

CAMERON HOUSE
ON LOCH LOMOND

RESORT GUIDE

A GUIDE TO THE FLORA AND FAUNA
OF LOCH LOMOND





WELCOME

We are delighted to welcome you all to Cameron House and the Cameron Club Resort. Whether you're staying in the hotel, relaxing in a lodge, or just visiting us for the day, I would like to say thank you for choosing our resort.

We are incredibly proud to call the enchanting Loch Lomond our home. It is a beautiful but fragile landscape, and as such we want to care for where we live. Here at Cameron House, we take a practical approach when it comes to conservation, we promote biodiversity across the grounds and are developing sustainable practices throughout the resort. We firmly believe that even the simplest of actions can make a big impact. Whether it's picking up litter whilst you're out for a walk or just turning down your thermostat at home, we can all make a difference.

Cameron House Estate dates back to the 1700's and was home to the Smollett family for many years before being transformed into the luxury resort it is today. The estate comprises of gardens, parklands, woodlands, and loch-side views. With the addition of the Carrick golf course in 2006, Cameron House Resort stretches over 400 acres and is home to many animals and plants, from giant Redwoods to the native Red Squirrel. In this booklet, you'll find some information on the flora and fauna that can be found here.

There is endless fun to be had here and adventure waiting just around the corner, so I actively encourage you to get out there and explore what our estate and the wider National Park has to offer.



Tim Henson
Environment & Sustainability Officer

DEER, DEER!

If you're an early riser, you may spot our resident deer. We have two species on site; Roe and Red deer. Roe deer are very small (65-75cm at the shoulder)



with a reddish-brown coat in the summer. The coat turns grey-brown in the winter. Roe deer have a black nose, a white chin and rump, and

fawns often display a coat speckled with white spots – the original Bambi! Roe deer are primarily crepuscular (primarily active at dawn and at dusk); very quick and graceful, living in woods, although they may venture to grasslands and sparse forests.

Red Deer, on the other hand, are big! They are the UK's largest land mammal. Ranging from 110-150cm from the shoulder. Their fur is russet-brown with a paler rump. During the autumn (breeding season known as the 'rut'), the males signify their territory by bellowing.

Like all deer species (except reindeer), only the males have antlers, which are made of a type of dense and solid bone. Whilst growing, they are covered with a hairy skin called 'velvet' which is shed when the antlers have reached their full size for that year. The males may speed up this process by rubbing their antlers on trees, so that their antlers are hard and stiff for the duels during the mating season.

MY HEART'S IN THE HIGHLANDS, MY HEART IS NOT HERE, MY HEART'S IN THE HIGHLANDS, A CHASING THE DEER; CHASING THE WILD-DEER, AND FOLLOWS THE ROE, MY HEART'S IN THE HIGHLANDS, WHEREVER I GO.

- ROBERT BURNS

RED SQUIRREL

These adorable little creatures have recently made a comeback to the Cameron House estate in the last few years. The Red Squirrel has been displaced nationally by the invasive Grey Squirrel which spreads squirrel pox that is fatal to our native species. Recently though, a group of Red Squirrels have been spotted around the lodges at the southern end of the estate. Our hope is that through management they will spread and repopulate our estate, so once again you'll see little red streaks darting from oak to oak.



COME FLY WITH ME

Cast your eye over the loch and you will see a wonderful variety of birds. Perhaps the largest population is made up of Geese, which includes the largest and bulkiest of the wild Geese native to the UK and Europe, the Greylag. You may also see the colourful Mandarin Duck's resting on some of the boats in the Marina.

If you're lucky enough, you may even spot a White-tailed Eagle soaring over the loch. These large birds of prey have a wingspan of 2.5 metres and have recently come back to the loch after a 100-year absence.

SWAN SONG

We have also been host to several breeding pairs of Mute Swans (pictured left). Swans are omnivorous birds but have a mainly vegetarian diet. They will eat underwater vegetation such as seaweed and aquatic plants when they are on the water, and a mixture of plants, seeds, and berries when they are on land. Swans can also eat insects; both water and land based, and the occasional small fish.

FRUIN WATER

If you are exploring up at the Cameron Club and Spa, you'll come across the bridge over Fruin Water. This final section of the Fruin is bordered either side by a narrow band of mixed woodland that is of high value for breeding birds. The keen-eyed might see a Kingfisher on its perch or zooming low over the water as it hunts for food.



