Otters in the Regional Park
Page 5
Contents

3 Welcome
4 PHRP donation scheme
5 Otters in the Regional Park
6 Birds of prey
7 Lambing
8 Rural crime
9 Arable Farming
10 Responsible Access
11 Area Report
12 Area Report
13 Area Report
14 Snowy weather
15 Donate
16 Pentland Inspirations
17 Friends of the Pentlands
18-19 Biodiversity surveys and events
Welcome to issue 49 of the Pentland Beacon

If you haven’t explored these (virtual) pages before, you’re in for a treat. The Beacon collates articles from outdoor professionals across the Pentland Hills, letting you know what’s been happening in the hills, and about upcoming activities.

As ever, the Regional Park was busy over winter, experiencing all aspects of winter weather. Most notably being the snow! The snow brought good and bad; good in that otters were visible in the Park which you can read more about in this issue, and bad in that the snow has impacted the sheep with farmers predicting a significant loss in lambs.

Spring sees the start of our new events programme which this year includes biodiversity surveys, guided walks and activities for children. A new booking process has been brought in so if you would like to attend any events, book in to secure your place.

If you are new to the area, make sure you pick up our Discover the Pentland Hills Regional Park leaflet, available at Flotterstone, Harlaw and Bonaly; it has a useful map which should help with navigating the Park, whether on foot, bicycle or horse! On weekends, keep an eye open for our Volunteer Rangers (identifiable by their green uniform), part of the largest Voluntary Ranger Service in Scotland: they have a wealth of knowledge and are happy to help with route suggestions – and they will gladly pass any feedback back to the Regional Park Service.

Enjoy!

Pentland Hills Regional Park staff
Steven Webley
Regional Park Manager
Jenny Hargreaves
Senior Natural Heritage Officer
Tommy McManmon
Natural Heritage Officer: (Dreghorn, Flotterstone, Carlops)
Paula Newton
Natural Heritage Officer: (Bonaly, Clubbiedean)
Meryl Norris
Natural Heritage Officer: (Harlaw)
Victor Partridge
Natural Heritage Officer: (Harperrig, Threipmuir, Hillend)
Pentland Hills Regional Park

DONATION SCHEME

The Pentland Hills Regional Park covers an area of 10,000 hectares with over 100km (62 miles) of paths. Approximately 600,000 people enjoy recreating in the park every year; walking, cycling, horse riding and fishing to name but a few of the recreational activities.

The staff that manage the Regional Park carry out a large number of projects in order to increase the visitor’s enjoyment of the Park. These include: path construction and maintenance; signage and waymarking; installation of access gates; habitat improvements for wildlife; and improvement of facilities at visitor centres and other popular sites. There are always more to do than resources allow. That is where the donations scheme can help.

The Donations Scheme is a simple way for people to put something back into the Regional Park. The scheme creates a way for a general donation to be made towards environmental improvements in the Park. Donations can be made via cheque, bank transfer or cash can be placed into the donation boxes situated in Flotterstone, Harlaw and Threipmuir Car Parks.

All funds raised are used only for new ‘added value’ projects on the ground and not for the day to day running of the Service.

Completed projects:
- Replacement of gate at Castlelaw (2018)
- Replacement of Daisy Dell bridge (2016)
- Upgrading of steps leading into Bonaly Country Park from Torduff Reservoir (2012)
- A new recycled plastic seat for the Flotterstone Glen (2011)
- 500 copies of the ‘Horse Riding in the Pentland Hills Regional Park’ leaflet (2010)

For more information and to donate visit the Regional Parks website: www.pentlandhills.org

‘Approximately 500,000 people enjoy recreation in the park every year; walking, cycling, horse riding and fishing to name but a few of the recreational activities.’
A frequent question I get asked at the moment is “What is your favourite animal Dad?”. The answer is always the same – Dolphins. Sorry, only joking! I do not quite know why I like otters so much, may be like many people who saw “Ring of Bright Water”, I like to think of them as playful, mischievous animals. They are hard to spot, but when seen, never fail to impress.

I have seen several otters on the west coast and on Scottish Islands but in the 25 years I have worked in the Pentland Hills Regional Park, I have not seen a single otter, until this winter, when I have seen three. Back in the 90s we often saw or got reports of mink particularly around Flotterstone, which we believed to have been released from a mink farm. Mink are not native to Britain and unlike otters are not as fussy about what they eat, so they can devastate wildlife particularly wetland birds. Thankfully, the mink disappeared and there is a theory that they can be pushed out by the bigger stronger otter, so perhaps the recovery of the otter population helped with this.

