

Welcome to the forests of Ross and Cromarty

A Sunday stroll? An all-day adventure?
Find the trail that's right for you...

Starting in the west, follow the famous Blackwater river to take in historic bridges at **Silverbridge** and **Little Garve**, leaping salmon at **Rogie Falls** and great views near **Contin**.

Step back in time as you head east, with a geological labyrinth and an Iron Age fort at **Blackmuir**, and a survivor from Scotland's earliest woodlands at **Monadh Mòr**.

Further north, there are three lovely trails near Tain. Explore the ancient drove road between **Strathory** and **Scotsburn**, meander by the **Aldie Burn**, and take in breathtaking views from **Tain Hill**.

Alphabet Forest

Did you know that the Gaels named the eighteen letters of their alphabet after eighteen trees and shrubs? Letter 'b' was named **beithe** after birch tree, and 'f' was named **fearna**, the alder. See if you can find these 'alphabetical' species as you wander through the woods of Ross and Cromarty.



Contact 1 Forestry Commission Scotland
North Highland Forest District, The Links, Golspie Business Park, Golspie, Sutherland, KW10 6UB
Tel: 0300 067 6841
Email: northhighland@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
Web: www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland

Contact 2 Inverness, Ross & Skye Forest District
Tel: 0300 067 6100
Email: invernessrossskye@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
Public enquiry line: 0845 3673787

Explore further:
Look out for these other leaflets in the surrounding area

1 **Forests of the Far North guide**
Covering our fantastic forests in the north of Scotland.

2 **Inverness guide**
Explore these 6 fabulous forests within 15 miles of the city.

If you need this publication in an alternative format, for example, in large print or in another language, please contact:

The Diversity Team
Tel: 0300 067 5000
E-mail: diversity@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

For information on public transport services contact:
Traveline Scotland, 0871 2002233 or
www.travelinescotland.com



Beannichte is Mallaichte

Anns an t-seann aimsir, bhiodh na Gàidheil a' samhlachadh daoine ri croaban, le cuid dhiubh 'beannichte' agus feadhain eile 'mallaichte'.

Coimhead airson na craobh-chrrithin a tha 'mallaichte'. Tha duilleagan air chrrith nad h-uine (an rud a thug a h-aime dhij). Thathar ag rádh gur e as coireach risin gur ann a fiodh na craobh seo a chaidh crann-ceusaidh Chriosd a thogail.



Overview of destinations

1 Little Garve to Silverbridge

Grid ref: NH 395 630

Peaceful riverside trail with historic bridges. (Silverbridge toilets open all year).



2 Rogie Falls

Grid ref: NH 442 585

Impressive waterfalls and the chance of seeing leaping salmon. (Toilets open Apr - Oct).



3 Contin

Grid ref: NH 454 566

Great views west down Strathconon. (Toilets open Apr - Oct).



4 Blackmuir Wood

Grid ref: NH 477 574

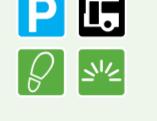
A geological maze and a ridge walk to an Iron Age fort.



5 Monadh Mòr

Grid ref: NH 579 526

Unique restored bog woodland habitat.



6 Strathory to Scotsburn Drove Road

Grid ref: NH 667 778

Hoof it along this ancient drovers' route!



7 Aldie Burn

Grid ref: NH 758 779

Easy trails past wildlife ponds and a pretty burn.



8 Tain Hill

Grid ref: NH 752 812

Spectacular views over the Dornoch Firth.



KNOW THE CODE BEFORE YOU GO
outdoorsaccess-scotland.com

Enjoy Scotland's outdoors responsibly

- take responsibility for your own actions
- respect the interests of other people
- care for the environment

Other places of interest

Slattadale & Victoria Falls

Grid ref: NG 888 719

Soak up magnificent Highland scenery from Slattadale pinewoods, with its pockets of ancient oak and birch woodland. Don't miss the impressive falls, named after Queen Victoria who visited in 1877. Both have stunning views of Loch Maree and Slioch mountain.



Lael Forest Garden

Grid ref: NH 195 806

Explore this unique collection of trees from all over the world, part of the National Tree Collections of Scotland.



Loch Achilty

Grid ref: NH 426 563

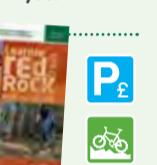
Pause for a picnic and to admire the view of the loch from this quiet glade amongst birch and alder trees.



Munlochy Clootie Well

Grid ref: NH 639 536

Feeling under the weather? Time to visit the Clootie Well! In a ritual dating back more than 1500 years, dip your cloth or 'cloot'* into the waters of the well, offer up a prayer and tie the cloth to a tree. As the cloths rot away, so the illness will leave your body. Alternatively, you're bound to feel better after walking one of the short woodland trails here.



