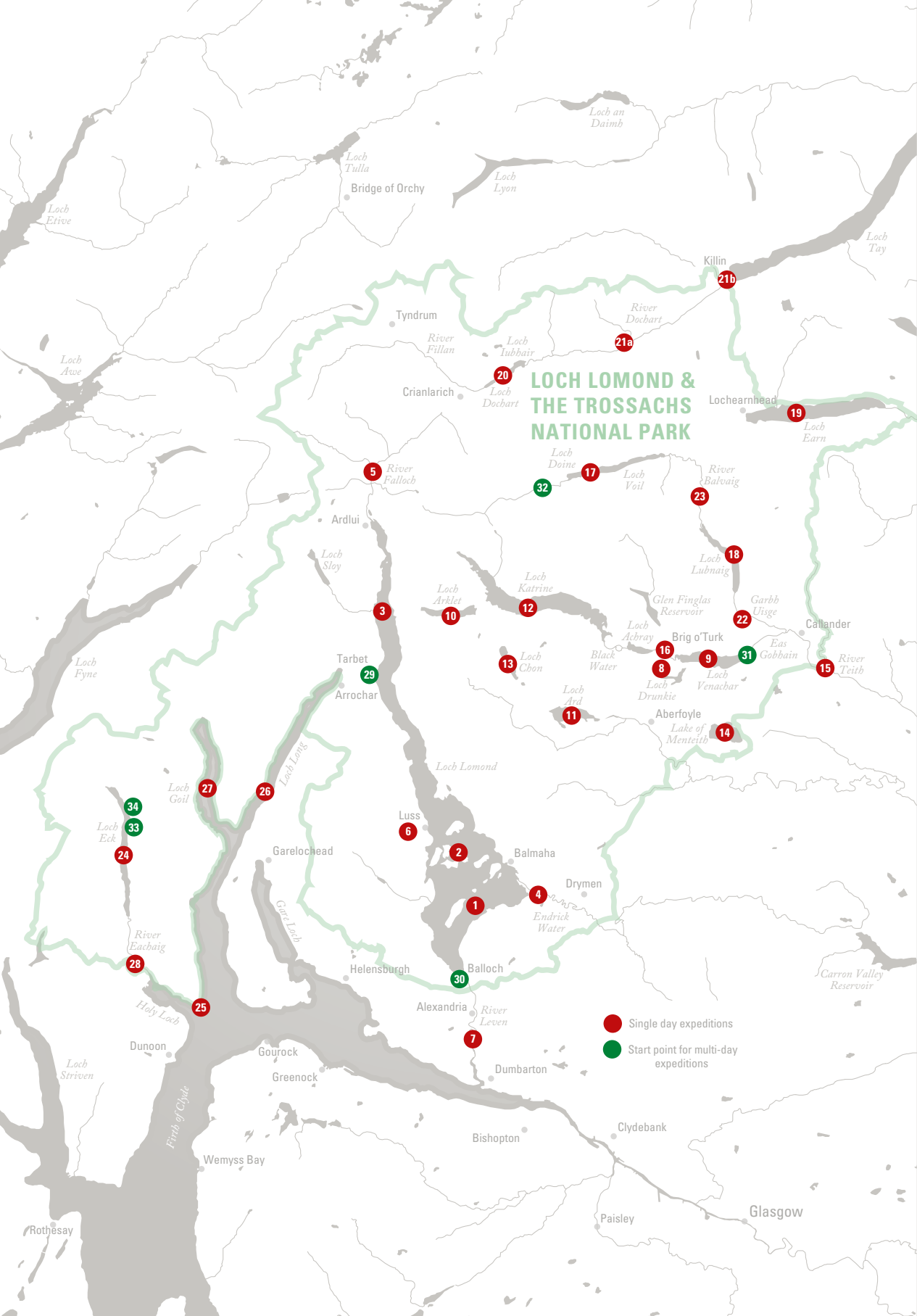


PaddleMore in Loch Lomond and the Trossachs

A GUIDE FOR CANOES, KAYAKS AND SUPS



Grant Dolier & Tom Kilpatrick



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By Grant Dolier and Tom Kilpatrick

First published 2021
Published in Great Britain 2021 by Pesda Press
Tan y Coed Canol
Ceunant
Caernarfon,
Gwynedd,
LL55 4RN

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ISBN: 978-1-906095-76-5

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Printed in Poland, www.lfbooksevice.co.uk

Acknowledgements

This book wouldn't have been possible without the input and influence of so many other people and we would like to extend our gratitude to them in this section.

