30	7.00 p.m.	Cinema night
July	Fri 9	7.00 p.m.	Hermitage walk
	Tues 13	7.30 p.m.	<b>Monthly committee meeting</b>
August	TBC	Evening	Festival event
	Tues 10	7.30 p.m.	<b>Monthly committee meeting</b>
September	Fri 3 – Sat 5	various events	LCV 40th Anniversary Weekend
	Tues 14	7.30 p.m.	<b>Monthly committee meeting</b>