

## The Highland Council

### Skye, Ross and Cromarty Area Committee – 4 February 2015

Agenda Item	11
Report No	SRC/014/15

## Countryside Ranger Role

### Report by Director of Development and Infrastructure

#### Summary

This paper summarises the events programme delivered by Council's Countryside Rangers during 2014/15 and the resources allocated to the activities. The paper also presents the activities proposed within the Skye, Ross and Cromarty Area for the financial year 2015/16. Members are invited to:

- a) note the content of the report, including highlights of the work of the Countryside Rangers in Skye, Ross and Cromarty during 2014/15; and
- b) note the proposed priorities and activities programme for the 2015-16 financial year.

## 1. Background

- 1.1 Countryside Rangers have been operating in Skye, Ross and Cromarty since 1997.

The current staff complement in the area comprises:

- Skye and Lochalsh - 2.0 FTE based at Broadford
- Ross and Cromarty – 2.0 FTE based at Dingwall and Ullapool

- 1.2 The Rangers deliver a wide-ranging service for local communities and visitors to the Highlands as well as fulfilling functions across the remit of the Highland Council, notably assisting in the delivery of the Council's duties relating to Access and Biodiversity and the management and maintenance of its countryside properties.

- 1.3 This report will highlight the key achievements over the past year and proposes an events programme for financial year 2015/16.

## 2. Activity delivered via the 2014/15 programme

### 2.1 Guided Walks and Events

The final figures for 2014/15 will not be available until the end of the financial year, so the following figures are for the last full year, 2013/14.

115 events attended by 1552 people. The customer survey found that 98% said that the event met their expectations, whilst 59% said it exceeded their expectations.

## 2.2 **School Visits**

The final figures for 2014/15 will not be available until the end of the financial year, so the following figures are for the last full year, 2013/14.

160 school visits providing children with high quality outdoor learning in their local environment with the Countryside Rangers. There was continued involvement with local schools undertaking the John Muir Award.

## 2.3 **Highland Seashore Project**

As part of the Council's Biodiversity commitments the Rangers delivered events for the local communities in Easter Ross and were involved in the Wester Ross Seashore Festival providing activities for over 100 people on the day.

## 2.4 **Gaelic in the Environment**

Four events run as part of the ranger events programme, input into Duais Iain Muir (Gaelic John Muir Award) and a number of nursery and primary school sessions conducted through the medium of Gaelic.

## 2.5 **Countryside Properties**

The Rangers continue to have the direct responsibility for the local management of the numerous D and I countryside properties in the area. This includes twice-yearly risk assessments, monitoring visits and either undertaking or enabling maintenance and upgrading works on these sites. Notable achievements during the year were the project to construct a new footbridge over the Leasgeary river and the pilot project with Broadford Learning Centre's Countryside Skills course involving students undertaking work at a number of Highland Council sites on Skye.

## 2.6 **Countryside Access**

The Council's Access Officers undertake the major role in delivering the Council's access duties under the Land Reform (Scotland) 2003 Act, but the Rangers continue to provide vital support to highlight potential problems, undertake maintenance work with local volunteers, assist the audit of Core Paths and have the main responsibility for promoting the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

## 2.7 **Income targets**

The Rangers currently charge for guided walks and events, and this has contributed significantly towards the overall team's income targets.

## 3. **Proposed priorities and programme for 2015-16**

3.1 The priorities for the Ranger Service activities for 2015-16 are guided by the Single Outcome Agreement, the Programme of the Highland Council, 'Working together for the Highlands', and the Development and Infrastructure Service Plan 2012-2017.

### 3.2 The relevant Priority Themes are:

- Cross-cutting themes – Gaelic, Equalities and Climate Change
- Working together for the economy
- Working together for children and young people
- Working together for better infrastructure
- Working together to empower communities

#### **Gaelic**

Support to Gaelic and reflect the Gaelic culture in events and activities.

#### **Climate change**

Working with communities to raise awareness, and contribute to activities that contribute to the Council's climate change targets.

#### **Equalities**

Delivering activities to as wide a range of groups and individuals as possible and where necessary target specific groups and individuals who have had little or no previous engagement.

#### **Economy**

Delivering events and activities, and contribute to the countryside facilities enhancing the tourism product to attract and retain more visitors to the Highlands, and contribute to the Council's Green Tourism and income generation targets.

#### **Children and young people**

Key contacts for Highland schools supporting the achievement and retention of Eco-school status; and supporting the outdoor learning element of the Curriculum for Excellence.

#### **Infrastructure**

Responsibility for the management of Development and Infrastructure properties, including risk assessments, monitoring and maintenance. Support provision via audit and maintenance of the Core Path Network and promotion of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

#### **Empowering communities**

Assist communities with environmental and access projects, providing specialist advice and assisting their search for appropriate funds.

## **4 Events Programme for 2015-16**

- 4.1 Appendix 1 shows the draft events programme for the Skye, Ross and Cromarty Area for 2015-16.

## **5. Implications**

### **5.1 Resource**

There are no additional resource implications arising from this report. Countryside Rangers are part of the Development and Infrastructure Service and are funded from existing resources.

### **5.2 Legal**

There are no additional legal implications.

### **5.3 Equalities**

There are no additional equalities implications arising from this report. Rangers undertake equalities training and ensure that this is a key element of their work.

### **5.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever**

No additional implications. Rangers encourage understanding and respect of the natural environment. Their work promotes the climate change/carbon clever agenda.

### **5.5 Risk**

There are no additional risk implications arising from this report.

### **5.6 Gaelic**

Rangers support the Gaelic language and culture and strive to include Gaelic in their activities.

### **5.7 Rural implications**

There are no additional rural implications arising from this report. Rangers operate in the rural environment and contribute substantially to its enhancement.

## **Recommendation**

Members are invited to:

- a) note the content of the report, including highlights of the work of the Countryside Rangers in the Skye, Ross and Cromarty area during 2014/15; and
- b) consider and approve the proposed priorities and activities programme for the 2015-16 financial year.

Designation: Director of Development and Infrastructure

Date: 9 January 2015

Author: George Duff, Countryside Manager (Ext 2279)



Saturday March 28, 2015

8pm - 9.30pm

**SkyeLarks: Earth Hour 2015**

Join the Rangers to celebrate Earth Hour 2015 with a night-time wander through woodland and open moor. Listen out for nocturnal wildlife and if the skies are clear, do some stargazing. Please bring a torch and warm clothing. Hot drinks and home baking provided!

Booking essential. Meet at the Duirinish Church car park, Dunvegan. Grid ref: NG 251479. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Saturday April 04, 2015

9.30am - 12noon

**Kinloch Reptile Survey**

Volunteers wanted! We plan to continue the work of Skye and Lochalsh Environment Forum in 2014 in surveying the reptile fauna at Kinloch Forest. This will be a training and awareness raising session with the hope of encouraging volunteers to walk a prearranged route through the area throughout the year noting the presence or absence of reptiles along the way. Will reschedule if weather unsuitable.

