

# Environmental Volunteer Network Newsletter

Autumn 2015

## The Environmental Volunteer Network

South Lanarkshire Council's Countryside and Greenspace Service works with environmental volunteers across the county in a number of ways. We continue to work closely with a number of groups to help improve sites and engage with local communities. This year we have moved away from running as many formal courses and are focussing on providing volunteers in South Lanarkshire with informal events, courses and networking opportunities. For example, we have worked with OPAL (the Open Air Laboratory [www.opalexplornature.org](http://www.opalexplornature.org)) to show the group at Holmhill Community Park how to use the water quality survey pack, and those at Millheugh & Greenhall to survey hedgerows using the biodiversity survey pack. Our Partners the Clyde and Avon Valley Landscape Partnership [www.clydeandavonvalley.org](http://www.clydeandavonvalley.org) also run training courses and events throughout the year – have a look at their article in this newsletter for details.



*Small tortoiseshell butterfly*

Over the next few months we are planning to run mountain bike courses for the Mauldslie Trail Collective and a few sessions to introduce people to surveying different animals such as bats and butterflies. There are also a number of events that you may be interested in joining in with:

- Conservation days at South Haugh, Hamilton – fortnightly on Thursdays
- Responsible mountain biking day at Chatelherault Country Park – 12 September
- Bluebell wood planting with the Friends of Langlands Moss, East Kilbride – 20 September
- Volunteer day with the Friends of the Calder (Millheugh and Greenhall) – 20 September
- Clean up at Low Parks, Hamilton – 14 October
- Snowberry removal with the Friends of the Calder (Millheugh & Greenhall) – 25 October.



*Clearing a fallen tree at Barnhill, High Blantyre*

For more information on any of these events please get in touch. If you are part of a volunteer group that would like to join our network just let us know. This year our annual networking event will be a Big Volunteer Day Out at Whitelee Wind Farm – details to follow.

# Clyde and Avon Valley Landscape Partnership (CAVLP)

The summer may have been slow to start, but we've certainly not let it hold us back in our mission to conserve, enhance and celebrate the Clyde and Avon valleys here at the Clyde and Avon Valley Landscape Partnership.

The CAVLP Heritage team have joined us in our new office in the historic David Dale's house in New Lanark. The team launched the heritage focussed projects they'll be delivering over the next few years dressed as Red Coats and using traditional surveying techniques at the Roman Temporary Camp near Cleghorn on Friday 10th July. The event was followed by a local heritage group networking session the following day. For information on their workshops, activities and events which will provide more opportunities for people to get involved in recording, researching, sharing and celebrating the unique archaeology and historic environment of the local area, follow them on **Facebook: CAVLP Heritage**, and **Twitter: @CAVLPHeritage**.

We've also launched #WildTimeLAN – a summertime campaign offering fantastic opportunities for getting out and about with natural play sessions and a digital forum to share your play ideas, photos and favourite places.

Check out [www.clydeandavonvalley.com/events](http://www.clydeandavonvalley.com/events) for listings and join in the conversations using #WildTimeLAN on Facebook: Clyde and Avon Valley Landscape Partnership, or **Twitter @ClydeAvonValley**.

If you are looking for a great place to walk, then look no further than Scottish Wildlife Trust Falls of Clyde. A new historic trail leaflet, bringing to life the forgotten history of old Bonnington Estate which now forms the reserve, was published in spring. A project to restore the historic Corra Linn viewpoint on the other side of the Clyde on Corehouse Estate has also been recently completed. This means that visitors can once again enjoy the breath-taking views over Corra Linn waterfall, made famous by travel journals, artists and writers over the past few hundred years.



*Children enjoying #WildTimeLAN playtime*



Glorious Gardens, a project researching, surveying and recording the designed landscapes of the Clyde and Avon valleys is also underway, with the first training session in maps based research completed. It's still not too late to sign up. Visit [www.gloriousgardens.org](http://www.gloriousgardens.org) for more information, or contact Ingrid Shearer directly on [ishearer@yorkat.co.uk](mailto:ishearer@yorkat.co.uk) or **07432 694 183**.