The Fruin is also a corridor for the Otters in the nature reserves. Otters are members of the Weasel family, but they are larger than their cousins and larger still than the invasive Mink. Staff have even spotted these lovely creatures playing along Fruin water early in the mornings. You may not see these aquatic mammals, but you're likely to spot their tracks imprinted along the river's edge and the loch shore.

FILCHED FROM THE AIR, ARE SLANTED, FROM A WRECKED LOBSTER CREEL. THE CORK THAT CAN'T BE TRAVELS-NOSE OF A DOG OTTER. IT'S PIPED AT, SCREAMED AT, SWORN AT. BY AN ELEGANT OYSTERCATCHER ON FURIOUS ORANGE LEGS...

-NORMAN MACCAIG

DID YOU KNOW?

A male swan is called a cob; a female is called a pen. Swans are highly intelligent and will remember you. They can fly up to 60mph.



THE WISE OWL

Barn Owls are incredible predators with many adaptations to perfect hunting their prey. Their feathers are extremely soft, and their foremost wing feather has tiny hooks, all of which help to deaden the sound of the wind for almost silent flight. The facial disk also directs sounds to the Barn Owls ears. This enables them to watch and listen for their prey. Across the estate, we also house two Barn Owl boxes. They are both perfectly positioned on a mature, thick trunk in an isolated position with no low branches. The boxes have been positioned to provide excellent hunting opportunities in the form of small mammals such as mice, voles, moles, and shrews.

IT WAS THE OWL THAT SHRIEKED, THE FATAL BELLMAN, WHICH GIVES THE STERN'ST GOOD-NIGHT. HE IS ABOUT IT.

-LADY MACBETH

**TWINKLE, TWINKLE, LITTLE BAT!
HOW I WONDER WHAT YOU'RE AT!
UP ABOVE THE WORLD YOU FLY,
LIKE A TEATRAY IN THE SKY.**

-THE MAD HATTER

BATS

Our mature Oak and beech woodlands provide the perfect habitat to house Bat boxes. We have 14 bat boxes dotted around the Cameron Club and Spa, and another 9 located around Cameron House. If you're a guest at Auchentullich Farm, you may have spotted the two heated bat boxes located on the side of the buildings, and these are generally used as maternity roosts for female Soprano Pipistrelle bats. Bats play an important role in many environments around the world. In the UK, bat populations have declined considerably over the last century. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 protects bats and their roosts in England, Scotland, and Wales, so it is important to understand these laws if you are planning any building or remedial work that may affect a roost.

The Fruin river is a great place to see Daubenton's bats at dusk; just one of the species of bat living around the Cameron Club and Spa, it is a medium-sized bat, reminiscent of a hovercraft as it flies steadily above the water surface hunting its prey. Daubenton's bats usually take insects from close to the water and have also been seen taking insects directly from the water surface, using their large feet as a spear or the tail membrane as a scoop!



DID YOU KNOW?

**People think bats are blind, but they can see almost as well as you.
The tiny Pipistrelle Bat eats over 3,000 insects a night.**

**A PUDDOCK SAT BY THE LOCHAN'S BRIM AN'
HE THOCHT THERE WAS NEVER A PUDDOCK LIKE HIM. HE SAT ON
HIS HURDIES, HE WAGGLED HIS LEGS, AN' COCKIT HIS HEID AS HE
GLOWERED THROU' THE SEGGS**

-J.M.CAIE



PUDDOCK

OLD SCOTTISH WORD FOR TOAD OR FROG

The common frog has smooth, moist olive-green or brown skin, with a dark patch or "mask" behind the eyes. The common toad, however, has "warty" skin which may appear dry when on land. Common toads are most active at night when they hunt invertebrates including snails, slugs, ants and spiders. Frogs will also feed on a variety of invertebrate prey, which makes them very beneficial and popular with gardeners!

Unlike the common frog, toad spawn is laid in strings (not clumps) and toad tadpoles are black and form shoals. "Mature" tadpoles are faintly speckled with a gold/brown colouration. There are many practical ways you can enhance your garden for toads by creating compost heaps, leaf piles and log piles. You could consider a "toad home", which could be simply upturning a plant pot and knocking a hole in the side for a door, or by making a structure out of wood. It is a good idea to place grass or leaves inside your toad home for extra warmth and protection.

