

Festivalgoers urged to help rewild the Highlands

Friday 21 June, 2019

Music lovers attending this year's Belladrum Tartan Heart Festival – the Highland's longest running and biggest music festival – are being encouraged to help rewild the Scottish Highlands by having their own trees planted by conservation charity Trees for Life.

With growing concerns about the threats of climate change and loss of nature, the organisers of 'Bella' 2019 are calling on attendees to mitigate the carbon impact of travelling to the event near Inverness through donations to fund native trees.

Every tree will help Trees for Life restore the globally important Caledonian Forest together with its precious wildlife such as red squirrels and pine martens.

The trees donated will be planted at Trees for Life's acclaimed Dundreggan Conservation Estate – a 10,000-acre forest regeneration site and biodiversity hotspot in Glenmoriston near Loch Ness.

"We're delighted Bella is helping to bring back one of the world's most magical forest habitats. As well as trees, rewilding is about people, culture and place – so it's wonderful to connect nature, music and the wild spirit of the Highlands like this," said Steve Micklewright, Trees for Life's Chief Executive.

Claire Clark from Bella said: "The wild Caledonian Forest once covered much of the Highlands, but today only one per cent remains – which we think is a really big problem. So we're asking Bella-goers to help. Every £6 donation will allow Trees for Life to plant a native tree – a lasting legacy, and a great, green way to give back to nature when visiting Bella 2019."

So far Trees for Life's volunteers have established 1.7 million native trees, and the charity is also successfully reintroducing red squirrels to suitable woodlands across the Highlands.

The award-winning charity will have a dedicated presence at Bella from 1-3 August, so that attendees can discover more about rewilding the Highlands. See <http://tartanheartfestival.co.uk> for details about the event.

Everyone who dedicates trees through the Bella initiative will have their names included in a tally of tree planters at www.treesforlife.org.uk/bella, and will be invited to a celebration day at Dundreggan in September – with music, activities and opportunities to plant their own tree or to see it being planted.

People can support Trees for Life by becoming members, volunteering, and by funding their own dedicated trees and groves. See www.treesforlife.org.uk.

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Company Contact:

Trees for Life

T. 07753 488146

E. richardbunting@gmail.com

W. <https://www.treesforlife.org.uk>

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