Our partner Clydesdale Community Initiatives run environmental training and volunteering; from family friendly fairy wand and Harry Potter sword making, to path maintenance and free certified pesticide use, there's something for everyone.

For up to date listings, go to [www.clydeandavonvalley.com/events](http://www.clydeandavonvalley.com/events)



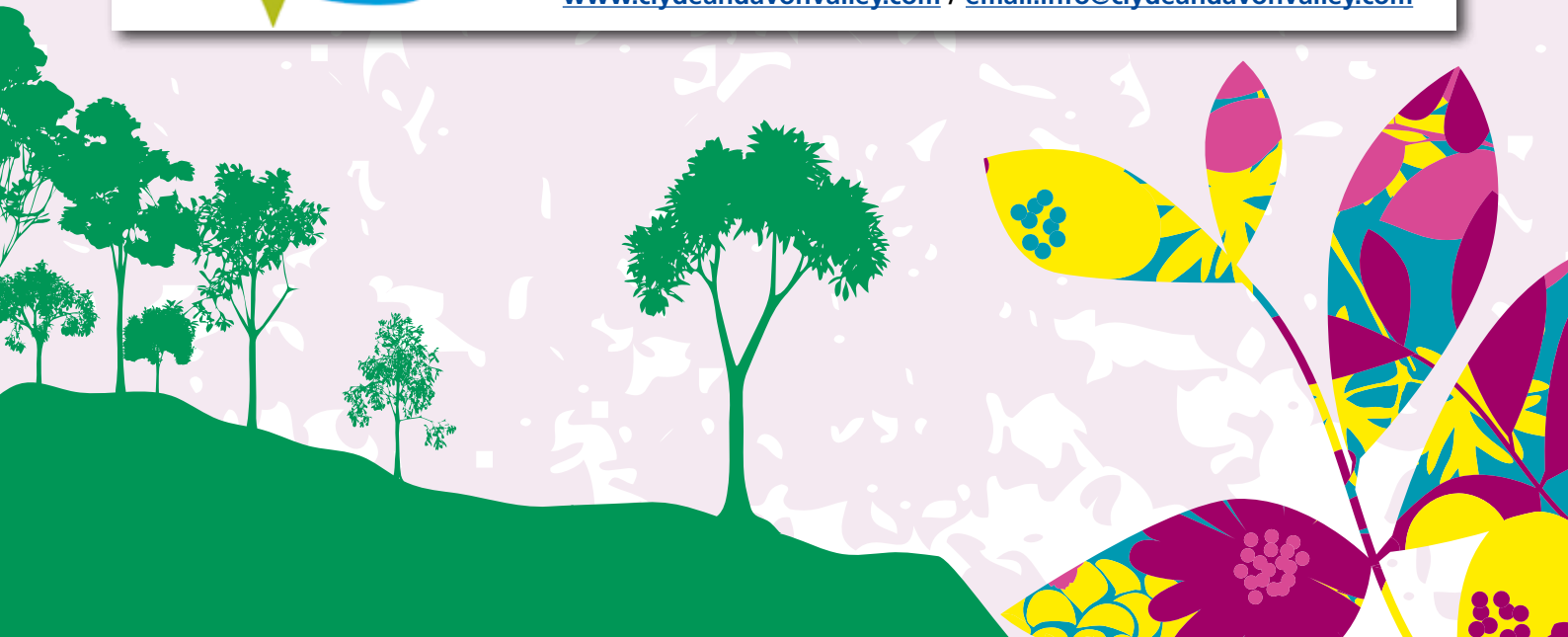
*Clydesdale Community Initiatives volunteers carrying out environmental work at Nethan Gorge Woodlands*



 Like us: Clyde and Avon Valley Landscape Partnership

 @ClydeAvonValley

[www.clydeandavonvalley.com](http://www.clydeandavonvalley.com) / [email:info@clydeandavonvalley.com](mailto:info@clydeandavonvalley.com)



# Your Nature Space

“Your Nature Space” cards are handy pocket guides that anyone can use to assess the biodiversity quality of their local environment. They use a points system to ‘score’ different types of habitat, for example adding points for seeing beetles and wasps at your site, with points being removed for items such as fly tipping or Japanese knotweed. They also give hints and tips on species identification, how to improve nature spaces for biodiversity, as well as other citizen science surveys to take part in.