First and foremost, we would like to extend our thanks to Franco and all the team at Pesda Press. When we approached them with what we thought was the outline of a book and a great idea, we had no idea how far we still had to go to reach the finished product. Their help and guidance through the process has been invaluable.

The undying support of our partners, Ellie and Beth, has spurred us both on when things seemed to be hitting dead ends. Not only that, but they willingly come on trips with us, and have put up with us and been nothing but positive about our paddling partnership for years; without them we would never have written this book.

Speaking of our bromance, we couldn't go through a whole acknowledgments section without some recognition of the place we first met. Back in 2013, Moose moved to Scotland to work at the Lochgoilhead Centre, coincidentally the same year Grant moved back to the centre having worked abroad. Within weeks we were paddling together and the friendship flourished. Without Neil Baird offering us both jobs, a decision we're certain he wondered about for years afterwards, we might never have got on the river together.

Finally, we would like to thank everyone we've ever paddled with. From the first people to take us out on the water as much younger versions of who we are today, to those we guide with, or who have run courses for us, or who have simply been there to go paddling with.

There really is nothing half so worth doing than simply messing about in boats, and we're always grateful when other people want to join us.

Important Notice – Disclaimer

Canoeing, kayaking and paddleboarding are healthy outdoor activities that carry some degree of risk. They involve adventurous travel, often away from close habitation. Guidebooks give an idea of where to access a river, where to egress, the level of difficulty and the nature of the hazards to be encountered.

However, nature being what it is, river valleys are changed by time and erosion, water levels vary considerably with rain, and man-made features can be updated or altered – therefore weirs, walls and landings are not always as expected. Coastal sections, large lakes and estuaries are also subject to change due to wind and weather. This guidebook is no substitute for personal inspection at the time of paddling, and your own risk assessment and judgement. Your decision to paddle or not, and any consequences arising from that decision, is your responsibility.

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Welcome to Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park

Good choice.

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park is long established as a playground for paddlers and attracts visitors from all over the world. Loch Lomond itself has over eighty kilometres of shoreline to explore, but there is so much more to the park. The twenty-two navigable lochs range from the vast sea lochs around Loch Long to small inland bodies such as Loch Chon. The rivers vary from relaxed meandering waterways like the Balvaig to the steep white water of the River Falloch and everything in between.

This vast array of options in such close proximity makes this park the perfect place for every paddler of any level, looking for whatever type of adventure. The area is also outstandingly beautiful and it is commonplace to see deer and red squirrels playing on the shores, as well as the many other species of mammal, bird and water life which call this park home.

So why have we written this book?

***Our ethos is simple; more people,
more paddling, more often.***

Rather than limiting you to one discipline, we have focused on all options within the national park. Whether you want hardcore white water, multi-day touring trips or a relaxing afternoon exploring sheltered water with your family, you'll find all that and much more in this book.

This 'much more' element includes those make or break aspects of many trips; where to get a good coffee, bacon roll, or somewhere to stay with a hot fire and a cold drink. We have also tried to include relevant, interesting information, stories, and tips from our many years of exploring the park.

You may be wondering what gives us the authority to write about the National Park. Understandably. Collectively we have over twenty-five years of professional guiding experience in the park as well as countless personal trips on the rivers and lochs. Driven by our love of exploration and enduring bromance, and much to the dismay of our partners, we continue to spend days off paddling new areas and coming up with wild adventures.



What is PaddleMore

We're just a couple of paddlers, passionate about promoting paddling. It doesn't matter if it's your family's first time afloat on a paddleboard, or you're a beardy multi-day canoe tripper, or you're hucking 20 metre drops with the crew – we're with you!

Meet the team!

GRANT DOLIER

Grant started paddling over fifteen years ago on the west coast of Scotland. Since then he has explored more of Scotland than most people could imagine. His experiences in the UK and working overseas in the Ardèche, coupled with his extensive knowledge of paddlesports, make him a highly sought-after coach and guide. He is backed by Hōu Canoes, is involved with Scottish Canoe Association as part of the Environmental and Access Team, and supports Scouts Scotland with paddlesports provision across Scotland.



Meet the team, Grant and Tom \ Photo PaddleMore

TOM 'MOOSE' KILPATRICK

Moose started his paddling life on the ponds and rivers in the south-east of England. He has slowly worked his way north and has spent the last few years working his way through all things Scottish. As well as being a very experienced and knowledgeable coach and guide across Scotland and the rest of the UK, he spent a summer in Norway and a month in Nepal; apparently they weren't bad.

