



# WILD STRATHFILLAN



Wild Strathfillan is an ambitious nature restoration initiative working across 50,000 hectares of the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park. Through targeted ecological restoration work in partnership with multiple land managers, Wild Strathfillan will build a nature recovery network across the landscape. Working alongside traditional rural industries that underpin the local economy, the project will help to restore natural processes and ecological function, creating a healthier, more resilient, and better-connected landscape where people and nature thrive together.

The project's location, along with its rich diversity of habitats, mean that this landscape is also a vital strategic piece in a much wider nature recovery network across the Central Scotland landscape.

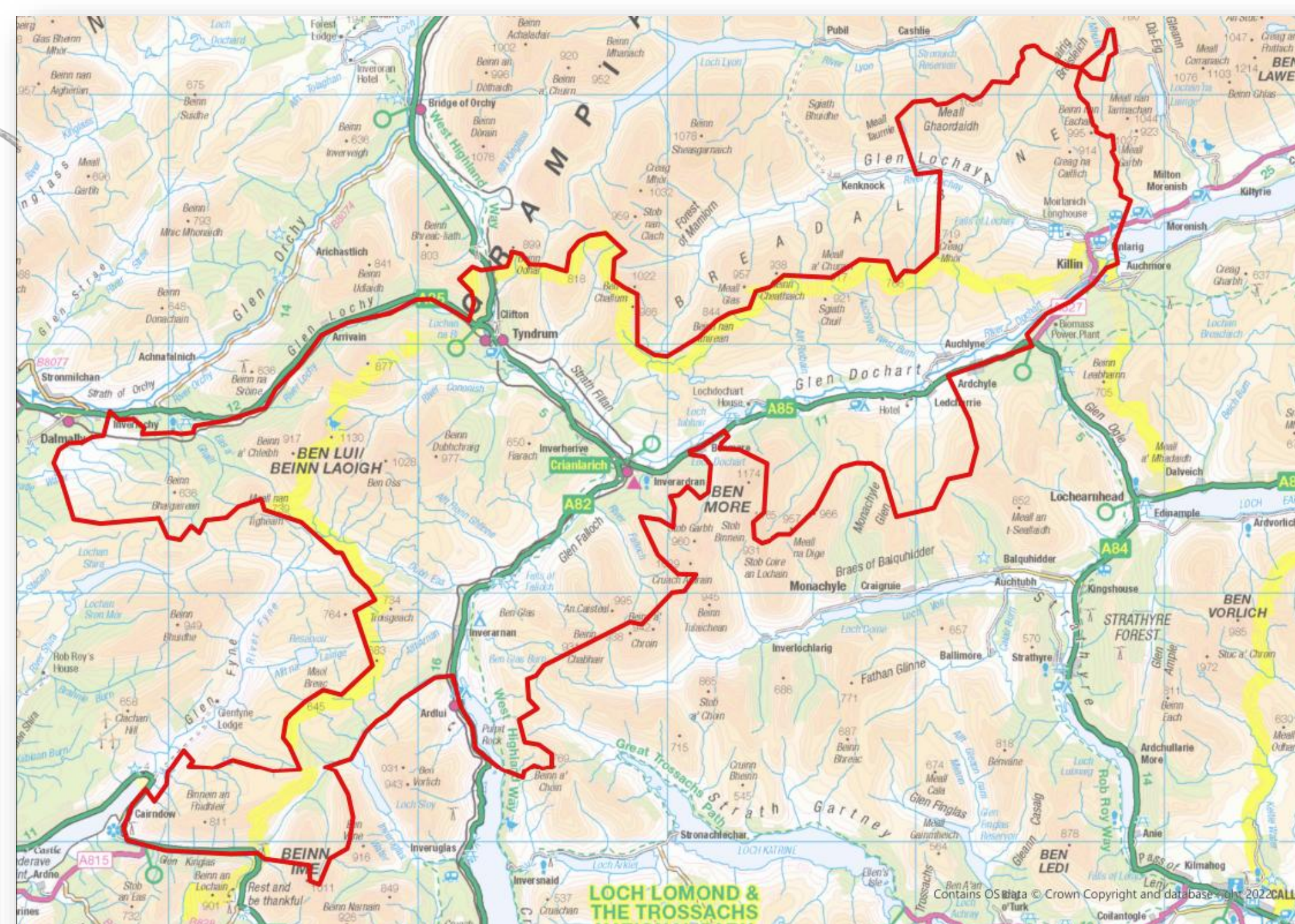


## Non-native plant species

Presenting an ongoing threat to native plant assemblages and the health and species diversity of key habitats, non-native plant species will be surveyed and managed. This includes Rhododendron, Himalayan balsam and non-native conifers. For effective delivery, a **catchment-wide plan for the management of invasive non-native plant species** will be produced. Whilst complete eradication will take several years, this work will continue to benefit the health and resilience of important habitats. In house training for local residents to learn how to identify and report the presence of invasive species will further enhance the effectiveness of controlling the spread of these species.