Booking essential. Meet at Kinloch Forest car park. Grid ref: NG 704160. Grade A. Free event. Contact John on 01471 820526 or [john.phillips@highland.gov.uk](mailto:john.phillips@highland.gov.uk).

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Friday April 10, 2015

10am - 3pm

**Wild West Coast (1), Galtrigill to Glendale**

Explore some of the less-walked parts of the west coast of Skye - an area of cliffs and caves, sea stacks and spectacular views. Avoiding the more populous areas we will take in archaeology, abandoned settlements, wildlife and scenery as we travel north to south along the wild west coast.

Booking essential. Meet at Glendale village hall to car share to start of walk. Grid ref: NG 178496. Grade C. Adults £15.00, conc. £7.50. Contact John on 01471 820526 or [john.phillips@highland.gov.uk](mailto:john.phillips@highland.gov.uk).

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Saturday April 11, 2015

10am - 1pm

### **The Dark Mysteries of Blackrock Gorge, Evanton**

Stroll through Evanton Wood visiting the haunting chasm of Blackrock Gorge learning the history that goes with it.

Meet at Evanton village car park. Grid ref: NH 607661. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or martin.hind@highland.gov.uk.

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Tuesday April 14, 2015

2pm - 3.30pm

### **Easter Egg Hunt and Pond Dip, Kinlochewe**

Come to Beinn Eighe National Nature Reserve for a fun afternoon for all the family. Ever wondered what lurks beneath the water? How many different beasties can we find? Hunt for Easter eggs on the way to the pond, with prizes for everyone.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk.

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Wednesday April 15, 2015

11am - 2pm

### **Contin Views and Loch Cran**

Take in the paths of Contin forest past View Rock up to Loch Cran looking out for Crossbills and other woodland birds.

Meet at FC Contin public car park just past the village on right going north. Grid ref: NH 453568. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or martin.hind@highland.gov.uk.

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Wednesday April 15, 2015

2pm - 4pm



## **Ainmean Nàdarra Gàidhlig: Gaelic Names for Nature 1. Place names of Skye and Lochalsh.**

A series of events exploring the use of Gaelic in the natural environment. Have you ever wondered what all the Gaelic on the Ordnance Survey maps means? Come along and explore the topic with John Phillips, Gaelic learner and a Countryside Ranger for 26 years!

Booking essential. Meet at the meeting room, The Highland Council Offices, Broadford. Grid ref: NG 637237. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or [john.phillips@highland.gov.uk](mailto:john.phillips@highland.gov.uk).

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Thursday April 16, 2015

10am - 12pm



## **Bird's Eye View, Ullapool**

Climb up Ullapool Hill for fantastic views of Loch Broom, the town and surrounding hills. Learn about the area and its natural history along the way.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade C. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or [reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk](mailto:reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk).

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Saturday April 18, 2015

12pm - 3pm



## **SkyeLarks: Dinosaurs and Seashores**

Come and see the fossils at Staffin Museum and learn about the dinosaurs which once roamed Skye! Then take a walk to the beach where there are giant dino footprints, and have a go at making your own! Suitable for children aged six to 12.

Booking essential. Meet at Staffin museum. Grid ref: NG 506657. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Monday April 20, 2015

2pm - 5pm

**Skye's Big Five (1) Seal Appeal**

Taking advantage of a very low tide, join the Ranger on a walk out to the tidal island of Lampay via Coral beach, part of a Special Area of Conservation designated for common seals. We'll return via Cnoc Mòr a' Ghrobain, which gives fantastic views to Waternish and Dunvegan Head.

Booking essential. Meet at Coral Beach car park. Grid ref: NG 232537. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Wednesday April 22, 2015

10.30am - 3.30pm

**Achnahaird to Garvie Bay, Achiltibuie**

Prepare to step back in time on this stunning, geology-themed coastal walk, with a glimpse into fossil records of the first life to appear on earth. Walk through the fall-out of a meteorite strike preserved in the rock. It's also a great walk for spotting seals, seabirds and otters, plus the views are stunning. Bring sturdy footwear and lunch. This walk is in the North West Highlands Geopark.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade C. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or [reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk](mailto:reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk).

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Wednesday April 22, 2015

10am - 12.30am

**Leg Stretchers, Tain Hill and Pulpit Rock**

Stretch your legs on this walk up to the Pulpit Rock on Tain Hill listening for the birds and great views over Dornoch Firth.

Meet at Tain Hill Forest car park up from Quarry Road, Tain just off the A9. Grid ref: NH 752812. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or [martin.hind@highland.gov.uk](mailto:martin.hind@highland.gov.uk).

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Wednesday May 06, 2015

11.30am - 3.30pm

**Fairy Lochs, Gairloch**

Take a wild ramble through the small hills south of Gairloch, with stunning views to the Torridon hills, and a visit to the atmospheric crash site of a WWII plane. Bring sturdy footwear and lunch.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade C. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk.

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Thursday May 07, 2015

10am - 1pm

**Birds of Ardnish**

Join the Rangers and local bird expert Bob McMillan on a visit to Ardnish, a popular pit stop for a wide variety of migratory birds traveling to and from their northern breeding grounds. Brent geese, bar-tailed godwits, wimbrel and great northern divers to name but a few mingle with the resident breeders, making a spring visit to this site well worth it for any keen bird watcher. Bring binoculars.

Booking essential. Meet at Broadford car park to car share to site.. Grid ref: NG 643235. Grade C. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk.

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Saturday May 09, 2015

10am - 4.30pm

**Mountain Navigation Course, Ullapool**

Gain the confidence to take to the mountains. A one-day course focusing on map-reading and use of a compass. Beginning in the classroom, we'll then head out onto Ullapool Hill for an afternoon working on our skills. Bring a compass, sturdy footwear, and OS Explorer Map 436.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade C. Adults £15.00, conc. £7.50. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk.

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Wednesday May 13, 2015

10am - 1pm

**Leacanasigh Woods and Shore, Lochcarron**

Enjoy this beautiful ramble around mixed woodland and a secluded shore, exploring a variety of habitats. Look for otters, bird life, and caves that might have been used by early Scots. Bring sturdy footwear.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade C. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk.

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Friday May 15, 2015

11am - 4pm

**Wild West Coast (2), Glendale to Neist Point**

Explore some of the less-walked parts of the west coast of Skye - an area of cliffs and caves, sea stacks and spectacular views. Avoiding the more populous areas we will take in archaeology, abandoned settlements, wildlife and scenery as we travel north to south along the wild west coast.

Booking essential. Meet at Neist Point to arrange car share back to start of walk. Grid ref: NG 132477. Grade C. Adults £15.00, conc. £7.50. Contact John on 01471 820526 or john.phillips@highland.gov.uk.

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Saturday May 16, 2015

10am - 1pm

**Spring Birdsong and Flowers at Teandore Oakwood**

Visit the ancient oak wood and open air preaching site listening for summer migrants that breed here and learn about indicator plant species of ancient woods.

