

Just at the edge of Dinnet village there's a place where you can walk through some of Deeside's prettiest woodland or picnic beside a loch covered in water lilies. And if you fancy scrambling into a granite cauldron, following in the footsteps of Queen Victoria, you can do that too!



Burn o' Vat

The lochs are both leftovers from the last Ice Age. As the glaciers melted, two huge lumps of ice got stranded here: the lochs formed in the dents they left behind.

Plenty of light reaches the bottom of the shallow water, so the lochs are rich in plant life. Over 50 species of plant grow around the water's edge. The reeds, rushes and willow trees make great shelter for nesting birds.



Loch Kinord

People have lived at Dinnet for thousands of years, leaving fascinating traces of their lives. One of Scotland's most beautiful Pictish crosses, carved over 1,000 years ago, overlooks Loch Kinord.

Long before the cross was made, Iron Age people lived in a thriving village near New Kinord. See how many traces of their great huts you can find.

On Loch Kinord, one of the islands is actually a crannog: the remains of a hut built on a platform over the water. The other island once boasted a castle, visited by several Scottish kings.



Pictish cross

The Reserve's most spectacular feature is the Vat. It's a vast bowl of pink granite, scooped out by a river flowing underneath the glaciers that covered the land about 20,000 years ago. Clambering inside is a real adventure. See if you can do it without getting your feet wet!

Beautiful woods have grown on the land shaped by the glaciers. Listen for birds like willow warblers in the spring, or watch for foraging flocks of tits in the winter. Around the edges of the Reserve there are swathes of rare bearberry heath, while its bogs are home to colourful dragonflies and insect-eating plants like sundew.



Goldeneye

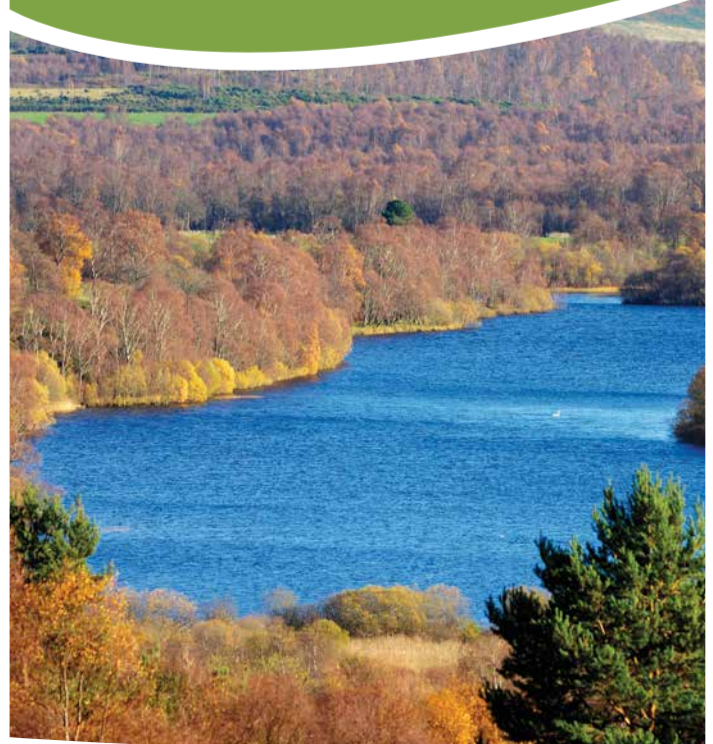
The lochs are great places for birdwatching in winter. Teal, tufted duck and greylag geese all visit the Reserve, and it's one of the best places in Britain to see goldeneye. These dramatic-looking birds used to be just winter visitors: now many pairs breed in Scotland. Dinnet's lochs are perfect for them, with plenty of food and shelter. In early spring you might be lucky enough to see the males displaying, showing off their snowy white breasts and making a low, growling call as they try to impress the females.

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Welcome to Muir of Dinnet National Nature Reserve, managed by Scottish Natural Heritage.

Muir of Dinnet is one of the nine National Nature Reserves (NNRs) in and around the Cairngorms National Park. Four trails, all clearly marked, will help you explore. You choose whether you want a half-hour stroll, or a half-day's walk round one of the lochs.



Loch Kinord

Getting here

Muir of Dinnet is 9.5km (6ml) east of Ballater on the A93. Turn north onto the B9119, signposted Tarland and Strathdon, and the Burn o' Vat Visitor Centre is 2.5km (1.5ml) from the junction. Or set your sat nav for AB34 5NB.

Need to know

Many birds breed and raise their young on the lochs. If you bring a dog between April and July, please keep it on a short lead or under close control.

For more information please contact:

Scottish Natural Heritage, Burn o' Vat Visitor Centre, Dinnet, Aboyne AB34 5NB.

