

I'w ryddhau **AR UNWAITH** -
For **IMMEDIATE** publication –



Walking in the Footsteps of Darwin

Cerdded yn olion traed Darwin

Walking in the footsteps of the great man, visitors to Cwm Idwal saw the obvious signs that Darwin missed on his first visit.

Wedi cerdded yn olion traed y dyn mawr, gwelodd ymwelwyr â Chwm Idwal yr arwyddion amlwg a gollodd Darwin ar ei ymweliad cyntaf.



Llyn Idwal - in a glacial cirque



In front of Darwin's Boulders
- how did they get there?

On the evening of July 6th, 200 years after Darwin's birth, North Wales Wildlife Trust members and Friends of Treborth Botanic Garden walked up into Cwm Idwal. They tried to imagine how the valley might have looked when it was grazed largely by cattle, Telford's road (now the A5) was newly opened, and the science of Geology was just beginning. They wanted to find out how Darwin's visit in 1831 had affected his future career.

In 1831, Charles Darwin aged 22, had just completed his studies at Cambridge University. Time for a year out? So he planned a trip to Tenerife, was learning Spanish, and came to N. Wales with Adam Sedgwick for a crash course in field geology. They left Shrewsbury on August 3rd and travelled across Wales mapping the rocks as they went. They spent 3 days around Capel Curig and searched Cwm Idwal for fossils, without success. Darwin returned home from North Wales and found the invitation to join the Beagle expedition waiting for him.

The whole course of his life changed and the training he received from Sedgwick and his experiences in Snowdonia were enormously valuable when he came to travel in S. America.

In 1842, just over 10 years after his visit with Sedgwick, Charles Darwin came back to Cwm Idwal, and was bowled over by the evidence of glaciation he now saw. In his own words, these included *'the plainly scored rocks, the perched boulders, the moraines. These phenomena are so conspicuous that a house burnt down by a fire did not tell its story more plainly than did this valley.'*

He wrote to a friend –

'Have a ramble in Wales, its glorious scenery must do everyone's heart and body good.'

Kate Gibbs, Secretary of the NWWT Arfon Branch, says "When you visit Cwm Idwal today, look out for the slate memorial to Charles Darwin at the start of the path, and reflect on the contribution Wales made to his future development as a scientist".

Nodiadau i Olygyddion

Notes to Editors

- **Yr Ymddiriedolaeth Natur www.wildlifetrusts.org**

Ceir 47 Ymddiriedolaeth Natur ar hyd a lled y DU, Ynysoedd Manaw ac Aldernay. Rydym yn gweithio dros amgylchedd sy'n cynnig cyfoeth o fywyd gwylt i bawb. Gyda 720,000 aelod, y ni yw'r sefydliad gwirfoddol mwyaf yn y DU sy'n ymroddedig i gadwraeth yr amrywiaeth llawn o gynefinoedd a rhywogaethau yn y DU, boed yng nghefn gwlad, y ddinas neu'r môr. Mae 134,000 o'n haelodau'n perthyn i'r adran lau, sef y Clwb Gwyllo. Rydym yn rheoli 2,200 o warchodfeydd natur sydd yn ymestyn dros fwy nag 80,000 hectar; rydym yn sefyll dros natur; rydym yn ysbrydoli pobl ynghylch y byd naturiol ac rydym yn meithrin byw cynaliadwy.

- **The Wildlife Trusts www.wildlifetrusts.org**

There are 47 local Wildlife Trusts across the whole of the UK, the Isle of Man and Alderney. We are working for an environment rich in wildlife for everyone. With 720,000 members, we are the largest UK voluntary organisation dedicated to conserving the full range of the UK's habitats and species, whether they be in the countryside, in cities or at sea. 134,000 of our members belong to our junior branch, Wildlife Watch. We manage 2,200 nature reserves covering more than 80,000 hectares; we stand up for wildlife; we inspire people about the natural world and we foster sustainable living.

- **Ymddiriedolaeth Natur Gogledd Cymru www.northwaleswildlifetrust.org.uk**

Ein gweledigaeth yw amgylchedd cyfoethocach o ran byd natur i bawb. Y ni yw'r brif elusen yng ngogledd Cymru sy'n gwbl ymroddedig i gadwraeth pob cynefin a phob rhywogaeth. Gydag aelodaeth o fwy na 5,000 o bobl, rydym yn ymgyrchu dros amddiffyn bywyd gwylt a buddsoddi yn y dyfodol drwy helpu pobl o bob oedran i werthfawrogi a deall bywyd gwylt yn well. Rydym yn edrych ar ôl 33 o warchodfeydd natur sy'n cynnwys dros 700 hectar. Am ragor o wybodaeth ynghylch Ymddiriedolaeth Natur Gogledd Cymru ffoniwch 01248 351541 neu e-bostiwch nwwt@wildlifetrustswales.org.

- **North Wales Wildlife Trust www.northwaleswildlifetrust.org.uk**

Our vision is 'an environment richer in wildlife for everyone'. We are the leading charity in North Wales dedicated exclusively to conserving all our habitats and species, with a membership of more than 5,000 people. We campaign for the protection of wildlife and invest in the future by helping people of all ages to gain a greater appreciation and understanding of wildlife. We care for 33 nature reserves spanning over 700 hectares. For further information about North Wales Wildlife Trust please phone 01248 351541 or e-mail nwwt@wildlifetrustswales.org