

Press Release

JOHN
MUIR
TRUST

Adventure grant supports research for children's book on Scottish wildlife.

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Ben Parker, from Newcastle, will explore initiatives aimed at conserving iconic Scottish species, with funding support from the Des Rubens and Bill Wallace Grant.



Ben will spend 4 weeks from June, hiking and wild camping across the Cairngorms National Park and the Isle of Skye. Along the way he will explore initiatives aimed at conserving iconic species such as osprey, capercaillie, ptarmigan, mountain hare, red squirrel, golden and white-tailed eagles, otters, minke whales, and basking sharks. Ben, who has an MSc in Biodiversity, Conservation and

Management from Oxford University hopes to inspire a younger audience with his research by producing an engaging and educational children's book on the wildlife of Scotland.

Ben will be working on the project with teammate Teresa Matamoro who has experience of producing children's books. The finished book will be beautifully illustrated and include tips for how readers can get involved in conservation initiatives in Scotland.

On receiving the news of the grant offer Ben said: "I'm incredibly excited to have received the Des Rubens and Bill Wallace Grant, as it will allow me to enrich my understanding of Scottish wildlife and wild places. This knowledge will be invaluable for developing a children's book that celebrates the special wildlife of Scotland. I am very grateful to the John Muir Trust for helping me to produce something that will, hopefully, inspire others to explore and value the natural world."

Jenny Seaman of the John Muir Trust, who administers the Des Rubens and Bill Wallace Grant said: "The grant panel were delighted to be able to support Ben's research and were impressed by his enthusiasm for making the findings of his academic investigations accessible to a much younger audience".

Ben is one of six successful applicants to the Des Rubens and Bill Wallace Grant in 2023. This grant was established to give people the opportunity to seek out life-changing experiences in wild places in ways which will benefit both the person, and the wild places themselves.

Editor's Notes

About the John Muir Trust

The John Muir Trust is a leading voice for the UK's wild places. Its stewardship of some of Britain's most iconic wild places, including Ben Nevis and Helvellyn, is guided by three freedoms; ensuring nature has the freedom to repair itself, people have the freedom to enjoy the benefits, and communities have the freedom to thrive. For 40 years, the Trust has advocated for the protection of wild places by evidencing their benefit to society. Driven by the belief that wild places are for everyone – it also provides opportunities for people from all walks of life to engage with nature through its UK-wide environmental award scheme, the John Muir Award.

About the Des Rubens and Bill Wallace Grant

The grant commemorates two former Presidents of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, who each led inspiring and adventurous lives. It was set up to give others an opportunity to follow in their adventurous footsteps and experience wild places. Projects should have an educational or scientific component and benefit wild places.

Bill Wallace, died of heart failure in February 2007 while skiing in the Alps at the age of 73 with two artificial hips.

Des Rubens, was a popular teacher at Craigroyston High School in Edinburgh was killed in June 2016 in an Alpine climbing accident at the age of 63.

Grants are for £200 to £2,000 and open to UK applicants of all ages. Closing date for applications is 15 January each year. Further details on how to apply: <https://www.johnmuirtrust.org/whats-new/grants/des-rubens-and-bill-wallace-grant>

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