Learnie Red Rock MTB Trails

Grid ref: NH 736 614

Mountain bikers of all levels will revel in the singletrack Red Rock Trails at Learnie.

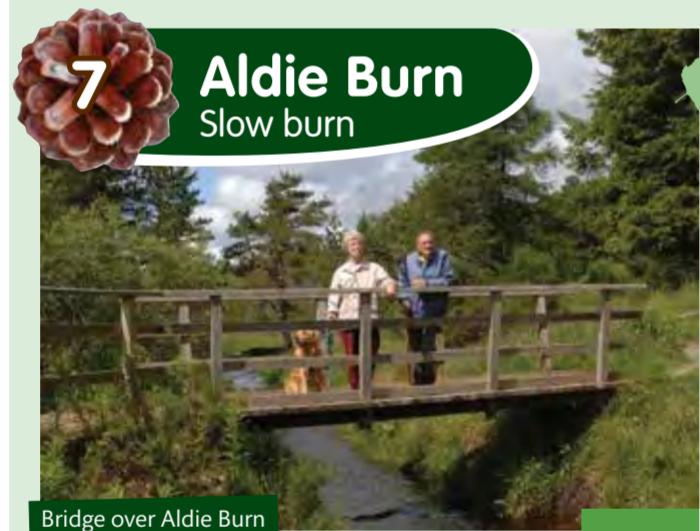


Contact 1 Forestry Commission Scotland
Coimisean na Coillteachd Alba

Contact 2 Inverness, Ross & Skye Forest District
Tel: 0300 067 6100
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Public enquiry line: 0845 3673787

Explore
Enjoy and Discover

The forests of Ross and Cromarty



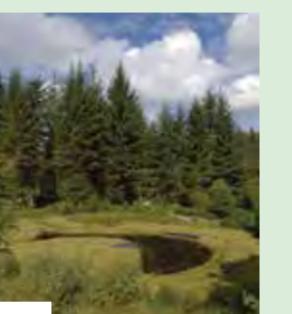
7 Aldie Burn

Slow burn

Bridge over Aldie Burn

These well-loved woodland trails are full of interest: wildlife ponds, the attractive Aldie Burn and gnarled Scots pine trees. Paths are level, well-marked and suitable for pushchair and wheelchair use.

The gently flowing Aldie Burn used to power corn and woollen mills further downstream at Aldie. These days, things are more relaxed. Bring a picnic and enjoy a lazy summer's day 'plourterin' in the shallows. If you're very lucky, you just might spot an otter.

