



KIT OF THE WEEK

Berghaus Remotes rucksacks
A new packs collection from Berghaus is aimed at day walkers or city strollers.

The Remote 20 and 25 day sacks are lightweight and compact but still boast lots of features.

The Remote 20 has 20litres of packing space with internal and external zipped pockets, a bottle pocket and an internal organiser.

It also has a back system with vented foam for great comfort, even in warm weather. Other features include a hip strap and height-adjustable chest strap.

■ The Remote 20 retails at £50 while the Remote 25 is £55. See www.berghaus.com



UPGRADE Rouken Glen is revamped

PARK LIFE IS £3M BETTER

An event to celebrate the £3million revamp of a popular park near Glasgow will take place next week.

Visitors are invited to Rouken Glen park on July 30, where they can see the new facilities and features created as part of the four-year project.

Included in the refurbishment are a £300,000 upgrade to the children's playpark, while the Walled Garden has been extensively renovated.

There has also been major conservation work carried out on the boating pond, affectionately known as Swan Lake.

■ See www.roukenglenpark.co.uk

RUN FOR TOM

A race in memory of a Stirlingshire walker who disappeared in 2012 takes place next month.

The seven-mile Tom Robb Memorial Trail Race follows a route in the Carron Valley.

The event, on August 27, will raise funds for Alzheimer's Scotland and Ochils Mountain Rescue.

Tom, who suffered from dementia, vanished after going for a walk and was last seen at the Carron Valley Forestry.

■ To register and enter see www.tomrobbmemorialtrailrace.com

Immerse yourself in our marine life

UNDER THE SEA
Tanera Mor's landing platform has steep drop-offs which are ideal for snorkelling



Have you tried?



FIONA RUSSELL

SCOTLAND'S FIRST SNORKEL TRAIL

What is it?

The Scottish Wildlife Trust has created a unique North West Highlands Snorkel Trail.

Tell me more

From beginner to experienced, snorkellers can dive into the new trail. The route features nine beaches and bays on the coast of Wester Ross and Sutherland.

Marine life to spot include dogfish, barrel and moon jellyfish, sea urchins, Maerl, Ballan wrasse and common sunstar.

Anything else to know?

The SWT trail has been launched as part of their Living Seas programme, supported by the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation.

Noel Hawkins, Living Seas communities officer at the Scottish Wildlife Trust, said: "The coast of Wester Ross and Sutherland features some fantastic sheltered headlands and beaches that are great places for snorkelling.

"The new trail is self-led but we are hoping to establish a training programme for local people to become qualified snorkel instructors.

"We also hope there will be a snorkel club at the local leisure centre to introduce younger members of the community to snorkelling and their local marine environment."

It's hoped the snorkel trail will raise awareness about Scotland's fragile marine



SEA STARS Snorkellers can spot dogfish and the common sunstar



habitats. Noel added: "Scotland needs healthy living seas that can adapt to climate change.

"The trail will encourage more people to explore the habitats below the waves and the marine life they support.

"In turn, this will give greater understanding of the need to protect them."

Where can I do it?

There are four featured locations on the North West Highlands Snorkel Trail:

■ Achmelvich Bay – The sandy beach and rocky outcrops offer the perfect location for beginners, with plenty of fish, shellfish and kelp beds.

■ Gruinard Bay – A headland with superb low-tide exploration. Seagrass and kelp shelter numerous fish and shellfish.

■ Mellon Charles – The sea beneath the old pier at the former naval base is a haven for sea urchins, anemones and wrasse.

■ Tanera Mor – The steep drop-offs either side of the island's landing platform make for great snorkelling. Kelp and crevasses shelter lobsters and crabs.

But what about the cold?

Many people will worry that Scottish waters are too cold for

snorkelling. But thanks to modern wetsuits and neoprene technology, it's possible to swim in comfort.

Scottish waters also warm up over the summer and into the autumn. Lizzie Bird, an instructor trainer with the British Sub Aqua Club, believes Scottish snorkelling is accessible to many people.

She said: "Anyone can snorkel at any age as long as they are confident in the water.

"They don't have to be fantastic swimmers.

"The colours and life under the surface in places like the north-west coast of Scotland are up there with the coral reefs you can find abroad."

Tips to stay safe

The SWT are encouraging people to follow safety advice, including being aware of tides and the weather forecast.

Swimmers should never go snorkelling alone and it's vital that they do not take, touch or tease animals, plants or shells.

■ More info: www.scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/what-we-do/living-seas/north-west-highlands-snorkel-trail

Advice and ideas

Join me on my adventures in Scotland's great outdoors by checking out my award-winning website at www.fionaoutdoors.co.uk – you'll find lots of great information about walking, cycling, running and other outdoor activities, as well as kit reviews.