

# **You'll have had your cherry blossom – now it's bluebell time**

**There are spectacular carpets of bluebells at their peak across Scotland.**

Conservation charity, Woodland Trust Scotland, has suggested over 20 top bluebell woods where people can celebrate the annual natural spectacle.

Stunning displays of the violet-blue flowers can now be found from the Highlands down to the Borders, including locations near Edinburgh.

The charity, which cares for over 8000 hectares of land in Scotland, recommends its sites at Glen Finglas in the Trossachs, Keil's Den in Fife, Dunollie at Oban, Aldouran Glen by Stranraer and Crinan in Argyll as among the very finest.

Other top bluebell locations on the list include Pepper Wood at Kirkliston and Dalkeith Country Park.

Woodland Trust Scotland spokesman George Anderson: "This is one of Scotland's big natural spectacles. Most of these woods will have floral displays throughout the season but the bluebell display at its peak is not to be missed – these are nature's fireworks."

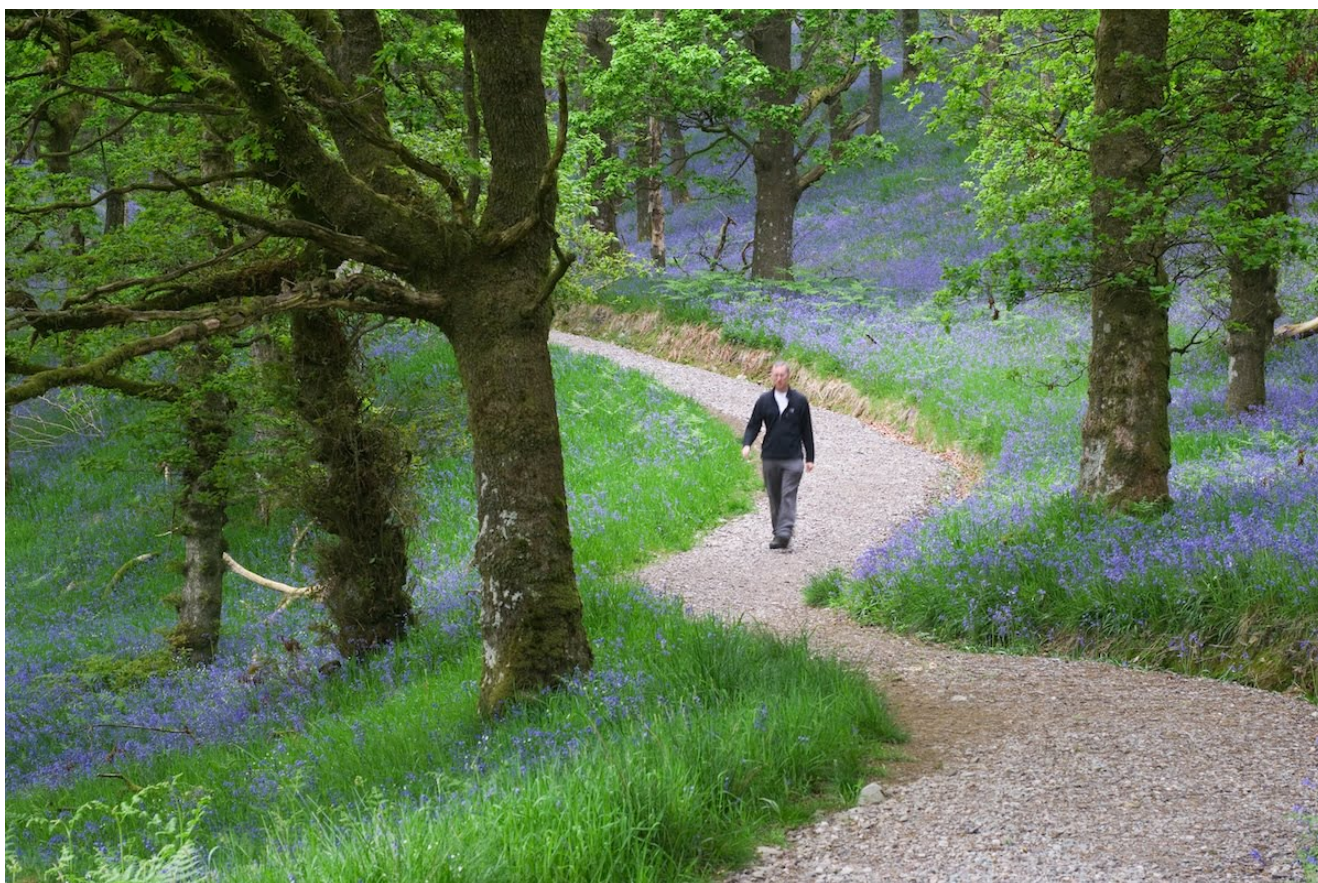
Bluebells – also known as wild hyacinths – thrive in old broad-leaved woodlands where trees are far enough apart to allow light to reach the ground.