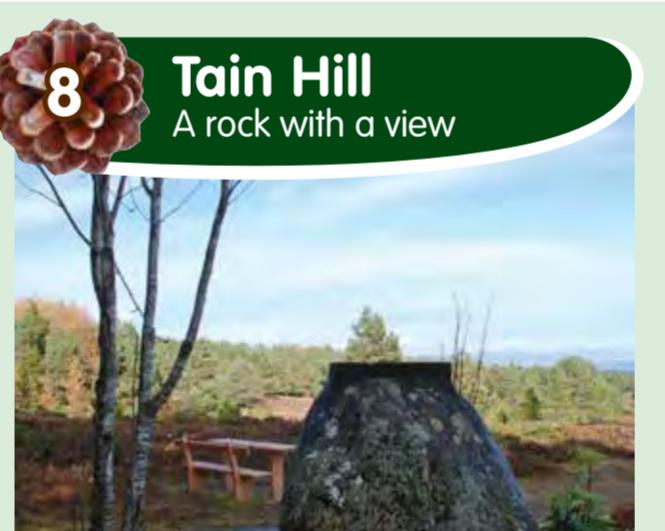
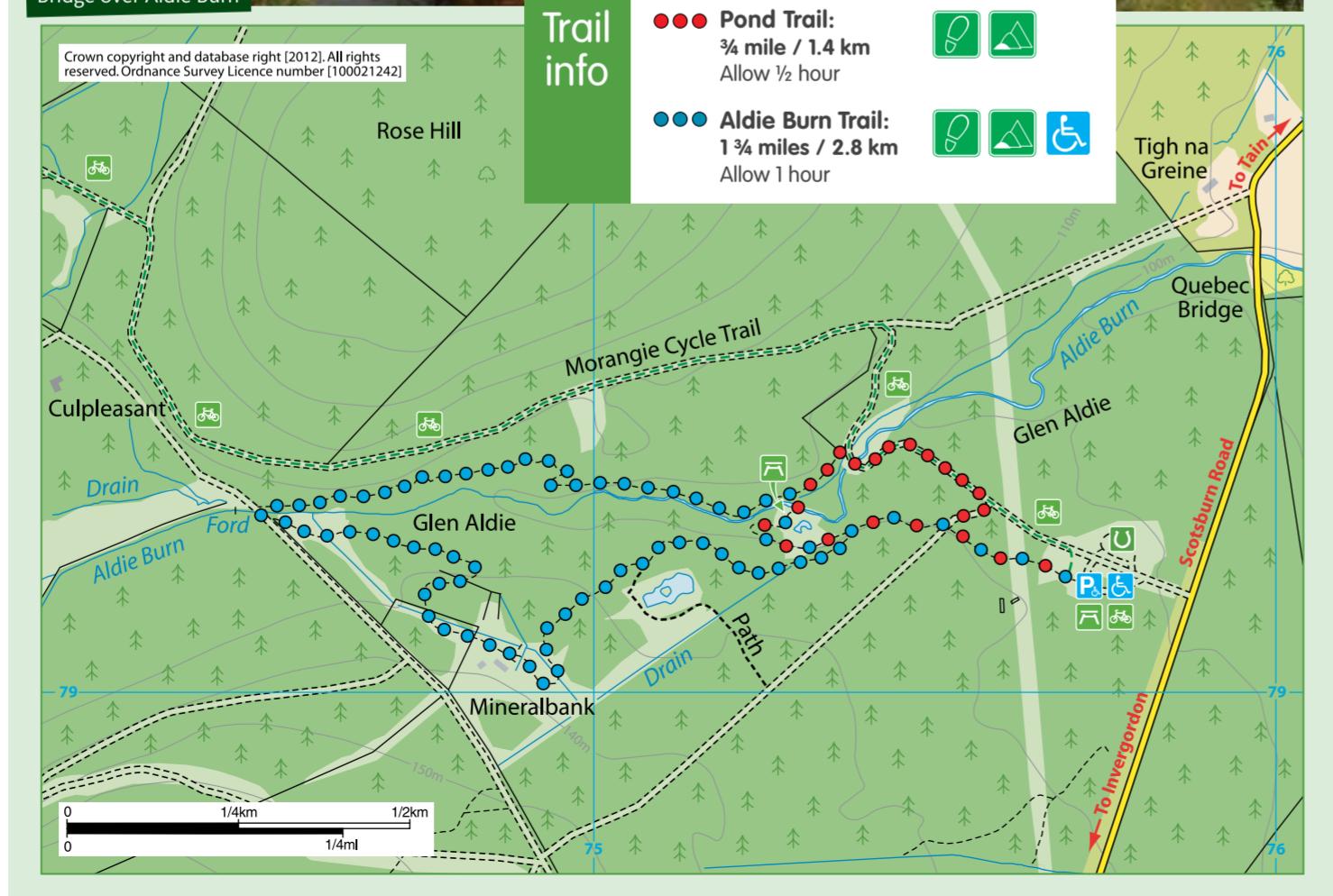


Trail info

Pond Trail:
¾ mile / 1.4 km
Allow ½ hour



Aldie Burn Trail:
1 ¼ miles / 2.8 km
Allow 1 hour

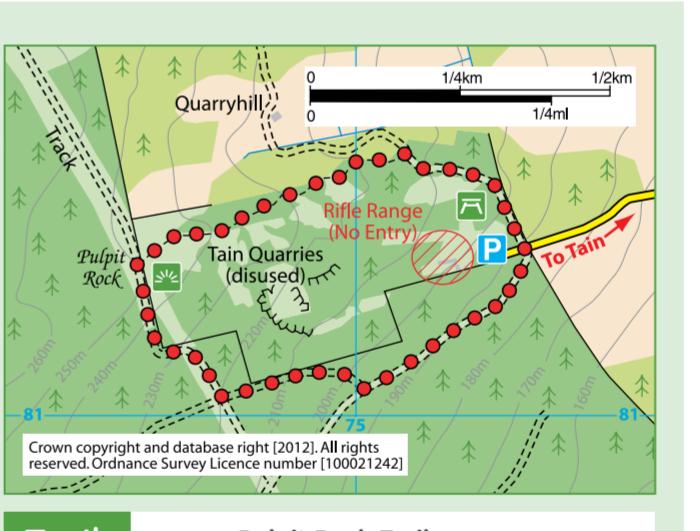


8 Tain Hill

A rock with a view

Breathtaking views from the top of Tain Hill above the historic Royal Burgh town of Tain.

The circular trail takes you through mixed pine woodland, where pine martens have been seen and then up to the summit of Tain Hill. From Pulpit Rock, the highest point, there are panoramic views across the Dornoch Firth to Tarbet Ness, and south over the Cromarty Firth.



