



European Otter

5. Glencripesdale National Nature Reserve (5km - 12.5km) Tèarmann Nàdair Nàiseanta Gleann Cripesdal

From the end of the public road, a rough road leads towards Laudale House and you are invited to take a shortcut across the grassy beach-head on your right, which rejoins the main track after 250m. Further along the shore road, you will witness the on-going work by Scottish Natural Heritage and neighbouring estates to remove the planted exotic conifers and restore the native woodlands. The damp, shady conditions of these woods support a lush growth of ferns, mosses, liverworts and lichens. The track ends beyond the NNR, in Glen Cripesdale itself. Two upland rights of way lead on from here - neither of which is fit for cycles!

6. Scotstown-Longrigg loop (8km with 3km off road) Cuairt Scotstown-Longrigg

This is a good way to get a view of Strontian from above and enjoy some good off-road cycling. From Strontian, take the path along the river and cross a bridge after 750m to join the public road towards Ariundle, from where you head uphill for 1.5km before turning left onto a smaller track, through several gates and across the open hill, on a single track towards Longrigg and the Ben View Inn, from where you can get back to the Salen-Strontian road. One short section of ruts and a muddy hollow require you to carry your bike.

7. Strontian Village to Ariundle NNR (9.5 km)

Sron an t-Sithein gu Àirigh Fhionndail
Start this circuit from the Community Compost site behind Dailmhor House and follow the single track left up through the Community Woodland. Continue along this single track to the viewpoint sign and turn left through a gateway. Fabulous views of Strontian village and the Glen. A single-track path will lead you all the way to a small junction at a bridge. Bear right and follow the riverside, crossing a bridge and following a boardwalk section until you join the forest road. Turn left and follow the track through Ariundle and past the car park until you reach the junction with the Polloch Road. Turn left and head back towards the village. Alternatively, turn left just before the church, cross the bridge, turn right and follow the track along the riverside until you reach the village.



Sessile Oak Acorns

8. Loch Doilet Loop (6.5 km)

This is a short loop with a lovely swoopy single track section along the side of Loch Doilet. To start, cross the metal Bailey Bridge at the end of Loch Doilet and turn right onto a forest road. Parking is available on this road. A single track starts from this parking area. Follow this track through the young plantation and then into mature larch to its junction with the forest road. Follow the road, which has great views of Loch Doilet and Glenhurich, and turn right at the junction at the bottom of the hill. Join the tarmac road and turn right. Follow this back to your start point.



Sea Eagle

9. Dalilea to Kinlochmoidart (9 km)

Dail an leigh gu Ceann Loch Muideirt

A good starting point for this circuit is the viewpoint and car park above Langel on the A861. Here there are fabulous views of Loch Shiel, Clais Moss and Ben Resipol - it's worth keeping a picnic for this spot. Head down hill from the car park to the Dalilea road end, turn left and follow the road (signposted: Dalilea) to just beyond where it meets the low road dirt track. Turn left, through a gate and onto a rough track. This area can be very muddy during winter months when cattle and sheep are being fed. Follow this track up the hill and at the junction, keep left and carry straight on. Look out for great views of Loch Moidart and the Island of Eigg.

On the descent into Kinlochmoidart you will cross a small bridge and General Ross's cairn on your right hand side. Keep left at this point and carry on down until the track meets the small tarmac road in Kinlochmoidart. Turn left and follow the public road to the red telephone box. Turn left over the old bridge and re-join the A861. Turn left and climb back to the viewpoint.

10. Singing Sands (5km) Camas na Lìghe

The track starts from the bridge at Arivegaig and heads west, circling Kenra bay before entering the forest. On the far side of the forest, you will see a single track to the right, leading downhill to the Singing Sands. It is also possible to continue through to Ockle and return on the public road via Glenborrodale. Taking in Ockle creates a very fine circuit with great views of the Small Isles and even the Cuillins on a clear day. However the track is quite technical in places and some sections are not cyclable.

