

Balmacara Estate & Lochalsh Woodland Garden for schools

Balmacara is a crofting estate of 6,300 acres with outstanding views of Skye and Applecross. Traditional crofting is carried out at Drumbuie (Crofting Township of the Year 1996) and Duirinish, and Plockton is an Outstanding Conservation Area, including the Open Air Church, designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM). The Coille Mhór oak-birchwood is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and candidate Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the neighbouring Loch Alsh is a candidate marine SAC. The estate has over 19 km of way-marked footpaths.

Lochalsh Woodland Garden provides pleasant sheltered walks beside the shore of Loch Alsh. Mature Scots pine, oaks and beeches with developing collections of rhododendrons, bamboo, ferns, fuchsias and hydrangeas all flourish. The associated natural woodlands and coastline have outstanding scenic value and support a variety of botanical and wildlife habitats.

● education programme

Balmacara is an important primary resource that offers cross-curricular learning opportunities for key areas of the 5-14 Curriculum

a site visit offers

- environmental activities led by the Ranger Service, which can be specifically designed to match school projects and the curriculum
- a wide range of habitats to study - rivers, lochs, meadows, woodlands, bogs, moorland, coast and formal garden
- guided walks to explore the area
- Balmacara Square Visitor Centre with orientation and interpretation panels, walks leaflets and an interactive touchscreen computer programme, including an entertaining crofting game
- kiosk with informal interpretation of the garden and estate

classroom resources include

- Ranger visits to schools to lead activities
- illustrated guidebook (available on request)
- Interactive CD-ROM (available on request)

● practical information

planning your visit

- open for school visits: all year (as there are no indoor facilities it is recommended that visits are made between April and September)
- Ranger Service available: all year
- we suggest a ratio of 1 teacher/adult to ten children
- cost for school parties: children £1. Donations to the Trust are gratefully accepted
Educational Membership of the National Trust for Scotland allows free entry to all NTS properties
- preparation: a Ranger will discuss plans for a visit over the phone or by a site visit (depending on distance)

● for more information contact

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continued

your visit

- please note: visiting teachers are responsible for discipline - good conduct in the countryside is expected from pupils at all times
- picnic facilities: for whole day visits please bring packed lunches
- shop: not available at the property
- toilets: available at Lochalsh Woodland Garden (Lochalsh House)

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