Trail info

Pulpit Rock Trail:
1 mile / 1.8 km
Allow ¾ hour



1 Little Garve - Silverbridge

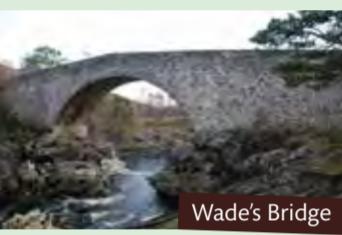
A tale of two bridges

The Blackwater river is known in Gaelic as *An t-Alltan Dubh* ('the black burn') and is the subject of a famous hunting song written by Donald Fraser, the 'Fannich Bard'.

This attractive, circular riverside walk is topped and tailed by two historic bridges. A peaceful, level path through mixed woodland with ever-changing river views.

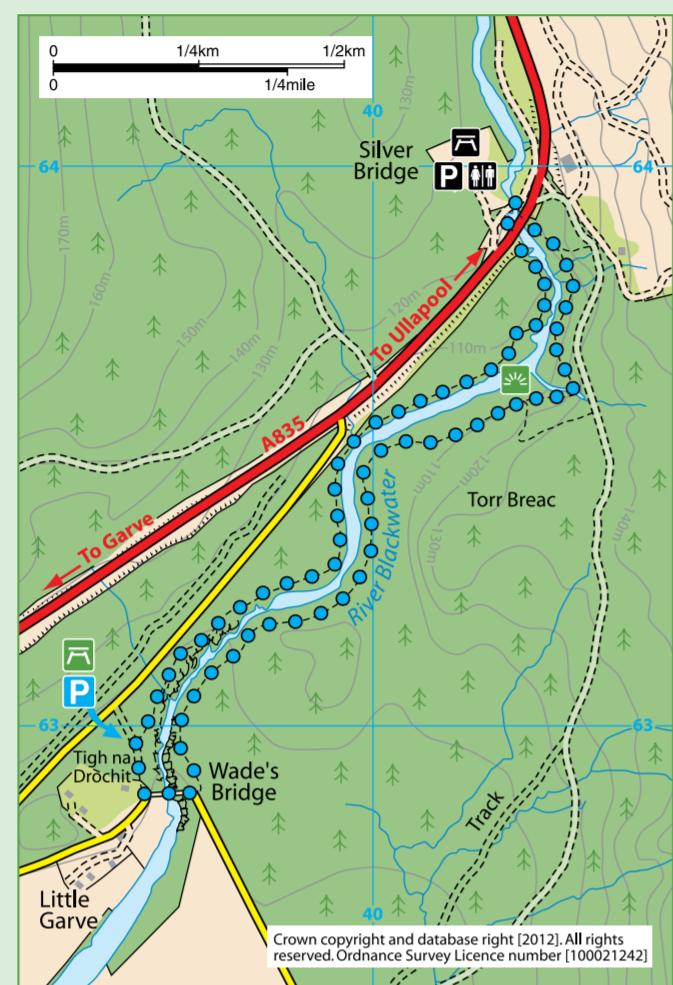
As you stroll by the Blackwater river, you're walking in the footsteps of soldiers – and cows! Silverbridge is part of an ancient route used by drovers herding their cattle to Muir of Ord and the markets to the south. The high-arched bridge at Little Garve was part of a military road which was built between Contin and the west coast at Poolewe around 250 years ago. It's known as Wade's Bridge, but it was actually built by Wade's successor, Major William Caulfeild.

Look out for brown trout in the pools below the bridge.