WARNING - unexploded ordnance could be present in parts of the forest and beach at the Singing Sands; visitors must keep to the forest tracks.



Common Seal

11. Loch Shiel (22km) Loch Seile

From the car park at Polloch, pick up the forest road on your right as you face the bridge. At the top of the first steep hill, you reach a forest gate where there is a fine viewpoint over Loch Shiel and its islands zoom up a small track through the trees on your left. More experienced riders might also want to take the shortcut on the right here, which drops soon down to rejoin the forest road by the lochside. From here there are no more shortcuts though you'll be glad to hear the hills are mostly near the start, unless of course you're leaving from Glenfinnan! The road surface is reasonably good all the way though there are some looser sections of stones and gravel to watch out for.



Morvern Castle



Garbh Eilean Wildlife Hide

Scottish Outdoor Access Code

The outdoors is where land managers make a living. It is the home of Scotland's diverse wildlife and is enjoyed by the many people who live there and visit it. Access rights extend to cycling. Cycling on hard surfaces, such as wide paths and tracks, causes few problems. On narrow routes, cycling may cause problems for other people, such as walkers and horse riders. If this occurs, dismount and walk until the path becomes suitable again. Do not endanger walkers and horse riders; give other users advance warning of your presence and give way to them on a narrow path. Remember that users could have sight or hearing difficulties. Take care not to alarm farm animals, horses and wildlife. If you are cycling off-path, particularly in winter, avoid going onto wet, boggy or soft ground, and churning up the surface.

What to Expect on single-track sections:

- Bike required: Mountain bike only.
- Skills needed: good off-roading skills and techniques to cope with unexpected trail features.
- Trail & surface type: steeper and tougher with technical sections. Expect variable surface types.
- Gradients and technical features: Expect boardwalks, large rocks, water crossings, roots and a wide range of climbs and descents.
- Suggested fitness level: a higher level of fitness and stamina is required to deal with technical features and longer distances. Mountain biking is a potentially hazardous activity carrying a significant risk. It should only be undertaken with a full understanding of all inherent risks. These guidelines must always be used in conjunction with the exercise of your own experience, intuition and careful judgement.

What to Expect on Forest Road-type sections:

- Bike required: most mountain bikes and mountain bike hybrids are suitable.
- Skills needed: for roads which are not waymarked or signposted basic map reading will be helpful.
- Trail and surface types: relatively flat and wide. The trail surface might be loose, uneven or muddy at times. These roads might be also be used by vehicles and others including horse riders and dog walkers.
- Gradients and technical trail features: gradients can be very variable and might include short, steep sections. Occasional potholes might be present. Routes might not be waymarked or signposted.
- Suggested fitness level: a good standard of fitness can help as some roads have climbs.

Wildlife photography by David Whitaker
www.highlandwildlifephotography.com

Always Follow the Forest Code

 1. Always wear appropriate safety clothing including a cycle helmet and gloves.	 2. Expect the unexpected - keep your speed down
 3. Remember other vehicles use forest roads as well as you!	 4. Give way to walkers - be friendly towards other forest users.
 4. Halt a horse and avoid an accident!	 6. Danger! Keep away from forest operations.
 7. Danger! Do not pass any vehicle loading timber until you have been told to do so.	 8. Cycle with care and you can come back again!

The Sunart Oakwoods Initiative is a partnership between the community and local agencies including Forestry Commission Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, Lochaber Enterprise and The Highland Council. It aims to restore and expand the native woodlands of the Sunart area to create an extensive forest bringing conservation, economic and amenity benefits to the local community.

www.sunartoakwoods.org.uk



PROJECT PART-FINANCED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

Europe and Scotland
Making it work together

Cycle Routes in the Sunart Oakwoods

Slighean rothair Coilltean Daraich Shuaineirt

...Ardnamurchan...
...Morvern...
...Moidart...
...Ardgour...