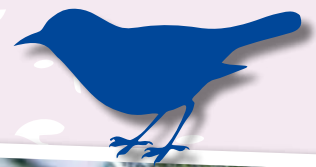
Central Scotland Green Network Trust and South Lanarkshire Council, on behalf of the South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Partnership have recently extended their range of habitat assessment cards to include 4 more habitats found in South Lanarkshire.

The set of 8 cards now cover:

- Woodlands
- Ponds
- Bogs
- Meadows
- Orchards
- Parks and Greenspaces
- Rivers and Streams
- Brownfield sites

These guides can be used to assess how good your site is for wildlife – why not see if you can spot some of the wildlife and habitats on the guide, and see what improvements could be made to your local site?

All of these guides can be downloaded from the South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Partnership webpage at [www.southlanarkshirebiodiversity.co.uk/Press/press.html](http://www.southlanarkshirebiodiversity.co.uk/Press/press.html)



Contact Us

Seen something interesting?

If you would like to let us know how you got on, or what you think of these cards, please go to our website [www.southlanarkshirebiodiversity.co.uk](http://www.southlanarkshirebiodiversity.co.uk)

Phone: 0303 123 1020

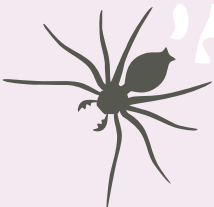
Email: [CAG@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:CAG@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)



Paper copies are available from SLC and CSGNT, and will be available to pick up at events throughout the year.

Please use the contact details on the website above if you would like any more information or copies of these leaflets.

Funding for these cards has come from the Developing Local Communities Fund which operates under the Renewable Energy Fund.



# Get Walking Lanarkshire

Walking is the perfect activity for people who wish to ease themselves into exercise gently and the good news is there's some help to get you started. Get Walking Lanarkshire lead group health walks throughout North and South Lanarkshire. These are FREE, short, friendly walks, for all ages and abilities and are led by trained volunteers.

Consider the benefits: Regular physical activity has been shown to lower the risk of early death, help control weight and reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, depression and a host of other conditions. It helps keep your brain active and is also the perfect way to meet new people and enjoy walking and talking in the fresh air.

The project currently supports over 20 walks across Lanarkshire and in the last year has seen over 150 new walkers join the project and set up 10 new walking groups. It also provides the opportunity to access free training and even become a volunteer walk leader yourself; allowing you the flexibility of setting up a walk at a time and place to suit you. This means that as well as improving your own health and wellbeing you can also be supported in



*Health Walks take place across North and South Lanarkshire*

delivering a service to improve the health of other local people. In the last year we have trained almost 50 new walk leaders; you could be part of a diverse range of volunteers.

The walking project is supported by Scottish Charity Paths for All, who promote everyday walking in Scotland. To find out about your local health walk please contact Jo Duffy, Health Walks Co-ordinator for Get Walking Lanarkshire on; 01698 402077 / 07903358424 / [getwalkinglanarkshire@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:getwalkinglanarkshire@northlan.gov.uk).

**Why not come along and give it a go, you'll be so glad you did!**



*Get Walking Lanarkshire!*

## Holmhill Wood Community Park

The friends of Holmhill Wood Community Park is a group in relative infancy, but already they have created a great partnership with the council and are in the midst of a season of activities and events to further promote the site to the surrounding schools and communities. They aim to:

- Ensure that the park is maintained to a good standard
- Promote the park for everyone in the local community
- Encourage people to visit the park by running events and projects.

The group have been very busy this year working on lots of projects and have great plans, some of which are:

- Improve safe access to different parts of the site
- To place new bins, and work with Cathkin High School and local police to raise awareness of the results of littering and reduce the problems
- To embrace technology by setting up a "Streetlife" app, creating a Tree Trail that will use QR codes to allow users to use their smartphones to access information, and perhaps having geocaches on the site
- To carry out various ecological surveys to assess what there is in the park and then use this information to create educational signage and further improve the site for wildlife by adding bird and bat boxes, planting bulbs and wildflower seeds
- Refurbish the ponds in partnership with Froglife.