THE TEAM

We started paddling together in 2013, when Moose finally saw the light and moved to Scotland. The bromance flourished and, to the dismay of our partners, most of our days off were spent together.

Together we have paddled and swam on countless lochs and rivers in Scotland. We have guided trips together, explored new regions and shared our favourite paddling spots with anyone who will come with us. Abroad, we have paddled on the Soča together as part of a European adventure and the Noguera Pallaresa after an epic journey from Aviemore to Spain.

If it floats, we love to paddle it!



Arty-farty boaters | Photo PaddleMore

Safety First

Danger never takes a day off!

Paddlesports is an inherently risky sport. This book is designed as a guide to the area, written by paddlers who want to share their love of the sport. With that in mind, while we have tried to consider all sorts of weather, river levels and paddler abilities, we cannot encompass everything.

We want to encourage as many paddlers as possible in all sorts of places, but it is important to be aware of your personal abilities and those of your group. Even the most tame-looking waterway can become wild in the wrong conditions and rivers can swell quickly. Make sure you have the right training and understanding relevant to the environment you want to paddle in.

Injuries and accidents may occur while taking part in paddlesports. Prepare yourself with safety equipment and knowledge. Emergency and rescue services are always on hand, but only if you have means to contact them and know where you are. It's also worthwhile telling someone you're going on the water; remember to let them know when you're off so they know you're safe.

River grading

Ungraded	Ungraded sections of slow moving rivers where the group could paddle upstream against the flow (not involving the shooting of, or playing on, weirs or running rapids).
Grade 1	Moving water with occasional small rapids. Few or no obstacles to negotiate.
Grade 2	Small rapids featuring regular waves. Some manoeuvring required.
Grade 2 (3)	The overall standard of the run is grade 2, but there may be a few (normally one or two) grade 3 rapids that can be portaged if required.
Grade 3	Most rapids will have irregular waves and hazards that need avoiding. More difficult manoeuvring will be required but routes are normally obvious. Scouting from shore is occasionally necessary to maintain line of sight.
Grade 4	Large rapids that require careful manoeuvring. Scouting from the shore is often necessary and rescue is usually difficult. Kayakers should be able to roll before tackling these rapids. In the event of a mishap, there is significant risk of loss, damage and / or injury.
Grade 4(5)	The overall standard of the run is grade 4, but there may be a few (normally one or two) grade 5 rapids that can be portaged if required.
Grade 5	Extremely difficult – long and very violent rapids with severe hazards. Continuous, powerful, confused water makes route finding difficult and scouting from the shore is essential. Precise manoeuvring is critical and for kayakers, rolling ability needs to be 100%. Rescue is very difficult or impossible and in the event of a mishap there is significant hazard to life.

Source – *British Canoeing Environmental Definitions and Deployment Guidance for Instructors, Coaches and Leaders*

Navigating this Guide











We have split the national park into four different regions: Loch Lomond, The Trossachs, Breadalbane, and Cowal

Within these regions we have described the lochs, with Loch Lomond itself being divided into three distinct sections, followed by the rivers which link them. The final section outlines six long distance routes. These are multi-day trips, which often combine several of these regions.

For each route the following Quick Reference information is provided if appropriate:

Get on/off	Access Grid Reference / Egress Grid Reference. These will be the main points outlined in the route, but other options may be given further down in the text.
Time required	This is a rough approximation based on our experiences, but will vary depending on a number of factors including your ability, your chosen craft and the weather conditions.
Distance	Distance in kilometres of the prescribed route.
Parking/shuttle	Access parking / shuttle parking. The access parking is often limited and we have suggested other options in the Trip Overview where this is the case. The shuttle parking is for the egress.
Optimum water levels	Only relevant to rivers, these mainly relate to SEPA (Scottish Environmental Protection Agency) levels which can be found on their website.
River grade	The grade of the river at usual paddling levels (only relevant to rivers). This may vary with water levels and it is incumbent on you to read the river as you paddle it. As we all know, grading is somewhat variable and situation dependent. This is only a guidebook, the decision to paddle a rapid or not is up to you on the day.

Map symbols in this book

	start		portage
	finish		described route
	alternative start		campsite
	alternative finish		Placename
			name
		Peakname	significant peak
			castle

Equipment

The kit you take on a paddling trip depends on many things: where you plan to go, weather conditions, who you're accompanied by, and many more.