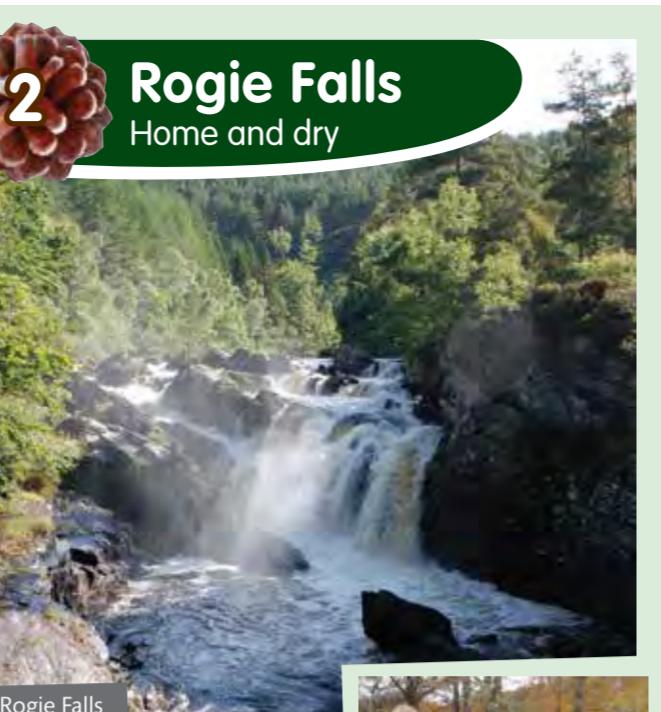
Trail info

- Two Bridges Trail: 2 miles / 3.3 km Allow 1 1/2 hours



2 Rogie Falls

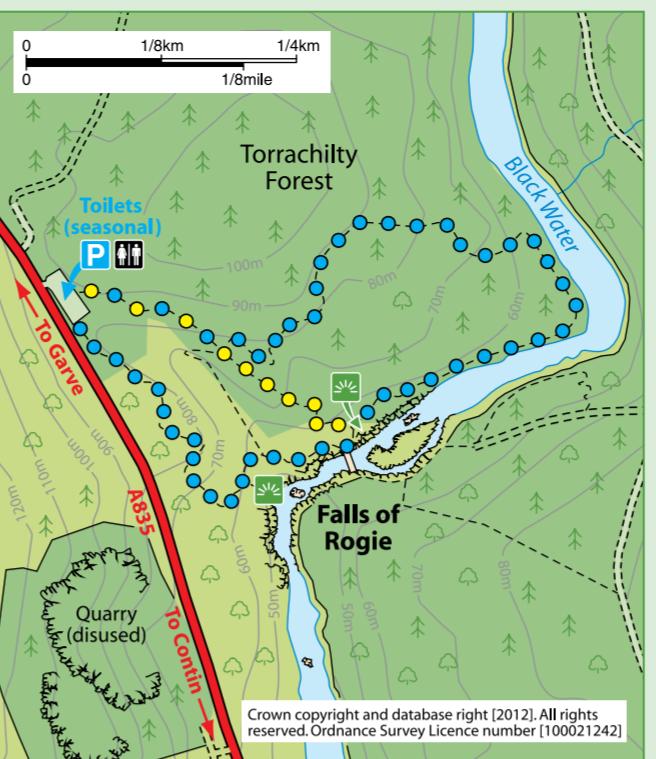
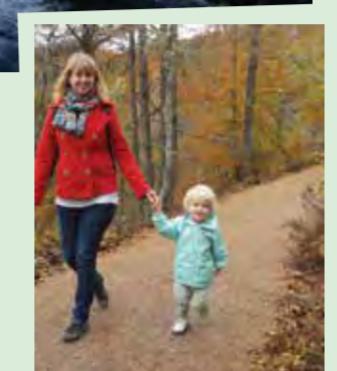
Home and dry



Enjoy these waterfalls up close from the suspension bridge – particularly impressive after heavy rainfall! A network of short trails lead to viewpoints overlooking the falls and a dramatic gully as well as more tranquil stretches of river.

Did you know that Rogie Falls is one of the best places in Scotland to watch salmon as they 'run' upstream? From July to October salmon can be spotted leaping up the waterfalls as they make their way up the river to find a mate and lay their eggs. The fish are returning to the same spot where they themselves were hatched.

If they look tired, it's no wonder: the salmon have travelled huge distances from cold northerly seas to return to their home river. A fish 'ladder' gives salmon a helping hand to reach the top of the falls when the river level is low. Cheer them on – they're nearly home!

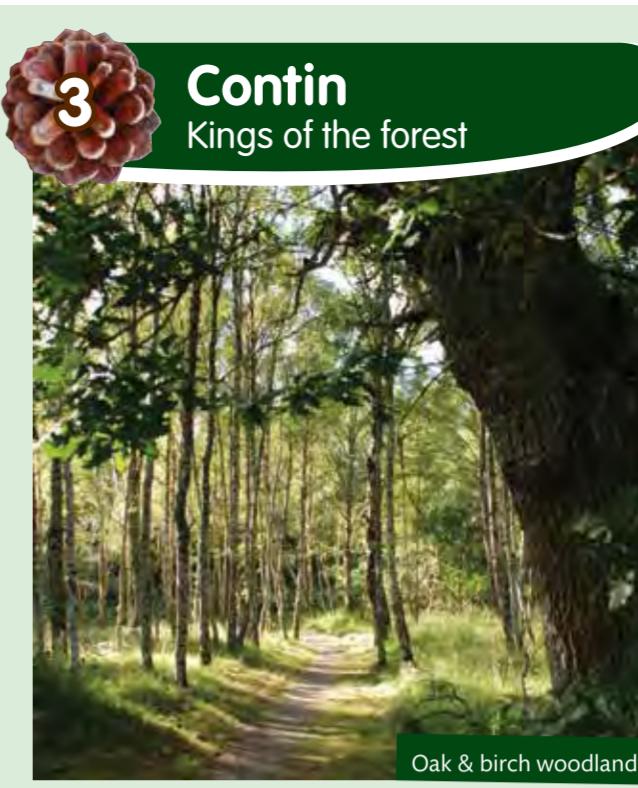


Trail info

- Salmon Trail: ½ mile / 0.7 km Allow 20 minutes
- Riverside Trail: ¾ mile / 1.3 km Allow ½ hour