## Montane scrub restoration

Montane scrub is a rare and fragmented habitat type. We will install **enclosures** to protect remnant populations from browsing pressure until herbivore pressure is reduced across the landscape, especially considering the short seed viability period. We will also trial other technique to deter herbivores to see whether planting without fencing is feasible.



## Beavers and riparian woodland

This research project aims at better understanding herbivore activity within riparian woodlands, with a particular focus on deer and beavers. The goal is to gain insights into which tree species are most favoured by these herbivores and how they interact with the woodland ecosystem (and each other!). The findings will hopefully help guide future planting schemes that support both ecological balance and the needs of farming and estate management.

## Propagation of key plant species

Starting with the development of volunteer 'Seed Squad' work parties, seeds and cuttings from **tall herb upland plant communities** and **rare montane flora**, as well as **notable bryophytes** will be collected. Many of these scarce species survive in areas only most inaccessible to herbivores. The aim here is to propagate these important and declining montane and upland plants to improve species diversity and help maintain genetic diversity to boost recovering populations. Seeds and cuttings will be propagated at two **specialist plant nurseries**, one already in operation and the second being developed during the project. At the end of the project, we'll share out findings by developing propagation protocols to disseminate knowledge and help establish best practices.



Wild Strathfillan is supported by the Scottish Government's Nature Restoration Fund, managed by NatureScot.



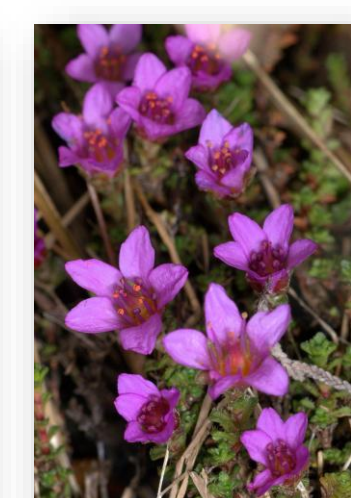
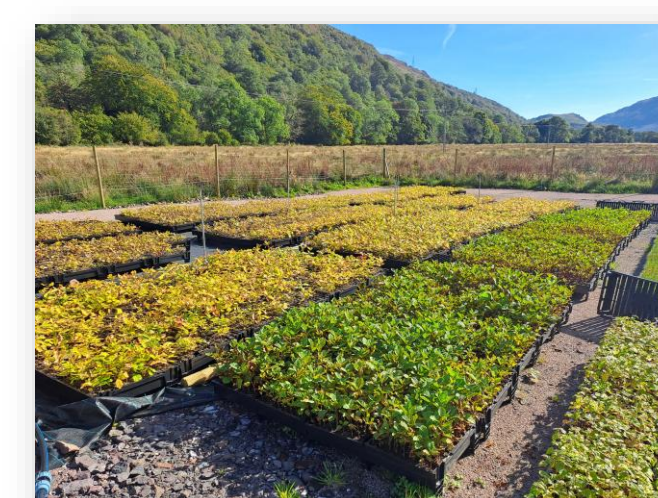
## Creating and restoring native woodland

Existing woodland will be enhanced and protected with an **updated woodland management plan** and new stock fencing. This will deliver optimal management for the 93ha of habitats on site will protect 3ha of ground flora, increasing biodiversity throughout. A **woodland design plan** will be created to optimise the biodiversity potential for new planted woodlands. Four pockets of new native broadleaf woodland (totalling 6 ha) will be created to improve habitat connectivity, diversity and resilience, as well as up to 100 ha of high-altitude native woodland being planted.



