Call for public support for a wilder Scotland

Monday 25 June, 2018

Golden eagles, beavers, ospreys and pine martens will take centre stage in a landmark new conservation book aiming to inspire a sea change in attitudes towards a wilder Scotland.

Scotland: A Rewilding Journey will lay out a vision of how rewilding could transform Scotland and benefit its people and wildlife. It is being supported by a crowdfunding appeal launched today by conservation charity Trees for Life.

The book, to be published this autumn, is written and edited by some of Scotland's most prominent conservationists – including John Lister-Kaye and Duncan Halley – with stunning images from many of the country's top nature photographers, who have spent three years capturing the beauty and drama of Scotland's wild landscapes and wildlife.

Steve Micklewright, Trees for Life's Chief Executive, said: "Despite its raw beauty, the Scottish landscape is today an ecological shadow of its former self. It wasn't so long ago that vibrant, wild forest stretched across much of Scotland, with beavers and cranes at home in extensive wetlands, salmon and trout filling rivers, and lynx and wild boar roaming in woodlands.

"Yet now our large carnivores are extinct, our woodlands reduced to small fragments, and a degraded landscape supporting little life stretches across millions of acres. But it doesn't have to be this way. This book will be a major rallying call for rewilding – helping to make Scotland a place where nature works, wildlife flourishes and people prosper."

Trees for Life is the main sponsor of the book, which is also being supported by Reforesting Scotland, Rewilding Britain, The Borders Forest Trust, and Woodland Trust Scotland.

The book will be published by SCOTLAND: The Big Picture (www.scotlandbigpicture.com), a non-profit social enterprise that includes many leading nature photographers and film-makers, and which promotes the benefits of a wilder Scotland for people and wildlife through stunning visual media.

Trees for Life's crowdfunding campaign runs from 25 June-23 July 2018, and offers people the opportunity to support publication of the book and its urgent conservation message by helping to raise £20,000. A range of rewards for supporters include a stay in a wilderness cabin, wildlife photography workshops, fine art posters and signed editions of the publication.

Photographer and Director of SCOTLAND: The Big Picture, Peter Cairns – who is editing the book with Susan Wright – said: "Scotland: A Rewilding Journey will lay out a powerful vision for a future Scotland, where eagles soar, red squirrels forage and beavers engineer new wetlands.

"It is being published at a tipping point in the history of Scotland's landscapes, with a growing understanding of the benefits of a wilder environment for people and nature. We want the book to ignite fresh conversations and forge new relationships with the people who shape Scotland's landscapes – including key landowners, policy makers and rural interest groups."

He added: "Worldwide, short-term economics are wrecking nature – sometimes irreversibly. Our climate is changing, species are being lost forever, and vital natural resources such as clean air and water are under threat. Everyone who supports Scotland: A Rewilding Journey will be helping to make the case for a new approach, in which Scotland is a world leader in environmental repair and restoration."

Trees for Life works to restore Scotland's ancient Caledonian Forest and its unique wildlife. For over 25 years, the award-winning charity has been pioneering ecological restoration or rewilding. Its long-term vision is to restore natural forests to a vast area of the Scottish Highlands, including its 10,000-acre Dundreggan Estate in Glenmoriston. See www.treesforlife.org.uk.

To support the crowdfunding campaign, visit crowdfunder.co.uk/rewilding.

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