I watched one otter for about 10 minutes at Harperrig Reservoir, swimming, diving and catching prey from the comfort of the Bird Hide; and two together at Bavelaw Marsh, going through a hole in the ice. Reports of other people seeing otters have also increased and not just from these reservoirs. All the reservoirs are being used! It is not surprising, as the reservoirs are full of fish which are otters favourite but they will also eat frogs and toads. Otters wander up and down rivers about 20km for female and 40km for male, so it is unlikely the otters in the Regional Park are just living in the reservoirs and are probably using the Water of Leith and the River North Esk.

It is likely the two I saw at Bavelaw Marsh (see photo) were a mother and a cub, as the young ones stay with their mother until 7 to 12 months of age. Otters are generally solitary, courtship lasts about a week and then the male takes no part in rearing the cub.

If you would like to see an otter in the Pentland Hills I would suggest choosing a quiet time and location. They are shy and will disappear when humans are around. Calm water makes them easier to spot as they swim or dive. You will not be able to get close to them so a pair of binoculars is useful.

Maybe after seeing an otter it will become your favourite animal too. Good luck!

Victor Partridge
Natural Heritage Officer
In light of the recent suspicious disappearance of Fred the golden eagle in the Pentland Hills Regional Park, it would be good if people using the Park for work or leisure reported any suspected wildlife crime to Police Scotland, the Pentland Hills Regional Park Service or the RSPB.

The Regional Park is home to a wide variety of birds of prey; with kestrels, merlins and peregrine falcons nesting here. Buzzards and sparrowhawks nest in the numerous shelter belts and woodlands.

Barn owls, long eared owls, and tawny owls nest frequently and last year we had two pairs of short eared owls nesting inside the Regional Park for the first time in a number of years. Red kites, ospreys and hen harriers are being spotted more often in the Pentlands – it would be pretty special if any of these were to eventually nest here.

Kestrels have been the primary focus for Keith and myself, building up a study area in the Pentlands for the last five years, and we will continue to do so for as long as possible. The kestrel is probably our best known and most recognisable bird of prey, once common, but numbers have been in heavy decline since the 1970s. There is no clear reason for this and it is most likely a combination of factors from agricultural changes, pesticides, insecticides, climate change and a few other reasons.

In 2013, we started putting up more boxes and baskets in and around the Regional Park. The reason for boxes and baskets is that the kestrels will use both, tawny owls will use the boxes, and long eared owls and merlins will sometimes use the baskets.

The aim of the scheme is to provide the birds with nesting opportunities in areas where natural nests are in short supply as well as helping in the monitoring of the nesting population. We then monitor the nest sites and keep detailed records of productivity and fledging success.

We are ringing all the kestrel chicks with the British Trust for Ornithology rings and colour rings (Red with 2 white numbers/letters). We would be grateful for any information regarding sightings of these birds – grid reference, date and if possible the letters/numbers on the ring. The ultimate hope is that the study can help contribute to the understanding of why the kestrel is struggling so much in certain areas of our countryside.

Want to get involved?
Park users can help these birds at nesting time by looking and being aware of what’s around them. Every year we have birds deserting nest sites due to people camping too close, sometimes directly underneath a tree with a large and visible nest box attached to it. So please listen for birds’ alarm calls when you’re having a break or setting up a campsite.

Graham Anderson and Keith Burgoyne
Lothian and Borders Raptor Study Group
Spring, also known to many farmers as lambing season, sees the Park gain thousands of lambs, with most being born in the lowland areas. The ewes usually return to the same areas each year to give birth, and this year, with the unfavourable weather conditions, will struggle to deal with any purposeful or accidental disturbance (sheep worrying) from visitors and in particular, from dogs.

With this in mind, we would like to remind visitors that the Regional Park is living, working landscape, where rearing sheep is one of the biggest land uses, covering much of the 10,000 hectares of land in the Park. The 100km of Pentland Paths, cross much of the land where sheep graze throughout the year and this means no matter the time of year, you will encounter sheep.