The iconic blue-purple flowers traditionally begin blooming in the warmer south around April and the shimmering carpets spread further north as the season progresses.

Around half of all bluebells in the world are found in the UK and Scotland's native species (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) is protected.

Woodland Trust Scotland has urged people to look after the displays and not trample on them in search of selfies and picture perfect picnic spots.

It can take up to seven years for a trampled area to recover.



Glen Finglas bluebells by Niall Benvie

Mr Anderson added: "There really is nothing to beat a walk in a bluebell wood, and we love welcoming people to our sites at this time of year. But it would be a pity if there is less of a display in future because people have been careless.

"The plants must pack a lot of work into a very short few weeks and it can be catastrophic for them to be crushed or

trampled now.

“Between emerging in spring and the trees above coming into full leaf that shades them, bluebells must get enough energy from the sun to sustain them throughout the year.

“They are also racing to make the most of their time in the sun before other plants such as bracken overtake them.

“In the same short window, they must blossom and reproduce too. So, we ask everyone enjoying bluebells to keep to existing paths and leave them to do their glorious thing undisturbed.

“Don’t wade into the blossoms to take a photo and don’t stand among the plants to have your photo taken. You can get great photos staying on the path.

“Keep dogs on paths too and let them run around somewhere else while the bluebells are out.”

Spanish bluebells also flower at this time of year but are simple to differentiate from native species. The Spanish bluebell is more upright with flowers on both sides of the stem, while the British bluebell leans over, weighed down by its flowers all on one side.

In Scotland, the harebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*) is also referred to by many people as the “Scottish bluebell”.

The list of favourite bluebell woods includes locations cared for by a range of organisations including Woodland Trust Scotland, RSPB Scotland, The Scottish Wildlife Trust and the National Trust for Scotland.



Bluebells at Glen Finagles by Laurie Campbell  
Twenty-one woods for you to explore in Scotland with  
spectacular bluebell displays:

Glen Finglas (Brig 'o' Turk) Loch Lomond & the Trossachs  
National Park

Carstramon Wood, Gatehouse of Fleet, Dumfries & Galloway

Dunollie Hill, Oban, Argyll and Bute

Keil's Den, Leven, Fife

Crinan Wood, Argyll and Bute

Aldouran Glen, Stranraer, Dumfries & Galloway

Cumbernauld Glen, North Lanarkshire

Fairy Glen, Fortrose, Highland

Dalkeith Country Park, Midlothian

House of Dun, Brechin, Angus

Carron Glen, Denny, Falkirk

Baron's Haugh, Motherwell, North Lanarkshire

Cathkin Braes Country Park, East Kilbride

Urquhart Bay, Loch Ness, Highland.

Balmacaan Wood, Inverness, Highland

Glasdrum Wood, Oban, Argyll & Bute

Binn Wood, Perth & Kinross

Loch of the Lowes, Blairgowrie, Perth & Kinross

Brodick, Isle of Arran, North Ayrshire

Pepper Wood, Kirkliston, Edinburgh

Corsehillmuir Wood, North Ayrshire