



**Personal Testimonial
from John Muir Trust Journal
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'I am writing about John Muir...'

My name is David McCallum, 37, janitor at St Paul's School, Glenrothes, Fife.

I am writing about John Muir (who?), the John Muir Trust (what's that?).

Until around 1 year ago my philosophy was 'cut trees down, who cares about the environment.....I'm not going to be here. Wildlife - got nothing to do with me.'

Then one of our teachers, Mrs Doherty, came to me to say that they were thinking of planting a mini woodland area as part of the John Muir Award Scheme. I voiced my complaints all negative eg vandalism, encouraging folk at night especially as my house and garden are next to the area proposed. After the plans were shown to me I thought - not too bad this idea, the kids will learn a lot when this gets bigger and they will respect the area. So I got involved!!!

Along with the kids, digging, planting, making paths, clearing, learning about John Muir and what he was all about, I have now started to look at the world with different eyes and a different attitude. My children also are now being changed because they are the ones who will be here when I am gone, their children and their children.

Myself and my kids and my dog now regularly walk through woodlands, over hills etc just looking and acknowledging how beautiful this place really is.

I recently went on an outward bound course at Ardroy in Argyllshire. The scenery was amazing. I was asking one of our leaders about the area and why the trees were all being cut down? He said they can plant trees which SHOULD be growing in that part of the country. So thanks to the John Muir Awards Scheme I am learning things that I didn't even care about a year ago.

My outlook on life, planet, plants and wildlife is turned full circle. I am trying to teach my children the same.

So all I can say is a big thank you to the teacher, Mrs Doherty and Mr John Muir. I have been converted.