



Press Release

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For immediate release

Don't slip up this bank holiday

Experts warn of late-lying snow patches in Scotland's mountains

As the May Bank Holiday approaches, hill walkers are being urged to treat long-lying snow patches with caution.

Although it's spring on lower ground, the high mountains of Scotland are still hanging onto winter, and there are still substantial snowfields and snow patches lying across the routes up many popular hills.

Temperatures over the last week having been unseasonably low, with new snow falling on some of the higher mountain tops, and much of the old snow people encounter may be hard and icy, posing a significant threat to anyone not properly equipped.

Heather Morning Mountain Safety Advisor with Mountaineering Scotland, said: "Every year at this time, folk get into difficulties when encountering old snow patches. Sadly, a slip and subsequent slide in the wrong place does sometimes result in fatalities."

She added: "These snow patches will often be hard and located high up on the shady, north side of the mountain. Many traditional mountain routes cross through such terrain and are the usual choice for Munro baggers. Hill walkers are advised to treat these old snow patches with caution, particularly if the 'run out' below is over steep or rocky ground. Route choice is really important and hill walkers should consider a 'snow free' alternative or simply turn around.

"My advice, if you don't have the kit or knowledge to deal with hard snow, is to adjust your plan and enjoy a day out on one of our fabulous lower hills or glens where there is no chance of encountering old snow patches.

"If you are planning to head up onto the higher mountains take a good look at the mountain weather forecasts. If temperatures at 900m are forecast to be below freezing then my advice would be to still have your winter kit with you - a rigid pair of boots, crampons and an ice axe. Check out mountain-specific weather conditions at www.mwis.org.uk"

Carey Davies, the British Mountaineering Council's Hill Walking Development Officer, said: "It's important to remember there can be a big difference in climatic conditions across different parts of Britain, especially in spring. The south of England can have sunny T-shirt

weather while the Cairngorms are still in sub-Arctic snow conditions. Even lowland Scotland can be a completely different world to the upper reaches of the Highlands”.

“When spring arrives a lot of people feel the pull of the mountains and want to get up high again. But don’t forget to check the weather forecast carefully and be prepared for things like snow fields and cornices.”

Ends

Notes for editors:

Image: Loch Etchachan and Ben MacDui in the heart of the Cairngorms – still under snow and ice at the beginning of May.

http://www.mountaineering.scot/assets/contentfiles/media-upload/Spring_snow_2018.JPG

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About Mountaineering Scotland:

- Mountaineering Scotland is the only recognised representative organisation for hill walkers, climbers and ski-tourers who live in Scotland or who enjoy Scotland’s mountains.
- Mountaineering Scotland provides training and information to mountain users to promote safety, self-reliance and the enjoyment of our mountain environment.
- The Mountaineering Scotland is a membership organisation with over 14,000 members representing hill walkers, climbers and mountaineers, funded through a combination of membership subscriptions, non-governmental grants and investment from sportscotland, which supports public initiatives and services in mountain safety, mountain training and the development and promotion of mountaineering activities.
- Mountaineering Scotland also acts for 75,000 members of the BMC or British Mountaineering Council on matters related to Landscape and Access in Scotland.
- Mountaineering Scotland landscape and access work is supported financially by the Scottish Mountaineering Trust and the BMC
- Mountaineering Scotland has launched the ClimbScotland initiative to encourage young people to participate in climbing and support their progression. It offers a dedicated website and a development team, which will introduce young people to climbing at schools, climbing walls and via youth organisations with a range of activities and events, while developing kids clubs and providing specialist support to parents, volunteers and teachers.
- Mountaineering Scotland is the national governing body for sports climbing. It offers pathways to climbing coaching, organises and promotes a range of regional and national climbing competitions, and manages the Scottish climbing and bouldering teams. It contributes to the management of the GB teams with the ultimate aim of seeing a Scottish athlete achieve a podium position in the Olympic Games.
- The MCoS is a not for profit company limited by guarantee and incorporated in Scotland. Company number SC322717.

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