## GPS cattle grazing

In place of stock fencing, we're trialling the use of **virtual fencing** via GPS cattle collars. The virtual fence lines are set out to trial using cattle for conservation management. Through using the GPS collars we'll facilitate appropriate grazing levels to deliver optimum upland habitat management. The effectiveness of this grazing trial will be monitored and analysed to inform future management plans at this SSSI and other similar habitats.

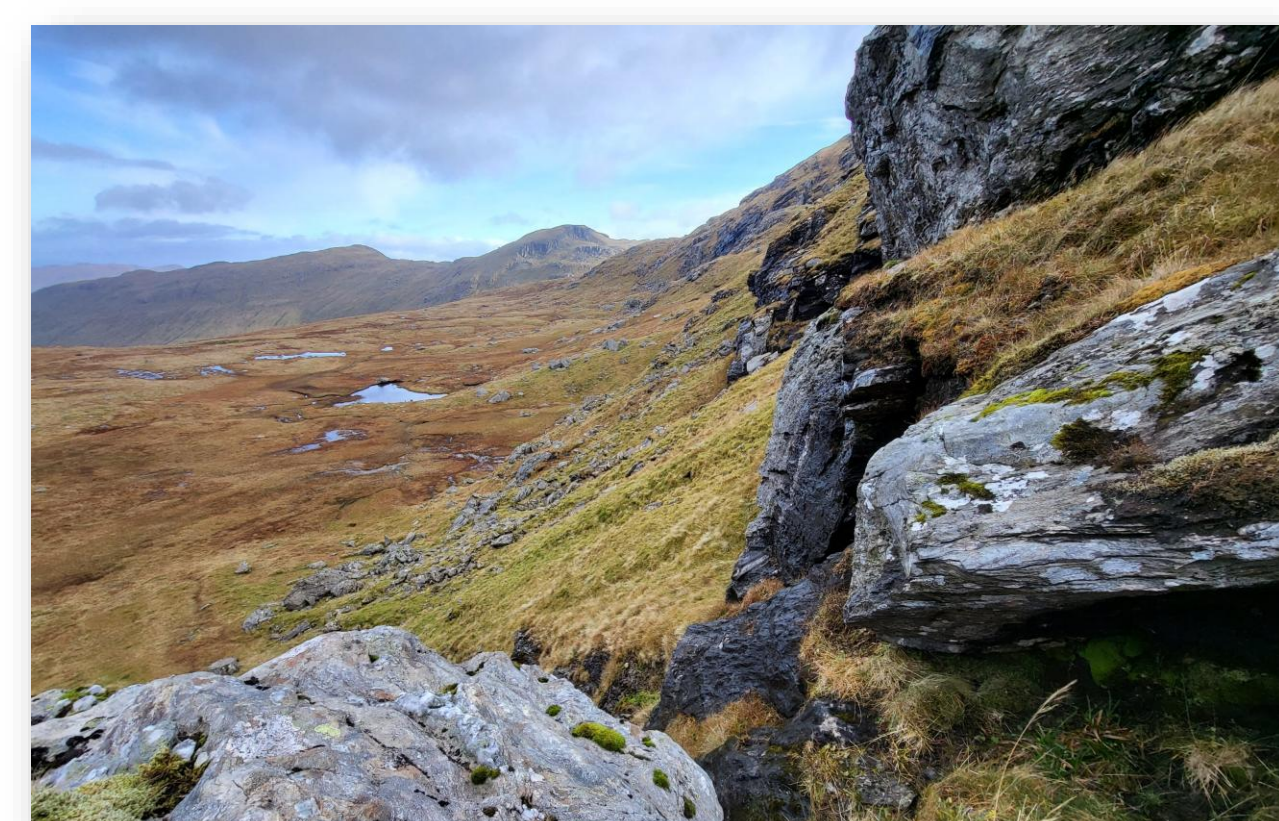


## Restoring river and wetland habitats

Around 80ha of wetland habitat will be restored, providing flower-rich wetland mosaic habitat, ponds and scrapes, supporting breeding wading birds and the invertebrates they feed on. River and wetland restoration will help restore natural flow conditions and downstream flood impacts, whilst the creation of riparian habitat will provide resilience to climate change.

## Montane flora surveys

The Strathfillan area features the **Breadalbane Important Plant Area** and multiple sites designated for their montane flora assemblage. Montane flora surveys are being undertaken to collect baseline data, identify suitable areas for restoration and potential seed sources, which will allow to have a more holistic understanding of montane species distribution and population size across the landscape.



## CONTACT

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