Tree Lungwort

Introduction *Roimh-ràdh*

Whether you are looking for a quiet loch-side pedal or an all-day epic, the Sunart Oakwoods will have something to interest you. Besides the fun of getting out on the bike, there is no better way of seeing the extensive woodlands with their abundant wildlife and rich cultural heritage, from castles to charcoal platforms, lime kilns to historic townships.



1. Drimnin to Doirlinn (11km) *Na Drùimeanan gu Doirlinn*

From Drimnin pier, follow the right fork in the estate track that leads uphill through the oakwood. The track levels out and you come to a gate on your right with a stile, leading to a rougher farm track. The rough section is short-lived and you are soon back onto a good track. From here, you start to climb gradually and the Ring of Ardnamurchan and Ben Hiant come into view. Passing the cleared townships of Auliston and Portabhata, the track then drops down to the birchwoods of Loch na Droma Buidhe (Loch of the Yellow Ridge); take care on the rutted section of the descent. The track ends at Doirlinn, where there was once a whisky still and a ferry crossing to Ardnamurchan.



Oak Woodland

2. Fiunary Forest

Coille Fhionn Àirigh

Fiunary Forest offers 64km of roads and tracks with several access points around the forest. *Savary Bridge* via *Lag Mor* gives fine views of Mull combined with a fast and furious downhill on a historic cattle drove track. Shorter MTB rides are possible at *Achadh Forsa* (Field of the Waterfall) 'north shore' loop and the winding *Drochaid Shalachain* (Salachan Bridge) descent.



To see the best of Morvern, pick up the Barr post track from the small village of Drimnin, climb to the pass, above the forest (where the post used to be left under a rock), drop down via *Coire Buidhe* (Yellow Corrie) to a gate marking the start of a sensational descent, with rock steps and steep grass banks, ending at Barr River. You can loop back to Drimnin via the forest and public roads or try the new *Eilean* (Island) trail for great views of the Island of Carna. The *Eilean* trail can also be reached from *Aoinneadh Mor* car park on the public road to *Kinlochtaeacuis*. Rides in *Fiunary Forest* combine well with the *Tobermory-Drimnin* (Mon & Fri) and *Fishnish* ferries.

3. Lochaline old road (3km)

Seann rathad gu Loch Alainn

Starting from Lochaline ferry pier, follow the coast road towards the sandmine and take the path on the right that skirts the mine workings, passing under the gantry used for loading the sand onto ships, and carry on until the path becomes the old road, running among the trees up to Kinlochaline (the head of the loch). If you are combining this with a longer ride, keep this section for the end so the fine silica sand from the mine doesn't put extra wear on rims and gears. From Kinlochaline, you can also take the estate track through to Claggan, on your left after you cross the *Aline* bridge, and join the *Fiunary Forest* cycle routes to create a loop back to Lochaline.



Pine marten

4. Old Ardtornish Castle (6km)

Caisteal Àrd-torainnis

From the *Ardtornish Gardens* car park, cycle back to the bridge at the loch-side and turn left along the shore road. Look out for the lime kiln in the ashwoods at the roadside. From the deer gate on the road, the track becomes rougher as it climbs to an old steading, used as a cattle barn. Here you turn right for *Ardtornish Castle*, stronghold of the high chiefs of *Clan Donald* until the 15th century and later owned by *Clan Maclean*.

This leaflet describes 11 off-road trails that you can combine with the public roads for cycle touring or as part of a day trip. When on single track roads, remember to use passing places to let following vehicles overtake. Useful maps for the area are the OS Landranger 40, 47 and 49 or OS Explorer 383, 390 and 391. Accommodation and visitor facilities can be found in villages throughout the area. Bike hire is available locally: ask at *Strontian Tourist Information Centre* (01967 402381). Bike shops can be found in *Fort William* and *Oban*.

