

friends of Lenzie Moss

Winter 2009/2010

New Signage for Lenzie Moss



East Dunbartonshire Council have commenced a signage project in Kirkintilloch and Lenzie as part of the 'Smarter Choices' sustainable transport project.

For Lenzie Moss, this means that new signs will be erected: at Southbank; near the Greens; on the path near the Jet garage; at Heather Drive; at Lenzie Station; and at the end of Fern Avenue next to Lenzie Primary School. In addition there will be two signs on the Moss itself: one at the end of Heather Drive and one at the junction near the station. The signs are due to go up from the first week in January.

These signs are intended to promote the path network, local destinations and encourage walking and cycling, while attracting new users to the Moss. Many local people do not realise the wider range of cycles or walks that can be started from the Moss.

Lenzie Moss Nature Reserve

Lenzie Train Station		$\frac{3}{4}$	(15 min)
Lenzie Shops		$\frac{3}{4}$	(15 min)




One good example is the virtually traffic free route to Kirkintilloch from Lenzie. This route is a good start to a longer off road cycle or great for those wanting an alternative walk from Lenzie into Kirkintilloch.

Take the exit from the Moss at Heather Drive, cross into the Boghead Wood, and travel down the well surfaced path (Christine's Way) following the burn. From the end of Christine's Way, a new path has been built that allows easy access to the canal Marina and the new bridge over the canal. A longer route could then be taken along the canal or from the canal to the Strathkelvin Railway Walkway – now upgraded with a good path from Kirkintilloch all the way to Strathblane.

People Counter

In summer 2009 a “people counter” was installed by E.D.C.’s Technical Services Department at one of the main paths on the Moss.

It showed that in two and a half months 9,360 people passed the monitor. That makes an average of 120 people per day. An impressive total – although it must be borne in mind that many of these would be “repeat” walkers. On the other hand, the counter records numbers at just one point, so misses all the people traversing other parts of the Moss.

Watch this space! We are hoping that the Department will keep us informed on future figures.

Anna Illingworth



The Canal Festival August 2009

In August 2009, as part of our celebrations on becoming a Local Nature Reserve, we took part in the Canal Festival in Kirkintilloch. We had a stand in Peel Park on which we displayed some of our photographs of the Moss, information on the history of the Moss, and our most recent newsletter. It was lovely to share the memories - both childhood and adult - of passers-by who stopped to chat.

We also gained some volunteer help for ongoing work on the Moss.

A Secret Place

Not everyone knows that there is another raised-bog wetland not far from Lenzie: Low Moss.

Under the expert guidance of an E.D.C. Ranger, Christine Morrison and I explored it last June. It is hidden away, un-signposted, and the paths are indistinct – but what a lovely place! It is reached off Westerhill Road, Bishopbriggs, along a side road which gives access to a football ground. On the street atlas it is called LOW MOSS PLANTATION, because much of its area has been planted with trees over the past two centuries.

However, there still remains a large area devoid of trees, retaining the original domed shape because, unlike Lenzie Moss, it has never been cut for peat.

At present it is drier than Lenzie Moss, so “alien” plants, particularly heather, have gained a foothold over much of its surface. The E.D.C. Rangers are working hard to counteract this, by installing dams where water is seeping out. This procedure is also planned for Lenzie Moss, but is happening earlier at Low Moss thanks to a grant to the Council from B&Q for this purpose (in exchange for acquiring some land there to build their current premises).

We were most interested to see the dams, especially the rustic ones made out of birch saplings and compacted mud, - one of the types envisaged for Lenzie Moss. They are attractive to look at and harmonise with their natural surroundings.

Originally Lenzie Moss, Low Moss and High Moss were all one area, extending from the present B&Q site across the farmland at the back of the Collins buildings to Lenzie Moss and the land south of Lenzie station. High Moss was drained in the 1790's and trees planted as “land improvement”(!). Other developments such as conversion to farmland, the railway, a 1939 RAF station (a site subsequently utilised for Low Moss Prison), and the retail park (opened in 1992), have combined to separate and shrink these areas.

Therefore we must congratulate East Dunbartonshire Council for recognising the value of the remaining two Moss's, and taking steps to conserve them.