Project 31 has been visiting Holmhill Wood to run events and activities for local families. The Countryside Ranger Service has been working with them to help with a litter pick, minibeast hunt and pond dipping event. Project 31 provide a wide variety of fantastic, free of charge activities and services to children, young people, parents and families in Rutherglen, Cambuslang and wider South Lanarkshire. Come along and



*One of the wildlife ponds at Holmhill Wood*

join the adventure! Visit the website for more information and to see which events you would like to join in with:

[www.project31.co.uk](http://www.project31.co.uk)

There is a "Routes around Roots" walk that includes part of Holmhill Wood; search for "Routes around Holmhill Wood" at [www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk](http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk) for the map and local information.

To see photos of the work at Holmhill Wood, and for contact details if you'd like to get involved, please visit

[www.cambuslangcommunitycouncil.com/friends-of-holmhill-wood](http://www.cambuslangcommunitycouncil.com/friends-of-holmhill-wood) or email [CAG@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:CAG@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)



*Community litter pick at Holmhill Wood in June 2015*

## Focus on ... Roy Sutherland

### Adopt a Path Volunteer

If you're thinking of getting out on a countryside walk why not join our Adopt-A-Path Scheme as a Volunteer Path Surveyor? Roy Sutherland is a volunteer with this project – here's what he has to say:

"I volunteer with "Adopt a Path" by regularly walking my chosen path – the old railway line from Wellhall Road to Strathaven Road in Hamilton. I am a path surveyor which involves visiting the path and reporting to my contact, Chris McGinley (South Lanarkshire Council Countryside Ranger Service), of any problems I have found. I also do a litter pick each week to keep the path free from litter. I have been involved for nearly 2 years. I like being outdoors and meeting the users of the path. I also hope I am helping my local community."

# Adopt a Path



Roy Sutherland - Adopt a Path volunteer



Part of the path that Roy monitors

As Volunteer Path Surveyors you do not need to be 'Access' experts, you just need to be enthusiastic about exploring your local path network. The Countryside Ranger Service provides each Path Surveyor with a Handbook that covers all the basics you will need to get started and we will provide initial training that covers topics such as surveying paths and assessing risks. For the more energetic, hands-on, volunteers there will also be the opportunity to be trained in small-scale path maintenance and basic tool use.

So, how about joining our Volunteer Path Surveyor Scheme and make your walk even more interesting than before? Just drop an email to [CAG@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:CAG@southlanarkshire.gov.uk) or call 0303 123 1020 to help get you started on the right path!



## Focus on ... Hamilton Natural History Society

There has been a Natural History Society in Hamilton since 1891 and the current version of the society celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2010. We are a friendly and sociable group aiming to encourage an appreciation of all branches of natural history and related wider interests in geology, archaeology and history. Joining the society is an excellent way to begin or extend an interest in natural history and we cater for novices and experts alike. Based in Hamilton, we cover the Clyde Valley area including Motherwell, East Kilbride and Lanark.

Our website has information about what we do and how to join us; our news, current activities, history and a comprehensive resources page which should be helpful to anyone looking for information on local wildlife.

"Do you want to know more about local wildlife? Would you like to learn more about the nature in your garden, local park or countryside? Would you like to be able to identify the plants and animals that you see round you?

To help you do this, we have launched a new website at

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

We aim to keep adding content such as information leaflets and digitising some of our archive material – keep checking the site for updates. We also welcome any interesting local sightings, information or wildlife photos that people would like to send in. Or why not come along and see us at one of our talks or outings?

Over the summer we organise outings to places of interest where we can go and look at wildlife and habitats. There are also occasional practical tasks such as tree planting, wildflower seed sowing and wildlife surveying. Our winter programme has talks on wildlife-related subjects by invited speakers and is held at Hamilton Old Parish Church Hall, Leechlee Road, Hamilton. Entrance is £0.50 (which includes refreshments) at the door and non-members are very welcome to come along. This season launches on Friday 9th October and topics will include local history, African wildlife and the Scottish wildcat.