There are a few things you can do to help not disturb/harm the sheep; keep to waymarked paths especially during lambing season (sheep will generally try to avoid humans and dogs as much as possible), keep dogs on a short lead or close at heel at all times, read and adhere to seasonal signage, change route if necessary and do not pick up perceived abandoned lambs but instead notify the farmer or the Regional Park Service of the exact location of the lamb.

Please remember that sheep worrying is a criminal offence and under the Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act, 1953, if a dog is identified to be worrying livestock, the keeper and any person in charge of the dog at that time can face a fine and a court can make an order for the dog to be destroyed. The owner of the livestock may also take direct action at the time including shooting the dog to protect their stock.

Paula Newton
Natural Heritage Officer
On Saturday 31st March, the Regional Park Service, alongside Police Scotland, National Farmers Union, Midlothian Council Dog Warden and Penicuik Estate Ranger Service held a sheep worrying event at Flotterstone Information Point. The aim was to speak to as many dog walkers as possible to raise the awareness of sheep worrying in the Regional Park and the surrounding areas, and to let them know that Police Scotland would be actively patrolling the Park during April and May to help combat sheep worrying.

The day was very wet and therefore Flotterstone was not as busy as would have been expected for the Easter weekend. None the less all dog walkers were given advice on how to avoid disturbing sheep and were given free dog poo bags from Midlothian Council Dog Warden.
Arable farming takes place on the fringes and in the flatter low lying areas of the Regional Park. The most noticeable areas are in the large open fields around Harlaw and Threipmuir Reservoirs. These fields are ploughed, tilled and sown with a variety of food crops depending on the time of year, including wheat, barley, oilseed rape and other brassicas.

All the crops grown in these fields are food crops and are destined for either the plates of us humans or to be produced into feed for animals. This is important to keep in mind every time we enter these fields; any damage or contamination of these crops will cause significant financial loss for the farmer. There will be certain times of the year when there is a lot of activity in these fields, this will include the use of large machinery for ploughing, planting, spraying and harvesting the crops.

To help protect the livelihoods of those who depend on a healthy crop please follow the advice provided in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code:

- Use paths or tracks through the fields, never walk over sown ground or growing crops
- Use the margins of the field (if the margin is narrow or has been planted, avoid causing unnecessary damage by keeping close to the edge in single file)
- Do not allow your dog to run into or foul amongst the crops - always pick up and bin dog poo
- Follow any advice given on signage in and around fields
- Do not obstruct access for large farm machinery – always park considerately and never block gates
- Do not leave gates open or cause damage to walls or fences that may enable neighbouring livestock to gain access to the crop fields.

Meryl Norris
Natural Heritage Officer
Unfortunately, landowners in the Regional Park experience incidences of deliberate damage and disturbance from time to time. For example, the top strands of barbed wire were deliberately cut from two fences where people have created a desire line path. These barbed wire strands were left hanging from the fence and in one case a lamb had become tangled in the wire. Cutting strands of wire off the fence causes the entire fence line to weaken and puts the fence at risk of further damage and collapse. This is costly to repair and can cause neighbouring sheep flocks to become mixed up.

When following existing routes or looking for new routes to try, please always use access points such as gates and stiles which provide access without causing damage by climbing fences.

It is also important to consider how the route you are taking might impact livestock or wildlife especially during key seasonal periods such as lambing, tupping and bird nesting season.

Causing sheep to scatter and panic can cause them stress during their pregnancy that might result in aborted lambs. During lambing season if ewes are separated from their new born lambs, these lambs become weak and can die quickly if not reunited. Sheep are instinctively wary of people and dogs and so it is important to stay on paths and keep dogs on a short lead or close to heel when near sheep.

In the Regional Park we have an excellent variety of ground nesting birds. During March-July these birds lay their eggs and rear their chicks on the ground in amongst the heather or grass. These nests are extremely vulnerable to disturbance. When disturbed birds will fly away from their nests, neglecting their eggs or chicks. This can result in eggs not hatching, chicks dying from cold or lack of food and nests becoming vulnerable to predators.

No matter your preferred activity when you are visiting the Pentland Hills Regional Park, always be aware of your impact on the landscape and on those whose livelihoods depend on the countryside you’re visiting. Know the code.


