

**JOHN
MUIR
AWARD**

wild places:
**DISCOVER
EXPLORE
CONSERVE
SHARE**

John Muir Award News Autumn 2015

The John Muir Award is the main engagement initiative of the John Muir Trust. It encourages people to connect with, enjoy and care for wild places.



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More milestones than a long distance trail...

There has been quite a flurry of significant John Muir Award presentations around the UK in recent weeks and months. From Abernethy to Arthog and Kinross to King's Cross, they reflect a wealth of activity in and for wild places – by thousands of individuals and hundreds of organisations. It's not all about the numbers, but simply an opportunity to celebrate a huge amount of enjoyment, effort and achievement.

Quarter of a million John Muir Awards

London Wildlife Trust volunteer Zak Lakota-Baldwin became the 250,000th John Muir Award recipient at a special presentation at Camley Street Natural Park in London's King's Cross on September 8th.

Zak has been volunteering with London Wildlife Trust for over a year. "To me, the really special thing about Camley Street is the fact that it's a home to nature right in the heart of London. It's a little pocket of the wild world, only ten minutes walk from my own home, and so I feel a great connection to it. I've been using the John Muir Award to help explore and understand the wild places close to me."

Presenting the milestone certificate, Daniel Raven-Ellison from the campaign for a Greater London National Park City said: "It's fantastic to see organisations working together to encourage thousands of people to enjoy themselves and benefit from time

in nature – and help nature and society to benefit too. I'm delighted to have been asked to present the 250,000th John Muir Award."

Chair of the John Muir Trust Peter Pearson added: "When it was launched in 1997, the John Muir Award was a small-scale, localised project. It's now a significant part of our core work, giving the Trust a presence with many diverse partners, and helping to share our values with new audiences throughout the UK. This is a milestone that our trustees and members can take real pride in."

The presentation coincided with the Trust's inaugural Spirit of John Muir lecture at the Royal Geographical Society (see page 9), where naturalist Chris Packham took time to congratulate Zak.

For more on the Spirit of John Muir event, including a transcript, go to www.johnmuirtrust.org/spiritofjohnmuir and #spiritofjohnmuir.



Zak with the 250,000th John Muir Award certificate, alongside Chris Packham



100,000 Awards achieved in Scotland

The John Muir Trust was honoured to be given a Civic Reception in March by Perth and Kinross Council to mark 100,000 John Muir Awards achieved in Scotland, and for topping a UK-wide online poll to win the prestigious TGO Outdoor Campaigner of the Year 2014 Award.

Local MSP and Deputy First Minister John Swinney said: "I've always been proud that the charity which looks after some of

Scotland's most magnificent areas is based in the heart of my own constituency." Liz Grant, Provost of Perth and Kinross said: "The John Muir Trust has a long history of working in Perth and Kinross to raise awareness and help protect our areas of outstanding beauty. I was in particular pleased to be able to acknowledge the efforts of the Trust in supporting over 100,000 people in Scotland to achieve a John Muir Award. Taking an active role in protecting their nature and wide places is to be encouraged."

Read more at <http://tinyurl.com/najjl49>



John Swinney MSP meets Cairngorms National Park Junior Rangers at the John Muir Trust Wild Space in Pitlochry

A decade of delivery in Wales



Arthog Outdoor Education Centre, on the edge of the Snowdonia National Park, recently celebrated special recognition to mark the 10,000th John Muir Award achieved at the Centre.

Phil Stubbington presented certificates to both Arthog OEC and to students from the Hadley Learning Community School from Telford. "This is a fantastic achievement for the Centre, made possible by the commitment of the staff at Arthog and the visiting schools who do so much to take responsibility for these special places."

To read the full news story go to <http://tinyurl.com/nf3jzyq>



25,000 Cairngorms Awards

One of the first actions of the fledgling Cairngorms National Park Authority in 2003 was to adopt the John Muir Award as its 'outdoor engagement scheme of choice'. That's now led to 25,000 Awards being achieved in the Cairngorms, which was recognised in September.



Dr Aileen McLeod MSP presents Grace Moir with a commemorative certificate, alongside trustees Chris Townsend and Peter Pearson

A commemorative certificate was presented to Grace Moir, of Apex Scotland, by the Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform, Dr Aileen McLeod, at the RSPB Abernethy Nature Reserve.

