



Creating Natural Connections

Cumbernauld Community Park Activity Pack



CUMBERNAULD COMMUNITY PARK TREASURE TRAIL

How many of the following things can you spot on your walk?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| • Arria | 1 point |
| • One of the plough sculptures | 1 point |
| • A stream | 2 points |
| • A view of the whole town | 10 points |
| • The Carrick Stone | 1 point |
| • A bird of prey | 10 points |
| • A deer | 10 points |
| • Fungi | 5 points |
| • A yellow flower | 2 points |
| • The water tower | 1 point |
| • A butterfly | 5 points |
| • A plant or tree with thorns | 2 points |

Total



Arria



The Carrick
Stone



Buzzard (bird
of prey)



Roe deer



Orange tip
butterfly

SPECIES SPOTTER

Common sights to see now?

Kestrel

January- December

Seen perched or hovering in the air looking for prey. Look out for their pointed wings and tail.



Rook

January- December

Sociable birds that are unlikely to be spotted alone. Distinctive pale, bare beak that's thinner than most other corvids.



Rooks don't like crowds so aren't often seen in cities and prefer open spaces like fields.

Grey partridge

January- December

Also just called the partridge. These birds pair up early and will stay together through till autumn. Partridges lay one of the biggest clutches of any UK bird with 14-15 eggs that only the female will keep warm, but both sexes will protect.



Greenfinch

January- December



Stocky, bright yellow-green little bird with a distinct forked tail and thick beaks used to pry open seeds. Very sociable birds but can be seen bickering with others at the bird feeder.

Skylark

January- December

Brown-streaked body with white-tipped wings only seen in flight. Well known for their fluttering flight patterns accompanied with their long songs.

When perched you will be able to see their speckled crest atop their heads.



Linnet

January- December

Named for their love of seeds in the linen family, like flax seeds. Females are a bit less colourful than males, who stand proud with a bold red forehead.



SPECIES SPOTTER

Others to spot when you're out and about.....

Reed bunting

January- December

☐

Starlings

January - December

☐

Yellowhammer

January - December

☐

What else do you see (make a note):

What to look for at a later date:

Wildflowers



Teasel

July - August

Birds



Whitethroat

June - October

SPECIES OF THE WEEK

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

This bird of prey is relatively small compared to others of this category. Like most birds of prey **females** are slightly **larger than males**, weighing up to 220g.

Although many don't live past their first two years, kestrels can **live** up to **16 years** or more!

Only 30-40% of kestrels survive their first year of life, mainly due to starvation.



Hunting

Kestrels will hunt either by **perching** to survey their surroundings or **hovering** over an area in search of prey. Hovering is a more effective technique but uses up a lot of energy. This is why during harsher conditions, like winter, you are more likely to see them perched to hunt. Kestrels' food of choice is mainly small rodents like voles, but in cities they tend to hunt sparrows.



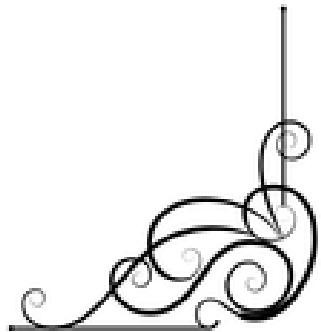
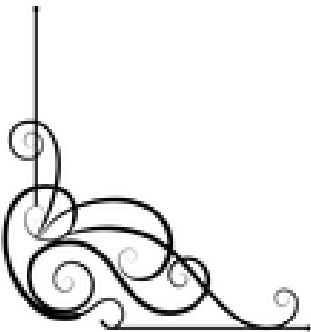
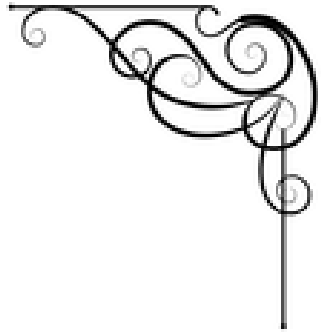
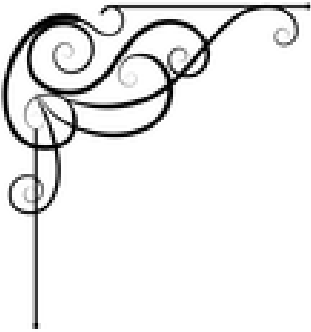
DID YOU KNOW?

Kestrels have amazing eyesight that lets them hunt almost till dark.