Meet beside the Urquhart New Cemetery on the B9163 between Alcaig and Urquhart, North Black Isle. Parking roadside so please park carefully. Grid ref: NH 578578. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or martin.hind@highland.gov.uk.

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Wednesday May 20, 2015

10am - 12.30pm

**Ainmean Nàdarra Gàidhlig: Gaelic Names for Nature 2. Birds of Land and Sea.**

A series of events exploring the use of Gaelic in the natural environment. Did you know that the Gaelic for Oystercatcher is Gille Brìghde (St. Bride's servant) and that Snipe in Gaelic is Gobhar Adhair (goat of the air)? Learn the Gaelic names for lots more birds on this easy walk round one of Skye's best birding sites.

Booking essential. Meet at Broadford main car park to car share to the start of the walk. Grid ref: NG 637237. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or [john.phillips@highland.gov.uk](mailto:john.phillips@highland.gov.uk).

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Thursday May 21, 2015

10am - 4pm

**An Groban Hill Walk, Gairloch**

At only 383m, An Groban is not massive like its neighbours, but what a view! A delightful riverside walk through historic Flowerdale Estate leads us to a pretty waterfall and the start of our climb up the rocky hill. With careful route-finding it is easier than it looks, but it is steep! Bring sturdy footwear and lunch.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade D. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or [reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk](mailto:reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk).

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Thursday May 21, 2015

10.30am - 1.30pm

**Loch Kinellan and the Black Loch**

Explore the lochs above Strathpeffer for grebes and wildfowl and to see a green hairstreak or two.

Meet at Loch Kinellan car park. Grid ref: NH 473576. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or [martin.hind@highland.gov.uk](mailto:martin.hind@highland.gov.uk).

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Tuesday May 26, 2015

2pm - 4.30pm

**Highland Harvest (1) Spring, Portree**

Thought there was no such thing as a free lunch? Think again! Join the Rangers on a series of foraging forays to discover the variety of fare nature has to offer. Learn how to identify and prepare different natural foodstuffs found across a range of seasons and habitats. Wild garlic, ground elder and dandelion - we have all the makings of a spring salad already. Lets see what else we can find to go along with it.

Booking essential. Meet at Sgoirebhreac car park (on the coast directly below the Cuillin Hills Hotel). Grid ref: NG 488438. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or john.phillips@highland.gov.uk.

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Thursday May 28, 2015

11am - 2pm

**Riverside Walk, River Sgitheach, Evanton**

Wander along the river paths to Balconie Point visiting the amazing bluebell woods at this time. Look out for dippers and wagtails as we go.

Meet at Evanton village car park. Grid ref: NH 607661. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or martin.hind@highland.gov.uk.

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Friday May 29, 2015

Time given out on booking.

**Wild Isles (1): Soay**

Board the "Misty Isle" to voyage from Elgol to Soay, an island rich in history but little visited. Explore Gavin Maxwell's basking shark fishery, hear tales of evacuation and re-occupation, and enjoy the unique and varied wildlife.

Booking essential. Meet at Misty Isle booking office, Elgol Jetty. Grid ref: NG 516135. Grade C. Adults £15.00 plus boat fee, conc. £7.50 plus boat fee. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk.

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Saturday May 30, 2015

2pm - 4.30pm

**Highland Herbal (1) Husabost**

A spring session exploring the variety of plants used as remedies by early medical practitioners in the Highlands. The first in this series of 3 walks takes place close to the ancestral home of the Beatons of Skye, hereditary physicians to the Lords of the Isles. Some of the plants, like valerian and lesser celandine are still in use as medicines today whilst others like bogbean and white water lily have long fallen into disuse.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or [john.phillips@highland.gov.uk](mailto:john.phillips@highland.gov.uk).

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Tuesday June 02, 2015

11am - 1pm

**Ramble Through Rassal, Kishorn**

Come and discover the abundant flowers, wildlife and geology of the most northerly ash woods in Scotland. Look out for orchids and mountain avens flourishing on the limestone slopes. Bring sturdy footwear and a sense of exploration.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or [reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk](mailto:reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk).

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Tuesday June 02, 2015

10am - 2pm

**Skye's Big Five (2) Regal Eagles**

A fantastic hill walk in a beautiful coastal position, Beinn Tianavaig offers fabulous views of Portree harbour, the Storr and across to Raasay. With Creag na h-Iolaire ('Eagle Crag') sitting below the summit, there is great potential to see both white-tailed and golden eagles.

Booking essential. Meet at the parking area on the shore of Camustianavaig. Grid ref: NG 508388. Grade C. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Friday June 05, 2015

11am - 3pm

### **Wild West Coast (3) Neist Point to Ramasaig**

Explore some of the less-walked parts of the west coast of Skye - an area of cliffs and caves, sea stacks and spectacular views. Avoiding the more populous areas we will take in archaeology, abandoned settlements, wildlife and scenery as we travel north to south along the wild west coast.

Booking essential. Meet at Glendale village hall to arrange car share to start of walk. Grid ref: NG 178496. Grade C. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or [john.phillips@highland.gov.uk](mailto:john.phillips@highland.gov.uk).

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Wednesday June 10, 2015

10am - 4pm

### **The Coffin Route, Dundonnell to Inverbroom**

A wild day-long hike on a historic route. Once a coffin route to Clachan church, now part of the Cape Wrath Trail. Bring sturdy footwear and lunch.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade D. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or [reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk](mailto:reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk).

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Thursday June 11, 2015

10am - 1pm

### **Bell of the Brae**

A gentle woodland walk through swathes of bluebells and wild garlic to take in the views from Armadale hill, listen to the spring birds singing and watch the new lambs playing. Ending with tea and cake at the Stables this is a real treat for the senses

Booking essential. Meet at Clan Donald Centre car park. Grid ref: NG 639044. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Tuesday June 16, 2015

11am - 2pm

### **Who's Piping on the Avern River? Alness**

The riverside of the Avern is alive with bird song at this time where dippers, sandpipers and other birds feed on invertebrates of the river. Come along and have a look.

Meet at Crawl Park across from the Alness Library. Grid ref: NH 655695. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or martin.hind@highland.gov.uk.

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Wednesday June 17, 2015

10am - 4pm

### **Highland Dragonflies**

A workshop exploring the life cycles and ecology of Highland dragonflies and damselflies. Led by Jonathan Willet of the British Dragonfly Society, learn how to identify and record your sightings of these amazing insects.

Booking essential. Meet at Highland Council Service Point, Tigh na Sgire, Portree. Car share to afternoon site. Grid ref: NG 482437. Grade B. Adults £10.00, conc. £5.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk.

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Thursday June 18, 2015

11am - 4pm

### **A Mountain-top Stroll, Applecross**

Starting from one of Britain's highest roads allows us to take in a Corbett summit (Sgurr a' Chaorachain, 792m) with magnificent views, for relatively little uphill walking. We'll look out for mountain birds, deer, and upland plants. Note that this walk still contains rugged and exposed terrain, despite the modest ascent, so come prepared for a mountain day and bring lunch.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade D. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk.