Peter Pearson, Chairman of the John Muir Trust said "We are proud of our association with the Cairngorms National Park. Reaching this milestone through the national park is excellent, but the partnership success goes beyond the numbers of people doing their Award. Since the formal partnership was put in place, the John Muir Award has grown and is now being used in all 15 national parks across the UK. It is a proven model in the Cairngorms that raises awareness and understanding of the area's special qualities, encourages nature conservation and helps get people enjoying the outdoors. A natural fit for both organisations." For the full story see <http://tinyurl.com/q7kotdz>

Lake District National Park partnership passes 10,000

In a continuing partnership between the Lake District National Park and the John Muir Trust we're proud to have passed a landmark 10,000 John Muir Awards achieved since April 2011.

"The John Muir Award is an excellent example of making the most of the spectacular landscape of our region to inspire people to discover why this place is so special. This goes far beyond the realms of just achieving an award, it invites people to embrace National Parks as a special place for the rest of their lives. As well as encouraging people to get out and get active outdoors, it's also in many cases giving them a first taste of volunteering, and highlights the need for us all to play a role in caring for the Lake District. And all of this is good fun too."

Jayne Pugh, Head of People and Communications, LDNPA.

1,000 Awards in North East England

Local funding in the North East from the Local Environment Action Fund (LEAF) at the Community Foundation Tyne and Wear and Northumberland has helped 47 diverse groups achieve over 1000 John Muir Awards in the last 12 months. "It has been a pleasure and great joy to watch how these students have engaged with THEIR nature, discovered it, and learnt from it. All the students have enjoyed the opportunity to work as a team with their friends, while making a genuine contribution to improving their immediate locality". Susan Long, local College lead teacher

<http://tinyurl.com/pby5jpi>

Conserve Audit

Throughout 2015 we're identifying the amount of activity carried out to meet the Conserve Challenge of the John Muir Award. When we last did this in 2011, we found that almost £1million of environmental volunteering effort was generated. So far – from the 500+ groups that have submitted Conserve Audit information – we're in for another bumper spread of Conserve-related activity.

Some highlights to date this year include:

Keep your Conserve Audits coming in – the co-operation of so many Providers and partners is really appreciated! Find out more at www.johnmuirtrust.org/initiatives/conserve-audit-2015

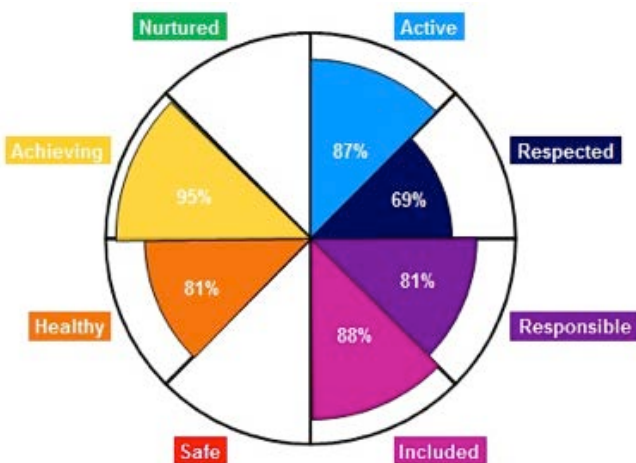


Provider Survey

What do Providers – organisations that run the John Muir Award – think about it?

We're always keen to hear from Award Providers about their experiences of using the John Muir Award. This year in Scotland we asked for feedback through a Provider Survey. Our aims were to assess impacts on participants, leaders and organisations, and to gather information that could influence and help improve the way we work.

We had a great response¹ – from teachers, rangers, health workers, youth and community workers to name just a few. We'd like to thank everyone involved for their time and thoughts.



Questions referred to 6/8 of the most relevant areas

Participant wellbeing

We asked about impacts on participants' wellbeing, specifically in relation to the Scottish Government SHANARRI wellbeing indicators². The chart above shows the percentage of Providers who said involvement in the John Muir Award helps their participants improve in each area.

Value, Connect, Care

We asked questions relating to parts of the John Muir Trust's vision – helping people to value, connect with and care for wild places.

- 94% said the John Muir Award helps the people they work with value wild places.

"Pupil evaluations reflected a change in their ability to 'tune-in' to nature. Most pupils showed a greater sense of value of their local woodlands."