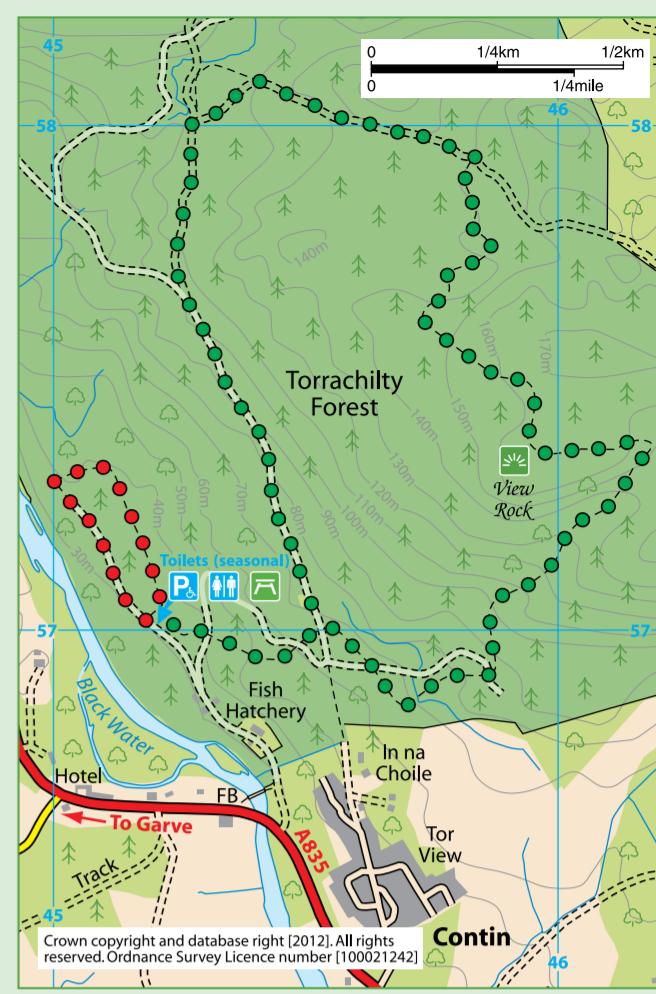
3 Contin

Kings of the forest



There's something for everyone in the oak and birch woodland to the west of Contin.

A short, flat, easy trail loops from the car park, while the more energetic can enjoy great views up Strathconon by following the trail up to the 'view rock'. Look west across the glen and you'll see the hill called Craigdarroch (Creag an Darach). This is named for the *darach*, the oak tree, a species fondly dubbed *righ na coille*, 'the king of the forest' by the Gaels.



The open woodland of the lower slopes are home to both red and roe deer, and in summer you can see pearl-bordered fritillary butterflies. This is also a good place to spot frisky native red squirrels.

You can report any sightings at www.redsquirrelsofthehighlands.co.uk



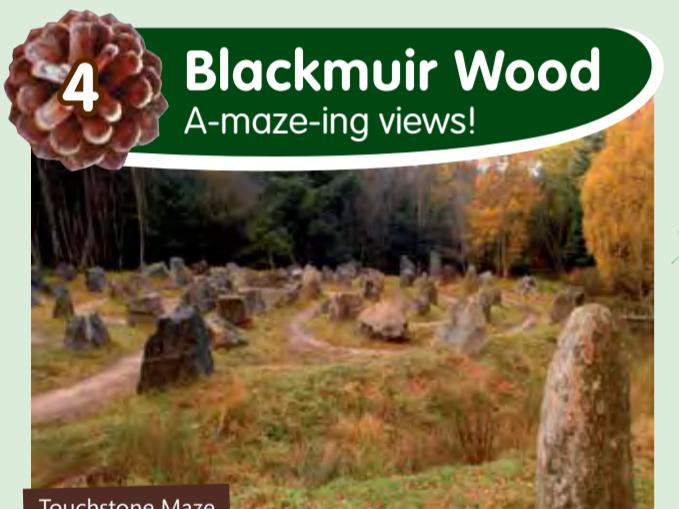
You can discover more about the amazing life story of the salmon on the red Salmon Trail.

Trail info

- Blackwater Trail: ½ mile / 0.7 km Allow ¼ hour
- View Rock Trail: 2 ¾ miles / 4.5 km Allow 2 hours

4 Blackmuir Wood

A-maze-ing views!

