

## The Pond Trail Smuggler's Adventure

**Start** : as a continuation of the Burnside Trail Smuggler's Adventure at Cardroon Bridge (the trail can also be done in reverse from the Wildlife Ponds if preferred)

**Distance of adventure** : 2km / 1 ½ miles (one way)

**Time** : 1 hour

**Tool kit** : pen or pencil, pad of paper, a coin, a 50cm long length of string (can be shorter so long as you know how long it is)

**Instructions** : the various puzzles are laid out in order along the course of the Pond Trail and further directions are provided in italics in between tasks to help you find your way.

**Aims** : find the possible looty location and solve the puzzles along the trail to discover more about the wood.

***Directions part 1** : Cross Cardroon Bridge and continue uphill towards the Wildlife Ponds for a short distance until you come to another standing stone beside the path.*

- 1. Artistic Challenge No 1 – What is the Stone thinking?** : it might seem a strange thing to imagine a stone thinking, but this stone will be here for many years longer than you will, so treat it with respect! Sit down and lean up against the stone and take a second to think. If you asked the stone what it was thinking, what would it say? Write down one sentence of thoughts here:

***Directions part 2** : This stone also marks the point at which you can leave the path on your right hand side to discover the Pond Trail looty location!*

- 2. Explorer Challenge No 1 – Find the Looty Location!** : turn right off the path into the forest at the location of the standing stone, making sure you remember which way you have come. This challenge is only for the more adventurous and is very rough going so feel free to miss this challenge out if you feel anxious or

don't want to scramble through the brambles! A few minutes' bush whacking from the path you should find the ruins of some old buildings in the woods. What about this as a looty location? Write down here two reasons why this would be a good looty location, and two reasons it would be a bad location:

Good location: 1.  
2.

Bad location: 1.  
2.

**Directions Part 3** : return to the standing stone and continue up the path towards the ponds. The adventure trail gently winds through the wood and passes through various gaps in the wall. At every gap in the wall you must play the

**3. Explorer Challenge No 2 – Keeping the Adventurer Fit!** : unfit adventurers are no use to anyone! At every gap in the wall or gate you pass through and at every bridge you cross along this section of trail you must gain the permission of the woodland witch with the coin in your pocket to gain entry. Toss your coin at the entrance to the gap in the wall and before every bridge or gate. If the coin falls on heads you may pass through. If the coin falls on tails you must hop ten times before trying once more! Remember to do this at every gap, gate and bridge, not just the first one...and don't even imagine what might befall you if you try and trick the woodland witch!

**Directions Part 4** : continue along the trail until you come to a very big, old tree on your right hand side, beside the wall. This is a hazel tree, and it has leafs like this:



**4. Conservationist Challenge No 1 – How old is the hazel tree?** : you might know how to tell the age of a fallen tree, by counting the number of rings? But do

you know how to calculate the age of a tree while it is still growing? Take your piece of string and measure how many lengths it takes to wrap it right around the tree. Every 25cm represents about 10 years of growth. So, how old do you think the hazel tree is?

Guessed age of hazel tree : \_\_\_\_\_ years

This test doesn't work perfectly with really really old trees, and the hazel is probably a bit older than this. But can you find another 3 different species of trees to measure? Take a leaf from the tree to stick beside your measurements. You can look at the Balloch Wood website to identify the trees later!

LEAF                                      tree species - \_\_\_\_\_                                      age - \_\_\_\_\_ yrs

LEAF                                      tree species - \_\_\_\_\_                                      age - \_\_\_\_\_ yrs

LEAF                                      tree species - \_\_\_\_\_                                      age - \_\_\_\_\_ yrs

**Directions Part 5** : after the tree you will start to descend through some conifer trees before crossing a bridge at the bottom – remember to do your Explorer Challenge at the bridge! Take a right at the fork in the path up to the wildlife ponds or a left to go to the car park.

*This is the end of the Pond Trail. You are now at the location of the ponds where you can do the Wildlife Ponds Smuggler's Adventure, or return the way you have come as far as Cardroon Bridge and back along the Burnside Trail Smuggler's Adventure back to the village.*