- 89% said the John Muir Award helps the people they work with put something back for wild places.

"The Conserve aspect causes the youngsters to consider the value of the environment to us and how much we rely on it in so many ways."

Leaders' practice

We also asked about impacts on leaders and their own professional practice. They told us that using the John Muir Award in their work, volunteering and recreation:

- gives a **focus and structure** for learning and teaching and is a valued tool to link activities together and recognise achievement
- helps **increase confidence in leadership and teaching outdoors**
- has given opportunities and incentives to **try different approaches** and develop new skills
- helps **develop partnerships**, as well as community and parental involvement

"It has ingrained an appreciation of the value of connecting with nature and working outdoors. It has changed my teaching practice."

Providers' next steps included delivering to more people and helping participants progress onto further Award levels. Providers also identified some ways that the John Muir Trust can give further support, which we are keen to explore.

For more information visit www.johnmuirtrust.org/initiatives/scotland-provider-survey-2015.

¹ 67 people responded to the survey, 11% of Scottish Award Providers

² <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/background/wellbeing>

Thanks to all our Award Providers, participants, supporters and John Muir Trust members for helping to spread the word on our fundraising appeal for the John Muir Award, for finding out more about it, and for the generous donations of all sizes.

We've had donations of pocket money and from jumble sales, right through to an epic coast-to-coast fundraising expedition and a sail around Arran, to an indication of a legacy gift, raising over £30,000 to date to support more people to connect with nature. Any help you can give will help us do more, so please continue to support the John Muir Award Appeal www.johnmuirtrust.org/connect.

C2C4K



Late May...in the Cairngorms... supporting the John Muir Award Appeal

Former John Muir Trust colleague David Lintern and David Hine brought a real spirit of adventure to the John Muir Award Appeal in May, choosing to use a planned coast-to-coast expedition as a fundraising focus.

Two further adventurous elements were planned: using packrafts to travel much of the route on loch and river; and traversing Scotland via its nine 4,000 metre peaks. A third – May blizzards – was definitely unplanned.

For more images and insights, read this cracking piece in the online Sidetracked Magazine www.sidetracked.com/pieces-of-a-journey. You can also see their blogs by searching 'David Lintern C2C4K' and 'Grid North C2C4K'.



Photos: David Lintern

Walking Dundee's Dighty Trail

Dundee Association for Mental Health (DAMH) Greenbuds participants, staff and volunteers walked the Dighty Heritage Trail, raising over £400. Participants were keen to show their support for the John Muir Award as they value that it is provided free of charge. They also wanted to raise awareness and encourage others to get involved. The occasion attracted DAMH members who had not previously engaged with the physical activity offerings from the service and who, after a really enjoyable day, have now signed up for the regular walking group and Greenbuds programmes. Great results all round!



31 people walked the Trail this August. Their Just Giving page is still live – search The John Muir Meanderers

Arran Solstice Sail

Staff member Bethan Haston sailed around the Isle of Arran with Arran Outdoor Education Centre on the longest day of the year, raising £278. Leaving at 2am in a 20ft boat the group completed the sail in only 13 hours thanks to some strong winds!

“Over 30,000 people access nature every year through the John Muir Award”, said Bethan. “Since starting with the John Muir Trust two years ago I've lost count of the amount of positive stories I've heard from people taking part. I was thrilled to be able to support the appeal with an adventure that I hope Muir would have been proud of.”

Since its launch in 1997, the John Muir Award – the John Muir Trust’s primary engagement initiative – has touched a quarter of a million lives around the UK.

Here, a cross-section of participants, Award Providers and supporters share their perspectives.

This is what the John Muir Award Appeal is supporting.



“I found out I enjoy spending time in remote places way more than I could have imagined.”

John, George Watson’s College participant

“Today I saw a wild deer for the first time in my life. It clattered off cos I disturbed it, and then stood listening before quietly walking away. MINT!”

Becky, on a YHA residential



“The John Muir Award has become an essential part of the school week.”

Gillian, Teacher

“The John Muir Trust has helped hundreds of people with drug and alcohol problems reconnect with nature and open their eyes to a whole new world around them.

We have seen first-hand the inspiring change it can make to people’s lives.”

Jon Hall, Commissioning & Development Manager, Phoenix Futures



“Fresh air comes into your body and all the bad stuff goes out – the stuff that makes people not well like angriness and [being] stressed out.”

