

# **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 932 (which corresponds to Litir 1,236). Ruairidh can be contacted at [fios@learngaelic.scot](mailto:fios@learngaelic.scot).

*You'll be tired of the name 'James Robertson'. I was mentioning a minister with that name in the last five Litrichean. He was the Rev. James Robertson. Now, I'm going to mention another 'James Robertson' today. This man was a botanist.*

*He was alive in the eighteenth century. He was working in the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh. He was under the guidance of the Professor of Botany at the University of Edinburgh, John Hope.*

*James did a lot of research on the plants of the Highlands. In 1768, he left Edinburgh in May. He went to Lanarkshire, Ayrshire and Wigtownshire. He went to Arran, to Bute and then to Inveraray. After that, he went to Mull and to Skye. He returned home to Edinburgh in October.*

*He did a lot of work on the plants in Bute. He found more than three hundred species of plant that still grow there today.*

Bidh sibh sgith dhen ainm 'Seumas MacDhonnchaidh'. Bha mi ag ainmeachadh ministear dhen ainm sin anns na còig Litrichean mu dheireadh. B' esan an t-Urramach Seumas MacDhonnchaidh. Nise, tha mi a' dol a dh'ainmeachadh 'Seumas MacDhonnchaidh' eile an-diugh. Bha am fear seo na lus-eòlaiche.

Bha e beò anns an ochdamh linn deug. Bha e ag obair anns an Lios Luibheach Rìoghail ann an Dùn Èideann. Bha e fo stiùir Àrd-ollamh an Lus-eòlais ann an Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann, Iain Hope.

Rinn Seumas tòrr rannsachaidh air lusan na Gàidhealtachd. Ann an seachd ceud deug, seasgad 's a h-ochd (1768), dh'fhàg e Dùn Èideann anns a' Chèitean. Chaidh e a Shiorrachd Lannraig, Siorrachd Àir agus Siorrachd Bhaile na h-Ùige. Chaidh e a dh'Arainn, a dh'Eilean Bhòid, agus an uair sin a dh'Inbhir Aora. An dèidh sin, chaidh e a Mhuile agus don Eilean Sgitheanach. Thill e dhachaigh a Dhùn Èideann anns an Dàmhair.

Rinn e obair mhòr air na lusan ann am Bòd. Lorg e còrr is trì cheud gnè lusa a tha fhathast a' fàs ann. Ach tha timcheall air ceathrad gnè air an liosta

*But there around forty on his list that were not recorded since then. For example – ‘the little rough one of the moor’ or fir-clubmoss. It was famous among the Gaels as a protective plant.*

*James climbed to the summit of many mountains in the Highlands. It is reported that he was the first person ever to reach [who reached] some of the summits. But that ignores the Gaels that summited without writing or boasting about it!*

*James was also overseas. He did research on plants in China and India, in South Africa and St Helena. In addition to being skilful as a botanist, he was good at doing pictures of plants. He has at least one picture in the famous book Flora Scotica by Lightfoot. That appeared in print in 1777.*

*And Robertson wrote notes about the people in the Highlands and their way of life. We’ll look at them next week.*

aige nach robh air a chlàradh bhon uair sin. Mar eisimpleir – garbhag an t-slèibhe no *am fir-clubmoss*. Bha e gu math ainmeil am measg nan Gàidheal mar lus-dìon.

Shreap Seumas gu mullach iomadh beinn air a’ Ghàidhealtachd. Thathar ag aithris gum b’ esan a’ chiad duine riamh a ràinig cuid de na mullaichean. Ach tha sin a’ cur an dàrna taobh na Gàidheil a chaidh gu mullaichean gun a bhith a’ sgrìobhadh no a’ bòstadh mu dheidhinn!

Bha Seumas thall thairis cuideachd. Rinn e rannsachadh air lusan ann an Sìona agus na h-Innseachan, ann an Afraga a Deas agus ann an St Helena. A bharrachd air a bhith sgileil mar lus-eòlaiche, bha e math air dealbhan de lusan a dhèanamh. Tha co-dhiù aon dealbh aige anns an leabhar ainmeil *Flora Scotica* le Lightfoot. Nochd sin ann an clò ann an seachd ceud deug, seachdad ’s a seachd (1777).

Agus sgrìobh MacDhonnchaidh notaichean mu na daoine air a’ Ghàidhealtachd agus an dòigh-beatha. Bheir sinn sùil orra an-ath-sheachdain.