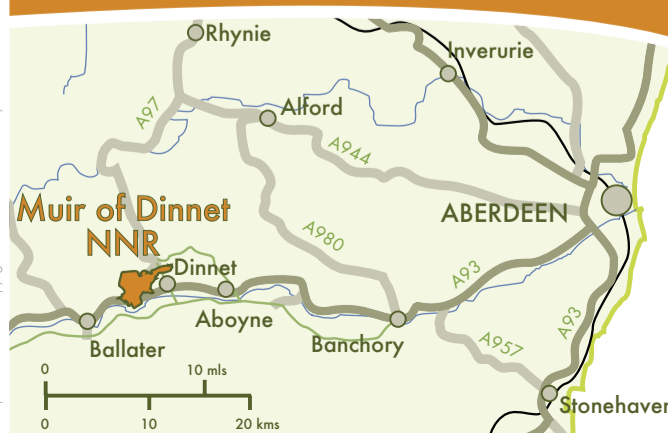
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Follow the Muir of Dinnet blog muirofdinnetnr.wordpress.com



Search for 'Scotland's National Nature Reserves' on Facebook.

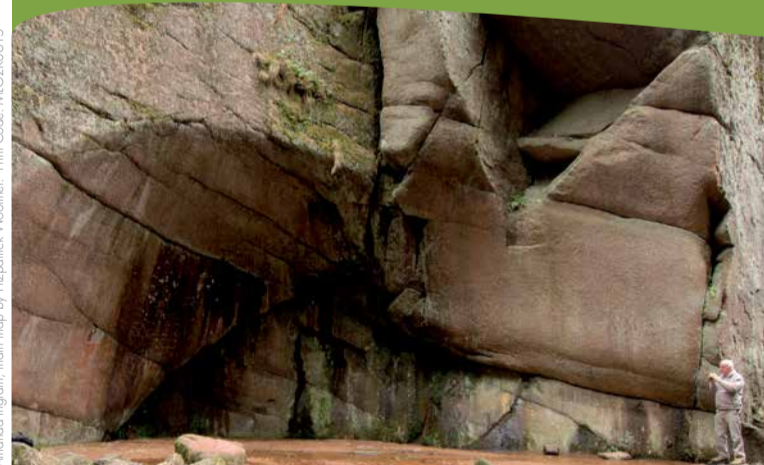


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Muir of Dinnet National Nature Reserve



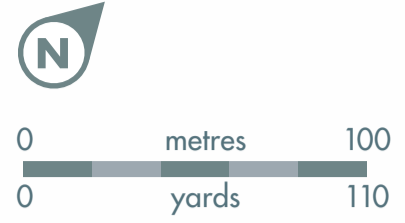
VISIT


Scottish Natural Heritage
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Key

-  Toilets
-  Viewpoint
-  Refreshments
-  Parking
-  Information centre
-  Paths
-  Accommodation
-  Bus
-  Picnic area

-  Vat Trail
-  Parkin's Moss Trail
-  Little Ord Trail
-  Loch Kinord Trail
-  Other routes
-  National Nature Reserve



Parkin's Moss Trail

Raised bogs are mysterious places where the ground is more water than solid earth. Find out what makes them so special - there's a boardwalk to keep your feet dry!

Firm gravel, earth and boardwalk path with a road crossing between start and car park. Path often narrow with uneven sections including tree roots. Several short, fairly steep slopes.



2 miles / 3.3 km
Allow 1 1/2 hrs

Loch Kinord Trail

A circular route around the loch that takes you through Muir of Dinnet's woodland, with beautiful views across the loch.

Firm path with narrow, uneven sections, tree roots and short moderate slopes. Occasional seats and odd muddy sections after rain. Road crossing between car park and start/end of trail.



4 miles / 6.5 km
Allow 2 1/2 hrs

The Vat Trail

Explore the woodland and scramble into the Vat - a huge granite cauldron formed by glaciers 20,000 years ago. Climb up to the viewpoint to learn about the Reserve and admire the lochs. For an easier, low-level option, you can follow the lower section of the path "there and back" to the Vat.

Firm path surface to the Vat with one moderate slope near start and uneven, slippery stepping stones into the Vat. Circular return option has steep slopes, narrow sections and a bridge.



3/4 mile / 1.2 km (circular route)
Allow 3/4 hr

Little Ord Trail

People have lived on the Reserve for thousands of years. On this trail you can explore some of the traces they've left behind, including a crannog and a beautiful Pictish cross.

Firm path which has narrow and uneven sections, tree roots and short moderate slopes. Two gates and occasional seats. Road crossing between car park and start/end of trail.



3.3 miles / 5.3 km
Allow 2 1/2 hrs