John Muir Award participant, aged 11, Drumchapel



“I have an interest and curiosity for nature that I never felt before.”

Pippa, John Muir Award Participant

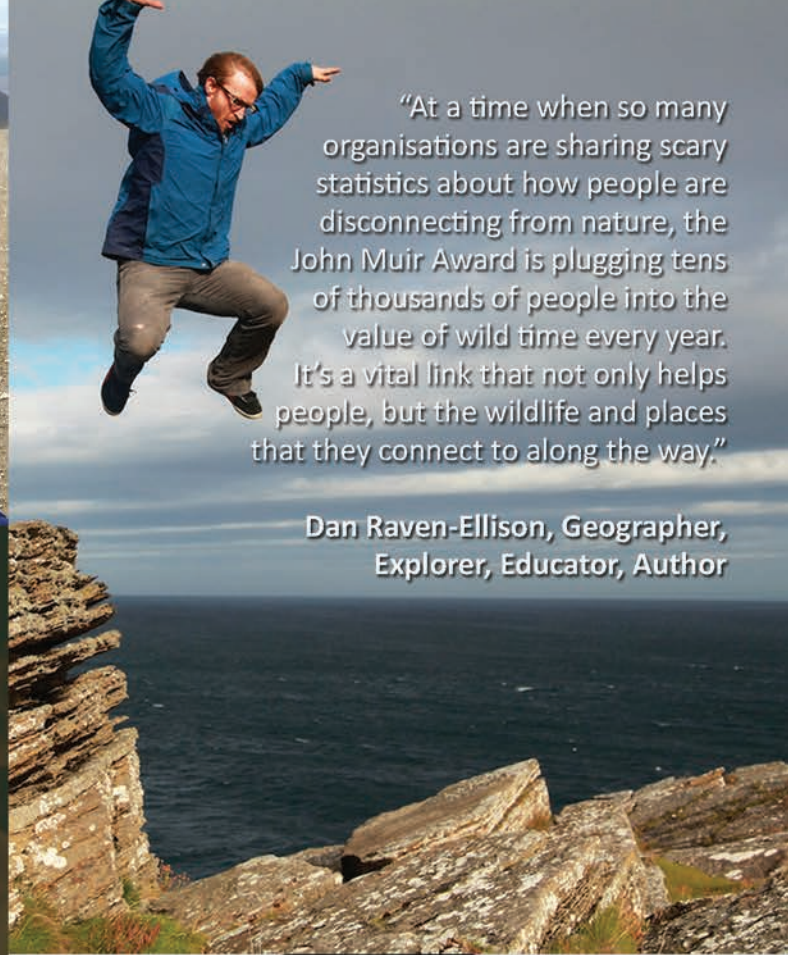


“I have depression and anxiety, and living with ME means I am often in pain and experiencing fatigue. Getting outdoors and doing something physical with a group helps me feel better. The John Muir Award, as part of Branching Out, was the motivator to keep me involved. I have gone from living my life behind closed doors to getting out and engaging with people. If I had not done my John Muir Award I would not have built the confidence to lead other groups.”

Award participant and peer leader, Dundee Association for Mental Health

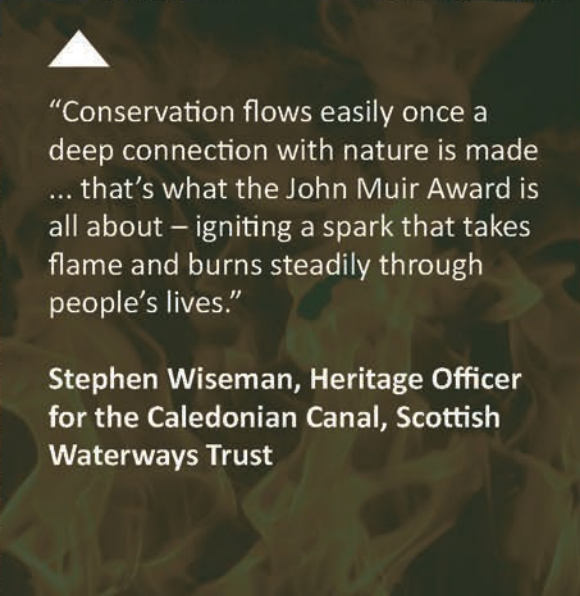
“Walking down the burn up... Being bombarded with the... lots of feelings; the main o... that I now realise I have sa... years. The day has allowed... on what is really important... personally and professional... reawakened an enthusiasr... I will endeavour to weave... part of my life.”