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Thursday June 18, 2015

2pm - 5pm

**Ainmean Nàdarra Gàidhlig: Gaelic Names for Nature 4. Sea and Shore**

A series of events exploring the use of Gaelic in the natural environment. Explore the low shore on a spring tide to learn the Gaelic names for seaweeds and other shore life. Here are a few to get you started: feamainn = seaweed; slige = shell; partan = crab; faochag = whelk and faoileag = gull.

Booking essential. Meet at the parking area at An Corran (Staffin Beach). Grid ref: NG 491685. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or [john.phillips@highland.gov.uk](mailto:john.phillips@highland.gov.uk).

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Saturday June 20, 2015

9.30am - 4pm

**Glacial Secrets of Ben Wyvis, By Garve**

Climb upwards and learn how glaciation has shaped the Ben. Learn to see the signs of glaciation on our high mountains with the Ranger and the Highland Geological Society.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grid ref: NH 410671. Grade D. Adults £15.00, conc. £7.50. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or [martin.hind@highland.gov.uk](mailto:martin.hind@highland.gov.uk).

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Tuesday June 23, 2015

10.30am - 1pm

**Saunter Round Shieldaig Peninsula, Sheildaig**

A stunning and easy coastal walk, looking for herons, otters and sea-eagles. Come and discover something about the history of the area and learn about the uses and folklore of the many plants along the trail. Suitable for all the family.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or [reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk](mailto:reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk).

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Wednesday June 24, 2015                      11am - 2pm

## **Leg Stretchers, Struie Hill, by Edderton**

Another leg stretcher up a wee hill with great views.

Meet at parking on the B9176 about 1km south of the Struie Viewpoint. Grid ref: NH 650850. Grade C. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or martin.hind@highland.gov.uk.

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Wednesday June 24, 2015                      Time given out on booking.

## **Wild Isles (2): Rona**

A day trip to Rona on board the Brigadoon. An island as rich in wildlife as it is in cultural history, visit the Church cave and abandoned villages, soak up the 360 degree views which showcase the best of Scotland's beautiful west coast, and walk among the diverse flora and fauna.

Booking essential. Meet at Portree Harbour. Grid ref: NG 485434. Grade B. Adults £15.00 plus boat fee, conc. £7.50 plus boat fee. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk.

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Tuesday June 30, 2015                      11am - 2pm

## **Skye's Big Five (3) Otter Spotter**

A walk to Kylerhea otter hide and eagle exhibit where a turning tide offers great opportunity to see white-tailed and golden eagles, as well as seals and if we're really lucky, otters too.

Booking essential. Meet at Forestry Commission car park, Kylerhea. Grid ref: NG 786211. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk.

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July                      Time given out on booking.

**Wild Isles (3): Isay**

We're teaming up with Diver's Eye Boat Trips for a visit to Lochbay, an area with a rich diversity of wildlife including common seals, porpoise, otter and an array of breeding seabirds. With time ashore on Isay island to visit abandoned villages, hear tales of times past and explore the foreshore, this is sure to be a day to remember. This trip will take place in July 2015. Date to be confirmed please call for further details.

Booking essential. Meet at Stein car park. Grid ref: NG 263564. Grade B. Adults £15.00 plus boat fee, conc. £7.50 plus boat fee. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Friday July 03, 2015                      10am - 1pm

**Queen's Path**

One of the lesser-known walks on Raasay. Take a relaxed stroll through natural woodland alive with birdsong and wild flowers to the pebble beach below, a lovely spot for lunch with stunning views across the sea towards Portree and Trotternish. Short drive required to walk starting point.

Booking essential. Meet at Raasay ferry terminal. Grid ref: NG 545363. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Wednesday July 08, 2015                      11am - 1pm

**Minibeast Hunt, Laide**

Bugs and beetles, millipedes and moths. Come along to discover who's hiding in the undergrowth, trees and ponds of Laide Community Woodland near Aultbea. Fun for all the family. Bring wellies.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or [reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk](mailto:reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk).

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Wednesday July 08, 2015

2pm - 5pm

**Ainmean Nàdarra Gàidhlig: Gaelic Names for Nature 3. Woodland Plants and Trees**

A series of events exploring the use of Gaelic in the natural environment. With its roots in Irish Gaelic, the Gaelic tree alphabet is well known however many of the names have changed through time. Bring yourself up to date with these and the names for a range of woodland plants on this wander through some of Skye's scarce ancient woodland.

Booking essential. Meet at the shore parking area by the Ord River. Grid ref: NG 616131. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or [john.phillips@highland.gov.uk](mailto:john.phillips@highland.gov.uk).

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Thursday July 09, 2015

10am - 1pm

**SkyeLarks: The Art of Survival**

Have you got what it takes to survive in the wild and become the next Bear Grylls? Come along and learn how to build a shelter, navigate, forage for wild food, track animals and make fire. Suitable for children aged six to 12. Expect to get muddy!

Booking essential. Meet at Camus na Sgianadin parking area. Grid ref: NG 625254. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Friday July 10, 2015

10am - 4pm

**The Mountain Trail, Kinlochewe**

Visit the Beinn Eighe National Nature Reserve to discover a piece of the ancient pine forest that once covered vast areas of the Highlands, before climbing above the trees to find a totally different habitat, resembling the arctic tundra. Learn about the natural history that makes this NNR so special. The trail is steep and rocky. Bring appropriate clothing/boots and lunch.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade D. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or [reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk](mailto:reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk).

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Saturday July 11, 2015

2pm - 4.30pm

## Highland Herbal (2) Portree

A summer session exploring the variety of plants used as remedies by early medical practitioners in the Highlands. Some of the plants, like valerian and lesser celandine are still in use as medicines today whilst others like bogbean and white water lily have long fallen into disuse.

Booking essential. Meet at Sgoirebhreac car park (on the coast directly below the Cuillin Hills Hotel). Grid ref: NG 488438. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or [john.phillips@highland.gov.uk](mailto:john.phillips@highland.gov.uk).

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Tuesday July 14, 2015

10am - 12pm

## SkyeLarks: Mammal Magic

Using camera and small animal traps, come along and see what magical mini mammals we can discover! Learn some fun facts about the mammals we find, and how to spot the signs of those we don't. Suitable for children aged six to 12.

Booking essential. Meet at Lochalsh woodland park entrance. Grid ref: NG 802279. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Friday July 17, 2015

10am - 5pm

## Wild West Coast (4) Ramasaig to Orbost

Explore some of the less-walked parts of the west coast of Skye - an area of cliffs and caves, sea stacks and spectacular views. Avoiding the more populous areas we will take in archaeology, abandoned settlements, wildlife and scenery as we travel north to south along the wild west coast.

Booking essential. Meet at Orbost to arrange car share to start of walk. Grid ref: NG 257431. Grade C. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or [john.phillips@highland.gov.uk](mailto:john.phillips@highland.gov.uk).