Regardless, there are certain things which should be with you, or at least among the group, on each trip:

- **The right craft for the environment** – This should be kitted out with proper buoyancy and safety features. This is explored more deeply in the next section. Make sure you take a paddle!
- **Personal flotation** – This should be checked frequently and used within manufacturer recommendations.
- **Helmets** – These are recommended for river environments but it is at the discretion of the wearer (or non-wearer). We strongly recommend the wearing of them for all white water and shallow rivers.
- **Appropriate clothing** – For the environment, weather and craft. Pick your clothes to suit, and remember there's always a possibility that you might get wet.
- **Spare warm clothing** – Scottish weather changes fast and it's not uncommon to experience all four seasons in one day. Spare layers can also be used to keep casualties warm.
- **First aid kit** – You should make sure you know how to use this and have been appropriately trained in what to do in a water-borne situation.
- **Emergency group shelter** – Somewhere to stay warm if you get into difficulties, either a tent, tarp or bothy bag for the whole group. Along with warm clothing, this not only keeps the casualty warm but can prevent the rest of the group becoming casualties themselves.
- **Means of communication** – There is often patchy phone signal in the National Park so other means of communication (VHF radios, GPS trackers, flares) can be useful. Make sure you know how to use these as misuse can land you in trouble.
- **Specialist WW rescue equipment** – Make sure you have the knowledge to use this kit and that it is suited to the environment. There's no use carrying bags of ropes and chains of karabiners if you don't know how to use them.

Top tip: Streamline your safety kit. Everything should serve a purpose but make sure you've accounted for all reasonable situations.

Choosing your craft

If it floats, you can probably paddle it. This doesn't necessarily mean you should.

Paddling the wrong craft is like wearing the wrong shoes. The right boat type will make your journey safer, easier and much more enjoyable. Length, width and height of a boat all make a difference, as do attachment points and kit-stowing arrangements. We have not prescribed a particular craft, but have given information to allow you to make an informed decision.

In this section we will detail a range of boats. It is not an exhaustive list but it includes the more popular and well-used craft. We have avoided recommending any one particular craft but have hopefully given you some options and things to consider.

STAND UP PADDLEBOARDS (SUP)

Contrary to popular belief you don't have to stand up to use one of these. They are becoming increasingly popular and ranges of SUPs are diversifying. There are boards designed for white water, touring trips or recreational. Inflatable SUPs are popular with people who have to travel, their deflated size suiting hold luggage on a plane or the boot of a rental car.

These should be used with leashes and fully inflated to recommended pressure before entering the water.

CANOE

A traditional approach to taking to the water, the use of canoes dates back thousands of years. These are multi-purpose boats but do differ in design and usage. Depending on whether you want to paddle the boat solo or with a family, expedition over lochs or paddle rivers, your boat choice may change.

Canoes usually require buoyancy bags or blocks at either end and have several attachment points for ropes or painters – for securing, attaching or rescuing boats. Canoes differ from kayaks because they are paddled with a single blade, but can be open top or closed cockpits. Generally when we refer to canoes we mean the traditional open-topped style.

WHITE-WATER KAYAK

Usually closed cockpit, these are shorter boats generally 9' (2.75m) or less. This shorter length allows greater manoeuvrability in rivers, ideal for quick moves in white water. Air bags, foam pillars and attachment points on the outside of the boat are all safety features on these boats, strengthening and allowing easier rescues. Within white-water kayaks, boat design differs between long creek boats and short playboats and it's worth doing some research as to what type of boat would suit your needs.

TOURING / SEA KAYAK

Touring kayaks and sea kayaks are longer than white-water boats. Usually 13' (4m)+ these are narrower with a V-shaped hull which allows these boats to glide gently through the water. Their length and speed allows them to cover much longer distances than their white-water counterparts.

These boats tend to have bulkheads to stop water flooding the entire boat in the event of a swim. Additionally they have hatches for gear storage and roped lines around them, as well as bungee cord, for attachment points and spare paddles.

CROSSOVER KAYAKS

As the name suggests, these kayaks blur the lines between our touring / sea and white-water kayaks. They often have hatches and bulkheads similar to touring / sea boats, but are shorter and more manoeuvrable, like white-water boats. Although they have many of the great features from the two types of boats, they also have limitations in each discipline. These can be a great option for mixed environment trips.

SIT ON TOP KAYAKS

Open-top kayaks act as a stable platform and are often the most appropriate craft for beginners or younger paddlers. They are easy to climb back onto if you fall off, and great for shorter journeys on open water. There are sit on top kayaks designed for touring as well as white water, therefore in these cases can be considered in those categories.

