



Press Release: September 2018

Lybster Girl Guides Explore Forsinard

This August the Lybster Girl Guides descended on Forsinard for a day of bog-tastic learning! The day started off with a guided trail walk up to the tower for pond dipping. The girls were encouraged to find a plant no bigger than their thumbnail to draw, which produced some beautiful drawings! After some educational (?) hot chocolate and biscuits, we dived into the ponds with nets, finding back-swimmers, water beetles and newts.

On the way back to the field centre the girls became master perfumers and alchemists, choosing plants from the bog to make their own potion or perfume. The field centre was filled with all sorts of smells, and some girls began planning their business empire based on midge repellent perfume - *you heard it here first!*

The girls found out about life cycles and metamorphosis by making beautiful wire dragonflies and turned their minds to the preserving properties of peat by creating their own bog artifact out of clay!

In the afternoon, a treasure hunt around the Dubh-Lochan trail had teams of guides exploring the bog using peat probes - scientific instruments used to measure the depth of peat. The girl's jaws dropped as the probes sunk deeper and deeper into the peat, at some points up to 4 meters!

It was a fantastic day and was so great to see the girls engaging with the landscape: identifying plants for their perfume - "*Miss...how do you spell asphodel?*" - and using magnifying glasses to count the number of legs on pond creatures.

The day seemed to have a lasting impression on the girls with one saying she would now consider a career as a ranger and all expressed a keen interest to return!

Thanks for the girls for being such wonderful visitors and many thanks to our new education officer Hilary Wilson for putting on such a fantastic day!

If you are interested in visiting Forsinard with your group, please contact Hilary at hilary.wilson@rspb.org.uk

Photos and captions.

1. Pond dipping
'Identifying pond beasties'
2. Making Perfume
'An important part of making a perfume or potion is the ingredients list complete with real plants!'
3. Queens of the Bog:
'Lybster Girl Guides are queens of the bog!'
4. Peat probing
'Girls used specialist equipment to measure the depth of the peat'
5. Sundew Impression
'3...2...1... Impersonate a sundew!'



NOTES TO EDITORS

The Peatlands Partnership includes Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry Commission Scotland, Highland Council, RSPB Scotland, Plantlife Scotland, Highlands & Islands Enterprise, The Highland Third Sector Interface, The Flow Country Rivers Trust, The Northern Deer Management Group and The Environmental Research Institute. It is chaired by Professor Stuart Gibb from the Environmental Research Institute.

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