

An Litir Bheag

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Litir Bheag is a shortened and simplified version of Ruairidh's Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh (also available on the BBC website), designed for those who are at an earlier stage of learning Gaelic. The topic each week is the same as Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh so that, once the Litir Bheag is mastered, a student of the language might wish to try the full Litir. This is Litir Bheag 916 (which corresponds to Litir 1,220). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

I was recently in three places – on the one day – that are in the centre of Scotland. I mean by that the Geographical Centre of Scotland.

My journey began in Highland Perthshire. I was travelling northwards in a vehicle. The first place I reached that is – perhaps – in the centre of Scotland was a mountain called Dùn Coilich. It's near Schiehallion, a high and famous mountain.

But how is the centre of Scotland measured? One way is the 'centre of gravity method'. If the mainland of Scotland were created in cardboard, that's the place where you'd put a pin and the country would stand without falling on either side. By measuring it in that way, Dùn Coilich is the centre of Scotland.

However, did you notice that I said 'the mainland of Scotland'? Some of you live on islands! When we include the islands, the centre of the country is in a different place. It's in Atholl, near the A9 road. And I

Bha mi o chionn ghoirid ann an trì àiteachan – air an aon latha – a tha ann an teis-meadhan na h-Alba. Tha mi a' ciallachadh le sin 'The Geographical Centre of Scotland'.

Thòisich mo thuras air Gàidhealtachd Siorrachd Pheairt. Bha mi a' siubhal gu tuath ann an carbad. B' e a' chiad àite a ràinig mi a tha – math dh'fhaodte – ann an teis-meadhan na h-Alba, beinn air a bheil Dùn Coilich. Tha e faisg air Sìth Chailleann – beinn àrd, ainmeil.

Ach ciamar a thathar a' tomhas teis-meadhan na h-Alba? 'S e aon dòigh an *centre of gravity method*. Nam biodh tìr-mòr na h-Alba air a chruthachadh ann an cairt-bhòrd, 's e sin an t-àite far an cuireadh tu prìne agus sheasadh an dùthaich gun a bhith a' tuiteam taobh seach taobh. Le bhith ga thomhas mar sin, 's e Dùn Coilich teis-meadhan na h-Alba.

Ge-tà, an do mhothaich sibh gun tuir mi 'tìr-mòr na h-Alba'? Tha feadhainn agaibh a' fuireach air eileanan! Nuair a bheir sinn na h-eileanan a-steach, tha teis-meadhan na dùthcha ann an àite eadar-dhealaichte. Tha e ann an Athall, faisg air rathad mòr an A9. Agus chaidh mi seachad air sin

<p><i>went past that in the car about half an hour after Dùn Coilich.</i></p> <p><i>One other place was awaiting me, where the centre of Scotland is, allegedly. It's near Newtonmore in Glen Truim. At one time, the Ordnance Survey were saying that that was the centre of the country. They carved a cross in a stone in a drystone dyke. It's still there. They erected a plaque as well, more than one time. But the plaques were stolen. Thus, they stopped putting up new plaques.</i></p> <p><i>In 2015 a large stone was put next to the road. There is a plaque on it that tells us that that is the centre of Scotland.</i></p> <p><i>What is your own opinion? Which of [among] the three places is in the centre of Scotland? I don't know myself, but I enjoyed visiting them.</i></p>	<p>anns a' chàr mu leth-uair a thìde an dèidh Dhùn Coilich.</p> <p>Bha aon àite eile a' feitheamh rium, far a bheil teis-meadhan na h-Alba, mas fhìor. Tha e faisg air Bail' Ùr an t-Slèibh ann an Gleann Truim. Aig aon àm, bha an t-Suirbhìdh Òrdanais ag ràdh gum b' e sin meadhan na dùthcha. Shnaigh iad crois ann an clach ann an gàrradh. Tha i ann fhathast. Chuir iad plaig an-àirde cuideachd, barrachd air aon turas. Ach bha na plaigean air an goid. Mar sin, sguir iad bho bhith a' cur plaigean ùra an-àirde.</p> <p>Ann an dà mhìle 's a còig-deug (2015), chaidh clach mhòr a chur ann ri taobh an rathaid. Tha plaig oirre a tha ag innse dhuinn gur e sin teis-meadhan na h-Alba.</p> <p>Dè ur beachd fhèin? Cò am measg nan trì àiteachan a tha ann an teis-meadhan na h-Alba? Chan eil fhios a'm fhèin, ach chòrd e rium a bhith a' tadhal orra.</p>
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