Meryl Norris
Natural Heritage Officer
What a winter! The weather took its toll, with one of the more noticeable effects being on the access road to Harlaw, with puddles which started degrading rapidly into craters! We managed to repair them, and have also replaced the rubber speed hump at the Harlaw Farm end with a tarmac one. The repairs don’t seem to have stopped the inconsiderate parking by Harlaw Farm and in the car park itself, so I’d like to put out a plea for people to consider lift-sharing to Harlaw, jumping on a bike, or parking elsewhere to access the reservoir area (it is possible to park near the bus terminus in Balerno, and walk through Malleny Mills to the Harlaw Road before heading up the path some call “Fairy Glen”).

Elsewhere in Bonaly Country Park there has been the usual detritus left by campers, but apparently not as much as in previous years. There have been some ongoing issues with unpermitted mountain bike features being constructed, with the more dangerous ones taken apart by ourselves. Huge thanks to Kate Wilkinson and the Tynecastle High School Green Team for their ongoing efforts in keeping the Country Park presentable and accessible.

At the south end of Bonaly we have had continued issues with illegal 4x4 access, some in some pretty wintry weather. These vehicles appear to be entering the Regional Park via Ministry of Defence land, and we are in communication with both the police and MoD about occurrences. There has been some success on this front, with vehicles recently impounded near the Swanston/MoD boundary. Please keep calling us if you see a suspicious 4x4 on the open hillsode. If it’s us in a Council Landrover we won’t mind the misunderstanding!

You may have heard about the disappearance of Fred the golden eagle from the Regional Park. We were deeply saddened to find out that Fred the golden eagle had disappeared under unexplained circumstances from within the park boundary. The investigation is continuing and we await the outcome.

Laverockdale repairs are still not done – we have struggled to get a firm time for gabion repairs from Amey, but are constantly reminding them the work needs done before the path completely disappears into the burn.

Lambing has started in earnest, and we have put in a suggested diversion for cyclists between Maiden’s Cleugh and Sanctuary Woods in Bonaly. This route takes people up to the top of Harbour Hill and down via the Bonaly track, instead of down the Strava “Scalextric” route. I was ably assisted by PCs Graeme Howie and Simon Wotton, who were in the area disseminating information on dog-walking during lambing time.

Finally, welcome back to Paula Newton, whose areas I have been covering whilst she was on maternity leave. I can’t promise I’ve left them in any better state than I found them, but have enjoyed the variety of tasks and encounters inevitable in an area abutting the urban fringe.

**Tommy McManmon**
Natural Heritage Officer
This winter has felt especially long, wet and cold so we know that everyone will be looking forward to the longer, warmer and hopefully drier days of Spring and Summer. The weather doesn’t put everyone off though and when the snow fell it encouraged lots of people outside to explore the snowy hills and for some sledging of course. Despite the poor weather we have managed to get lots of tasks completed. In December we welcomed a group of volunteers from the Courtyard Edinburgh West, a hotel at Herriot Watt University, who took part in some gorse bashing. The gorse in question is growing within one of the enclosures built to support green hairstreak butterfly populations. Here the gorse is beginning to take over and crowd out the blaeberry which is an important food plant of the green hairstreak butterfly. Here’s hoping their efforts will be rewarded with some nice butterfly sightings this summer!

Other maintenance jobs have included gate repairs and installing a new picnic bench in the picnic area. Since the change of use of the information centre at Flotterstone, we have been working on ways to deliver interpretation using the external walls of the building. This will be done through a set of new interpretation panels. The first of these panels which will be installed in spring and will promote responsible access for all user groups visiting and using the hills for recreation. A funding bid has been submitted to hopefully win funding to produce and install a set of seasonal interpretation panels and to design a new biodiversity activity trail in the Glencorse area. This way we can continue to provide visitors with information and advice on responsible access and what the Pentlands has to offer.

Meryl Norris
Natural Heritage Officer
If you have walked through the Green Cleugh between Bavelaw and Loganlee Reservoir, have you ever noticed that this pass through the hills is a relatively gentle slope compared to a normal pass between hills? The reason why it is a small incline is due to the Ice Age. When the glaciers on the west side of the Pentland Hills started to melt, the hills initially formed a dam and water built up into a lake between the hills and the glacier. Once this water got to a certain level it burst through the gaps between the hills and eroded the ground down from Bavelaw Castle through the Green Cleugh, past The Howe and down to Flotterstone. The down side to this is much of the area is marshy and in a couple of places near Bavelaw Castle the route crosses wet ground. The path has been built up over the years, but gradually it sinks into the bog. Towards the end of last year, water was covering sections of the path, so this January new drains were put in and another foot of material was added on top.