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park staff member and staff team Award participant



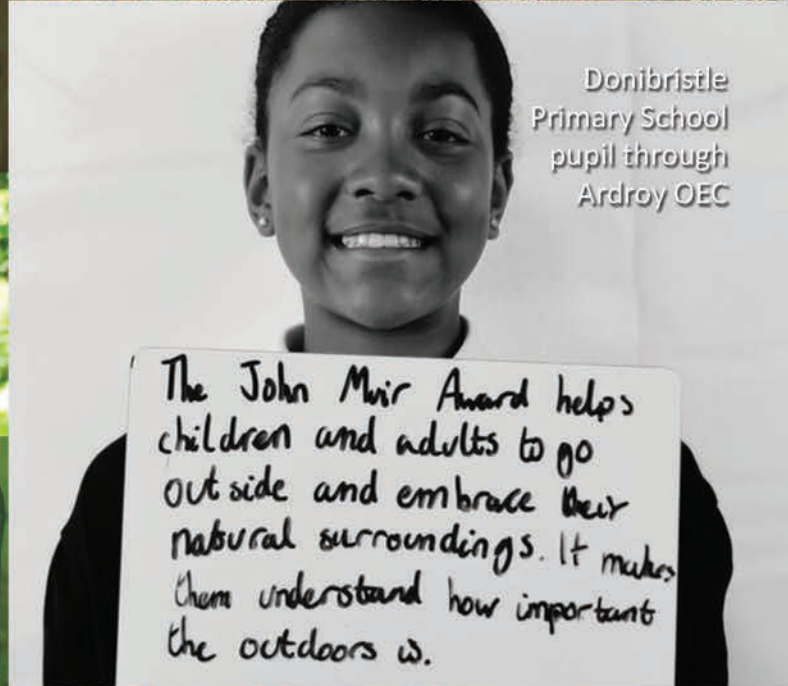
"At a time when so many organisations are sharing scary statistics about how people are disconnecting from nature, the John Muir Award is plugging tens of thousands of people into the value of wild time every year. It's a vital link that not only helps people, but the wildlife and places that they connect to along the way."

Dan Raven-Ellison, Geographer, Explorer, Educator, Author



▲
"Conservation flows easily once a deep connection with nature is made ... that's what the John Muir Award is all about – igniting a spark that takes flame and burns steadily through people's lives."

Stephen Wiseman, Heritage Officer for the Caledonian Canal, Scottish Waterways Trust



Donibristle Primary School pupil through Ardroy OEC

The John Muir Award helps children and adults to go outside and embrace their natural surroundings. It makes them understand how important the outdoors is.



"John Muir is never far away in terms of what we do, how we act and what we think."

Gavin, Youth Worker



unlocked so many memories for me. The sounds, sights and smells, triggered one was a connection with the land and allowed to drift for too many years. It made me to refocus on both the physical and mental energy and energy into every



www.johnmuirtrust.org/connect

John Muir Award in Action

How do people and organisations use the John Muir Award? As it's not a set programme – you can choose which wild places to Discover, how to Explore them, what you'd like to do to Conserve them, and how to Share your experiences – examples are many and varied. Here are just a few. Take a look at the John Muir Award *In Action* and *Latest* pages of the John Muir Trust website for lots more.

Case studies

Wirral Autistic Society Volunteers help rewrite a local Country Park, Merseyside. “We use the John Muir Award to help develop new life skills, and build confidence and independence for our service users. It's a hugely practical and beneficial framework for our group.”
Group leader Michael Howard

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Visitor Policy and Engagement team.

“Doing our Staff Award sparked an interest in what's out there, and reminded me of why visitors are coming and the experiences they have when they are here.” **Graham, staff member**

Tomorrow's People: 'Working It Out' into employment, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

“There is real pleasure and increased self-esteem, not just from being outdoors in a wild place, but also from making a genuine contribution to their local environment and community. These are all essential building blocks towards future employment.”

