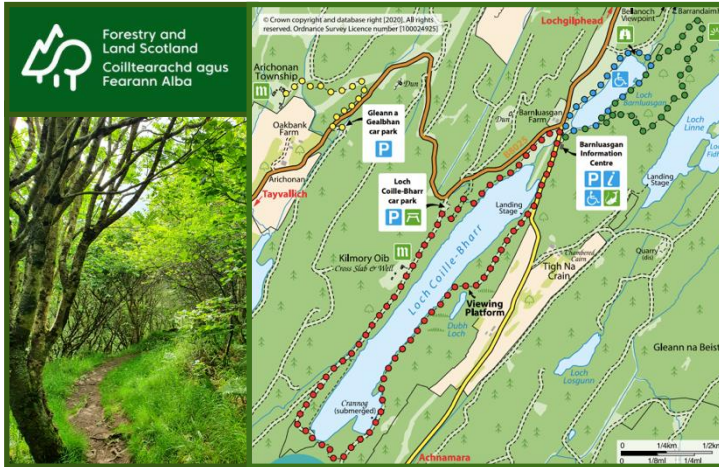


Explore the Atlantic woodlands of Knapdale...



Barnluasgan Wildlife Trail
A mile-long level circuit of the loch, suitable for all abilities. Look out for beavers at dusk and their gnawed trees in the daytime.

Barnluasgan Oakwood Trail
Beginning at the loch, follow a path that climbs up through Atlantic oak woods and ancient stands of hazel to a treetop viewpoint.

Loch Coille-Bharr Trail
A 3-mile circuit of Knapdale's longest loch, with large stretches of Atlantic woodland and a landscape engineered by beavers.

Dunardry Near to Nature Trail
A 45-minute walk through a remnant of temperate rainforest lining a steep gorge, with footbridges criss-crossing a tumbling burn.



Other Atlantic Woodland walks nearby include:
Crinan Wood,
The Dalriada Heritage Trail and
Taynish National Nature Reserve



The Heart of Argyll Wildlife Organisation (HAWO) is dedicated to promoting the conservation and enjoyment of the wildlife and habitats found in this exceptional part of Argyll. We were founded in 2016 following the success of the Scottish Beaver Trial, which saw sixteen Eurasian beavers released into the wild in the Knapdale Forest, the first reintroduction of its kind in the UK. From our off-grid and sustainable visitor centre in the Knapdale Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) we run guided beaver walks, seashore safaris, interactive events with schools and local groups and act as an information point for all things wildlife.



www.argyllbeavercentre.co.uk
 email: info@heartofargyllwildlife.org
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HAWO is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SC047167)

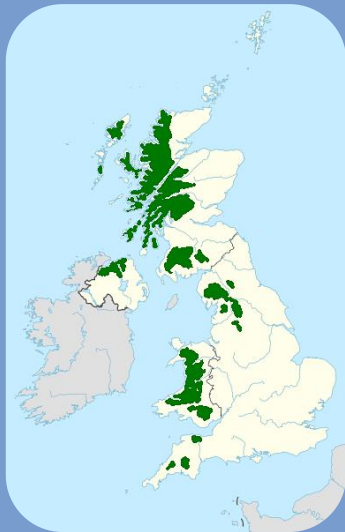


An Interactive Guide to Knapdale's Temperate Rainforests

What makes a temperate rainforest?

Atlantic woodland, also known as temperate or Celtic rainforest, is a globally scarce habitat characterised by ancient, native woodland and year-round mild, wet weather. It is found scattered along the west coast of the UK, where the oceanic climate, upland geography and unpolluted air combine to create conditions favourable to some of the world's rarest species of mosses, ferns, liverworts and lichens.

Areas of the UK with the right conditions for Atlantic



🌸 Ancient woodland

Sites that have had continuous tree cover for c.400 years

🌸 Plenty of rain and clean ocean air

Crucial for many mosses and lichens to thrive

🌸 Sunlight

An open canopy leads to lush plant life on the forest floor

🌸 Regenerating trees

A mixture of veteran broadleaf species (such as oak, ash and hazel) alongside new growth of younger trees

🌸 Consistently mild temperatures

The annual average here in Knapdale is 12°C

🌸 Rivers, streams, boggy ground

Water sources keep the woods cool and damp



Argyll's Atlantic woodlands have a rich human history. Traces of it can be spotted in coppiced trees and the stone walls of dwellings and enclosures now covered in blankets of moss.