Another former wet path was that from Listonshiels up to the Borestane. Thankfully, last Autumn the landowner created a new 2½ km long path, which makes walking, cycling or horse riding in that area a much more pleasant experience.

Wooden bridges do not last forever and the bridge crossing the infant Water of Leith at Leithhead was a concern to us. This is part of a little used but still important link path to the Regional Park and can be part of the route up to the Borestane. The bridge crosses the boundary between the City of Edinburgh Council and West Lothian Council and it was the latter who funded and organised the replacement which should be completed by the time you read this. The new bridge is bigger and will last longer.

The Friends of the Pentlands did a great job repairing a set of steps in Boghall Glen and put in some French drains at Threipmuir Car Park to keep it drier.

Among other things, our Estate Team have refurbished the wooden “Bavelaw” great crested grebe signs near Threipmuir Car Park.

Surveying for wildlife in the Regional Park continues all year round as does managing habitats. If you want to know more about what we did for nature last year, please look at our Nature Conservation Report 2017 which can be found on our website.

Victor Partridge
Natural Heritage Officer
We all know it’s been a hard winter, with an unusual amount of snow for the east of Scotland. This impacted the Service to a certain degree, as Regional Park Service was tasked with gritting roads and car parks, and, over one particularly snowy weekend in March, driving nurses and carers around the city in work Landrovers.

Harlaw House Visitor Centre had four-foot snow drifts covering the gates: I was able to ski over the wall!

We took the opportunity to snap some pictures, some of which can be seen here. It should be noted that it wasn’t all fun and games: the cold spell in the beginning of April is expected to badly affect lambing, with one farmer reckoning a 20-25% mortality rate due to the snow.

As mentioned in my area round-up, the criminal fraternity suffered as well, with an illegally-driven 4x4 being discovered high on Castlelaw.

Victor had a wet and cold, ground nesting bird-monitoring experience in early April, at Bonaly, but still managed to spot 12 grouse.

As I write this on 6th April, there appears to be no let-up; hopefully summer is on its way.

Tommy McManmon
Natural Heritage Officer
With over 600,000 visitors per year the hills are well used by people walking, cycling, running, fishing and swimming. But it is also a place for wildlife and education. With approximately 100km of network footpaths, 1148 individual features such as gates, stiles, step, stairs, waymarkers etc we have a lot of assets to take care of. We are thankful of the support given by our Volunteer Rangers, Friends of the Pentlands and other volunteer groups but we do also need money to make improvements.

Money that has been donated in the past has always gone towards specific projects. Some examples include the replacement footbridge at Daisy Dell, handrail installation at Torduff path and kissing gate replacement at Nine Mile Burn.

This coming year we would like to upgrade the bat boxes that we have on site, refresh the Great Glen Mystery Trail, install new habitat boxes at Flotterstone and Harlaw, undertake further repairs to drystane dykes and continue with the replacement gate programme, and the list goes on.

Since June 2017 we have had a small donation box at Flotterstone Car Park and just before Easter, installed boxes at both Harlaw and Threipmuir Car Parks.

Now some might say that cash is a bit old fashioned and not everyone carries money with them when they’re taking to the hills. So, with this in mind, we are also investigating other ways in which you can donate money, especially when using our car parks. In the future, we are hopeful that visitors will also be able to contribute by phone app.

So please give generously and help the Pentland Hills Regional Park improve the path network and help boost wildlife in Edinburgh’s local hills!

Jenny Hargreaves
Senior Natural Heritage Officer

DONATE
Pentland Inspirations
Art and Photographic Competition 2018

The Regional Park is happy to announce that the 8th biennial Pentland Inspirations Art and Photographic Competition will launch in May. Once again, we would like to invite you to enter your photographs and paintings of the Pentland Hills which will form a traveling exhibition visiting venues across Edinburgh and the Lothians from December 2018 – May 2019.

We look forward to seeing how the Pentland Hills has inspired you!

Paula Newton
Natural Heritage Officer

The brief: Your Pentlands, your Inspiration!
Entries need to be an image taken within or of the Pentland Hills, either in the Pentland Hills Regional Park or the south Pentlands. Entrants can enter up to two paintings which can be framed or unframed but must be mounted onto stiff card and up to three photographs into one or more of the categories: Activity, Biodiversity (plants and wildlife) and Landscape. Full details on specifications will be highlighted in the entry form which will be available in May.