TREES

As you walk through the grounds of Cameron House and Cameron Club, you'll notice large, gnarled oaks, Copper Beeches glistening in the sun and even some gigantic Redwoods towering above all. We are home to some lovely woodlands, some of which are classed as ancient and semi ancient (dating back some 400 years). Our trees are incredibly important, not only are they deeply rooted in Loch Lomond's heritage, but they are a haven for a vast number of animals and insects. Oak trees alone provide food, and shelter for around 2,300 species.

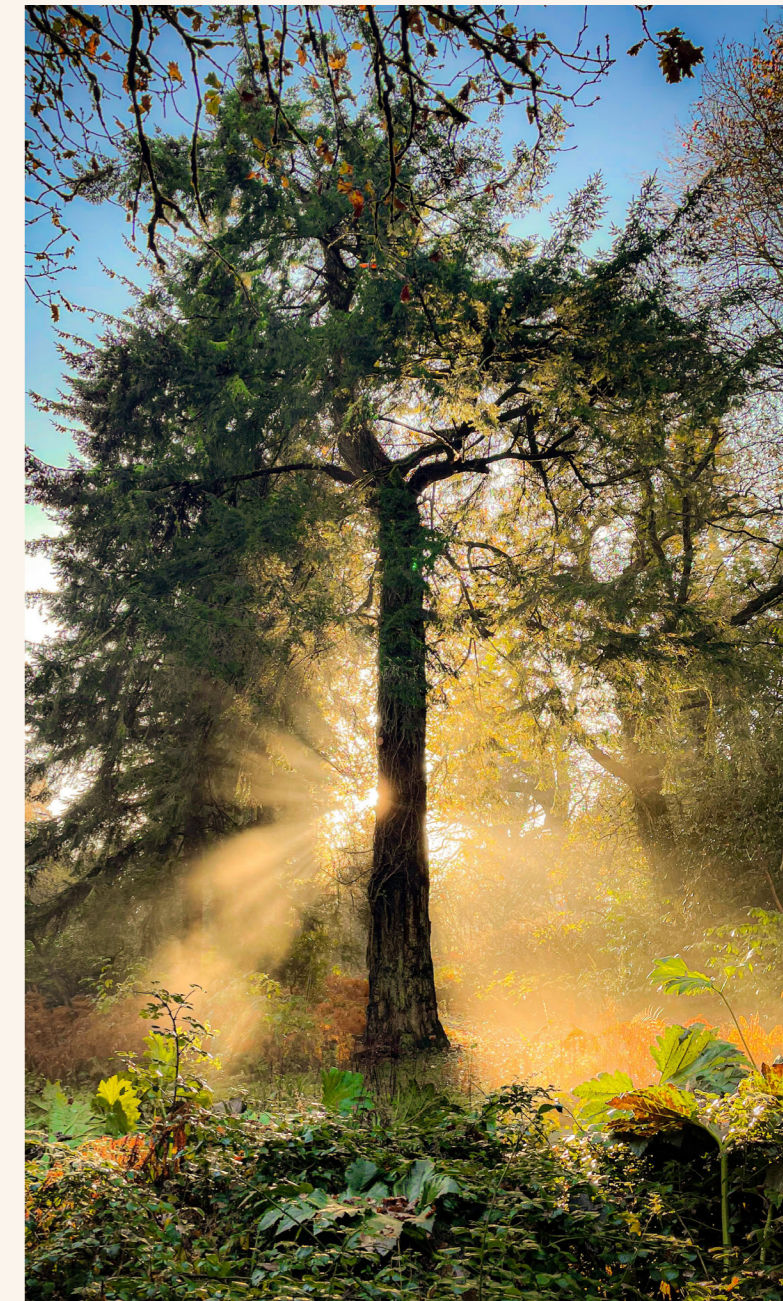
You may notice that some of the trees are covered in lichens which are ancient organisms; some colonies are over 8,000 years old and there are around 1,700 species in Britain. Lichens don't grow in areas of heavy pollution, so the fact that we have them in abundance means the air you are breathing is wonderfully fresh.

