

KNOYDART HOUSE – Activities and wildlife to look out for

Daytime low level walks - Pack a picnic and head over to the long beach, if you fancy a good push make racks for Airor where an old school and pier with a great little beach awaits you. There are great views across to the Isle of Skye from here.

Hill walking / Munro Bagging please see our walking page on the website www.knoydarthouse.co.uk for the OS Landranger Maps and more information.

Knoydart has an excellent brand new mountain bike track, close by to Knoydart House in the woods with bends, jumps, dips and bridges, ideal for the more adventurous on 2 wheels. You are welcome to bring your own bikes, easily transported on the ferry for you.

Wildlife

Knoydart is home to some of the most iconic species in the Highlands. The rangers know the best times and places to see wildlife. Regular sightings include:

Buzzards – a common sight throughout the peninsula, even around the village. This large raptor can often be spotted perching on telegraph posts or soaring above the moorland looking for prey.

Red deer – There are a lot of red deer on the hills. In summer they are harder to find as they climb high into the mountains but in winter they are a common sight down by the coast and along the Airor road. Autumn is the best time to watch red deer when the stags start the rut. Listen for their impressive roaring in the glens.

Grey herons – There is a heronry in the trees by the village so spotting a heron is not difficult during the summer. Even throughout the winter they can easily be seen fishing along the coast.

Oystercatchers – Long Beach is a hot spot for oystercatchers. Their black and white plumage and orange bills makes them stand out on the beach. Knoydart is also home to some more elusive species. You can never guarantee a sighting of any wildlife but by joining the rangers your chances are much better. With some luck you may see:

Golden eagles – One pair nests on Foundation land and they can be seen just about anywhere soaring above the mountains. Best times to see them are on warm, sunny evenings.

Otters – Just after low tide otters venture out to hunt along the shore. Try spending some time at the wildlife hide at Long Beach there are a few otter holts along the shoreline look out for there tracks weaving in and out of the grassy patches that skirt the loch by the road.

Pine martens – Quite a common mammal but not often seen. Look at dawn and dusk in Inverie Woods. You are more likely to see their scats on prominent rocks and on paths.

Red-throated divers – Divers nest on upland hill lochs but feed at sea. Look out for them on the shore in Inverie Bay.

Sea eagles – There are no sea eagles nesting on Knoydart (yet!) but every year more and more sightings are reported. The west coast of the peninsula is a good place to look.

As well as wildlife watching we have a fantastic Foundation's Ranger Service which offers a whole range of other tailor-made walks and activities including:

- Stalking red deer with a camera
- Munro-bagging
- Coastal scrambles
- Night hikes
- Team-building activities for groups
- Guided walks to the destination of your choice

For more details and prices contact Tommy on 01687 462242, email ranger@knoydart.org

The Ranger Service has also produced a wildlife-watching booklet, specific to Knoydart, which can be purchased directly from them. If you fancy striking out in your own group, contact the rangers for a list of walks leaflets, which include day walks as well as more strenuous options.

Nature trails. There are a variety of trails in Inverie woods, behind the village. These walks take you through a mix of broadleaf and coniferous woodland, home to a variety of woodland birds and mammals. Self-guiding walks leaflets which can be purchased for £1 from the Display Room. Discover some of the hidden gems to be found only minutes from Inverie village, or explore further afield in the woods or along the coast.

Stalking

Two estates on Knoydart offer deer-stalking: the Knoydart Foundation and Kilchoan Estate. Both estates operate on a conservation basis, they are required to maintain their deer population at a healthy level. The Knoydart Estate will take guests up on the hill for £350 for a stag, or £180 for a day's hind stalking. The Foundation and Kilchoan Estate promote traditional stalking methods such with

hill-ponies to carry beasts off the hill.

Fishing

You can fish for free on small hill-lochs on Knoydart Foundation land. Alternatively, Kilchoan Estate offer catch-and-release salmon fishing on the Inverie river for £35 / day, or hill-loch fishing at Bhraomisaig for £10 / day. Please enquire in advance.

Ranger Service

The Knoydart Foundation Ranger Service have produced a range of leaflets which have detailed information on a range of walks, from low-level ambles to mountaineering expeditions up such classic peaks as Ladhar Bheinn and Luinne Bheinn. They do a great deal if you buy all nine leaflets and their beautifully produced wildlife booklet together – you get the lot for £10, saving £2.75.

You may wish to join the Rangers on one of their regular guided walks. Every Monday and Wednesday in the season (late March – end of October), they provide a guided walk to various parts of the peninsula, often set around a theme such as the Clearances, or butterflies. Contact Tommy in the Foundation Office on 01687 462242 for more information. They also publish what they are up to on their webpage.

Sealife

The waters are frequently visited by a variety of birds, seals, porpoises, dolphins, whales, basking sharks and even the occasional sunfish.

Sea Knoydart provides fast, comfortable and safe transport to and from Knoydart, the surrounding islands and almost anywhere you might want to go on the west coast of Scotland. Charter the boat for an hour, a day or even a whole week. Go on one of their expeditions to explore remote and exciting destinations. (Sea Knoydart also incorporates Knoydart Sea School which is a Royal Yachting Association recognized powerboat school.)

All boats are **RYA** and **Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA)** inspected, carrying all appropriate safety gear (including liferafts) and qualified staff.

Common and grey seals – Grey seals can be seen anywhere along the coast but the best place to see common seals (the rarer ones!) is around Sandaig Bay.

Dolphins and porpoise – often commonly mistaken for one another at first glance however both are not strangers to the loch and often chase the boat coming back with it's beer run. They have been known to give us some spectacular wildlife water shows as they play in front of the village pub and the arriving ribs.

Minke whale – These fellows enjoy more open space but frequent the sound of sleat and waters towards the small isles, playing out beyond the entrance to Mallaig Harbour. Why not charter one of our excellent local boats to take you whale spotting for the day, sightings are more common than you might think and the operators keep in touch with each other to communicate pod movements in the area to help you get your sighting.

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Power Boat Courses

You can also book onto a Powerboat course whilst staying at Knoydart House, with Knoydart Sea School for more information please enquire in advance of your stay. Courses are number dependent.