OTHER INFLATABLES

We haven't forgotten about rafts, inflatable kayaks or swimming-pool toys. These are all great ways to get out on the water, but as they're not what we use regularly we decided to leave these up to your discretion. As long as you're out safely enjoying the water, we don't mind how you do it.



Planning your trip \ Photo PaddleMore

Planning

Even the most experienced paddlers plan their trips. Sometimes it's simply a matter of checking river levels, wind conditions or what time the sun sets. Other times you might plan for days, painstakingly checking and rechecking mapped routes, weather forecasts, campsites and lists of kit.

Planning and pre-trip organisation takes many different forms, but is vital to success. On longer trips it's worth establishing where you can cut short if you are forced by the weather. Sometimes we're forced to change or abandon plans completely. This book will offer you alternatives which may be more suitable in challenging conditions.

The trip should be appropriate for everyone in the group. As always you are only as strong as your weakest member; this is not always the same as the least experienced. People paddle at different levels and might have different aims for the trip. Be sure it suits everyone and isn't taking them into environments well above their skill level.

Expeditioning

Perhaps one of the best ways to experience The Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park is to spend a night under the stars. There are incredible places to camp in the park, many of which can only be accessed via the water, including around one hundred islands.

Expeditioning brings with it a whole new element of planning and organisation and many other authors delve deeper into these subjects. In short, be sure to have (as well as the kit we have mentioned) appropriate sleeping shelter, sleeping bag, sleeping mat, stove and food. It's also useful to have some means to purify water to make it safe to drink.



Photo PaddleMore
Packing for a trip

PICKING YOUR CAMPSITE

Extra consideration should be given to everything discussed previously in the planning section. Campsites should be chosen to suit these considerations too. Many island campsites have flooded because of fast-rising rivers; campers become shore-bound when Scotland has shown its wild side, unexpectedly and the loch turned wild and rough.

Scotland has some of the most dramatic and incredible wild spaces in the UK (and arguably the world). Pragmatic access laws allow us to play freely, but responsibly, in these environments. The National Park was unfortunately seeing a steady increase in anti-social behaviour and irresponsible camping, and brought seasonal by-laws into practice in 2017. Camping in certain areas of the park now requires permits between 01 March and 30 September.

Don't panic though. Wild camping is still absolutely fine throughout a great deal of the park. The management zones are predominantly roadside and in the more populated areas. For a more comprehensive explanation visit: <http://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/things-to-do/camping/>. You can find information on the by-law, wild camping and how to get a permit if you need one. There is also information on what to do if you need a poo.

Leave No Trace

If you're the sort of person who wants to explore the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park, we can safely assume you're the sort of person who already knows about Leave No Trace. We all enjoy being out without the blight of litter or human waste on the river bank to put your boat in.

Leave No Trace goes deeper than this and should be at the forefront of all our trips out. To show how serious it is, we got someone else to write this bit. Neil Baird swans around an outdoor activity centre calling himself the manager but is only really responsible for emptying the bins within the park. Joking aside, he is a Leave No Trace Trainer, providing training courses to other outdoor professionals.

Leave No Trace – by Neil Baird

How do you share information about a beautiful place and then protect that place from being spoiled due to excessive visitors?

This question is the question a national park authority must wrestle with daily but is also the origins of an organisation called Leave No Trace. Leave No Trace was set up in America to help protect the national parks through education and training after dealing with large numbers of people using the areas irresponsibly.



 Neil Baird

Some people may have heard of Leave No Trace or be aware of Leave No Trace principles but what does this really mean?

The aim is not to make everyone become an eco-warrior but to let people start making informed decisions around their own personal ethics about how they use the outdoors. Attending a Leave No Trace course will not solve every issue associated with the outdoors or instantly solve problems but it will gradually make you question what you do and why you take the course of action you do.

Leave No Trace identified seven of the most common problems in the outdoors and developed seven principles that created a framework to educate participants in methods to mitigate these recurring problem areas. I will give a quick summary of the seven principles and identify a simple step for each that will help you protect the environment you operate within. More ideas and principles can be learned through attending a one-day introduction to Leave No Trace where tutors can discuss your specific environments and activities to give ideas and principles that will help each individual.

PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE

Planning ahead can allow you to gain more from your outdoor experience. Think about where you are going and what you plan to do while questioning your impact. Try to avoid honey pots or areas that you know will be busy or crowded and think about the time you are going. If you go earlier or later will you gain more from being there during quite times?

BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHERS

Not everyone will have the training, knowledge or education within the outdoors that you have. Be patient with everyone and try to help others make ethical decisions. If you are able to help others make small steps towards positive use of the outdoors every gain will help the environment. Conflict in the outdoors between users will help no one and detract from the very experience and reason you are there.

RESPECT FARM ANIMALS AND WILDLIFE

The nature of visiting the outdoors means we will be entering an environment that is the habitat of wildlife and farm animals. Our very presence can have an impact on animals yet we can take some simple steps to minimise our impact. Respectfully observe animals and wildlife from a distance and be willing to move away if you observe changes in behaviour caused by your presence. Be aware of nesting and mating seasons and avoid disturbing these activities. Keep an eye out for signs informing you of restrictions or requesting you to change your route due to wildlife. Those travelling with dogs should be particularly aware of other animals and keep dogs under control. Livestock and wild animals can be unpredictable if they feel threatened by people or dogs. And you could inadvertently place yourself at risk.

TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE GROUND

Every time we move through an environment, we will have an impact, mostly small, but sometimes we can have more impact on the ground than others. Try to stay on trails and be willing to get your feet dirty rather than moving to the side of muddy sections expanding the trail wider. Be aware of sensitive areas such as sand dunes or bogs and try where possible to avoid crossing areas that are sensitive or have special vegetation or characteristics that make it of interest.

LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

We visit the outdoors for many reasons but mostly the beauty and attractiveness of the area is from the things within it whether this is plants, rocks, vegetation or historic items.

If we remove these items to take them with us, we will remove the very reason we have visited the area in the first place. Take time to enjoy things in their setting and leave them there for others to enjoy. Be aware that some plants, animals and historic sites may be protected and removing items could get you into trouble without realising your mistakes.

DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY

Anyone using the outdoors for recreation has an obligation to tidy that area before leaving. Try to reduce the waste we produce by planning ahead but be prepared to take any rubbish with us. Know how to deal with human waste and dispose of our own waste in a way that will not affect animals, watercourses or other users of the area. Have a plan on how you will deal with all of your waste and ensure it is disposed of ethically.

MINIMISE THE EFFECTS OF FIRE

Fire can be one of the most devastating elements of nature. We must implement techniques which limit the effects of fire on the environment, but implement them ethically. Use fire circles that are already there; do not make new fire circles. Have fires on beaches below the tide line or use mound and pan fires to limit impact. If you must have a fire think about the size of your fire and keep it small and manageable.

The seven principles make up the Leave No Trace principles and despite giving a quick overview of some of the techniques and steps that can be taken to limit your impact, nothing will replace completing a full Leave No Trace course for yourself or organisations that will help shape your own ethics and morals in the outdoors.





Loch Lomond

Arguably Scotland's best known body of water, Loch Lomond (Loch Laomainn) offers an enormous seventy square kilometres of water to paddle on, as well as twenty-two islands and many more islets to explore. These islands have rich and varied history and at one time or another most of them have been inhabited. There are castles, priories, wallabies (yes wallabies!), and wild stories which bring them alive. Vikings raided any number of these islands, when they portaged their boats from Loch Long in the west at Tarbet, before leaving down the River Leven.

Geographically, Loch Lomond is something of an entrance to the highlands. The chain of islands, which stretch across from Connich Hill on the east to Cruach Dhubh on the west, sit directly on the highland fault boundary. Standing along this line you can see a clear distinction between the hills to the south and the rugged, highland mountains to the north.

The tourism here may mean that sections of the loch feel busier than other areas of the park, but it is easy enough to escape the crowds once you're on the water. There are countless shops and cafés all round the loch, and you'll have no shortage of options for stocking up or grabbing a coffee on the way.

Loch Lomond itself is so big that we have divided it up into three distinct trips, but these can be combined to create an excellent multi-day trip where you'll be treated to some of the most magnificent sunsets and landscapes that Scotland has to offer.

OPEN WATER

- 1 The Beautiful South
- 2 Island Explore
- 3 Northern Circuit

RIVERS

- 4 Endrick Water
- 5 River Falloch – WW Grade 4/5
- 6 Luss Water – WW Grade: 3/4(5)
- 7 River Leven





1 The Beautiful South

Get on / off	NS 411 922 / NS 386 823
Time required	3+ hours
Distance	16km
Parking / shuttle:	NS 411 922 / NS 386 822

Introduction

The busiest area of the park, Lomond Shores at Balloch, is a popular day out for the locals in Glasgow. If you can tear yourself away from the shops, cafés and the sea-life centre here, the Loch Lomond Distillery is also in town and worth a visit, so long as you're not driving the shuttle. Balloch itself has a number of supermarkets and shops at which to stock up before heading out for the day.

