

## Press Release

Release Date: 7<sup>th</sup> October 2011



### Wildlife Festival Gets Under Way

Highland Perthshire's wildlife festival, showcasing the area's potential as a wildlife tourism destination, launched this weekend and will run from 8<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> October, offering around 30 events to wildlife enthusiasts.

The range of events on offer includes specialist walks and talks with experts on beavers, red deer, red squirrels, wild cats, pine martens and bats.

One of the festival's more popular events features an exclusive opportunity to go sea eagle tracking with the RSPB's sea eagle expert. With only a few tickets left, festival organisers are urging people to book soon to avoid being disappointed.

For wildlife photography enthusiasts, award winning photographer Peter Cairns returns to lead two master classes, one aimed at beginners, during the festival. Earlier this year Peter beat off stiff competition against over 25,000 entries in 56 different countries to win a top nature photography award with Nature's Best Photography magazine. His previous successes include BBC Wildlife Photographer of the Year and GDT (Gesellschaft Deutscher Tierfotografen) European Photographer of the Year. His award winning photograph of an osprey is currently featured in an exhibition at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History in Washington DC.

Adrian Davis, a wildlife tourism specialist and the driving force behind the festival, has been working to develop the festival, which is now in its second year, and has brought together a strong group of wildlife organisations to mount the 9 days of events. His efforts have paid off and the festival is supported by an entire cavalcade of wildlife enthusiasts including Scottish Wildlife Trust, Wild Scotland, Wild Outdoors, Perthshire Big Tree Country, Forestry Commission Scotland, Perth & Kinross Countryside Trust and Perth & Kinross Council.

To enable the festival to develop, it has secured funding from a number of sources including LEADER Rural Tayside, The Onaway Trust, Forestry Commission Scotland, Perth & Kinross Council, and Perth & Kinross Countryside Trust.

Adrian Davis, commented "We are very excited about the programme for our festival this year. Our rich tapestry of wildlife in Highland Perthshire creates a tremendous opportunity to demonstrate to people the wild beauty of visiting Highland Perthshire, not just in the Autumn but throughout the year. We've got some events in the programme that have returned this year due to their popularity, plus some new events and we'd encourage anyone with an interest in wildlife to take a look – there's something for everyone, and all ages."

The festival got under way this weekend with a series of events including bat walks, the Jackson Hole Film Festival and red squirrel walks. Still to take place this week are bushcraft sessions, the Crann-Apple Cider Festival, Food Fire & Primitive Pyrotechnia and guided raptor walks, to name just a few.

For further information on the festival and the full series of events on offer visit [www.wildconnections.org.uk](http://www.wildconnections.org.uk)



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