

## JOHN MUIR AWARD YEAR OF YOUNG PEOPLE 2018 CONSERVE AUDIT

*“It felt good to do something for others and work outside in fresh air.”*

During Year of Young People 2018<sup>1</sup> the John Muir Trust carried out a monitoring exercise – identifying the amount and type of activity carried out by young people to meet the Conserve Challenge of the John Muir Award.

### Young People in Scotland Conserve Audit 2018 reveals:

- 29,848 days of Conserve activity (208,936 hours)
- Carried out by 19,346 young people completing their John Muir Award
- Valued at £783,500, based on National Lottery Heritage Fund figures
- Over 10.5 hours of Conserve activity per young person
- 30% of activity carried out by young people experiencing disadvantage
- Participation in Conserve activity is closely split between males (52%) and females (48%)

### What is the John Muir Award?

The John Muir Award, run for free by the John Muir Trust, encourages people from all backgrounds to connect with wildness – from what’s on our doorstep in urban settings to remote coastlines and mountain landscapes. It gives each participant the opportunity to put something back and make a positive contribution to our natural environment.

Participation has Four Challenges at its heart:

*Discover* a wild place  
*Explore* it

Do something to *Conserve* it  
*Share* your experiences.

[www.johnmuiraward.org](http://www.johnmuiraward.org)  
#JohnMuirAward



13,135M<sup>2</sup>

the area **invasive species** were searched, identified and cleared including: rhododendron, Himalayan balsam, lodgepole pine, Japanese knotweed, laurel, bamboo, sitka spruce, gunnera, snowberry, sycamore, hydrangea



5,151

bags of **litter** were cleared by 10,863 young people and 535 bags were **recycled**



12,967

**trees planted** by 3,235 young people, including hazel, aspen, beech, scots pine, oak, birch, holly, cherry, downy birch, rowan, hawthorn, willow, ash, maple, juniper, tree tube weeding, dog rose, blackthorn, horse chestnut, sycamore, monkey puzzle, crab apple, elder, poplar, alder, cherry, apple, plum, pear



78,539M<sup>2</sup>

of **wildflower areas** were improved for biodiversity with species including poppy, sunflower, cornflower, bluebells, yellow rattle, snowdrop, buddleia, nasturtium, alyssum, marigold, horn violet, Siberian wallflower, yarrow, wild garlic, fox glove, daffodil, crocus, common sorrel, common knapweed, wild strawberry, lady's bedstraw & more