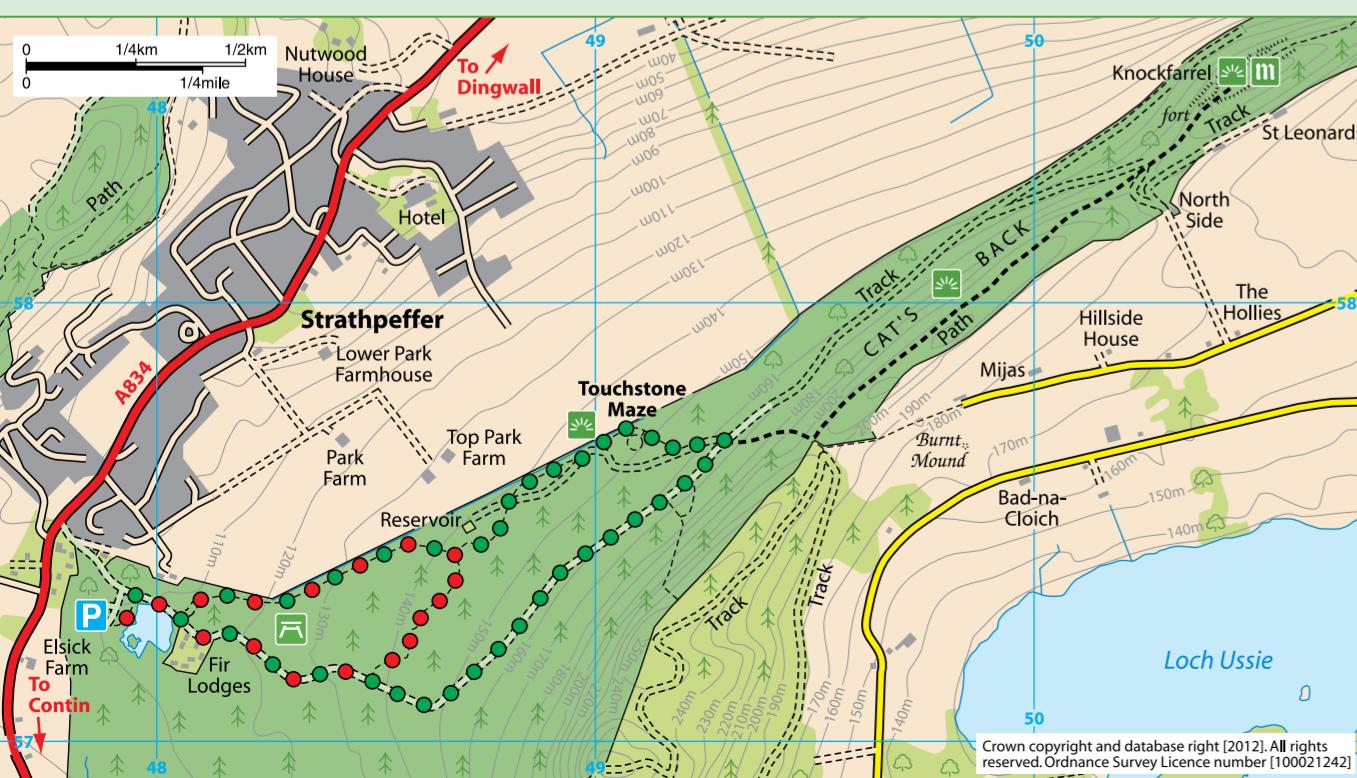


Trail info

- Red Kite Trail: 1 ¼ miles / 2 km Allow ¾ hour
- Touchstone Maze Trail: 2 ¼ miles / 3.6 km Allow 1 ½ hour



You can carry on along to the end of the Cat's Back – (2 miles / 3.3 km, allow 1 hour each way). Please note, this section is more strenuous and is not waymarked.



5 Monadh Mòr

Rare survivor



Explore this unique bog woodland, a rare survivor from the end of the ice age, on a well-marked level trail.

Around 14,000 years ago, as the glaciers retreated they left ridges and hollows here which gradually filled up with pools of water. On ridges between these boggy areas pine and birch trees took root, growing slowly because of the poor quality of the soil. Monadh Mòr is the largest remaining bog woodland in Scotland.