If you have an interest in any aspect of natural history, come and join us! "



HNHS visit 7 lochs wetland park

# Living Water comes to south Lanarkshire

Countryside and Greenspace are currently working with Froglife [www.froglife.org](http://www.froglife.org) on a project to create and improve ponds in South Lanarkshire. "Living Water" has already run successfully across England and in Glasgow and North Lanarkshire; we are very excited about the opportunity to make the most of these important habitats. The main aims of this project are:

- To promote ponds and the surrounding environment as vital habitats for the survival of amphibians and reptiles
- To create and restore standing water habitats
- To provide advice to community groups, schools, allotment holders, friends groups etc to increase standing water with a view to increase biodiversity
- To increase suitable terrestrial features for amphibians and reptiles
- To monitor and survey chosen sites
- To provide training and hands on opportunities to volunteers in practical habitat management and survey skills.

We will be creating new ponds near the Mausoleum (at the Palace Grounds in Hamilton); and near the old car park at Langlands Moss Local Nature Reserve in East Kilbride. These are already quite wet sites, so the addition of ponds and other site

improvements will make them great habitats for frogs and toads, as well as lots of other wildlife.

Ponds will be improved at:

- Barnhill, High Blantyre
- Braidwood
- Holmhill Community Park, Cambuslang
- Chatelherault Country Park, Ferniegair
- Calderglen Country Park, East Kilbride

These ponds need improvements such as tree removal and clearing back other vegetation to open up the water. As part of this project we will be working with community groups associated with the sites to get the most out of the ponds and see the effect that the improvements have over time. This project has been made possible due to funding provided by Froglife, South Lanarkshire Council and Biffa Award.

There is a free App available to download for iPhone and Android – search for "**Dragon Finder**". This will help you to identify different species of reptiles and amphibians, find out more about them as well as report a sighting – why not have a look in your local pond and see what you can find?



Common frog



## Dragons at Langlands Moss LNR.

Froglife's Scottish Dragon Finder Project launched in January 2014 and extends Froglife's previous work in Scotland to cover the country as a whole! Thanks to funding from Heritage Lottery Fund the Scottish Dragon Finder Project will operate for 4.5 years building on the strengths from Froglife Scotland's work in Glasgow and North Lanarkshire.

Scottish Dragon Finder aims to reach as many people as possible across Scotland with events and activities

which will give local people the chance to find out more about wildlife in Scotland and spread the word of amphibian and reptile conservation. Dragons on the Move visited Langlands Moss Local Nature Reserve in East Kilbride for a family and frog fun day!

"The Friends of Langlands Moss LNR were delighted when Froglife Dragon Finder's Emily and others from Froglife joined them at Langlands Moss for a family day with the focus on all things amphibian! The day was very wet early on but the sun came out and along with it came several families who thoroughly enjoyed all the interactive activities, the refreshments and most of all hunting for frogs! No dragons were found on site but a multitude of frogs were much to the enjoyment of the young amphibian enthusiasts." - Maureen Potter, FOLM [www.folm-ek.org](http://www.folm-ek.org)

Irrespective of your age, experience or background we would love to see everyone get involved with the events and activities we have planned – so stay up to date with what's happening near you by visiting [www.froglife.org/dragonfinder/scotland](http://www.froglife.org/dragonfinder/scotland) and clicking on the "events" page.



Photo courtesy of Froglife

Exploring wildlife at Langlands Moss



Photo courtesy of Froglife

The Dragonfinder Roadshow visits Langlands Moss



## Get in touch!

To see previous copies of this newsletter visit [www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk](http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk) and search for "Volunteer Newsletter".

If you would like to join the volunteer network, suggest courses/events, or would like any more information, please get in touch with us using the details below.

## We now have a Facebook page!

This shows events and lots of information on local wildlife and activities



Like us at "South Lanarkshire Countryside Rangers"

[www.facebook.com/CountrysideRangers](http://www.facebook.com/CountrysideRangers)

## Contact us

You can contact us by

Email: [CAG@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:CAG@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)

Phone: Kerry on 0303 123 1020

Write: The Ranger Station, Calderglen Country Park, East Kilbride G75 0QZ

If you need this information in another format or language, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.

Phone: 0303 123 1015 Email: [equalities@southlanarkshire.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@southlanarkshire.gov.uk)

[www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk](http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk)