



View to Cairngorms from Newmore. ©GVA

Scottish Red Deer. ©Mark Hamlin

Ballicler from Goghtarrach. ©Peg Photography

View to Loch Avon. ©Mark Hamlin, 2020/SON/CNVA

aille – Highland History and Culture www.amballe.org.uk
 nary of Scots Language www.dsl.ac.uk
 ge Paths www.heritagepaths.co.uk
 sh Place Names Society www.st-andrews.ac.uk/institutes/sassilspns

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Gaelic dialects of Badenoch and Strathspey survived into the 21st century while in Aberdeenshire the last native Gaelic speaker died in 1984. rich dialects of Scots such as Doric are spoken in the east and south Park and there is a revival of Gaelic in the north and west.

e) – big
 ver by the 18th and 19th centuries many people could speak both and Gaelic resulting in the appearance of some Scots place names, ample Shank – a long ridge; Birk – a birch tree; Bigging – a building; a bridge; Haugh – a river-meadow; Straucht – a straight stretch of Kirk – a church; Burn – a stream and Meikle (locally pronounced as

1,000 years ago Gaelic became the dominant language in the Cairngorms. This is why the majority of the current place names in the National Park are Gaelic in origin. Examples include Allt – a large stream; Allt – a forest; Druim – a small ridge; Meall – a conical hill; and Tom – a hilllock

Nature in the Landscape

The way the landscape was named by local people in the past can give us a valuable insight into the habitats and species of the Cairngorms in centuries gone by. Names such as *Glas-dhòile* (the green wood) near the public road between Corgarff and Gairnsiel indicate areas where woodland occurred in the past, but no longer do. The *Allt an Da Chraobh Bheath* (burn of the two birch trees) on Balmoral which runs from 1000m down to an altitude of 880m indicates that birches would once have extended much higher up hillsides than they do today.

Many topographical features have been named after species characteristic of the Park, such as eagles, eg *Creag na h-hòlaire* (rocky hill of the eagle) in Glenfeshie; wildcats, eg *Eag a' chait* (ravine of the cat) on Abernethy; and deer, including several places where there would have been a deer trap, such as *Carn Eilrig* (hill of the deer trap) on Rothiemurchus. There is also place name evidence for some of the long lost wildlife of the Cairngorms, including wolves eg *Wolf Grain* (Scots 'wolf streamlet') on Glen Tanar and *Allt a' Mhòdaich* (Gaelic 'stream of the wolf') in Glen Shee, and possibly cranes, eg *Bogingore* (little bog of crane or heron) near Dinnet.

Gaelic pronunciations in this leaflet are based on local dialects spoken in the Park



Traditional routes

Although nowadays mountain ranges like the Cairngorms are often regarded as a barrier between communities, this was once far from the case. The Cairngorms are criss-crossed with passes and routes which connected communities with each other as well as with places farther afield. People would often use these passes to visit relatives, attend social events and transport goods and wares.

Some routes follow mediaeval roads, such as Comyn's Road, which the Red Comyn, Lord of Badenoch is said to have commissioned so that he could transport his favourite beer more easily from Atholl to Badenoch. Others were used by drovers to take cattle from the Highlands to markets in the Lowlands. Also surviving are remnants of routes which cattle reivers would have used, giving rise to names such as Rathad nam 'Meinleach, The Thieves' Road. Some remnants of the military roads built by General Wade following the failed Jacobite Rising of 1715 also survive.

Further Information

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Common Words

- Abhainn:** River
- Achadh:** Field
- Allt:** Large stream
- Baile:** Township
- Beinn:** Mountain ('Ben' in Scots)
- Braigh:** Upland ('Brae' in Scots)
- Cadha:** Steep slope (local dialect)
- Caochan:** Small stream
- Càrn:** Cairn-shaped mountain
- Clach:** Stone
- Cnap:** Lump
- Cnoc:** Low hill
- Còille:** Forest

- Inbhir:** River mouth
- Lairig:** Mountain pass
- Loch:** Lake
- Lochan:** Little lake
- Loinn/Lyne:** Enclosure/stackyard (local dialect)
- Meal:** Conical hill/hill with corrie summit
- Monadh:** Mountain range, usually with passes, which in the south part of the Park, are sometimes given the name of 'mountain' in (a word derived from monadh)
- Ruighne/Re:** Slope/shieling/croft



Wade's Road © C Gadden