

# Ptarmigan Mountaineering Club



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

## Monthly Newsletter

November 2019

**The meet on 3 November is to Pitlochry and Blair Atholl via Dunkeld. Fare £20.**

The bus will leave Waterloo Place at 07.30 going via Shandwick Place (bus stop opposite Boots), Roseburn, Drum Brae, Forth Road Bridge, M90, Dunkeld (short stop with facilities), A9 north to Blair Atholl.

**The bus will leave Blair Atholl at 17.30 prompt.**

**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)

**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.**

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

**Maps required: OS 1:50 000 sheets 43 Braemar & Blair Atholl; 52 Pitlochry to Crieff.**

**High tea** has been booked at 5 for 5.30 pm at the Atholl Arms Hotel. The menu choices are: fresh battered haddock, mushy peas, chips; homemade steak and ale pie (GF available), new potatoes, vegetables; deep-fried chicken goujon, homemade coleslaw, chips; mixed chef's meat salad, new potatoes or chips; homemade macaroni cheese (GF available), chips; selection of cakes and scones, bread and butter, tea or coffee. £13.95 per person.

NB: the Atholl Arms needs final numbers by Saturday 2 November and menu choices by Sunday morning (you can make your choice on the bus). If you'd like to discuss your dietary requirements with the Hotel beforehand, please phone the Hotel on 01796 481 205.

## 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.

**If winter conditions have arrived: if possessed, an ice axe and crampons should be carried and may be needed on frozen ground at any level. A careful judgement must be made on the prevailing conditions.**

**Do not wait until you are on steep ground and/or above the snow line. Be prepared to moderate plans according to experience in the party. The bus convener should be able to advise individual parties on the day.**

**Disclaimer:** The routes outlined below 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.

**Route Options (remember you need to finish up at The Atholl Arms Hotel [NN 87106 65308]) by 5 to 5.30 pm if you're having high tea.**

### Munros

**Carn Liath** (975m) [NN 936 698] from Loch Moraig [907 673]

In good conditions fast parties might be able to take in **Braigh Coire Chruinn-bhagain** (1070m) [NN 946 724] .

### Corbetts

**Ben Vrackie** (841m) [NN 950 632] from Moulin, walking through to Blair Atholl via Killiecrankie

**Beinn Mheadhonach** (901m) [NN 880 758] from Glen Tilt.

### Low Level

Glen Tilt: the traditional route goes from Blair Atholl to Old Bridge of Tilt, then by the present road to a point beyond Fenderbridge. At [884 672] turn off left to Kincaigie, then through woods and fields to join the River Tilt beyond Gilberts Bridge. How far you continue up Glen Tilt, and your return route, depend on time and conditions.

Glen Fender can be explored from Fenderbridge with the possibility of climbing Meall Dail Min (536m) [892 692], dropping down to a path at [885 694], passing Croftmore and dropping down to cross the River Tilt or follow the traditional route to Blair Atholl.

Another interesting walk takes the path on the east side of the Banvie burn to head up the Allt na Moine Bhain then east over Meall Reamhar (565m) [NN 863 704] (and perhaps Elrig (620m) [872 724]) to return by Glen Tilt.

If the bus goes on to Bruar, you can approach Glen Bruar by taking General Wade's road west for 1 km and the track north at [806 662], walking back to Old Blair and Blair Atholl through Baluain Wood, Glen Banvie Wood or Glen Banvie. Or you can visit the Falls of Bruar [819 668] and walk back through the woods.

Looking at the map there seem to be possibilities to the south of Blair Atholl, on the other side of the River Garry, taking in Tulach Hill (470m) [859 640], paths in the Tay Forest Park or Craig Fonvuick (SW of Killiecrankie) which used to be an RSPB Reserve.