Just north of Balloch, you will often see seaplanes landing and taking off from Arden. These come and go regularly and are worth looking out for, they're great to watch – as long as they're moving away from you.

There are a number of islands along the way. Inchcailloch, or the Island of the Old Woman, so named after the ancient convent on the island, is accessible from Balmaha



via a regular ferry. This island is adorned with bluebells and is a popular trip for families during the summer. Inchmurrin, however, has an altogether more unusual past. The Earl of Lennox's castle on the island was commonly used by nobility as a refuge, due to its remote location. In later years this island was also used as mental asylum, and where they also sent unmarried women to give birth.

Haggis hurling

In 1984 the island was the location for a world record haggis hurl by Alan Pettigrew, a record which lasted until 2011. Rob Dunseath was responsible for the rebirth of this 'ancient' sport, after he placed an advert in a local paper advertising the "World Haggis Hurling Championships" at the Gathering of the Clans in 1977. He later came clean about the hoax, claiming he and his friends wrote it as a joke. The sport continues despite this and competitions take place as far away as Australia and America.

Trip overview

Milarrochy has a large car park, toilets and showers and is on the course of the west highland way, so sees its fair share of visitors.

This route can be paddled either direction between Balloch and Milarrochy, or as a 'there and back' route if you have the energy. If you lunch in Balloch you have no end to the options available to you but it may be busy with other paddlers in Drumkinnon Bay. If you choose to start from Balloch and paddle this route out to Balmaha, the Oak Tree pub in town is a great choice for lunch. Here you can also see the statue of Tom Weir, most famous for Weir's Way, a TV show in the 70s and 80s where he explored Scotland's history and people as he walked his way around the country.

This trip is usually relatively sheltered, but the crossing from Inchmurrin to Auchentullich is just over a kilometre and wind can funnel through here. In these conditions we recommend crossing between Inchmurrin and Knockour instead. The crossings between Inchmurrin, Creinch and Torrinch can also become challenging in windier conditions. If it's looking as if the wind may build, perhaps consider the Island Explore route instead, where you will generally have more shelter around the island chain.

The route

Head out from Milarrochy and then south-west toward Balmaha, the starting point for the walk up Conich Hill.

From here make the short crossing to Inchcailloch. We usually head round the north side of this island as it allows you spectacular views up the loch. If there is a northerly



Lomond Shores at Balloch | Photo PaddleMore

wind blowing however, go south around to make use of the island to shelter yourself. On the western shores of the island there is a campsite and composting toilets, perfect if you want to book in and make this an overnight trip.

Head out from here to Torrinch, or feel free to visit Clairinch if time allows. From Torrinch cross to Creinch. Wind can channel through here and make it difficult crossing, the same applies from here to Inchmurrin. The fetch can build if the wind is coming from the north, and this should be carefully considered before undertaking the crossing.

Depending on the wind conditions, there are two options from here. From the south-west of Inchmurrin, either head east to the jetty at Auchentullich, or south-east to Knockour.

From either of these, head in a southerly direction along the shore towards Balloch where the trip either ends, or where you turn around and head back.

Maid of the Loch

Why not visit the *Maid of the Loch*? The last paddle steamer built in Britain, she allowed tourists to explore the water for 29 years until 1981. She now sits at Balloch pier and is open to the public throughout the summer.



6 Luss Water

Get on / off	NS 326 940 / NS 356 928
Time required	3+ hours (lots of inspecting and possible portaging)
Distance	4km
Parking / shuttle	NS 326 940 / NS 356 931
Optimum water level	0.9+
Grade	3/4(5)

Introduction

The village of Luss is one of the most popular tourist destinations around Loch Lomond; nevertheless once you head up the glen you quickly leave the crowds behind. As you reach the top of the hill and approach the get-on for the river, be sure to turn around and enjoy a view of the island chain which very few people see.

At the end of this river are the remnants of Luss slate quarry and much of the housing in modern day Luss was built to accommodate the workers.



The short walk through the woods after you get off the river includes a section of the Glen Luss Faerie Trail, a magical walk for youngsters who can see doorways to faery houses and make wishes as they walk around the woods.

