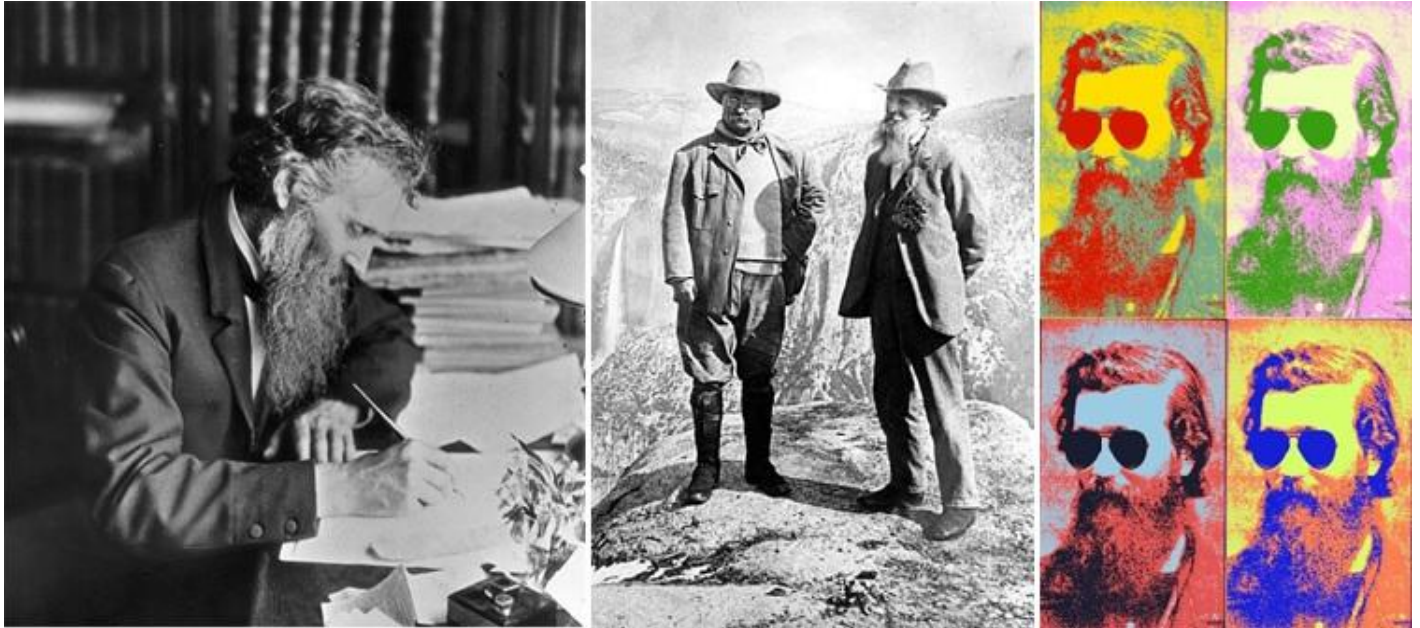


Resource Guide: John Muir (1838-1914)



John Muir information, activities, examples and links can be found at discoverjohnmuir.com

WHO WAS HE?

Born in 1838 in the Scottish port of Dunbar, John Muir emigrated with his family as a child to the USA where he became a founding father of the conservation movement, and devoted his life to safeguarding the world's landscapes. At home in the wild, John Muir made countless expeditions amongst mountains, forests and glaciers and has inspired thousands with his writing and passion for wild places. He influenced the creation of Yosemite National Park (one of the first National Parks), was a founding member of the Sierra Club, and campaigned for the protection of areas of North American wildness against commercial enterprises which threatened to destroy their beauty.

John Muir showed the people of his time - and ours - the importance of experiencing and protecting our natural heritage. His personal and determined involvement in the nature conservation questions of the day was, and remains, an inspiration for all of us.

John Muir was something of an all-rounder. He was an explorer and adventurer, a mountain climber, a botanist, an inventor, a writer, and a dreamer. It was Muir's view that it is not enough for people to be in sympathy with the plight of the natural world, but that they must become 'active conservationists' - as campaigners, as practical project workers, as scientists, as artists, as writers. John Muir might seem like a distant historical figure to some, but his message – that we all need to experience, enjoy and care for wild places – is as relevant today as it ever was.

INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES

Although John Muir claimed that he struggled with writing, some feel that – even after 100 years – Muir’s words on nature, beauty, enjoyment and health remain an inspiration. See page 3 ‘**USEFUL WEBSITES**’ for links to more quotes.

“I only went out for a walk, and finally concluded to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found, was really going in.”

“When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe.”

“Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wildness is a necessity; and that mountain parks and reservations are useful not only as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life.”

“One day's exposure to mountains is better than cartloads of books.”

“Another glorious day in which one seems to be dissolved and absorbed and sent pulsing onward we know not where. Life seems neither long nor short, and we take no more heed to save time or make haste than do the trees and stars. This is true freedom, a good practical sort of immortality.”

“God never made an ugly landscape. All that the sun shines on is beautiful, so long as it is wild.”

“Who publishes the sheet-music of the winds or the music of water written in river-lines?”

“Camp out among the grass of glacier meadows. Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves.”

“In such places standing alone on the mountain-top it is easy to realize that whatever special nests we make - leaves and moss like the marmots and birds, or tents or piled stone - we all dwell in a house of one room - the world with the firmament for its roof - and are sailing the celestial spaces without leaving any track.”

“Let children walk with Nature, let them see the beautiful blendings and communions of death and life, their joyous inseparable unity, as taught in woods and meadows, plains and mountains and streams of our blessed star, and they will learn that death is stingless indeed, and as beautiful as life.”

