



# GRAMPIAN REGION

32,299 HECTARES — GRAMPIAN REGION  
7,800 HECTARES — TAYSIDE REGION

## EXTENT OF AREA

The area extends from White Bridge at Chest of Dee in the Mar Forest to the Knock, west of Ballater, and includes Ballochbuie Forest and the Lochnagar-Tolmount massif. The River Dee and Duncan Gray's Burn identify the western limit, and the southern limit is defined by a line connecting the salient summits of Cam Liath, Cam More (south of Inverey), Morven, Sron Dubh (above Auchallater), Creag nan Gabha, Cairn of Claise (1,064m), Glas Maol (1,068m), Sron Saobhaidhe, Finalty Hill, Mayar and Driesh (947m). The eastern limit approximates to a line through the summits of Lair of Aldararie, Ferrowie, Black Hill, An-t-sron (above Spittal of Glenmuick), Gonachraig, Creag nan Gall, Cairn Sgor-na-h-lolaire, Creag Liath, to the Knock above Ballater. From the Knock the northern limits extend westwards to Glen Dee through the summits on the north side of the Dee: Geallaig Hill (661 m), Leac Gorm, Meall Gorm, Creag a Chleirich, Cam na Drochaide, Meall an Lundain, Sgor Dubh and Sgor Mor.

## DESCRIPTION

The character of Deeside is epitomised by the steep enclosing wooded valley sides, by continuous views of the river, and the unfolding of a new scene around each bend of the valley. Upstream of Braemar the valley has been widened and straightened by late glacial action. The Lui and Quoich waters enter the valley from narrow enclosed glens which afford walkers fine approaches to the Cairngorms. The flood-plain narrows at Linn of Dee where the river thunders through narrow rock-cuts and cauldrons. The valley floor has limited pastoral agriculture, and there are fine stretches of pine and birch woods with stands of Douglas Fir that reach up the side glens. Coniferous afforestation reinforces the natural woodland, and there is a planted admixture of broadleaved species in the many estate policies in the valley. The Ballochbuie Forest is a superb example of Caledonian Pine woodland, the beauty of which determined Queen Victoria to purchase the Lochnagar Estate to remove the threat of felling. The relationship of the fine woodland, with its understorey of heather and blaeberry, to the river and the flanks of Lochnagar form a significant landscape which has been further enhanced by the influences which Queen Victoria set in train. This is a very managed cultural landscape in which castles, large houses and their planted policies complement the natural character. It is this combination of intrinsic beauty and cultural elements which makes Royal Deeside famous.

Lochnagar (1,150m), Broad Cairn (998m) and Tolmount (958m) are significant summits in a mountain plateau, the edges of which have been sharply dissected by glacial erosion. It is a mountain core from which the deeply etched glens of Muick,

# DEESIDE AND LOCHNAGAR

Clova, Doll, Isla and Callater radiate, characterised at their heads by precipitous cliffs and crags. The summit of Lochnagar is further sculptured by huge corries containing lochans which in lesser degree are a feature of the whole massif, Glen Muick and Glen Callater also containing glacial lochs. The plateau is heather covered, '... and nowhere else in the Scottish Highlands is there to be seen such extensive mass of purple bloom.' (Murray 1962).

## OTHER NATIONAL INTERESTS

The Forestry Commission owns the Glendoll Forest and a small forest to the east of Invercauld. There are National Nature Reserves at Caenlochan Glen at the head of Glen Isla, and at Morrone Wood near Braemar. Sites of Special Scientific Interest occur at Eastern Cairngorms, Glen Ey Gorge, Ballochbuie Forest, Craig Leek, Crathie Wood, Lochnagar, Glen Callater and Coire Kander, and the Caenlochan Extension. The western extremity of the area includes a small part of the existing National Park Direction Area, and there is a Scottish Wildlife Trust Reserve at Glen Muick and Lochnagar.