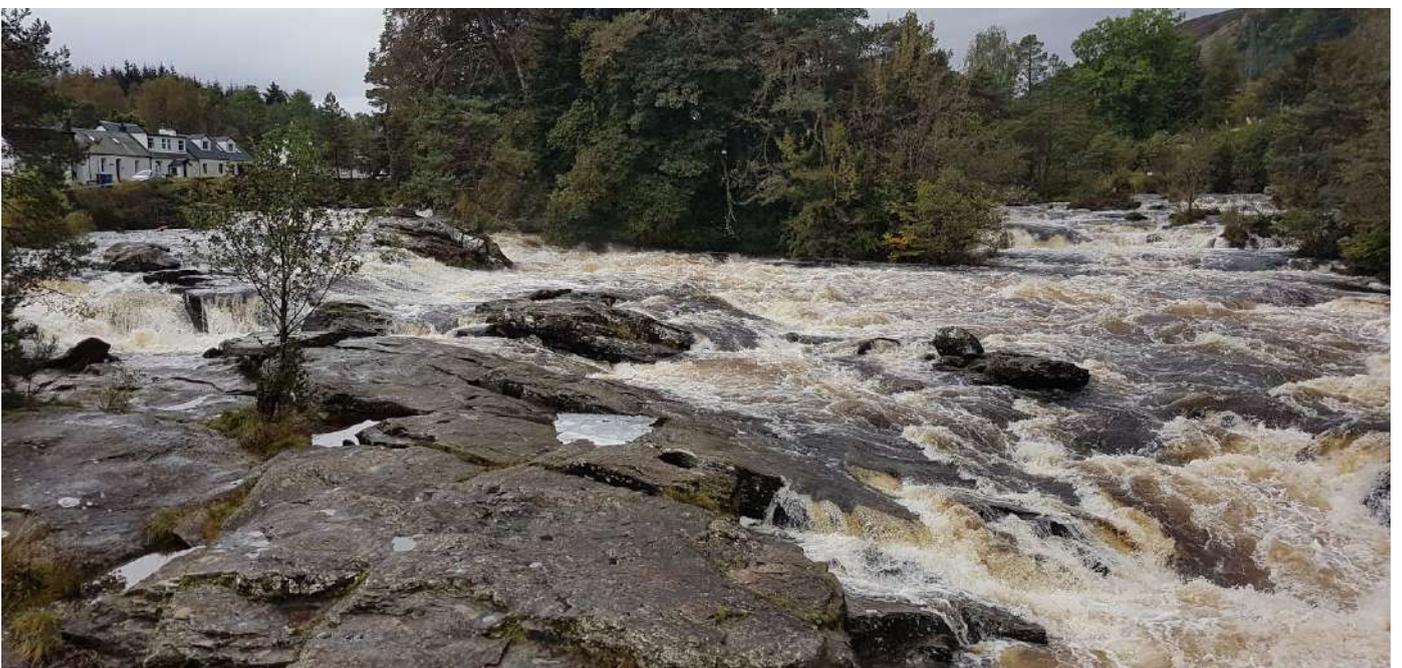
## What we did last month

The weather outlook for our trip to Ben Lawers was dire, with rain forecast for much of the day. This was probably why the numbers booked on the bus went down from 21 to 13. However, as so often happens on Ptarmigan outings, conditions were not nearly as bad as expected. True, the cloud was down and Jim's windscreen wipers were kept busy on our way north but the worst we endured on the hill was drizzle overhead and saturated ground beneath our feet. As the day wore on, the rain stopped, the cloud thinned and the sun put in a surprise appearance.

Given the unpromising start to the day, it was decided to go only as far as Killin and we all chose routes that were not too challenging. Douglas, Graham, Ewan, Alex and new guest Pablo (welcome, Pablo!) did the ever-popular route for bad-weather days, the railway path from Strathyre to Killin. This was part of the former Callander and Oban Railway, opened in stages from 1866 and closed in 1965. It may not have been a good day for the hills but the rivers and waterfalls put on a good show as Douglas's photos of the Falls of Dochart at Killin testify.