Stories & Articles

A Journey to the Wild: A reflection on our Journey to Assynt In their 50's, living in Fife, and experienced in the outdoors, Ingrid and Chris Todd's aim was simple spiritual renewal – “a wilderness experience through a more reflective approach, rather than goal-driven adventure.”

Films

The Woodland Trust use the John Muir Award to help pupils from Okehampton Primary School to get a real feel for nature in Fingle Woods, Devon.

Dochgarroch Primary School and Scottish Waterways Trust: 'Our Wild Things'

See what the pupils did to help connect with nature, including making the wild music for the backing track.

Latest News

Look through www.johnmuirtrust.org/latest for new and recent news items.

From 28 May 2015

#365DaysWild gets Muir family approval

Hannah Norton took some 'wild time', every day for a year, and blogged about it. John Muir's great-great-grandson heard and offered his congratulations: “Your commitment to 'Do something wild every day' is inspiring and I thank you so much for continuing my great-great-grandfather's vision through your own work and dedication. Me and my family are really proud of your accomplishment and we're all cheering for you all the way out here in California. Keep up the awesome work and thank you for being an incredible example to be inspired by.” **Robert Hanna**



Positive Partnership

The Outward Bound Trust and the John Muir Award

Outward Bound's adventurous and challenging outdoor learning programmes equip young people with valuable skills for education, work and life. They can be said to be about 3Rs – Relationships with self, Relationships with others, and Relationships with place.

The John Muir Award has been used for over a decade to highlight the importance of the environment, as a fundamental part of the experience, to promote understanding and awareness, and to give a context for putting something back. Last year, over 3,600 participants achieved a John Muir Award whilst on an Outward Bound course, up 24% on 2013, and 15% of all attendees at their centres. Measuring environmental outputs of Award involvement showed that (amongst a wide-ranging audit) over 500 bin bags of litter were collected, a square kilometre cleared of invasive species, and 165 bird feeders were made.

“The inclusion of the John Muir Award within many of our courses really helps participants to be inspired by the wild places we expose them to, and to develop a love and respect for the natural environment. The Award is valued by schools, staff and young people alike and is increasingly being requested as part of an Outward Bound course.” **Martin Davidson, Scottish Director, The Outward Bound Trust**

For more on how our two organisations work together, see <http://tinyurl.com/ndm278u>

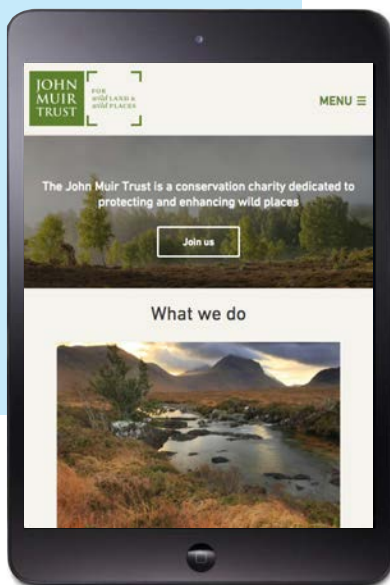


John Muir Trust website

The new-look John Muir Trust website is up and running. Do have a browse and let us know what you think (you can email comments to katrina@johnmuiraward.org).

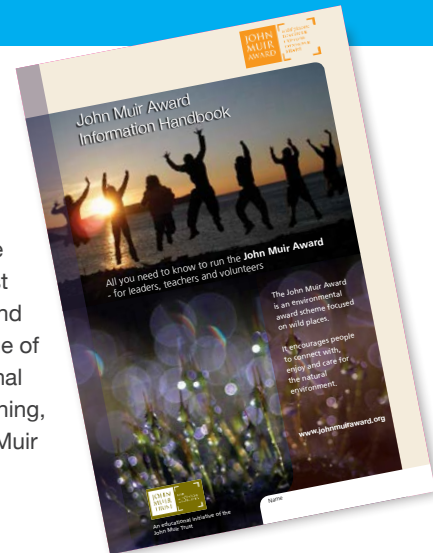
It's easier to navigate, works well on tablets and mobile phones (very 2015 rather than 2005), and is designed to support the process of John Muir Award participation. You'll find a one-stop introduction page, all the Key Documents needed to get involved, examples of the John Muir Award In Action, links to Partners and Initiatives, and Latest News.

Find out about the breadth of the Trust's work and how you can support it.