The competition will close on Friday 28 September 2018, with the winner’s ceremony taking place in November and exhibition starting in December.
Friends of the Pentlands

Last year ended on a sad note when board member Esmée Yuille passed away after a short illness. Esmée had been the organiser of our “Access for All” activity every May and lead gardener in the Harlaw Wildlife Garden. This year, our Access for All event will take place on 24th May and will be offered to children with disabilities from Braidburn and Woodland Schools.

Work teams have been out in all weathers, continuing the erosion prevention work at Baddinsgill Burn, improving the Kirk Burn path and carrying out improvements to the Phantom’s Cleugh path. We supported Balerno Ramblers in producing funds for a contractor to make a strong bridge over the burn which enters Harlaw Reservoir from the east. Contributors were Malleny Angling Association, Ramblers Scotland, Friends of the Pentlands, Currie and Balerno Round Table and two anonymous donors.

We are currently looking at lines of guide poles for the routes in the south of the Pentlands, out with the Regional Park boundary.

We have bought a moth trap, which we will use in local schools between April and June. Dean Park and Nether Currie Primary Schools have already signed up for this event, with other schools showing interest. The trap will be installed one afternoon and its contents examined the following morning.

For more information on the activities of Friends of the Pentlands, visit the website: www.pentlandfriends.org.uk

David Syme
Friends of the Pentlands
Biodiversity surveys and events

The 2018 Regional Park events programme is now accepting bookings. This year’s events include biodiversity surveys, guided walks and children’s events. ALL events require booking and charges apply. To find out more details please contact us on 0131 529 2401 or email pentlandhills@edinburgh.gov.uk

**APRIL**

**Tuesday 3 April**

**Breeding Bird Surveys**
Help survey Bonaly moorland to see how well our feathered friends are doing in this habitat.

Meet: Bonaly Country Park
Time: 6:30-8:30am
Bring: Sturdy footwear, waterproofs and binoculars if you have them
FREE

**Saturday 21 April**

**Wonderful Woodlands!**
Join us to explore the woods and get creative with a variety of fun woodland activities. We’ll find out about the wildlife that lives in our local woods and get crafty with woodland materials.

Meet: Bonaly Country Park
Time: 1:30-3:30pm
Bring: Sturdy footwear and waterproofs
Cost: £3 per child (Ages 3+)
FREE

**Sunday 22 April**

**Accessing the countryside: Your guide to responsible access**
Learn about the variety of land uses and activities that take part across the Regional Park. Take a guided walk with a Natural Heritage officer around Harlaw and Threipmuir.

Meet: Harlaw House visitor centre
Time: 11am-3pm with guided walk 11am-1pm
Bring: Sturdy footwear and waterproofs
FREE

**MAY**

**Thursday 3 May**

**Breeding Bird Surveys**
Help survey Bonaly moorland to see how well our feathered friends are doing in this habitat.

Meet: Bonaly Country Park upper car park
Time: 6:30-8:30am
Bring: Sturdy footwear, waterproofs and binoculars if you have them
FREE

**Wednesday 20 June**

**Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary Butterfly Survey**
Help us survey one of the last remaining colonies in the area of this attractive butterfly.

Meet: Threipmuir Car Park
Time: 13:30-15:30
Bring: Wellies or sturdy boots
FREE

**JUNE**

**Sunday 3 June**

**River Dipping**
Join us in the river to learn how to river dip to look for creatures in the river. Learn about their importance for a whole host of wildlife.

Meet: Flotterstone Information Centre
Time: 1:30-3:30pm
Bring: Wellies are essential!
Cost: £3 per child (Ages 5+)
FREE

**Thursday 16 June**

**Literary Walk**
Come and explore the Pentland haunts of writers such as Stephenson and Owen. Moderate. 7 miles

Meet: Swanston car park
Time: 11am-3pm
Bring: Sturdy footwear and waterproofs. Packed lunch and drink
Cost: £10 per person (concession £5). Over 16’s only.
FREE

**Friday 20 July**

**Wildflower Meadow Survey**
We have managed the meadow at Hillend Country Park for eight years. Come and see how many wildflowers we can find this year.

