

04 August 2025

## **BEN LAWERS CUSTODIANS CELEBRATE THE DIAMOND JUBILEE OF A JEWEL IN ITS CARE**

- **The National Trust for Scotland is celebrating 75 years of caring for Ben Lawers National Nature Reserve.**
- **Ben Lawers is an internationally important nature reserve, home to rare and diverse mountain flora, stunning wildlife and archaeological treasures.**
- **The Trust has launched the Ben Lawers 75 fundraiser to help raise £75,000 to support its vital conservation projects.**

The National Trust for Scotland is proudly celebrating the 75th anniversary of Ben Lawers National Nature Reserve coming into its care. Within this time, the Trust has developed pioneering restoration work to enhance the renowned and diverse mountain flora and has maintained access to this precious mountain habitat.

Ben Lawers is the highest mountain in the central highlands and gives its name to the wider National Nature Reserve owned and managed by the Trust. The massif was acquired by the charity in 1950, specifically to protect and conserve the renowned arctic-alpine plant species found on its mountainous heights and is known as one of the UK's most stunning landscapes.

It was the first Trust property to be acquired primarily for nature conservation. The National Nature Reserve supports many nationally rare or scarce plant species including montane willows, vascular plants, lichens and bryophytes. It also supports a characteristic range of upland birds and mammals and has an outstanding diversity of invertebrates, with many rare or notable species such as the mountain ringlets butterfly.

As part of the vital conservation of its rich arctic-alpine flora, other highlights over the past 75 years include the Trust establishing a detailed monitoring programme of species in its care, ensuring consistent data capture for over 40 years. The charity also pioneered the development of montane willow restoration methods and is now an exemplar of good conservation practice. As well as its surrounding natural environment and teeming biodiversity, the reserve's Historic Landscape Project highlighted the significance of Ben Lawers as a cultural landscape through its archaeological discoveries.

Although Ben Lawers has celebrated many successes over the years, it also faces many difficult challenges. Plants adapted to high mountain habitats are under threat due to the implications of climate change, which reduces protective winter snow cover and increases extreme rainfall events. There is also mounting pressure on the landscape as

over 40,000 people explore these hills annually. The repeated trampling underfoot damages the very fragile mountain vegetation the charity is trying to protect.

Helen Cole, Property Manager & Senior Ranger at Ben Lawers National Nature Reserve, said: "We are very fortunate to have a special place like Ben Lawers within our care for all these years, which has over 4,500 hectares of awe-inspiring mountains that brim with biodiversity. Over the past 75 years, the Trust has maintained access to this stunning mountain landscape, but this comes at a cost.

"There is a precarious balance in ensuring these places can be enjoyed by all, but that they also remain protected along the way. As we continue to welcome many thousands of visitors to Ben Lawers each year, the repeated trampling underfoot exposes soil to the elements, resulting in large-scale erosion, which takes its toll on the fragile mountain vegetation. The Trust has invested in work to minimise the effects and regular maintenance work by our Footpath Team is required to prevent deterioration."

Phil Long OBE, Chief Executive of the National Trust for Scotland, said: "To celebrate 75 years of pioneering conservation at Ben Lawers National Nature Reserve during its time in our care, we are delighted to launch the Ben Lawers 75 fundraiser. Every contribution makes a difference, and your support ensures that the Ben Lawers National Nature Reserve and its valuable, yet fragile, ecosystem endures for another 75 years and more.

"Our [Plan for Nature](#), launched in 2024, outlines our ambitions for conserving the nature in our care and will play an important part in delivering government commitments for nature, including the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, and tackling the nature and climate crises."

Will Boyd-Wallis, Operations Manager for the North-West Highlands at the Trust, said: "With seven Munros, a treasure trove of archaeological remains and stunning wildlife, Ben Lawers is a special place for nature lovers, adventurers and history enthusiasts alike. It's thanks to our members and supporters for their ongoing generosity that we're able to continue our work to care for these special places for future generations to enjoy."

To celebrate Ben Lawers' diamond jubilee, the Trust held a celebratory event at the National Nature Reserve for visitors and Trust staff this month, offering quizzes, activities and displays, as well as guided walks. The Trust also launched a social media photography competition inviting the public to share their favourite images of Ben Lawers. Entries will be judged across a series of themed categories, with the winning photographs showcased in an online gallery and one overall winner receiving a place on a photography workshop with acclaimed nature photographer Laurie Campbell.

The Ben Lawers 75 fundraiser is now welcoming donations to help raise £75,000 to support its vital conservation projects. National Trust for Scotland appeals support the charity's vision to care for, share and protect Scotland's nature, beauty and heritage for everyone to enjoy, as outlined in its 10-year strategy, launched in 2022. For more

information about Ben Lawers National Nature Reserve and the Ben Lawers 75 fundraiser, visit [nts.org.uk/ben-lawers-75](https://nts.org.uk/ben-lawers-75).

## **ENDS**

### **Notes to Editors:**

**Images:** <https://www.flickr.com/gp/133918740@N04/5G5R4NLjn0>

### **About the National Trust for Scotland**

Established in 1931, the National Trust for Scotland is Scotland's largest conservation charity and cares for, shares and speaks up for Scotland's magnificent heritage.

Over the last 90 years the Trust has pioneered public access to and shared ownership of some of the most magnificent buildings, collections and landscapes in Scotland. It cares for more than 100 sites, from ancient houses to battlefields, castles, mills, gardens, coastlines, islands, mountain ranges and the plants and animals which depend upon them.

In March 2022 the National Trust for Scotland launched *Nature, Beauty & Heritage for Everyone*, its ten-year strategy which sets out the ambitions of the charity over the coming decade. From speaking up for Scotland's heritage which doesn't have a voice, to improving the lives and wellbeing of people across the country, and responding to the climate and biodiversity crisis, the Trust will build on its work in recent years to grow its impact and conserve and restore more of Scotland's heritage, as it moves towards its centenary in 2031.

For more information on the National Trust for Scotland visit [www.nts.org.uk](http://www.nts.org.uk). The National Trust for Scotland is a charity registered in Scotland, Charity Number SC 007410.