PHOTO CHALLENGE

Can you snap a photo of a kestrel?

Or try sketching one. They like to hover over fields of farmland, and you may also see them close to busy roads looking for prey.....



STORY STONES



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What are story stones?

These stones have a drawing on one or both sides that can be used to create a group of continuous sentences which then create a story.

How to make them?

Go for a walk, out in nature, and look for flattish stones with a smooth surface. Make sure they are safe to pick up and take home. Once home give them a wash and don't forget to wash your hands too! You might need about six stones to get your story going. Leave to dry.

STORY STONES

Painting

This is your time to get creative. Paint something on the stones, leave to dry and then paint another image on the other side. Some ideas could include animals, weather symbols, smiley faces. Hint: make more than one story stone, in fact make quite a few. You can seal them by painting them over with a mix of water and PVA glue - or use acrylic paints.



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Somewhere to store them

Find a small bag or tub that can hold the stones without you being able to see what is on them.

STORY STONES

Get the family involved

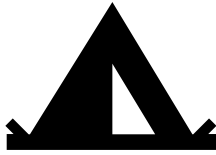
Get everyone in the house involved. Each person picks a stone from the bag/tub. Choose what side you want to make a sentence about, or if you are adventurous pick both sides and then make up a sentence about your pictures on the stone. The next person then makes up a following sentence using the pictures on their stone.

Create your story

Get someone to take note of each sentence and put the story together. You have made your first story.



THE CAMPING GAME



Number of people: Two or more

Where to play: Play while you walk

Materials needed: None

How to play:

- One person starts by saying the sentence “I’m going camping and I’m bringing ...”
- The person starting must name an item that they are bringing e.g. “I’m going camping and I’m bringing a tent.”
- It is then the next person’s turn. They must repeat back what the first player said then add something else to the list e.g. “I’m going camping and I’m bringing a tent and a sleeping bag, and so on.
- Players are eliminated if they miss something from the list or say them in the wrong order.

HUNGRY FOX



Number of people: Two or more

Where to play: The community park is full of wide-open space for this game to be played.

Materials needed: None

How to play:

- One player is chosen to be hungry fox. Hungry fox stands at least twenty steps away from the other players, facing away from them.
- All players except for Hungry Fox chant "What's the time, Hungry Fox?", and Hungry Fox will answer in one of the two ways:
- Hungry Fox may call a clock time (e.g., "3 o'clock"). The other players will then take that many steps closer to the fox, counting them aloud as they go ("One, two, three"). Then they ask the question again.
- Hungry Fox may call "Dinner time!" then Hungry Fox will turn around and chase the other players. If Hungry Fox tags a player, that player becomes the new Hungry Fox.

COMMUNITY PARK WORK

The community park is a fantastic place for wildlife and views. From the top you get tremendous views across the whole of Cumbernauld. It is also home to amazing woodlands, cracking wildflower meadows and historic structures.

Our volunteers have been busy bees in this park! We have been working to tidy up the wild “breathing place” garden at the top end of the area. Within this park we have worked to improve access along paths – cutting back overgrown trees and scraping paths. This will allow the local schools to get out and use these areas more easily. We hope to preserve the pond at the centre of the reserve, so we have cut back tree saplings that have been drying the pond out. We hope that in the next few years we will be able to clean these ponds out to revitalise them as havens for wildlife.

We have also been hard at work removing Himalayan balsam from the park. There is a sizable amount of this devastating plant overtaking the woodlands. This overgrowth falls into streams and spreads throughout Cumbernauld. It is vitally important to remove this invasive species before it seeds. We pull out the plants and place them on piles where they will quickly rot down.

We have trained up our volunteers in the use of brush cutting machinery to deal with overgrown verges. As the grass grows longer throughout the year, we hope to get along these paths and cut them back. Doing this will reveal litter that we will also lift and carry away.



NATURE NINJAS UNDERTAKING WORK AT THE COMMUNITY PARK.....





Cumbernauld Living Landscape is a partnership between the Scottish Wildlife Trust, North Lanarkshire Council, Sanctuary Scotland, the James Hutton Institute and TCV – The Conservation Volunteers.

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Partners



Funders



Cumbernauld Living Landscape is led by the Scottish Wildlife Trust, a Scottish registered charity (charity no. SC005792) and a company limited by guarantee and registered in Scotland (registered no. SC040247). Wild Ways Well is provided by TCV, registered as a charity in Scotland (SC039302).