

# Ptarmigan Mountaineering Club



Website: [www.ptarmiganmc.org.uk](http://www.ptarmiganmc.org.uk)

## Monthly Newsletter

July 2019

The meet on 7 July is to Innerwick in Glen Lyon. Fare £20.

**GENTLE REMINDER:** if you cancel your booking after 8 am on the Friday before the meet, or if you fail to turn up, our Code of Good Practice expects you still to pay your fare (to the Treasurer) unless the reasons for your cancellation or non-appearance were beyond your control.

The bus will leave Waterloo Place at 07.30 and travel via Shandwick Place (bus stop opposite Boots), Haymarket, Roseburn, Drum Brae, Forth Road Bridge, M90, A9, Dunkeld (comfort stop), Aberfeldy.

The bus will leave Innerwick at 17.30 sharp.

Bus Convener: Douglas Tullis

Bookings and cancellations: either 1. Text and phone Tim Featherstone 075 49 48 0321  
or 2. Email [bookings@ptarmiganmc.org.uk](mailto:bookings@ptarmiganmc.org.uk)

Emergency Number 075 49 48 0321 must be taken on the hill with each party.

Main map required: OS 1:50 000 Sheet 51 Loch Tay and Glen Dochart. All grid references are preceded by NN.

## Route Options

### Munros

[Carn Mairg group: access from Invervar](#)

Carn Gorm, 1029 m, 635500; Meall Garbh, 968 m, 647517; Carn Mairg, 1042 m, 684513; Meall nan Aighean, 981 m, 694496. **NB: a circuit of all four would suit fast parties only.**

[Lawers group: access from Invervar](#)

Meall Greigh, 1001 m, 674438; Meall Garbh, 1118 m, 644436; An Stuc, 1118 m, 639431; Ben Lawers, 1214 m, 635414; Beinn Ghlas, 1103 m, 625404; Meall Corranaich, 1069 m, 615410; Meall a' Choire Leith 926 m, 612439.

### Corbetts

Cam Chreag, 862 m, 536491; Beinn Dearg, 830 m, 608497. Access from Innerwick.

### Graham

Meall a Mhuic, 745 m, 579508. Access from Innerwick.

### Lower level

An interesting circuit starts at the west end of Fortingall village. Take the access road to Glenlyon House, going right past some cottages; a track goes ENE, then NW to the east of the Allt Odhar. It climbs about 600m to reach

Glenmore Bothy at 712527, sheilings, a cave (Uamh Tom a' Mhor-fhir) at 708534 and waterfalls after about 8km. To return follow the outward track, then go S into Gleann Muillin, where a path follows the Allt Odhar SE and then S to Glenlyon House. The most ambitious return route avoids the outward track altogether, going south to climb Meall nan Eun 874 m, 708509, before dropping ESE into Gleann Muillin.

Drummond Hill has a network of forest tracks accessible from Fortingall or 786487.

The Kirk Road goes from Innerwick north to Loch Rannoch.

The Post Office at Bridge of Balgie is highly recommended for tea and scones.

## The Club's Code of Good Practice

The Club's Code of Good Practice notes that parties should comprise two, preferably three, people and those **members must have a map of the area and compass and know how to use them**. A first-aid kit, survival bag, whistle and torch should also be carried. **The group should stick together and be alert for signs of anyone feeling unwell or getting into difficulties**. It does no harm to carry a mobile phone, though it is important to understand that there is no guarantee of signal availability and this should never be relied upon.

**Disclaimer:** The routes outlined above are merely descriptions of walks in the area; they do not represent invitations or recommendations by the Club or any of its Officers to members to go on these routes. It is the individual and sole responsibility of each club member to choose a route that is within their capability, taking due account of the timings given and the weather conditions prevailing.

## What we did last month

The forecast was dire and the late call-offs on Saturday night were presumably because of the predicted wet weather. This took the numbers on the bus down from the 25 earlier in the week to 14 on the day. Chairman Richard writes, "We always say, don't always believe what you hear about the weather, especially in the west, as it can be so localised. On this occasion however, the layabeds were quite right, as it rained fairly solidly till lunchtime.

"As a result, many of us took the pragmatic decision to go low. I went with a group of seven (Walter, Dave B, Elsa, Michael, Colin and Jennifer) from Bridge of Orchy along the West Highland Way to Kingshouse. The route was hillier than I recall from some years ago (funny what age does to the memory) but it is an attractive wooded start until the more exposed section west of Forest Lodge, where the full elements could lash us. Luckily the wind strength was low so umbrellas, used by two of us, came in useful. We have good role models in Hamish McInnes and Nicholas Crane as well as our own Ian Chuter to look up to. Anyway, it kept my hairdo in good order.

"On our gradual descent towards Kingshouse, the views towards the Buachaille and Glen Coe started to open up and there were some good photo



*Richard and Dave at the startlingly modernised Kingshouse Hotel (photo by Walter)*

opportunities denied us earlier. At our first stop at a ruined lodge house the midges descended and I picked up a few bites, so it wasn't a place fur hingin aboot. Some of us had nearly 3 hours to sample the delights of the completely refurbished, not to say rebuilt, Kingshouse Hotel. The inside is smart but sensibly has no carpets throughout the

ground floor. There were spectacular views from the bar and dining area at the west end of the building and the place has been going like a fair since it reopened in February.