**IT IS NOT SO MUCH FOR ITS BEAUTY
THAT THE FOREST MAKES A CLAIM UPON
MEN'S HEARTS, AS FOR THAT SUBTLE
SOMETHING, THAT QUALITY OF AIR
THAT EMANATION FROM OLD TREES,
THAT SO WONDERFULLY CHANGES AND
RENEWS A WEARY SPIRIT.**

-ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

BRAMBLE WOOD

Nestled between the A82 and the back of the hotel, lies Bramble Wood. Once an arboretum and a Rhododendron Garden, it houses some exotic and unique trees including Japanese Umbrella Pine, Giant Redwoods, and Handkerchief trees. Take a wander through here to relax and to clear your mind. Through spring you can see the bluebells carpeting the woodland floors between the trees, and early in the mornings you may even spy a deer or two.



THE MIDROSS NATURE RESERVE

The nature reserve is located by the side of the 5th green of the Carrick golf course. It is open all year round, but please bear in mind that it is managed primarily as a refuge for wildlife; the paths are very muddy, and it is often prone to flooding. Please take care if you decide to explore the reserve, and wear sensible boots or shoes



(wellies are highly recommended). Keep your eyes peeled for buzzards and grey herons. Herons can often be mistaken for larger birds of prey as they circle in the sky, but their long legs and bodies are usually enough of a clue to their identity. Buzzards are also a

common sight above the golf course, either soaring over the numerous woodland pockets, or perched on trees or posts looking for small mammals, birds, and carrion.

LOOK DEEP INTO NATURE, AND THEN YOU WILL UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING BETTER

-ALBERT EINSTEIN

DID YOU KNOW?

A bee flaps its wings between 200-230 times per second when flying. Bumblebees don't die when they sting; that's just a honeybee.

AS BUSY AS A BEE

Bees, and other flying insects, are incredible pollinators but their populations are in decline in the UK, so we've been busy creating initiatives and partnerships to help these little creatures:

The Wee Garden is located by the 3rd green on the Carrick golf course. It is full of vibrant plants to support the bee species found here. All the garden ornaments found here are lovingly created and maintained by our gardening team.



The Untidy Garden is a wildflower meadow project located at the Cameron Club and Spa. Planted with pollinator friendly species and left to grow wild, it provides food and shelter for many different animals. You can help bees yourself at home by planting some bee-friendly plants in your garden that flower between March and September.

HOW DO THOSE LITTLE BUSY BEES IMPROVE EACH SHINING HOUR, AND GATHER HONEY ALL THE DAY FROM EVERY OPENING FLOWER!

-ISAAC WATTS

We also support our local Beekeepers association and host several of their hives onsite to help promote biodiversity across the resort. If you do happen to come across the hives,

please be wary and keep your distance. To promote biodiversity resort wide, we leave areas of meadow and rough unmanaged. These areas grow wild in the spring, and summer, and naturally die off during the winter. They provide lots of valuable habitat for many animals found across our resort.

BY YON BONNIE BANKS AND BY YON BONNIE BRAES, WHERE THE SUN SHINES BRIGHT ON LOCH LOMOND

OYSTER-CATCHERS

Between April and June, you will see and hear our healthy population of Oystercatchers. The nests of Oystercatchers are simple affairs;



scrapes in the ground which may be lined and placed in a spot with good visibility. The Cameron Club and Spa car park has proved a popular

nesting area for some! Unfortunately, this can result in threats to their eggs and chicks from stoats, which are small and cute looking but vicious predators!

STOATS

Stoats are largely carnivorous, and their primary food source is rabbit, supplemented with small rodents, hares and birds. They also eat insects, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates, and when food is scarce, they will eat carrion (dead animal carcasses). Stoats

are fierce predators and can move at speeds of 20 miles per hour when hunting; they are active by day and are easy to spot on the open fairways with their orangey-brown back fur, creamy white throat and belly, and black-tipped tail.

Stoats breed once per year in spring but do not give birth until the following spring. The main dangers to the stoat are starvation in winter, predation by larger carnivores and being killed on roads.



A WEASEL'S WEASELLY RECOGNISED. A STOAT'S STOATALLY DIFFERENT!

ONE LAST THING!

We hope you found this brochure interesting and inspiring. We wish your stay at Cameron House to be relaxing and fun filled.

Remember when you're exploring our estate or the bigger National Park, leave nothing but your footprints and take nothing except happy memories.