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Tuesday July 21, 2015                      3pm - 4.30pm

### **Rock Pool Rummage at Rhue, Ullapool**

Discover, catch and learn about the fascinating creatures that live in the secret world of this rocky shore. Suitable for all ages. Wear footwear with good grip.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk.

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Wednesday July 22, 2015                      1pm - 3pm

### **Pond Dipping, Lily Loch, Muir of Ord**

Explore the lochan for skaters, whirligigs and dragonflies, along with the weird and wonderful beetles and bugs that can live under or skim along the top of the water. Also explore amongst heather and rocks and have a close look at mosses and lichens.

Meet at the Lily Loch entrance next to the Black Isle Showground. Grid ref: NH 536496. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or martin.hind@highland.gov.uk.

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Thursday July 23, 2015                      2pm - 4pm

### **Tobar na Slàinte (Well of Health) Shandwick**

Visit the old healing well and look out for the local rare butterflies beside the Seaboard Villages.

Meet at the Balintore Harbour car park. Grid ref: NH 862754. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or martin.hind@highland.gov.uk.

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Thursday July 23, 2015

10am - 12pm

### **SkyeLarks: Monstrous Mini-beasts**

Hiding under every fallen tree, leaf pile and in every pond lurks a secret kingdom of mini monsters! Come along and discover the wondrous world of mini-beasts using traditional and digital means. Suitable for children aged six to 12.

Booking essential. Meet at Sluggans Wood entrance. Grid ref: NG 471448. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Tuesday July 28, 2015

9am - 4.30pm

### **Beinn na h-Eaglaise Mountain Walk, Torridon**

Climb a great but uncelebrated mountain. Rising 737m above Loch Torridon, Beinn na h-Eaglaise has magnificent views to the surrounding sandstone monoliths and beautiful coast. A big day in wild country - hillwalking experience required.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade D. Adults £15.00, conc. £7.50. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or [reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk](mailto:reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk).

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Tuesday July 28, 2015

2pm - 4pm

### **Rockpool Exploring, Rosemarkie**

Ever wondered how crabs grow bigger and starfish feed on mussels? Well, come along and find out with the Ranger.

Meet at Rosemarkie Beach car park. Grid ref: NH 738577. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or [martin.hind@highland.gov.uk](mailto:martin.hind@highland.gov.uk).

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Tuesday July 28, 2015

10am - 3pm

**National Whale and Dolphin Watch (1) Rubha Hunish**

In support of the Seawatch Foundation's National Whale and Dolphin Watch Week, join the Ranger on a walk out to Rubha Hunish, the northernmost point of Skye and one of the best places on the island for watching marine mammals. Learn about the different species we have in our waters, and how to record your sightings. This is also a great place to get close to nesting seabirds.

Booking essential. Meet at Rubha Hunish car park at the start of the Shulista Road. Grid ref: NG 422742. Grade C. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Wednesday July 29, 2015

2pm - 4pm

**Rockpool Exploring, Portmahomack**

The Hermit Crab, Starfish and the other weird creatures are hiding waiting for you to find them in the rockpools. So come along and have a good look!

Meet at Portmahomack Public car parks beside the Blue Beach Flag. Grid ref: NH 914842. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or [martin.hind@highland.gov.uk](mailto:martin.hind@highland.gov.uk).

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Thursday July 30, 2015

1pm - 4pm

**National Whale and Dolphin Watch (2) Neist Point**

A walk out to Neist Point, a great location for land-based whale and dolphin watching. Here we'll conduct a second marine mammal survey as part of National Whale and Dolphin Watch Week. Come along and learn about the different species of cetaceans we have in our waters, and how to record your sightings. This is also a great place to spot seabirds and basking sharks.

Booking essential. Meet at Neist Point car park. Grid ref: NG 132478. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Friday July 31, 2015                      1pm - 3pm

### **Sand Sculpture Contest, Gairloch**

The sand-sculpture contest is back! This year's challenge is to sculpt your favourite marine creature - anything from a sea-snail to a minke whale. Fun for all the family. Prizes to be won. Bring buckets and spades and lots of imagination.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk.

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Friday July 31, 2015                      10am - 3pm

### **National Whale and Dolphin Watch (3): Point of Sleat**

A walk to the Point of Sleat to conduct our final marine mammal survey as part of National Whale and Dolphin Watch Week. A lovely walk past white sand beaches to the lighthouse, with views across to Rum, Eigg and beyond.

Booking essential. Meet at the car park at end of A851, Aird of Sleat. Grid ref: NG 588007. Grade B. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk.

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Saturday August 01, 2015                      10am - 4pm

### **Grab a Corbett - Beinn Liath Mhor a' Ghiubhais, Loch Glascarnoch**

Climb up to the summit and enjoy the grand vista of the surrounding mountains from this Corbett (weather permitting). We'll look at the landscape and how it was formed and maybe hear and see a golden plover or two.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grid ref: NH 276742. Grade D. Adults £15.00, conc. £7.50. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or martin.hind@highland.gov.uk.

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Monday August 03, 2015                      1pm - 3pm

### **Pond Dipping , Alness Point Pond**

Enjoy catching and learning about stickleback, dragonflies, water scorpions and other aquatic creatures at the pond.

Meet at the Alness Point Business Park beside the A9. Grid ref: NH 650681. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or martin.hind@highland.gov.uk.

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Tuesday August 04, 2015                      11.30am - 2.30pm

### **The Coral Beaches, Applecross**

A really beautiful walk to the white coral beaches of Ard Ban, where we can explore the shore and discover how the white sands are formed. Bring sturdy footwear and lunch.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk.

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Tuesday August 04, 2015                      10am - 12am

### **Exploration North Kessock Seashore**

Explore amongst the seaweed and rocks for slippery eels, sandhoppers and crabs before taking a trip up to the Dolphin centre to learn more about whales and dolphins.

Meet at North Kessock village car park. Grid ref: NH 653479. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or martin.hind@highland.gov.uk.

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Tuesday August 04, 2015

2pm - 5pm

### **SkyeLarks: Commotion by the Ocean**

Come along for a day of marine mayhem, funded by the Highland Seashore Project! Go on a rockpool ramble, a seashore scavenger hunt, sculpt some sand shapes and create a bit of beach art. Weather depending we'll have a BBQ too! Suitable for children aged six to 12. See [www.highlandbiodiversity.com/seashore.asp](http://www.highlandbiodiversity.com/seashore.asp) for more information.

Booking essential. Meet at Ord, shore parking area. Grid ref: NG 616131. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Wednesday August 05, 2015

10am - 12am

### **Exploration Cromarty Foreshore**

When the tide is out there is a whole world uncovered so come along and look for King Rags, Luggies, Brittlestars and other sea creatures.

Meet at the Cromarty Links. Grid ref: NH 788675. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or [martin.hind@highland.gov.uk](mailto:martin.hind@highland.gov.uk).