Temperate rainforest is even rarer than tropical rainforest, covering less than 1% of the world's surface. Scotland is home to some of the largest remaining pockets in Europe, but their future is threatened by invasive species, disease, global heating and pollution.



Mosses, lichens and liverworts each have intricate structures. They hold on to moisture and form microhabitats for insects, amphibians and invertebrates. They are just like rainforests in miniature!



Did you know? Lichens are not technically plants or fungi but symbiotic communities of micro-organisms coexisting on a firm surface like the bark of a tree.

Things to find in Knapdale's rainforests



Tree Lungwort

One of the stars of the woodland, this distinctive lichen only grows where the air is free from pollution and the woods are sensitively managed. Western Scotland is its last UK stronghold. So-called because its lobes look like human lungs, tree lungwort is a sure sign of a living, breathing rainforest. Look for it on the trunks of older trees.

Common Toad

Sadly not as common across the UK as it once was, toads are still going strong here in the freshwater lochs and cool, damp rainforests of Knapdale. Keep an eye out for the adults on their spring migration, or the huge numbers of tiny toadlets who emerge from the water all at once in mid-summer.



Woodland Dor Beetle

Better known as a dung beetle, the woodland dor beetle patrols the paths of moist broadleaf woods looking for animal poo, which it rolls away to its burrow to feed its young. Spot it on the ground clearing away pine marten scats and deer droppings. Look closely and you might notice its metallic blue markings.

Speckled Wood

This butterfly can be spotted flitting along damp glades and woodland paths in the dappled sunlight. The caterpillars feed on tall grasses, while the butterflies emerge in three waves between April and late September.



Hazelnut Shells

Keep your eyes peeled for these among the hazel trees of the rainforest's understory. Be a nutty detective! The shape of the shell will tell you which animal ate the nut. Voles leave neat oval holes, mice leave messier asymmetric ones, and red squirrels always cut the nut cleanly in half.



Wood Sorrel

This woodland plant is opportunistic and versatile. It's at its happiest in light-filled Atlantic woodland, where it can take root in surprising places, like the bough of this tree. Its edible leaves fold shut in the rain and taste like sour apple.



Beard Lichens

This family of lichens are so-called because of their bristly, shaggy structure. They contain a powerful antibacterial agent that has historically been used as a wound treatment. Spot them all over Knapdale's native woods.



Redstart

This striking bird lives almost exclusively in the UK's Atlantic woodlands. It arrives from central Africa in April to rear its young inside holes in trees. Look for its orange flickering tail among the treetops.



Tree Creeper

You might spot this camouflaged bird out of the corner of your eye as it works its way up a tree trunk pecking insects from among the lichens. Ancient rainforest is the perfect habitat for tree creepers due to the plentiful supply of old, rotting wood, filled with tasty bugs.

Blaeberries

Blaeberry bushes are low growing plants that thrive in the acid soils of Knapdale's Atlantic oakwoods. Also known as bilberries or European blueberries, they make a delicious snack for pine martens, whose poo turns purple when the berries are in season!



Climbing Corydalis

This scrambling plant grows along the Atlantic fringe of Europe, where it clammers freely over mossy boulders and tree trunks with its fine tendrils. Its delicate, off-white flowers attract honey and bumble bees.



Polypody Ferns

This family of ferns love the moist, shady conditions of Atlantic woodlands, where you'll find them growing among mosses and lichens on the trunks and branches of oak trees. Take a look at the underside of a frond and you might see neat orange spores, an ancient method of reproduction in the evolution of plants.



Wych Elm

One of the rarest broadleaf trees in our Atlantic woodlands, the wych elm is also known as the Scots elm, and it has held out well so far against Dutch elm disease. Regarded as sacred in pagan and Gaelic folklore, wych elm is the foodplant of many species of moth.