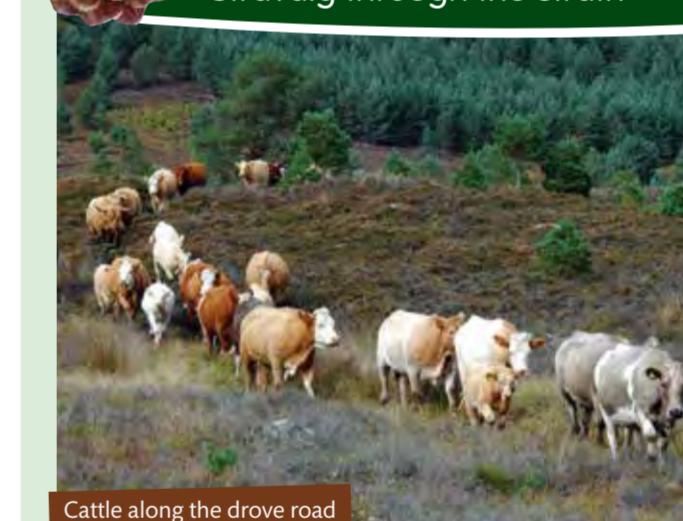
In the 1960s this area was planted with commercial forestry, which made the bog dry out. Recent conservation is restoring the bog woodland, by removing planted trees and allowing the bog to fill up with water again. Today Monadh Mòr is a beautiful woodland, home to a range of wildlife: darting dragonflies and damselflies, crossbills, and even ospreys.

Trail info

- Monadh Mòr Trail: 4 ¼ miles / 6.9 km Allow 2 ½ hours

6 Strathrory - Scotsburn Drove Road

Stravaig through the strath



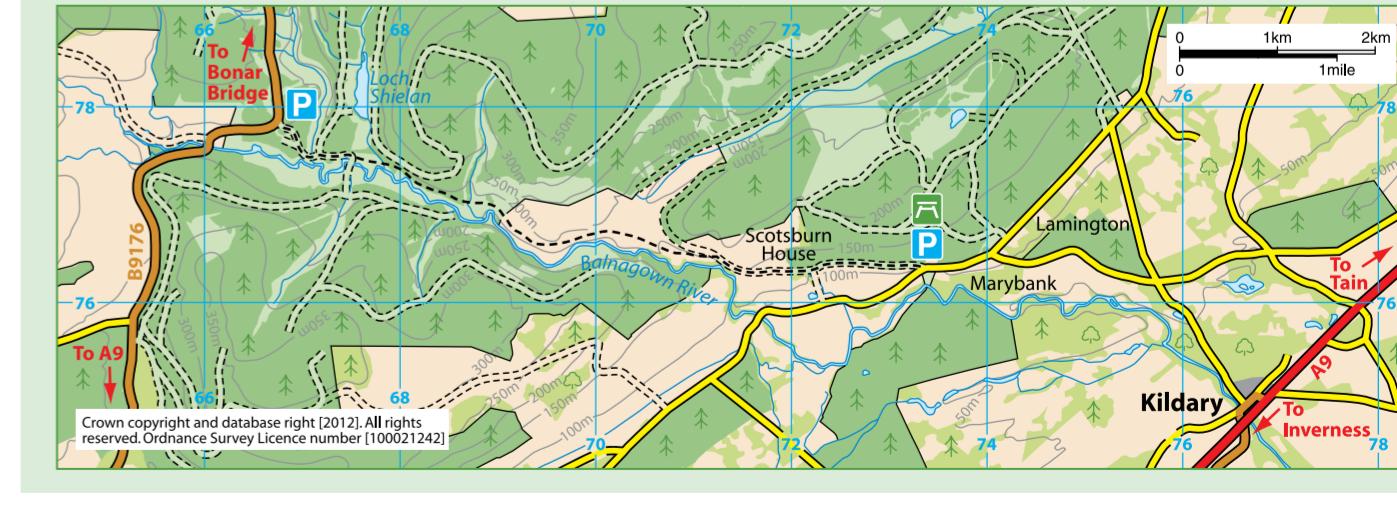
In summer the strath is alive with birds, butterflies and wildflowers. Listen for the 'chat! chat!' of the stonechat and if you're lucky (and an early riser), in spring you might see male black grouse gathering at a 'lek' to compete for a mate.

Follow the route of this drove road for a challenging but rewarding wander by the Strathrory river through oak and pinewoods and across open moorland. You'll need to organise transport from the end – or be prepared to walk back to the start.

Used by drovers herding their cattle to market from the 17th century, the strath has been settled for at least 6,000 years. Look out for signs of Bronze Age settlements, an unfinished Iron Age hill fort and the remains of more recently-abandoned croft buildings.

Trail info

- The Drovers Trail: 4 ½ miles / 7.4 km (each way). Allow 3 ½ hours (each way)



Trail grading

- | |
|-------------------------------|
| Easy: Sensible footwear |
| Moderate: Waterproof footwear |
| Strenuous: Muscle stretcher |
| Strenuous: Hillwalking boots |

There's a lot of boggy country in the Highland landscape, and this is reflected in the richness of Gaelic vocabulary. Did you know there are almost forty words in Gaelic for 'bog' or 'marsh'? Among the most common are *mòine*, *poll*, *feith* and *lapach*. And of course, the English word 'bog' is itself of Gaelic origin!