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Thursday August 06, 2015

10am - 1pm

### **Fossils and Fings, Eathie Coast, Black Isle**

Walk down to the fishing bothies on the coast at Eathie and learn about fossils and the geology of this part of the coast. You might even find your own ammonite!

Meet at public car park on Eathie Road past the Rosemarkie transmitter just before Eathie Mains. Grid ref: NH 769635. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or [martin.hind@highland.gov.uk](mailto:martin.hind@highland.gov.uk).

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Friday August 07, 2015

10am - 3pm

**Wild West Coast (5) Eabost - Struan**

Explore some of the less-walked parts of the west coast of Skye - an area of cliffs and caves, sea stacks and spectacular views. Avoiding the more populous areas we will take in archaeology, abandoned settlements, wildlife and scenery as we travel north to south along the wild west coast.

Booking essential. Meet at the parking place at Struan. Grid ref: NG 348382. Grade C. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or [john.phillips@highland.gov.uk](mailto:john.phillips@highland.gov.uk).

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Tuesday August 11, 2015

2pm - 4pm

**Rockpool Exploring, Rosemarkie**

Search for spiny urchins, nippy crabs and slippery blennies in the rockpools with the local Ranger and learn about the wildlife that live there.

Meet at Rosemarkie Beach car park. Grid ref: NH 738577. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or [martin.hind@highland.gov.uk](mailto:martin.hind@highland.gov.uk).

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Wednesday August 12, 2015

2pm - 4pm

**Rockpool Exploring, Portmahomack**

Even if you have been before there are still plenty new things to find in the rockpools. So come along and look for the stickleback, blenny and other creatures.

Meet at Portmahomack public car parks beside the Blue Beach Flag. Grid ref: NH 914842. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or [martin.hind@highland.gov.uk](mailto:martin.hind@highland.gov.uk).

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Thursday August 13, 2015

7pm - 9pm

### **SkyeLarks: Things that go Bump in the Night**

Come along for an evening of nocturnal nature exploration! Listen and look for bats, moths and owls, learn some fun facts about the animals we discover, and have a go at our night-time noises quiz! Suitable for children aged six to 12.

Booking essential. Meet at Clan Donald Centre car park, Armadale. Grid ref: NG 639044. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Friday August 14, 2015

1.30pm - 3pm

### **Rock Pool Rummage at Old Dornie, Achiltibuie**

Discover, catch and learn about the fascinating creatures that live in the secret world of this rocky shore. Suitable for all ages. Wear footwear with a good grip. This walk is in the North West Highlands Geopark.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or [reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk](mailto:reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk).

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Saturday August 15, 2015

2pm - 4pm

### **Spar Cave**

Hear about the legends and history of this Skye cave - in Gaelic, Slochd Altrumain - the Nursling Cave. The cave featured in the work of Walter Scott who famously bypassed the locked gate then blocking off the cave entrance "by the assistance of a rope and some ancient acquaintance with orchard breaking"! That barrier is long gone now but we still need to ensure we visit at low tide! If time allows, we may visit the nearby promontory fort, Dun Grugaig as well.

Booking essential. Meet at Elgol Village Hall to car share to start of walk. Grid ref: NG 519135. Grade C. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or [john.phillips@highland.gov.uk](mailto:john.phillips@highland.gov.uk).

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Tuesday August 18, 2015

10am - 4pm

**The Mountain Trail, Kinlochewe**

Visit the Beinn Eighe National Nature Reserve to discover a piece of the ancient pine forest that once covered vast areas of the Highlands, before climbing above the trees to find a totally different habitat, resembling the arctic tundra. Learn about the natural history that makes this NNR so special. The trail is steep and rocky. Bring appropriate clothing/boots and lunch.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade D. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk.

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Wednesday August 19, 2015

11am - 4pm

**Sea to Summit**

A short boat trip across Loch Scavaig passing the local seal colony on the way, followed by a walk to the top of Sgurr na Strì, which despite standing only 494 m high boasts arguably the best view on Skye, taking in Loch Coruisk and the Black Cuillin Ridge.

Booking essential. Meet at Misty Isle office, Elgol jetty. Grid ref: NG 516135. Grade C. Adults £8.00 plus boat fee, conc. £4.00 plus boat fee, family £20.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk.

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Thursday August 20, 2015

3pm - 4.30pm

**Seashore Safari, Gairloch**

Discover, catch and learn about the fascinating creatures that live in the secret world of this rocky shore. Suitable for all ages. Wear footwear with a good grip.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk.

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Thursday August 20, 2015

11am - 2pm

### **Macfarquhar's Bed and South Sutor from Cromarty**

Sea cliffs, caves and arches lurk hidden away along this part of the coast. Visit it with the Ranger and and seek out the flowers and animals that inhabit the area. Exposed path down to the shore.

Meet at South Sutor Viewpoint car park. Grid ref: NH 807671. Grade C. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or martin.hind@highland.gov.uk.

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Friday August 21, 2015

2pm - 4.30pm

### **Highland Harvest (2) Summer, Achmore**

Thought there was no such thing as a free lunch? Think again! Join the Rangers on a series of foraging forays to discover the variety of fare nature has to offer. Summer herbs will be ripe for picking and there should be some berries ready too as well as Britain's answer to the groundnut, a member of the carrot family called pignut.

Booking essential. Meet at Achmore Village Hall. Grid ref: NG 855335. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or john.phillips@highland.gov.uk.

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Saturday August 22, 2015

10am - 5pm

### **Unfrequented Summits of Ben Wyvis, Glas Leathad Beag**

Ever wondered about the hills to the east of Ben Wyvis? Well why not come along and explore them and get grand views into the eastern corries of the Ben. Look out for the mountain inhabitants including hare, dotterel and golden plover and learn some geology on the way.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grid ref: NH 545689. Grade D. Adults £15.00, conc. £7.50. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or martin.hind@highland.gov.uk.

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Tuesday August 25, 2015

2pm - 4.30pm

**Highland Herbal (3) Trotternish**

An autumn session exploring the variety of plants used as remedies by early medical practitioners in the Highlands. Some of the plants, like valerian and lesser celandine are still in use as medicines today whilst others like bogbean and white water lily have long fallen into disuse.

Booking essential. Meet at Lochan nan Dùnan car park. Grid ref: NG 467706. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or john.phillips@highland.gov.uk.

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Friday August 28, 2015

9am - 5pm

**Beinn Bhàn Mountain Walk, Applecross**

A big walk from sea to summit to explore this majestic Corbett. Walking over the rocky skeleton of this glaciated landscape, we'll take in giddy views of its corries, explore its impressive geology and look for flora and fauna, while hopefully enjoying views of the surrounding islands and hills. Hillwalking experience required.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade D. Adults £15.00, conc. £7.50. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk.

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Friday August 28, 2015

10am - 3pm

**Wild West Coast (6) Gesto - Drynoch**

Explore some of the less-walked parts of the west coast of Skye - an area of cliffs and caves, sea stacks and spectacular views. Avoiding the more populous areas we will take in archaeology, abandoned settlements, wildlife and scenery as we travel north to south along the wild west coast.