4,337

feeders were made for birds, butterflies, red squirrels, insects, and bees



158.5M<sup>2</sup>

of **pond** restored or created



8,168M

of footpaths created, maintained or improved

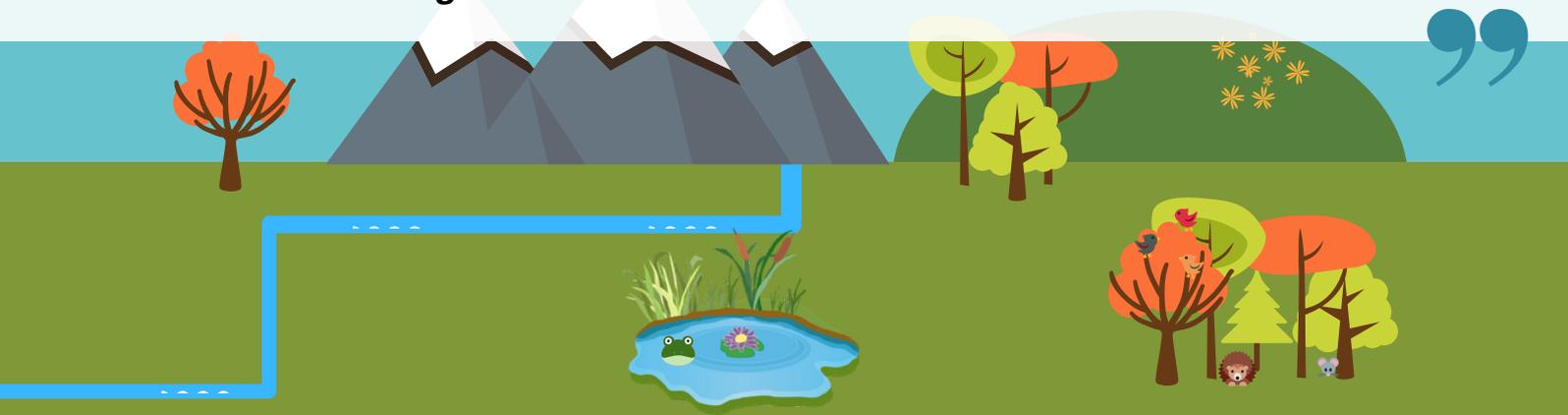


1,449M

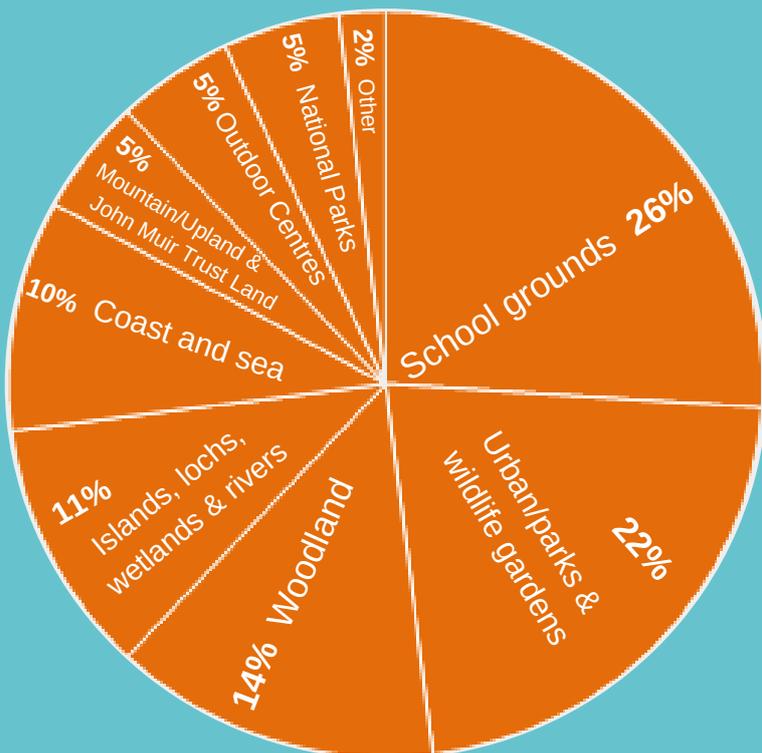
of **fences** created, maintained or removed and **311m of hedges** planted or maintained



***"I have thought a lot about how careless some people are by destroying wild places for others - leaving their litter which can hurt nature as well as look horrible."***



## Habitats activities took place in



***“Planting trees is just great fun. I'm interested in the environment and I've learned a lot. You get a real sense of responsibility, I want to come back to see how my trees are getting on.”***

Louise, from Coatbridge

## Nature Surveys - Citizen Science

Over 5,000 young people engaged with 63 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) partnership organisations to collect valuable data on a range of wildlife species and environmental factors - from mayflies to marine litter; and pollinators to pond water.

### Campaigns

Local, regional and national campaigns are popular ways for young people to make a difference. Active campaigning included issues such as 'bubbles not balloons', single-use plastics (#NaeStrawAtAw), palm oil, dog-fouling, take-away coffee cups and Clean Up Scotland's spring clean.

### Impact and Access

More than half of young people doing their John Muir Award directly engaged with minimising their impact on wild places – specific initiatives included:

Leave No Trace, minimum impact principles, Global Goals for Sustainable Development, and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. Young People also travelled greener, reduced-reused-recycled, audited energy, and monitored food miles (including growing their own).



Search 'John Muir Award Resource Guides' for ideas and links on nature surveys, campaigns and outdoor access.



## Conclusions

Research and feedback from young people shows that they value opportunities to engage with, care for, and invest in Scotland's nature.<sup>2</sup> The John Muir Trust aims to inspire and connect people with wild places, encouraging everyone to experience the benefits of them.

This year-long monitoring exercise demonstrates that young people are making a significant positive impact to our environment – locally, cumulatively, and nationally.

It shows that young people are not just the future – they seek volunteering opportunities to make a difference right here, right now.

Young people enjoy getting their hands dirty and working collaboratively through partnerships to achieve mutual benefits.

The John Muir Award can be a catalyst for linking nature and sustainability focused organisations and charities with schools, youth groups, families and individuals – helping put into practice national policies and plans.

Participants of the John Muir Award are young people from all walks of life, including those experiencing disadvantage.<sup>3</sup> Gender is closely split between male and female.

This Conserve Audit highlights a commitment from young people towards the priorities of the John Muir Trust to protect and conserve wild places across the UK.

Thank you to all the Award Provider organisations, families and individuals for contributing to this Audit and helping us demonstrate the impact of young people through the John Muir Award.



## Good for us - good for the planet

**Giving** (including volunteering) and **Compassion** (thinking about what you can do for nature) are two evidence-based actions identified separately by New Economics Foundation, and University of Derby that improve personal wellbeing and nature connectedness – the things associated with pro-nature behaviours. Search 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' and 'Five Pathways to Nature Connection' for more.

## Get Involved

#iwill4nature is a growing environmental youth social action campaign during Year of Green Action 2019. Join the movement, make a pledge and find out more [www.iwill.org.uk/environment](http://www.iwill.org.uk/environment)

A yellow banner with the #iwill logo in grey and red.

## Find out more

To help share nature engagement good practice the John Muir Trust is collating relevant research & feedback, youth engagement initiatives & campaigns, and young people's stories into a dedicated Young People and Nature web resource. Visit, share and contribute at [www.johnmuirtrust.org/youngpeople](http://www.johnmuirtrust.org/youngpeople)



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[2] Young people and nature – Research and Feedback [www.johnmuirtrust.org/youngpeople](http://www.johnmuirtrust.org/youngpeople)  
[3] Inclusion, Wild Places and the John Muir Award [www.johnmuiraward.org](http://www.johnmuiraward.org)