



**Scottish  
Wildlife  
Trust**

# Falkirk Members'

## Centre

### *Newsletter – August 2010*

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Articles or items of interest to our readers for inclusion in the next Newsletter should be passed by post or e-mail by 15<sup>th</sup> September 2010.

### Indoor Meetings Programme - September 2010 – April 2011

As our Talks Programme is no longer being printed on a separate card

please remember to KEEP THIS NEWSLETTER for future reference

*Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> September - "A visit to Goa" - Graeme Gunn.*

*Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> October - "Structures built by Animals" - Prof Mike Hansell, Glasgow University.*

*Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> November - "St. Kilda" - Stephen Mac Donald.*

*Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> December - Members' Centre Dinner.*

*Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> December - David Shenton - "Wildlife Down Under – Flora & Fauna of Australia"*

*Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> January - John Mulgrew - "Caledonian Pinewoods"*

*Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> February - Clair Smith, R.S.P.B. Perth - "East of Scotland Sea Eagles"*

*Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> March - "Poisonous Plants" - Roy Sexton, Stirling Members' Centre.*

*Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> April - The A.G.M. - Followed by Members Slides.*

All meetings are held in the Christian Centre Glebe Street, Falkirk, at 7.30 p.m.

**The Members' Centre A.G.M.** was held on 20<sup>th</sup> April, but there were no changes either to the Office Bearers or Committee, The Editor and Treasurer were due to demit their offices after serving the customary three years, but they were re nominated and elected for a further 3 year term. **Office Bearers** are **Ron Dalziel**, Chairman and Carron Glen Wildlife Reserve Convenor: **Andrea McCabe**, Secretary, Telephone: 01324 559700: **Jim Hopwood**, Joint Secretary: **Ian Craig**, Treasurer. **Committee members** are: **Muriel Clark**, Carron Dam Wildlife Reserve Convenor: **Angus Smith**, **Newsletter Editor**, Bo'ness Meadows Wildlife Reserve Convenor and Falkirk area Reserves Coordinator: **Douglas Mason**, Wallacebank Wood Reserve Convenor: **Margaret Cooper**, **Jean Watson**, **Ian Steel**.

**25 years of the Members' Centre May Week-end visits.** This visit year this was to the Isle of Skye from 30<sup>th</sup> April till 4<sup>th</sup> May and the weather could not have been better. It was cold, but bright and the fabled Isle of Skye Mists did not hinder the group's travels. The scenery and wildlife could not have been bettered and a highlight was excellent views of **two pairs of Whimbrel** while returning from a walk to The Coral Beach, north of Dunvegan. Several White Wagtails and the inevitable Willow Warblers were also seen on this walk.

**RON'S DIARY – JANUARY 2010** As I write this note, in the second week of January, we have experienced three weeks of extreme wintry weather with frequent snow showers and sub-zero temperatures. On 24 September Tom Findlay and I paid a visit to the hide at Guardbridge, on the Eden Estuary, near St Andrews. This is an excellent facility from which to watch birds and the highlight of the visit was having a good view of a Little Egret, only my second sighting of this species in Scotland, its yellow feet being clearly seen as it walked along the waters edge. We also had excellent views of a Greenshank close to the hide. Other sightings that day included two Grey Herons, an Osprey sitting on a post beside the Estuary, 10 Redshank and two Red Admiral butterflies.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> October, a stormy day at the mouth of the River Esk, Musselburgh and the neighbouring Levenhall Links, we saw a passenger ferry fighting the waves and a reasonable variety of birds, including my first Grey Plover of the year, a Bar-tailed Godwit and 12 Eider Ducks. From the relative shelter of one of the hides at Levenhall Links we saw two Barnacle Geese, 20 Teal, over 100 Oystercatchers, five Golden Plovers and a Snipe. During autumn I heard reports that some rare birds had been seen around Fife Ness so on 30 October Tom, Jim Hopwood and I travelled to that area and on arrival spoke to fellow "birders" and were directed to a section of the foreshore where we had good views of a first winter male Pied Wheatear - a vagrant from south east Europe. We then moved to a plantation at Kilminning where we flushed six Woodcock and saw a covey of Partridges.

However we had an even better day on our next outing to the east of Edinburgh on 27 November. We first paid a return visit to Levenhall Links where there had been a reported sighting of a Wilson's phalarope, a transatlantic vagrant. At the hides we saw the usual winter residents – Teal, Wigeon, Curlew, Lapwing and a single Snipe. After about half an hour the Phalarope was seen on one of the ponds spinning round on the water. We then drove to Aberlady where we saw another N. American vagrant – a Lesser Yellowlegs, which was feeding with Redshanks close to the car park. During the wintry weather in the final week of 2009 and the first 10 days of the New Year as well as the usual Blackbirds, Robins, Dunnocks, House Sparrows, Blue and Great Tits visiting my garden in the centre of Falkirk we have had visits from a beautiful cock Bullfinch, a Redwing, a Pied Wagtail and a Fieldfare.

**Editorial.** Once again Summer arrived suddenly as last year, cold one day then warm and sunny the next. Various Butterflies have been in evidence, including Small Tortoiseshell. Green-veined White, Peacocks and Orange-tips are all apparently plentiful and the cold snowy winter does not appear to have affected them too much. Flowering of plants was a week or two later, but the Swifts arrived, in Bo'ness at any rate, on 12<sup>th</sup> May, just a day later than last year. Following recent sightings of **Tree Sparrows at Bo'mains Meadows Wildlife Reserve** several nest boxes were erected in the hope of enticing them to nest and this has been successful as breeding has been confirmed in one of the boxes in a tree at the north boundary hedge. Additional nest boxes will be installed later in the summer, again in the hope of more breeding Tree Sparrows. After responding to an announcement in a recent issue of the Trusts Newsletter, our Members' Centre successfully applied for a **Grant under the National Lottery scheme** to purchase a state of the art **Laptop Computer and Printer**, which has been delivered for use by the Secretary.