Meet: Hillend Country Park upper car park (next to the Snow Sports Centre car park)
Time: 1:30-3:30pm
Bring: Sturdy footwear and waterproofs
FREE
# Biodiversity surveys and events

## AUGUST

**Thursday 9 August**  
**Walk the ridge**  
Join us as part of the Midlothian Walking Festival to walk part of the Pentland ridge. Strenuous. 8-9 miles.  
**Meet:** Flotterstone Information Centre  
**Time:** 9:30am-3:30pm  
**Bring:** Sturdy footwear, waterproofs, packed lunch and drink  
**FREE** – over 16’s only.

**Friday 17 August**  
**Wildflower Meadow Survey**  
The meadow at Bavelaw Marsh is in a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Come and see how many species of plant we can find this year.  
**Meet:** Threipmuir car park  
**Time:** 1:30-3:30pm  
**Bring:** Sturdy footwear  
**FREE**

**Saturday 18 August**  
**Water: the story in the North Pentlands**  
Learn about the history surrounding water in the Pentlands with spectacular views over Edinburgh. Strenuous section. 9 miles.  
**Meet:** Bonaly Country Park lower car park  
**Time:** 10:45am-3pm  
**Bring:** Sturdy footwear, waterproofs, packed lunch and drink  
**Cost:** £10 per person (concession £5). Over 16’s.

## SEPTEMBER

**Sunday 23 September**  
**Prehistoric Pentlands**  
Come and find out how Bronze and Iron Age People survived in the Pentland Hills on this moderate 5 mile hill walk.  
**Meet:** Castlelaw Hill Fort car park  
**Time:** 10am-2pm  
**Bring:** Sturdy footwear, waterproofs, packed lunch and a drink  
**Cost:** £10 per person (concession £5). Over 16s only.

## OCTOBER

**Saturday 6 October**  
**Awesome Autumn!**  
Ever wonder why leaves change colour? As the autumn colours start to flourish join us to explore the woodland. Get crafty with autumn leaves and see if you can make a leaf animal!  
**Meet:** Bonaly Country Park  
**Time:** 10:30am-12:30pm  
**Bring:** Sturdy footwear and waterproofs  
**Cost:** £3 per child (Ages 3+)

## NOVEMBER

**Sunday 4 November**  
**From Fire and Ice**  
Come and find out how the Pentland Hills were created from volcanoes and glaciers on this moderate low level 7 mile walk.  
**Meet:** Threipmuir car park  
**Time:** 10:30am-2:30pm  
**Bring:** Sturdy footwear, waterproofs, packed lunch and a drink  
**Cost:** £10 per person (concession £5). Over 16s only.

## DECEMBER

**Wednesday 12 December**  
**Christmas wreath workshop**  
Make a beautiful Christmas wreath for your home using a variety of festive foliage!  
**Meet:** Harlaw House Visitor Centre  
**Time:** 11am-1pm  
**Bring:** Gardening gloves and secateurs if you have them  
**Cost:** £15 per person (mince pie and hot drink included!)
We hope that you have enjoyed the articles in this publication. If you encounter any difficulties or disappointment, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Park staff, or ask them for a copy of the City of Edinburgh Council’s ‘Make Contact’ form (for complaints and suggestions).

After you have gone through the Council’s complaints process, if you are still not happy, you have the right to take your complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats if you ask us. Please contact the Interpretation and Translation Service (ITS) on 0131 242 8181 and quote reference number 18-3329. The ITS can also give information on community language translations. You can get more copies of this document by calling 0131 529 2401.

The Pentland Beacon is produced by the Pentland Hills Regional Park Service and designed and printed by the City of Edinburgh Council.

Letters or articles for inclusion can be sent to Paula Newton at:

Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

The Service is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Council, West Lothian Council and Scottish Water.

Contact us:
Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

T: 0131 529 2401
E: pentlandhills@edinburgh.gov.uk
www.pentlandhills.org

The Pentland Beacon is produced by the Pentland Hills Regional Park Service and designed and printed by the City of Edinburgh Council.

Letters or articles for inclusion can be sent to Paula Newton at:

Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

The Service is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Council, West Lothian Council and Scottish Water.

Contact us:
Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

T: 0131 529 2401
E: pentlandhills@edinburgh.gov.uk
www.pentlandhills.org

The Pentland Beacon is produced by the Pentland Hills Regional Park Service and designed and printed by the City of Edinburgh Council.