Information Handbook

This is the place to go for guidance on what the John Muir Award is and how to use it. Our latest revision (October 2015) provides background and detail on getting involved, and describes a range of relevant contexts for Award use, such as National Parks, Curriculum, Sustainability, Outdoor Learning, Inclusion. There's also an introduction to John Muir and the John Muir Trust. Find it online in [Key Documents](#) or ask for a hard copy.



Record Book

Record Books are available as a [print-friendly pdf](#) (in [Key Documents](#)), wire-bound hard copy or (coming soon!) an online version. They give each participant an opportunity to capture their John Muir Award experiences. They are not essential to Award participation, and many groups create their own resources for reflecting and sharing.

From September the new hard copy version costs £1 each, to cover printing costs and postage.

We first started making the Record Book available for free when less than 1,000 people each year participated – now that it's over 30,000 (and a much higher quality free-to-download version is available) this is a significant cost that we can no longer cover.



Chris Packham 'Spirit of John Muir' event

Television presenter, photographer and naturalist Chris Packham was invited to give the inaugural Spirit of John Muir lecture at the Royal Geographical Society in London in September.

The Trust feels that John Muir's ethos should find resonance and relevance in a modern age, and aims to explore this through Muir's modern contemporaries – the writers, adventurers, naturalists and campaigners – who help to shape our future. More than 400 people were informed, entertained and inspired, as Chris transported the audience to an imaginary dinner party with illustrious guests including Charles Darwin, Neil Armstrong, Audrey Hepburn and John Muir. For more details, including a sound recording of the talk, see www.johnmuirtrust.org/spiritofjohnmuir. Chris concluded saying, 'John Muir, what a bloke!', and relating how honoured he was to have been asked to make this maiden Spirit of John Muir speech. [#SpiritofJohnMuir](#)



Chris Packham at the Royal Geographical Society, London

Scottish Pupils Book In For A Greener Future

John Muir graphic novel has significant impact on environmental behaviour

A hundred years after his death, pioneering conservationist John Muir continues to influence and inspire. A graphic novel based upon his life – ‘John Muir, Earth - Planet, Universe’ – has created a statistically significant shift in pupils’ attitudes towards and connection to the natural world, according to a recent Edinburgh University study. Free copies were sent to every secondary school in Scotland last year, with a download version being freely accessible from www.scottishbooktrust.com/johnmuir

It was intended to help pupils aged 11-14 develop a deeper understanding and awareness of the natural environment and the importance of protecting wild places. It has found a much wider readership, attracting upper primary schools, adult learners, outdoor educators and family audiences across the UK.

The study noted that many Scottish secondary schools are already actively involved in the protection and restoration of wild places, and that the book complemented such activities. It was widely used in conjunction with the John Muir Award and also in a biology class on “proactive conservation”; in a geography class alongside a “recycling and environment module”, and in a Religious and Moral Education class on environment, values and personal actions. It was used in language and literacy classes to examine the genre of graphic novels, to support literacy in general and to study the Scots language.

“It’s an adventure story, beautifully presented” said the John Muir Trust’s Rob Bushby. “That’s a huge part of the book’s appeal and relevance. Its messages are there to be interpreted in a personal way, which makes reading it a meaningful and memorable experience. It was a privilege to be part of the steering group, and to see that it is having a positive impact is really heartening.”



Photo: SBT / Rob McDougall

It’s Our World

Thousands of children and young people across the UK have been sharing a view of their world, or local wildlife, by contributing to the It’s Our World online gallery. It’s a great, easy way to tie in with the Share part of the John Muir Award. There’s still chance to be a part of it before the closing date on 20 November.

The collection of artworks will be handed over to The British Library to coincide with COP21 Climate Change Summit in Paris. As world leaders gather, the aim is to provide a powerful reminder from the nation’s future custodians about the need for positive environmental action. Add your school’s or group’s artworks by getting in touch with admin@itisourworld.org.uk, and make it part of your John Muir Award.

IT'S OUR WORLD

Be Part of the UK's Largest Environmental Art Gallery

Aged 4-19?
Put Yourself On The Map
Get uploading by 20 November

www.itisourworld.org.uk

Special Thanks To:
THE PARTNERS | JCDigital | NUT | RACKSPACE

The Big Draw UK registered Charity: 1114811

Learning Away – Brilliant Residentials



Brilliant Residentials are school trips with an overnight stay, led by teachers, co-designed with students, and fully integrated into the curriculum. They are a ‘multi-tool’ for achieving vital educational outcomes, have a huge impact on students of all ages, and can help deliver whole school change.