Booking essential. Meet at the layby close to the junction between the A863 and the B8009 to Talisker. Grid ref: NG 415312. Grade C. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or john.phillips@highland.gov.uk.

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Wednesday September 02, 2015

2pm - 4pm

**Ainmean Nàdarra Gàidhlig: Gaelic Names for Nature 5. Mountain and Moorland**

A series of events exploring the Gaelic names for elements of the natural environment. Mountain and moorland are two of the dominant habitats of the highland landscape. Just as the Inuit are reputed to have 100 names for snow, there are a similar number of Gaelic names for hills and mountains. Come along and learn how to tell cnoc from cnap and creag from cruach!

Booking essential. Meet at the meeting room, The Highland Council Offices, Portree. Grid ref: NG 481436. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or [john.phillips@highland.gov.uk](mailto:john.phillips@highland.gov.uk).

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Friday September 04, 2015

10am - 3pm

**Wild West Coast (7) Portnalong to Talisker**

Explore some of the less-walked parts of the west coast of Skye - an area of cliffs and caves, sea stacks and spectacular views. Avoiding the more populous areas we will take in archaeology, abandoned settlements, wildlife and scenery as we travel north to south along the wild west coast.

Booking essential. Meet at car park off the B8009 close to Carbost Free Church to arrange car share to start of walk. Grid ref: NG 386311. Grade C. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or [john.phillips@highland.gov.uk](mailto:john.phillips@highland.gov.uk).

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Tuesday September 08, 2015

9.30am - 4.30pm

**Sail Mhòr Mountain Walk, Dundonnell**

One of the smallest Corbetts (767m), but with legendary views. On the way up we'll pass beautiful waterfalls before reaching open hill ground where wild goats and eagles live.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade D. Adults £15.00, conc. £7.50. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or [reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk](mailto:reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk).

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Wednesday September 09, 2015

10am - 3pm

## **Skye's Big Five (4) Whales of Waternish**

A walk from Trumpan to Waternish Point, a beautifully wild spot with panoramic sea views, and one of the best locations on Skye for spotting whales, dolphins and basking sharks. The route showcases the best of the island's varied flora and fauna, as well as encompassing several areas of archaeological interest and the site of Skye's bloodiest Clan battle.

Booking essential. Meet at Trumpan car park. Grid ref: NG 224613. Grade B. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Saturday September 12, 2015

10am - 4pm

## **Highland Spiders**

Led by the Highland Spider Group, come along to this workshop and learn about the different species of spider found in the Highlands, their ecology, life histories, and how to identify them.

Booking essential. Meet at the Highland Council Countryside Ranger office, Broadford. Grid ref: NG 638237. Grade B. Adults £10.00, conc. £5.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Tuesday September 22, 2015

7.30pm - 10pm

## **Out and about with the Bats, Dingwall**

Have you seen bats flying around your house or when out walking the dogs at night? Do you want to learn more about them? Come along for a talk and walk in Dingwall.

Meet at Dingwall Community Centre, Tulloch Street, Dingwall. Grid ref: NH 550589. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or [martin.hind@highland.gov.uk](mailto:martin.hind@highland.gov.uk).

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Friday September 25, 2015

10am - 4pm

**Wild West Coast (8) Talisker to Eynort**

Explore some of the less-walked parts of the west coast of Skye - an area of cliffs and caves, sea stacks and spectacular views. Avoiding the more populous areas we will take in archaeology, abandoned settlements, wildlife and scenery as we travel north to south along the wild west coast.

Booking essential. Meet at Eynort to arrange car share to start of walk. Grid ref: NG 378264. Grade C. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or [john.phillips@highland.gov.uk](mailto:john.phillips@highland.gov.uk).

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Saturday September 26, 2015

11am - 2pm

**SkyeLarks: Salmon of Snizort**

Celebrate World Rivers Day with a walk along the River Snizort, the longest and best salmon and trout river on Skye. As we make our way towards the falls, learn about the history and current conservation status of wild salmon on Skye, and see if we can spot any 'on the run'. We will also visit the hydro scheme and salmon hatchery, which have played a key role in the successful re-stocking of this river.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Monday September 28, 2015

11am - 4.30pm

**Wild Isles (4): Eilean Fladday**

Walk out from Torran to Eilean Fladday, a tidal island off the north-west of Raasay. At one time the children of the island used to walk to school in Torran and back as the tide allowed. Changed days indeed! We will explore the abandoned village, hear some of the tales of times past on Fladday and walk out past Loch Mòr towards Uamh nan Daoine (the People's Cave).

Booking essential. Meet at Raasay ferry terminal. Grid ref: NG 545363. Grade B. Adults £15.00, conc. £7.50. Contact John on 01471 820526 or [john.phillips@highland.gov.uk](mailto:john.phillips@highland.gov.uk).

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Tuesday September 29, 2015                      11am - 2pm

**Archaeological 'Buffet' at Loggie, near Ullapool**

Explore the remains of a bronze age fort, an iron age dun, a medieval fort, ruins of houses from the old village of Newton Loggie, a round house and a semi-broch, all in two short walks at Loggie! Plus enjoy fantastic views of Ullapool across Loch Broom. Bring sturdy footwear and lunch.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk.

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Wednesday September 30, 2015                      2pm - 4.30pm

**Highland Harvest (3) Autumn, Torrin**

Thought there was no such thing as a free lunch? Think again! Join the Rangers on a series of foraging forays to discover the variety of fare nature has to offer. With winter coming, it is time to get out and see what nature has to offer in the way of food to feed us through the coldest part of the year. Wild fungi will be in season together with nuts and berries. Lets see what we can find - and what we can do with it!

Booking essential. Meet at Torrin Outdoor Centre. Grid ref: NG 573210. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or john.phillips@highland.gov.uk.

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Friday October 02, 2015                      11am - 1pm

**Sands of Time, Gairloch**

Step into the past and discover how and where our ancestors lived, on a fascinating walk along the Sand Archaeological Trail. As well as revealing thousands of years of human activity, the moorland also harbours some fascinating geological and glacial features - this short walk has a lot to offer. Path can be boggy so wear appropriate footwear.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade C. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk.

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Saturday October 03, 2015                      10am - 1pm

**Knockfarral Iron Age Hill Forts , Strathpeffer**

Come along and walk up to the largest hillfort in Ross-shire and learn about the Iron Age, other hill forts and duns in the area as well as the process of vitrification. Was it used on purpose as a technique to strengthen the fort walls or did it happen by chance? Excellent views as well.

Meet at the Old Victorian Railway Station in Strathpeffer. Grid ref: NH 485583. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or martin.hind@highland.gov.uk.

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Saturday October 03, 2015                      11am - 3pm

**Archaeology Festival 2015, Glenelg**

Explore the stunning archaeological features of this remote Highland glen, including two brochs, Dun Troddan and Dun Telve, a massive round-house and a fort, Dun Grugaig, overlooking the steep gorge of the Abhainn a' Ghlinne Bhig (Glen Beag River). Other artefacts to look out for include a chambered cairn, two cup-marked stones and a ruined whisky still - all signs of significant use of this area in times gone by.

