



IMAGES OF NATURE FROM THE CAIRNGORMS
WILD LAND
 PETER CAIRNS AND MARK HAMBLIN

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Standing like huge matchsticks topped with dark green foliage, these ancient pines are reflected perfectly in the still waters of the peat-laden loch. As the sun sinks towards the horizon, the trunks turn first yellow, then orange and finally red before the light is extinguished. (MH)



The sight of an osprey plunging into a Highland loch is not one easily forgotten. For the osprey however, their search for food is not without risk: the fish must be grabbed with outstretched talons and manoeuvred into position—head first, torpedo-like—before take-off. If the osprey has misjudged the size of the fish, it can release it, but there are records of ospreys drowning by getting their claws stuck in the bones of a fish too heavy to lift. This osprey encountered no such difficulties. (PC)



In anticipation of a clear, calm morning, my alarm went off well before dawn. Within half an hour of leaving home I was standing on the edge of Loch Morlich, working feverishly to record this magnificent winter sunrise. I had been to this viewpoint many times, but never before had the sky provided such vivid colour. (MH)



The forest was silent save for the buzzing of insects and the chattering of woodpeckers flitting amongst the dead pines. As the air cooled, a thin veil of mist hung over the boggy mire in front of my hide. In the distance I could see the yellow border markers separating Russia from this remote area of eastern Finland. The crack of a dead branch grabbed my attention—an impressive male bear had ghosted into the clearing. He sniffed the air nervously and eyed the hide with suspicion. Satisfied that all was well, he moved purposefully towards the hide. My heart was pounding and although desperate to take a picture, I resisted until he started feeding on the reindeer carcass left out as bait. As a bone snapped between the bear's powerful jaws, the sound echoed through the still night air. I hesitantly depressed the shutter—just once. (PC)

Over several years, photographers Peter Cairns and Mark Hamblin have captured the spirit of this much-loved part of the world. The stunning wildlife scenes are complemented by atmospheric images of forest, mountain and moorland through the seasons. As thought-provoking as it is beautiful, *Wild Land* takes a look at the animals lost in Scotland's past and considers the pressures that have shaped the land. The book ends with a glance towards the future and looks at the arguments dominating current conservation management.

A breathtaking collection of photographs showing the unrivalled variety of wildlife inhabiting the diverse landscape of Scotland's Cairngorms, both aesthetically beautiful and ecologically significant.