Letters or articles for inclusion can be sent to Paula Newton at:

Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

The Service is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Council, West Lothian Council and Scottish Water.

Contact us:
Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

T: 0131 529 2401
E: pentlandhills@edinburgh.gov.uk
www.pentlandhills.org

The Pentland Beacon is produced by the Pentland Hills Regional Park Service and designed and printed by the City of Edinburgh Council.

Letters or articles for inclusion can be sent to Paula Newton at:

Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

The Service is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Council, West Lothian Council and Scottish Water.

Contact us:
Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

T: 0131 529 2401
E: pentlandhills@edinburgh.gov.uk
www.pentlandhills.org

The Pentland Beacon is produced by the Pentland Hills Regional Park Service and designed and printed by the City of Edinburgh Council.

Letters or articles for inclusion can be sent to Paula Newton at:

Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

The Service is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Council, West Lothian Council and Scottish Water.

Contact us:
Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

T: 0131 529 2401
E: pentlandhills@edinburgh.gov.uk
www.pentlandhills.org

The Pentland Beacon is produced by the Pentland Hills Regional Park Service and designed and printed by the City of Edinburgh Council.

Letters or articles for inclusion can be sent to Paula Newton at:

Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

The Service is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Council, West Lothian Council and Scottish Water.

Contact us:
Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

T: 0131 529 2401
E: pentlandhills@edinburgh.gov.uk
www.pentlandhills.org

The Pentland Beacon is produced by the Pentland Hills Regional Park Service and designed and printed by the City of Edinburgh Council.

Letters or articles for inclusion can be sent to Paula Newton at:

Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

The Service is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Council, West Lothian Council and Scottish Water.

Contact us:
Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

T: 0131 529 2401
E: pentlandhills@edinburgh.gov.uk
www.pentlandhills.org

The Pentland Beacon is produced by the Pentland Hills Regional Park Service and designed and printed by the City of Edinburgh Council.

Letters or articles for inclusion can be sent to Paula Newton at:

Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

The Service is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Council, West Lothian Council and Scottish Water.

Contact us:
Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

T: 0131 529 2401
E: pentlandhills@edinburgh.gov.uk
www.pentlandhills.org

The Pentland Beacon is produced by the Pentland Hills Regional Park Service and designed and printed by the City of Edinburgh Council.

Letters or articles for inclusion can be sent to Paula Newton at:

Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

The Service is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Council, West Lothian Council and Scottish Water.

Contact us:
Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

T: 0131 529 2401
E: pentlandhills@edinburgh.gov.uk
www.pentlandhills.org

The Pentland Beacon is produced by the Pentland Hills Regional Park Service and designed and printed by the City of Edinburgh Council.

Letters or articles for inclusion can be sent to Paula Newton at:

Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

The Service is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Council, West Lothian Council and Scottish Water.

Contact us:
Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

T: 0131 529 2401
E: pentlandhills@edinburgh.gov.uk
www.pentlandhills.org

The Pentland Beacon is produced by the Pentland Hills Regional Park Service and designed and printed by the City of Edinburgh Council.

Letters or articles for inclusion can be sent to Paula Newton at:

Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

The Service is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Council, West Lothian Council and Scottish Water.

Contact us:
Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

T: 0131 529 2401
E: pentlandhills@edinburgh.gov.uk
www.pentlandhills.org

The Pentland Beacon is produced by the Pentland Hills Regional Park Service and designed and printed by the City of Edinburgh Council.

Letters or articles for inclusion can be sent to Paula Newton at:

Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

The Service is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Council, West Lothian Council and Scottish Water.

Contact us:
Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

T: 0131 529 2401
E: pentlandhills@edinburgh.gov.uk
www.pentlandhills.org

The Pentland Beacon is produced by the Pentland Hills Regional Park Service and designed and printed by the City of Edinburgh Council.

Letters or articles for inclusion can be sent to Paula Newton at:

Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

The Service is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Council, West Lothian Council and Scottish Water.

Contact us:
Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

T: 0131 529 2401
E: pentlandhills@edinburgh.gov.uk
www.pentlandhills.org

The Pentland Beacon is produced by the Pentland Hills Regional Park Service and designed and printed by the City of Edinburgh Council.

Letters or articles for inclusion can be sent to Paula Newton at:

Pentland Hills Regional Park
Hermitage of Braid
69a Braid Road
Edinburgh
EH10 6JF

The Service is supported by the City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Council, West Lothian Council and Scottish Water.