



# "MOUNTAINS OF PEACE IN THE BALKANS"

Kosova - Montenegro - Albania

An illustrated talk



*Lilium Albanica on Maja Arapit 2217m, Albania (Photo: Paul Exley)*

In June 2012 six members of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club enjoyed a 13 day journey on foot through the Bjeshkët e Nemuna/ Prokletije mountain range which straddles northern Albania, southern Montenegro and western Kosova. These spectacular mountains and valleys, under threat from depopulation and environmental destruction, are at the heart of the Balkans Peace Park Project (B3P) which aims to unite the communities of the three countries in preserving their natural heritage and enabling their inhabitants to continue to live there in the valleys as they always have done.

This talk shows the dramatic, flower-rich mountain scenery and the homes and lifestyles of the people living in what is one of the least known parts of Europe. It includes snippets of history and politics to set the context and shows briefly the work of B3P's Summer Programmes, international volunteers teaching young people enough English to welcome visitors to their wonderful surroundings. The speaker is Richard Hargreaves, a retired teacher now living in the Yorkshire Dales, who has walked and climbed, albeit modestly, in Britain, Europe and beyond over many years. He has been involved in B3P since its inception in 2001 and has visited the area to walk, trek, mountain bike or for meetings almost every year since 2002. Proceeds from the talks will be given to B3P.

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