Booking essential. Meet at Glenelg Community Hall to car share to start of excursion. Grid ref: NG 814194. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or john.phillips@highland.gov.uk.

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Saturday October 10, 2015                      10am - 2pm

**Mica Mines of Scatwell, by Contin**

Look at the geology of the quarries and learn how mica was important during WWII with Highland Geology Society and the Ranger.

Meet at the Luichart Power Station, Lower Scatwell past Loch Achilty. Grid ref: NH 393571. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or martin.hind@highland.gov.uk.

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Saturday October 10, 2015

10am - 4pm

### **Skye's Big Five (5) Roaring Reds**

In the last of the series, join the Ranger on a circular route through the Red Hills, to listen and look for the resident red deer stags as they battle for dominance. There is also the potential to see eagles hunting and salmon leaping. Expect wet ground.

Booking essential. Meet at Strollamus. Grid ref: NG 602266. Grade C. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Tuesday October 13, 2015

11am - 2pm

### **A Trundle Through Torridon**

Join in the Torridon Mountain and Sea Festival with a gentle bike ride along the shores of Loch Torridon. Mainly using vehicle tracks, we'll explore picturesque bays, look for wildlife, and discover some of the area's fascinating history. Bring lunch and an off-road bike if you have one. Free bike hire may be available courtesy of the Torridon Inn (please call 01445 791242).

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or [reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk](mailto:reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk).

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Wednesday October 14, 2015

2pm - 4pm

### **Ramble on the Ridge**

Designated a Special Area of Conservation owing to its species rich grasslands and unique geological features, this walk along the Trotternish Ridge to Boda Buidhe offers panoramic views over the Quiraing, the land-slipped mass of Cleat and lochs below, and along the Ridge towards the Storr.

Booking essential. Meet at the summit of the minor road between Staffin and Uig. Grid ref: NG 440679. Grade C. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Tuesday October 20, 2015

10am - 5pm

**Clearance Coast**

This circular walk to the abandoned villages of Boreraig and Suishnish, emptied during the highland clearances, brings into perspective the stark contrast between Skye's beautiful scenery and one of its uglier periods in history.

Booking essential. Meet at Cill Chriosd ruined church, B8083. Grid ref: NG 616207. Grade B. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Friday October 30, 2015

10am - 4pm

**The Wild West Coast (9) Eynort to Glenbrittle**

Explore some of the less-walked parts of the west coast of Skye - an area of cliffs and caves, sea stacks and spectacular views. Avoiding the more populous areas we will take in archaeology, abandoned settlements, wildlife and scenery as we travel north to south along the wild west coast.

Booking essential. Meet at Glenbrittle to arrange car share to start of walk. Grid ref: NG 409206. Grade C. Adults £8.00, conc. £4.00, family £20.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or [john.phillips@highland.gov.uk](mailto:john.phillips@highland.gov.uk).

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Thursday November 05, 2015

11am - 12.30pm

**Birds for Beginners, Ullapool**

Wrap up warm for a walk along Ullapool's shore and river mouth to look at the winter birdlife. Learn the differences between the gulls, look for waders, and hunt for dippers and wagtails by the river. Bring binoculars if you have them.

Booking essential. Meeting place given out on booking. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Reuben on 01854 613904/07881 502230 or [reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk](mailto:reuben.brown@highland.gov.uk).

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Saturday November 07, 2015

10am - 12 noon

### **Salmon of the Blackwater, by Garve**

Explore the Blackwater on this short walk with a chance to see salmon leap the falls and learn how hydro-electric schemes have affected them.

Meet at the Silverbridge car park on the Ullapool Road. Grid ref: NH 402638. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or martin.hind@highland.gov.uk.

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Saturday November 07, 2015

10am - 12pm

### **SkyeLarks: Snug as a Bug**

It's getting chilly outside and the wildlife in our gardens needs a helping hand to survive the wintry weather. So let's get creative and make some homes and feeders for nature! Suitable for children aged six to 12.

Booking essential. Meet at Highland Council Service Point, Tigh na Sgìre, Portree. Grid ref: NG 482437. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk.

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Wednesday November 18, 2015

1pm - 4pm

### **Winter Birds of the Cromarty Firth, Dingwall**

See the many birds that have migrated from the arctic lands of Iceland, Scandinavia, the Russian tundra and Greenland. Why do they come here? Come along and find out.

Meet at Ferry Point car park, Dingwall. Grid ref: NH 561583. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or martin.hind@highland.gov.uk.

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Thursday November 26, 2015                      10am - 1pm

### **Winter Birds of the Cromarty Firth, Nigg**

Pop into the RSPB bird hide for a look at the winter visitors before heading along to Nigg Ferry to search for long-tail, eider and other ducks and divers.

Meet at the RSPB Nigg Bay hide car park. Grid ref: NH 807730. Grade A. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Martin on 01349 868563 or martin.hind@highland.gov.uk.

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Friday November 27, 2015                      1pm - 3.30pm

### **Highland Harvest (4) Winter**

Thought there was no such thing as a free lunch? Think again! Join the Rangers on a series of foraging forays to discover the variety of fare nature has to offer. In times of famine, the seashore offers a source of food when all other options fail. From seaweeds to shellfish there is lots to eat on the shore. Join us to explore what there is to eat on one of the low spring tides of the year.

Booking essential. Meet at the small car park at Gedintailor, Braes. Grid ref: NG 524350. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact John on 01471 820526 or john.phillips@highland.gov.uk.

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Friday January 15, 2016                      2pm - 4pm

### **A Voyage to the Hebrides**

Thomas Pennant was a Welsh naturalist and traveller who wrote illustrated books on British, Arctic and Indian ecology, though he never actually travelled to the Arctic or India! He did however visit Skye and the Dun Beag Broch, during his second tour of Scotland in 1771.

Booking essential. Meet at Dun Beag car park, Struan. Grid ref: NG 337385. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk.

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Saturday January 23, 2016

10am - 12pm

### **SkyeLarks: RSPB Big Garden Bird Watch**

Lend a helping hand to the RSPB by taking part in the world's biggest bird survey. Learn how to identify and record the birds we see, and make some feeders to help them survive the frosty weather. And to keep us warm, there will be hot chocolate and cake!

Booking essential. Meet at Clan Donald centre car park, Armadale. Grid ref: NG 639044. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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Thursday February 18, 2016

10am - 1pm

### **Wonderful Winter Wildfowl Wander**

A walk around Portree bay, which at this time of year will be alive with visiting winter ducks, gulls and waders. A must for any keen birder, bring binoculars and wellies, and join the Rangers for coffee and cake at Aros to finish.

Booking essential. Meet at Aros Centre car park, Portree. Grid ref: NG 477425. Grade B. Adults £4.00, conc. £3.00, family £11.00. Contact Ellie on 01471 820527 or [ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.maclennan@highland.gov.uk).

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