Trip overview

The get-on is up Glen Luss, off the A82. As you approach Edentaggart there is a bridge crossing the Molloch Burn; this is the get-on and there is space for a single vehicle here. If you want to avoid the burn itself, where some of the narrower, more difficult drops are, there's a turning point just before this bridge. This is a no parking area, so we recommend you use it to drop off your kit and then park elsewhere further down the glen.

Despite its accessibility, the Luss is rarely paddled. It's a narrow, relatively committing run from the Molloch Burn to Loch Lomond. Generally a grade 4, with some drops



warranting inspection and portage, there is potential to find trees at any turn. This isn't a river to bowl around any blind bends on or to drop hopefully into a rapid, but a slower trip requiring regular scouting.

The route

Mollochan Burn is very narrow and prone to overhanging; and maybe even fallen trees. This lead-in offers no real warm-up before some serious rapids, including a difficult double drop toward the end, which is worth inspecting / portaging river left.

Once onto the Luss itself you will find good sections of grade 4, the grade dropping slowly as you work your way downstream. Some of the drops and longer rapids require inspection and may be a portage, mainly because of trees.

Around the halfway mark you'll come across the Falls of Luss, a very steep, narrow, and almost definitely tree-filled drop. The rapid above is an easy enough right-hand bend, but it feels more gorgy as you get towards it. There are eddies above the falls; just make sure you don't miss them, as this is the last chance to run away or inspect.

Below the falls the river becomes easier but still very enjoyable, dropping a grade to grade 3. Read and run this section but stay awake for blockages. The last couple of drops through the old slate mine are a fun way to finish the run. The weir at the end of this mine is a potential get-out, or head all the way to Loch Lomond. The weir itself can be a bit messy, but is an easy enough portage.



Evening in the marina | PaddleMore

7 River Leven

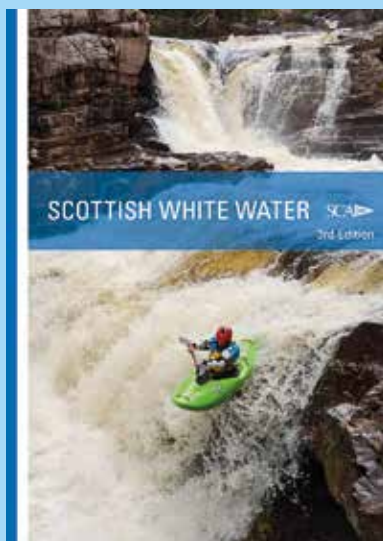
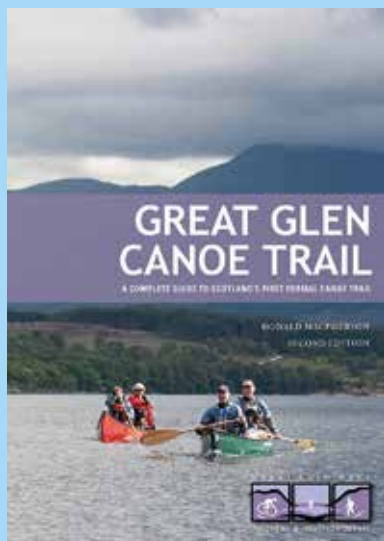
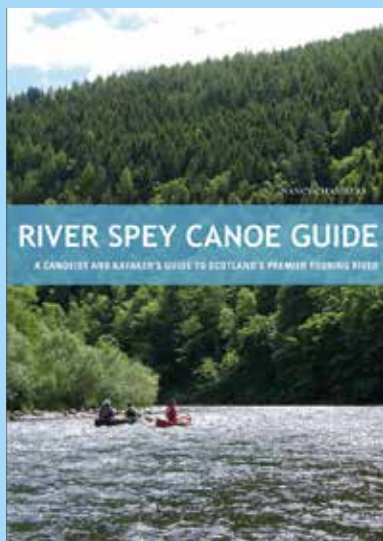
Get on / off:	NS 386 823 / NS 393 754
Time required:	3+ hours (lots of inspecting and possible portaging)
Distance:	8km
Parking / shuttle:	NS 386 823 / NS 393 754
Optimum water level:	0.9+
Grade:	1

Introduction

From the Gaelic for Elm Water, as per the crest of the Earl of Lennox, this river was historically a key route for the industry in Glasgow. It flows gently from Loch Lomond to the Clyde and is where the Vikings left Loch Lomond after their pillaging exploits in the area. This trip finishes in Dumbarton, the capital of the ancient Kingdom of Strathclyde, more recently the home of shipyards.

The barrage at the head of the river was built to control flooding on the river and maintain water levels in Loch Lomond. Downstream of here are the old rail yards which

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