

## **Ancient Woodlands – Monica Lennon MSP**

Hello, I'm Monica Lennon, a Member of the Scottish Parliament for the Central region, and I am also the Nature Champion for the Oak.

Oak is arguably the most iconic and best loved of all the British native trees, and it supports more wildlife than any other native tree species. Oak trees are also long-lived and reach large sizes, making them significant carbon stores compared to smaller and younger trees.

Some notable oaks in Scotland include the Cadzow Oaks in Hamilton, within my regional constituency, which are an internationally important parkland containing approximately 300 sessile oaks, including some of the oldest and largest examples of the species in Scotland.

These ancient woodlands are historically very species places. They are areas of woodland that have persisted since 1750 in Scotland, and we can use maps from this time to show that trees have lived in these places for hundreds of years.

Ancient woodlands are themselves important habitats need of protection. These woodlands have been around for so long that they develop complex communities of plants, fungi, insects and other microorganisms, forming some of our richest and most complex habitats.

Look out for woodlands containing bluebells, wood anemones, and primrose, and you may just find yourself in an ancient woodland - a living museum.