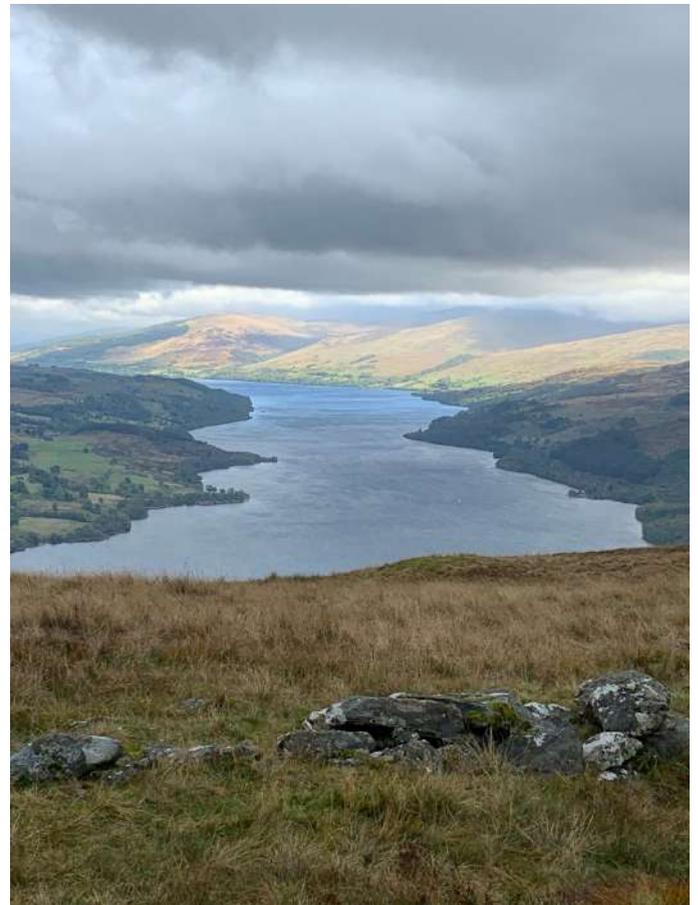


*Alex, Graham, Ewan and Pablo at the Falls of Dochart (photos by Douglas)*



Richard, Michael, Elsa, Colin and Christine got off the bus at Glenoglehead (the original “Killin” station) and followed the track from Glen Ogle Cottages westwards, heading for Gleann Dubh. Forestry work had all but obliterated the beginning of the track going up the east side of Gleann Dubh and we were seduced by a much clearer track on the west side of the river. All went well until we rounded a bend and saw to our horror that the track forded the river, transformed by recent rain into a deep and raging torrent that would have swept us away if we’d tried to cross. There was nothing for it but to struggle up a rough and very boggy hillside until we could find a suitable crossing point. In fact we had to cross three tributaries, the last one involving a delicate balancing act on wet boulders with optional plunges into deep and swiftly flowing waters. Safely (but squelchily) across we finally got onto the “official” track and celebrated with a quick lunch in the shelter of a peat bank. Then it was an easy tramp down Glen Kendrum to Kingshouse and Mhor 84 with plenty of time to enjoy tea, cake and pints.

Tim, Adrian and Owen went on to Killin. Tim says, “From Killin we headed west, following the very quiet road just north of the River Dochart. After 4 miles we reached Auchlyne, by which time the light rain had petered out. From here we took the track heading up the hillside to the north. At the end of the track we were able to cross a very swollen Auchlyne East Burn without problem thanks to the hydro scheme taking the water underground at this point. An off-track tramp on sodden ground heading north-east eventually took us to Mid Hill (559m) on the ridge. Many red deer were spied and our continuation east along the ridge was accompanied by the roaring of rutting stags. After Meall Clachach (603m) we reached our final hill Sron a Chlachain (521m) with splendid views along a by-now sunny Loch Tay. With plenty of time in hand we decided to look for the 'old peat road', mentioned in the newsletter, down to Glen Lochay. This proved to be a good way to descend the hill, and after a short road walk we arrived back in Killin with ample time for refreshments.”



*Tim and Owen on the ridge with Loch Tay behind them.*

*See? The sun did come out after all! (Photos by Adrian)*

Back on the bus, we found Jim in sombre mood as his battery charger was playing up and he was worried that the headlights might fail on the way back to Edinburgh. So it was straight home (no fish suppers), with a detour to the depot at Ratho where we transferred to a swish Ratho Coach to finish the journey into Edinburgh.



**Annual General Meeting, 7.30 pm, Tuesday 5 November, The Navy Club, 1 Broughton Road, Edinburgh**