Anna Illingworth



“Beatrice Rae in baking mode! The last newsletter told of Bea’s vital work for FoLM over many years.

You may recall previous articles urging readers to buy peat-free compost for your gardens, to reduce damage to peat bogs, which take thousands of years to form. (It is encouraging to see that most garden centres now offer peat-free soil improvers alongside those incorporating peat.)

Well, mosses are in a similar situation.

Scotland is very important for mosses, having many rare species and more than 60% of European species. Up to 10 different bog mosses are found on Lenzie Moss.

Hopefully none of you collect moss from the wild for your hanging baskets etc.. But if you must, please follow the guidelines of the Scottish Moss Collection Code, drawn up for commercial moss harvesters by a team funded by Scottish Natural Heritage, the Forestry Commission, the Scottish Forestry Trust and Scottish Enterprise.



'All these pexcept the sphagnum "flower" are mat-forming mosses'.

The Scottish Moss Collection Code

Where to collect

The least vulnerable sites for moss collection are those areas of conifer plantations (not native woodlands), which are soon to be felled. Needless to say, do not touch those on Lenzie Moss, which is home to some rare species, such as sphagnum fuscum ("rusty bog moss"). Rare mosses can be difficult to identify, particularly as sphagnum mosses tend to grow in communities of several species mixed up together.

How to collect

By hand, or using hand tools. Leave at least half of each patch, to encourage re-growth. Do not pluck from the same patch for at least 5 years, to allow the moss to recover.

What to collect

It is illegal to collect certain rare mosses, lists of which can be found on the website of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) www.jncc.gov.uk. Anyone seen using or selling any of these should be reported to the Police (Wildlife Crime Officer). "Weft-forming" mosses (those that form a mat on the ground) are the least vulnerable.

Mosses are very beautiful when observed closely. Here are pictures of some mat-forming mosses, and a common sphagnum. Next time you are on the Moss, take a magnifying glass and have a close look at these fascinating plants.



Lenzie Moss Needs You!

East Dunbartonshire Ranger Service and the Friends of Lenzie Moss are pleased to announce the launch of Lenzie Moss Conservation Volunteer Group.

With the management plan now in place the much-needed work on the Moss can begin. There is plenty to do and we are looking for help.

All the work is aimed at improving Lenzie Moss local nature reserve for the plants and animals that live there as well as for the people who enjoy visiting the Moss. No previous experience is needed as there will always be a Ranger on hand to explain the task to be carried out and show you how to use the tools involved.

If you fancy being out in the fresh air, getting fit, meeting new folk and learning some new skills, then come along and give it a go. You should wear old clothes and strong footwear (wellies would be ideal) that you don't mind getting dirty, and bring waterproofs and strong gloves if you have them. Anyone under 16 years should be accompanied by an adult.

We would like to retain the Moss as a raised bog, now a very rare habitat in the UK; this will involve removing a lot of the young invading birch trees, using loppers and saws.

There are six volunteer days planned throughout the year. Please find the dates below:

13th February, 24th April, 26th June, 5th August, 2nd October, 20th November.

All dates are Saturdays apart from August 5th, which is a Thursday during the school summer holidays. On that day there will be a chance for children to come along and search for minibeasts with a Ranger while the adults get stuck into a conservation task. All the other conservation days will run from 10.45am and finish around 2.30pm, but if you can only manage an hour you'll still be very welcome! Meet at the Moss end of the train station car park at 10.45am and bring a packed lunch if you plan to stay for the whole day.

If you would like to find out more or are interested in taking part, please phone Countryside Ranger Fiona Burns on 0141 956 6586 or email: rangers@mugdock.org

Membership

Please support this important greenspace by becoming a Friend of Lenzie Moss, thus helping us carry on the work of protecting this area to the benefit of the local community. You can join (or renew your membership) by contacting our Membership Secretary, or by downloading a subscription form from the website (www.friendsoflenziemoss.org.uk). Why not tell your friends and neighbours about it too?

Annual Membership Fees are:

- Retired or Unwaged £7
- Single £7
- Family £12

Subscriptions cover the year 1st April until 31st March the following year. For this you will receive twice-yearly Newsletters and will be kept informed of events and activities concerning the Moss.

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