

# Lochaber Biodiversity Group Minutes

**Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> Nov 2010

**Location:** Mallaig and Morar Community Centre, Mallaig

**In attendance:**

Jonathan Willet (chair), Ian Strachan, Hazel Bews, Eilidh-Ann Madden, Jim Blair, Gordon French, Alison Austin (minutes), Henry Dobson, Christine Welsh, Sarah Lewis, Gary Servant, Derek Hamilton

**Apologies:**

Dorothy Gibb, Jim Manthorpe, Joe Ferris, Stuart Wilkie, Dan Watson, Donald Kennedy

## Agenda

### 1. Minutes and Action Points from meeting of 7th Sep 2010

#### From 1<sup>st</sup> June

**AP1** IS contacted Paul Biggin to offer general support of LBG and Rangers and for possible event during Biodiversity week at Corpach Community Woodlands, accepted. IS willing to help organise something. Action so far: survey by Barbara Sumner (Botanical Soc Scotland). Details of this can be requested from IS.

**AP9** ongoing. IS to queried CDP but is low priority, no progress.

**AP1** EAM contacted Rachel Tonks (VAL), received form to register LBG on volunteer database and advertise positions vacant. IS to fill in forms and submit.

**AP2** see 5.

**AP3** IS tabled 'Summary of Non-native invasive species in Lochaber' – also to be circulated for comment. JW questioned if Crocosmia is an issue, IS noted that there many more non-natives in Lochaber but focus in document is on invasive species that are invading semi-natural habitats - Crocosmia not seen as in this category. Knotweed not invading semi-native habitats as much as Rhododendron. Question of hybrids between knotweeds leading to fertile offspring not an issue yet. Cotoneaster spp present at many sites but small-leaved species is main cause for concern on cliffs in one or two places. GS highlighted Sitka seeding as an issue. HD noted potential for opportunity to clear Sitka seedlings from areas to be restored to Native woodland in FC remit. JB suggested publicising volunteer opportunity through U3A. EAM suggested we advertise opportunities through Area Conservation Team (ACT). JW suggested that clearing Himalayan Balsam from FW area could be funded under Landfill Tax Fund. EAM informed the group of a survey of New Zealand flatworm in Sunart area and eradication from Community Compost Site.

**AP4** carry over: HB to contact IS re grassland project

**AP5** carry over: IS to contact Diane Baum

**AP6** complete

### 4. Feedback on joint meeting with SLEF

See minutes from joint meeting. Overall very good, good networking opportunities already and identified some potential for crossover and some other for individual group facilitation. Disappointment that not more members of SLEF present,

understandable due to distance to travel and weather and prior commitments of all.  
Plan to hold annual joint meeting.

## **5. Knoydart BAP**

JM not able to attend. BAP created as part of Knoydart Foundations Land Management Plan. Draft to be circulated, all comment to CW.

**AP1** CW circulate Knoydart BAP Draft – all comment back to CW

## **6. Co-ordination Project: LBAP Project Plan**

Website uploaded, space to add minutes of meetings to page – all agreed. Advert for chair to be added. Future events to be added. JW suggested adding leaflet holder to display material with info on shearwater as this is picture on pop-ups. Pop-ups ready, postcards on way. To be stored in Geopark Office, Fulton House, Gordon Square. Biodiversity week event – see Project Spec Checklist – Day event at Nevis Centre with stalls, walks, opportunity to carry out action, Drop in day. HD suggested walk to see FC cows on Cow Hill, Himalayan Balsam clearance. Repeated sessions am and pm. Need to ask Tom Prescott of BC.

HB to co-ordinate and promote. Get article in Lochaber Life early deadline.

EAM and Rangers and JMT to develop Biodiversity Game to go to schools prior to Event

**AP2** HB to add advert for chair

**AP3** All to forward details of events to HB to collate and forward to upload to website

**AP4** HB to check availability of Nevis Centre on 21<sup>st</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup> May

**AP5** EAM, AA and SL to update HB on their contribution after meeting on 8th

## **7. Current Biodiversity Projects**

SW submitted project Spec for training for deer managers in habitat assessment – target would be West Highland DMG. Some question whether this was our remit.

Grassland project discussed, suggested identifying flagship species for habitat e.g. butterfly orchids. Check if Crofting bodies will buy in.

Rhododendron Project in Morvern in offering to clear Morvern of Rhododendron.

Discussion for LBG involvement in Rhododendron clearance - no conclusion.

Other Project specs still to arrive.

Biodiversity Event in 2011 from FC – Biodiversity Kayak Loch Sunart, Squirrel viewing at Easter, Biodiversity Regeneration and Browsing Survey in Sunart with College

Apple Day on 22<sup>nd</sup> Oct 2011

**AP6** HB Circulate Project Spec re habitat assessment for deer managers

**AP7** JW Contact Wildlife Management Unit (SNH) to see if habitat assessment for deer managers project needed.

**AP8** JW to contact Crofting bodies to check interest in grassland project

**AP9** IS/CW to look at link to grassland project within SNH

## **8. Matters Arising**

**AOB**

**Date of Next Meeting:** To be confirmed – aim after joint meeting with SLEF.

### **Action Points:**

#### **From 8 June**

**AP9** ongoing IS to queried CDP but is low priority no progress

#### **From 7 Sept**

**AP4** carry over HB to contact IS re grassland project once it can go through

**AP5** carry over IS to contact Diane Baum

#### **From 1<sup>st</sup> Nov**

**AP1** CW circulate Knoydart BAP Draft – all comment back to CW

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