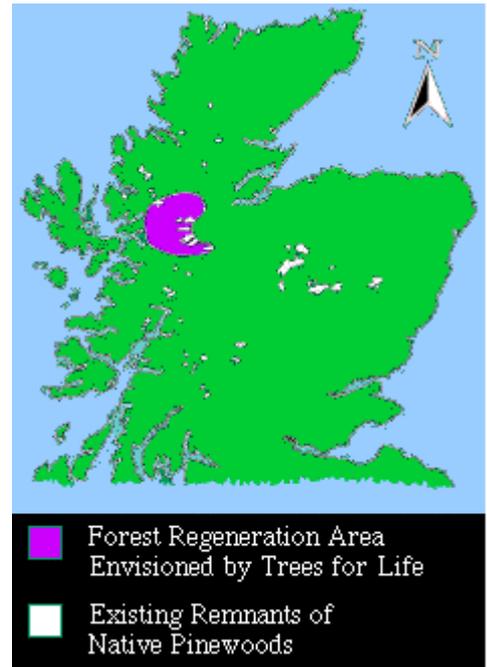




Trees for Life and the Naturesave Insurance grove

Trees for Life was founded in 1989 with a specific vision to restore the native woodland to parts of the Scottish Highlands. The Caledonian Forest originally covered much of the Highlands of Scotland, and takes its name from the Romans, who called Scotland 'Caledonia', meaning 'wooded heights'. However, there has been a long history of deforestation in Scotland, and clearance of the land began in Neolithic times. Over the centuries, the forest shrank as the human population grew, and some parts were deliberately burned to eradicate 'vermin' such as the wolf. More recently, large areas were felled to satisfy the needs of industry, particularly after the timber supply in England had been exhausted. The widespread introduction of sheep and a large increase in the numbers of red deer ensured that once the forest was cleared, it did not return.

Today less than 1% of the original forests survive, and the native pinewoods have been reduced to 35 isolated remnants (shown in white on the map to the left). Gone with the trees are all the large mammals, with the exception of the deer. Species such as the brown bear and the wild boar had become extinct by the 10th and 17th centuries respectively, while the last to disappear was the wolf, when the final individual was shot in 1743. The shaded part of the map also shows the target area of about 1,000 square miles where Trees for Life are working to restore the native forest.



Trees for Life Action Plan

Trees for Life has a threefold strategy for the return of the forest:



Aspens growing beside the River Cannick in Glen Cannick

1. To facilitate the natural regeneration of the trees, by fencing the deer out of areas on the periphery of the existing remnants, so that seedlings can grow naturally to maturity again.
2. To plant native trees in the barren areas where the forest has disappeared completely, by collecting seed from the nearest surviving trees, to maintain the local genetic variation in the forest. The resulting seedlings are planted in a random, non-linear pattern inside fenced enclosures. Particular attention is paid to the pioneer species such as birch, rowan and aspen.
3. Removing non-native trees which have been planted in some areas as commercial crops amongst the old trees of the Caledonian Forest remnants.

Once the new trees reach seed-bearing age, they will form the nuclei for an expanded natural regeneration in the surrounding area.

The Results and the Naturesave Grove (<http://www.treesforlife.org.uk/groves/naturesave.html>)

Since it was founded in 1989, with vital help from volunteers, supporters and corporate supporters, Trees for Life have planted more than a million trees across their project area. Their new goal is to expand the forests with a million more trees by 2018.

Many of the trees planted are in dedicated groves to commemorate births, weddings, memorials and various celebrations such as birthdays and anniversaries. Companies and organisations also able to set up groves to support Trees for Life and the Naturesave grove was set up to celebrate the continued support from our long-standing clients who have insured their property with Naturesave for the past 10 years or more. The Grove is funded by The Naturesave Trust, which, in turn, is directly funded from the premiums paid by Naturesave's household clients.



A volunteer planting native birch saplings in The Naturesave Grove.

The Naturesave Grove has been planted at Dundreggan, near Loch Ness, in beautiful Glen Moriston. This 10,000 acre expanse of wild land contains remnants of the original Caledonian Forest, rare birch-juniper woodlands, and one of the largest areas of dwarf birch in Scotland. Over 2,800 species have been discovered at Dundreggan, with some found nowhere else in the UK. Most of the remaining land is open habitat and ideally suited for forest restoration.

By 2058 Trees for Life envisage that Dundreggan will be a very different place, with diverse natural forest over about 60% of the estate. There will be a greater variety of species, with more oak, hazel, ash, wych, elm, bird cherry, birch, holly and Scots pine, and a greater diversity of wildlife. Trees for Life have established a wild boar research project to evaluate their impact on the natural regeneration of native woodlands.



This lone, naturally-regenerating pine near the top of the hill, Binnilidh Bheag, illustrates the potential for forest restoration on Dundreggan.

For more information about Trees for Life's vision for the Dundreggan estate, see the Trees for Life website at www.treesforlife.org.uk/dundreggan/

Naturesave has a strong commitment to environmental and ethical issues and is delighted to assist in the conservation and expansion of our national, native woodland.