“Most people are on the world, not in it, have no sympathy or relationship to anything about them - undiffused, separate, and rigidly alone like marbles of polished stone, touching but separate.”

“Only by going alone in silence, without baggage, can one truly get into the heart of the wilderness. All other travel is mere dust and hotels and baggage and chatter.”

“One touch of nature ... makes all the world kin.”

JOHN MUIR'S CHRONOLOGY AND LEGACY

- 1835 Born in Dunbar April 21st 1838
- 1840 A young John Muir learns to climb on the walls of Dunbar Castle, and is fascinated by 'everything that is wild'.
- 1845
- 1850 ↑ Aged 11 emigrated to the USA with his father and brother. He lived and worked on their farm for 10 years, teaching himself and inventing by night.
- 1855 ↓
- 1860 ↓
- 1865 Works in mills and factories but in 1867 is blinded temporarily in an accident. Return of his sight leads to 1,000 mile walk from Wisconsin to Cuba.
- 1870 ↑ Lives in the High Sierra as a shepherd with time to study, climb and explore glaciers. Takes many esteemed visitors on explorations of the area.
- 1875 ↓
- 1880 ↑ Aged 42 marries Louise Strenzel and for 6 years works as a fruit farmer and rancher. US Congress creates Yosemite National Park.
- 1885 ↓
- 1890 Co-Forms the Sierra Club in 1892 and serves as President for life.
- 1895 *The Mountains of California* published (1899). Mt Rainier National Park established.
- 1900 *Our National Parks* published (1901). President Roosevelt spends 3 days camping alone with Muir in Yosemite. World Tour (1903).
- 1905 Fight to save Hetch Hetchy Valley begins 1907. Grand Canyon National Park established (1908). *Stickeen* published and Muir leads president Taft through Yosemite (1909).
- 1910 *My First summer in the Sierra* published (1911). *The Yosemite* published (1912).
- 1914 Muir dies of pneumonia on Christmas Eve, aged 76.

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- 1951 1st UK National Park is designated (Peak District)
- 1976 John Muir Country Park designated at Dunbar, Scotland
- 1981 John Muir House, Birthplace Museum opens
- 1983 John Muir Trust is founded in Scotland to conserve wild land
- 1987 Trust purchases Li and Coire Dhorrcail in Knoydart
- 1997 Trust launches John Muir Award educational initiative
- 2000 John Muir Trust purchase Ben Nevis
- 2002/03 Scotland's 1st National Parks are established
- 2007 50,000th John Muir Award presented
- 2010 100,000th John Muir Award presented
- 2013 21st April is designated John Muir Day in Scotland.
- 2013 Scotland celebrates Year of Natural Scotland with a theme to 'Celebrate John Muir'
- 2014 The John Muir Way opens in Scotland – coast to coast between Dunbar and Helensburgh



USEFUL WEBSITES

Discover John Muir discoverjohnmuir.com

John Muir information sources, activities that help connect with Muir's messages, stories and adventures, and examples on how people engage with Muir's ethos.

John Muir Trust www.jmt.org/john-muir.asp

News, views and information on the UK's leading wild land charity inspired by John Muir.

National Parks Service in America www.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/jomu/index.html

History of John Muir with photos from his life and information on his role in setting up the National Parks, including a television series www.pbs.org/nationalparks/history

Mission:Explore John Muir www.jmt.org/jmaward-mission-explore-john-muir.asp

Free Muir-related mission activities from Mission:Explore – a group of geographers, explorers, and artists. Available in Welsh (Cymraeg), Gaelic (Gàidhlig), and English.

John Muir Way johnmuirway.org

Find out everything you need to know to travel on this new long distance route across Scotland.

John Muir, Earth – Planet, Universe www.scottishbooktrust.com/johnmuir

A graphic novel based on John Muir's life produced by the Scottish Book Trust. Available free online.

John Muir Birthplace Trust www.jmbt.org.uk

Information about John Muir and his home town of Dunbar including downloadable fact sheets. Plus new, interactive website linking Muir's homes in Dunbar and Martinez <http://tinyurl.com/kbbyp95>

Sierra Club www.sierraclub.org/john_muir_exhibit

American Conservation Organisation founded by John Muir, with extensive resource on Muir's life.

The Last Explorers - John Muir www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b017zqnn/clips

Short clips from the BBC series tracing Muir's journey from Dunbar to California, looking at his impact on the world and climbing in Muir's footsteps.

What if John Muir had Facebook... www.youngscot.org/info/2873-who-was-john-muir

Scroll down to see John Muir's mock Facebook page. What would Muir post, share and like today?

Wisconsin Historical Society www.wisconsinhistory.org

Search 'John Muir' to find photos, letters and drawings of some of his inventions.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Some books by John Muir are available free for Kindle from Amazon.

The Story of My Boyhood and Youth	John Muir	ISBN 1841584681
A Thousand Mile Walk to the Gulf	John Muir	ISBN 0877971935
John Muir, From Scotland to Sierra	Frederic Turner	ISBN 0862417015
Essential Muir: A Selection of John Muir's Best Writing	ed. Fred D. White	ISBN 1597140279
The Wild Muir	Lee Stetson	ISBN 0939666758

Books more suited to young people:

Stickeen: John Muir and the Brave Little Dog	John Muir	ISBN 1883220785
Call Him Father Nature: The Story of John Muir	Patricia Topp	ISBN 1577330471
John Muir: My Life with Nature	Joseph Cornell	ISBN 1584690997
Mission:Explore John Muir (contact Award staff)	Mission:Explore	ISBN 0957615809
John Muir, Earth – Planet, Universe (contact Award staff)	Julie Bertagna	ISBN 9781901077278