The website www.learningaway.org.uk is a fantastic place to go for background, evidence, and resources about residential experiences. A major three year study offers robust evidence of their value: “Learning Away has shown that a residential learning experience provides opportunities and benefits/impacts that cannot be achieved in any other educational context or setting.” Professor David Hopkins, Learning Away Final Evaluation Report

See more at <http://tinyurl.com/pqq2lu7>



Greater London National Park City

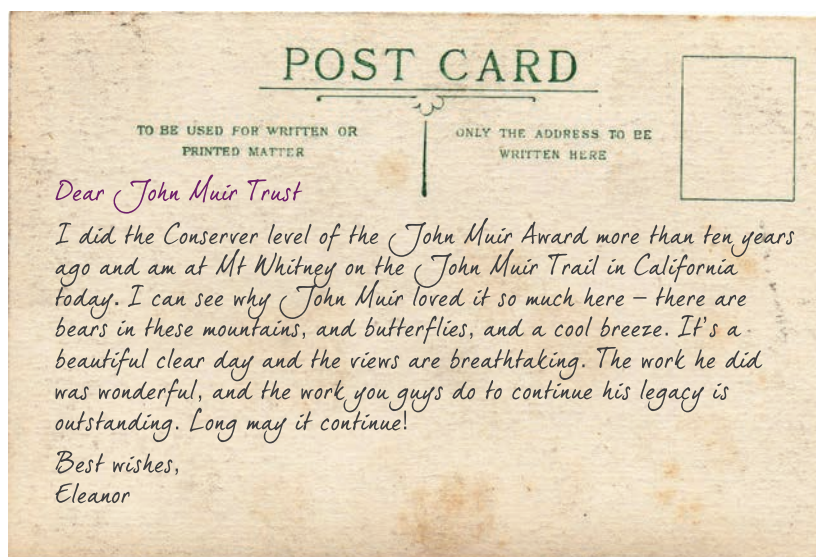
The John Muir Trust is lending its support to a new proposal for London to become a National Park City. There's no precedent for making a National Park City – London would be the first.

The concept interprets key purposes of the UK's current 15 National Parks – promoting understanding and enjoyment of the natural environment, as well as conserving and enhancing it – for a whole city. Its focus is to help Londoners benefit more from the capital's natural heritage, and to ensure London's environment benefits too.

Having already received significant support from all the major political parties, and the London Assembly, new research shows 9 out of 10 Londoners want the capital reimagined as a National Park City, and for the London Mayor and local councils to back it. A Proposal (right) to make London a greener, healthier and more enjoyable place to live and visit has been published as a result of a successful £32,000 crowdfunding campaign. Specific aims include ensuring that 100% of children are connected to nature, and increasing the capital's biodiversity. The proposal does not ask for any public sector funding from either local or central government, and does not include any request for formal planning powers.

“Since the launch of this initiative as a ‘notional’ park in April 2014, the backing of the John Muir Trust has been invaluable” says Daniel Raven-Ellison, founder of the initiative. “The Trust’s expertise in conservation and engagement work in relation to wild places has been an inspiring reference point, as has been the legacy of John Muir.”

For this vision to become reality, the campaign is asking for 2/3 of London's 649 electoral wards to support a Declaration. Find out more at www.nationalparkcity.london and add your support to make London a National Park City.



John Muir Trust Wild Land Films

The John Muir Trust owns and cares for some of the finest wild places in Scotland, including the summit of Ben Nevis and part of the Cuillin on Skye. We look after breathtaking mountains and coastline, dramatic gorges, native woodlands and beautiful meadows. These special places are open to explore and enjoy any time you like. We own land to protect it, repair damage, and to rewild it for future generations. We work with local communities and volunteers to restore habitats and bring back lost species. We maintain many miles of footpaths, clear invasive vegetation, pick up litter and clean beaches.

Discover more about John Muir Trust properties, and what we do on them, through a new suite of films. Then come and visit. www.johnmuirtrust.org/trust-land



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All of nature for all of Scotland
Nàdar air fad airson Alba air fad

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