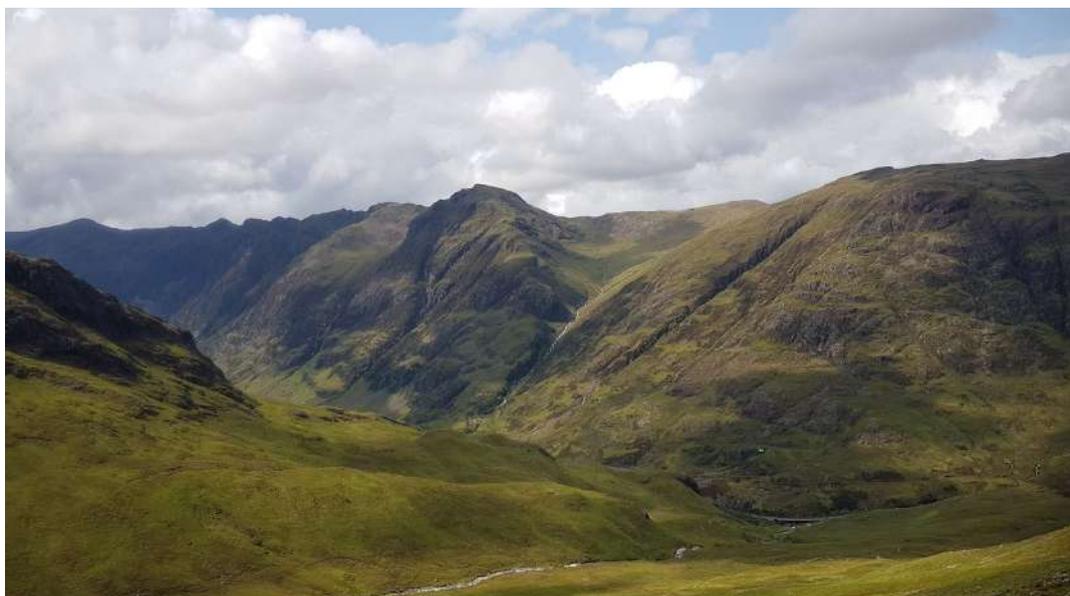
“Roll on summer days!”

Meanwhile Bill and Tim H went up Buachaille Etive Beag. Here’s how they got on, in Bill’s words...

“It was lightly spitting when we got off the bus at Dalness in Glen Etive but completely sodden underfoot. It seemed the Glen had experienced a lot of rain recently. As we climbed quickly, following the Lairig Eilde footpath, the heavens opened and it was clear that the Allt Lairig Eilde was in torrents which meant we had to find a safe place to cross. In the end, we found a relatively shallow pool and waded through - oh well, we were going to get wet anyway! From there, we headed towards the SW shoulder of Stob Dubh and took the long slog NE towards the summit. From around 750m we were clambering across scree fields - the larger stones proving a better footing than the slick small pebbles which seemed to take us two steps back to every step forward. Mist was crawling around us for the majority of the day, but it was cool and calm as we rose with little of the wind that the others experienced elsewhere. From the summit, it was a simple route back to the col under Stob Coire Raineach, a short up and down the second Munro, and then the "tourist path" towards the A82. We hiked alongside the road the final 8km or so towards Kingshouse in a combination of glorious sun and light rain and got back to the bus just in time.”



*Pretty wet and gloomy to begin with but the sun came out in the end! (Photos by Bill)*



Kathy, Lynn, Tim F and Kevin headed for a remote Graham, the poetically named A' Chruach (The Heap) and its summit, Stob na Cruaiche (Stub of the Heap). At around 400m Kev decided to bail and head over rough ground to pick up the southerly path back to Kingshouse. He says, "The rain was incessant and the walk was pretty grim. Yet, typically the rain stopped as soon as I picked up the other path. Still it was an enjoyable circular walk, a good 20+ km I may add. If I decided to take Graham bagging seriously in the next few years then I shall aim for that hill via Rannoch Station, or I'll bike it from Kingshouse."



On the way back Kev took some lovely shots of a moody-looking Glencoe and Rannoch Moor.

### **Extreme botanists and birders required** (see your current copy of *Scottish Mountaineer* pp16 to 18)

Botanists at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and ornithologists at the British Trust for Ornithology Scotland are looking to hillwalkers and climbers to help monitor the well-being of upland plants and birds in the face of such threats as changing land-use and climate change. The botanists are asking us to look out for three plant species that have been hanging on since the ice last retreated and whose future is now uncertain. They are alpine blue sow-thistle (*Cicerbita alpina*), tufted saxifrage (*Saxifraga cespitosa*) and a lichen, alpine sulphur tresses (*Alectoria ochroleuca*) (see left to right below).



These plants are now pretty scarce so RBGE botanists would be very interested in any suspected sightings. A good photograph, ideally accompanied by GPS co-ordinates or a 6-figure grid reference for their location, together with a count of the number of plants seen (in the case of the sow-thistle and saxifrage) should be sent to: [raremountainplants@rbge.org.uk](mailto:raremountainplants@rbge.org.uk)

If birds are more your thing, then you could help the BTO Scotland by recording your observations of such scarcer upland species as ptarmigan, dotterel, wheatear or breeding waders. A useful record could be as simple as the species name, a grid reference, the date and numbers seen. This information can be recorded via 'BirdTrack' ([www.birdtrack.net](http://www.birdtrack.net)) directly onto the website or via the BirdTrack app.