

Fife and Kinross Group



Fife Area Wildlife News

No 109 Summer 2020

Message from Alison Irvine, Chair



people on a very local level, about just where different birds, plants and animals have been seen, in whose gardens.

Also, I've had regular updates about, for example, who had helped to push the frogspawn back into the water in some of the drying pools in the woods and then who had helped to rescue the tiny tadpoles who were clearly going to be stranded. At this level of detail it is easy to become very involved in the day to day struggles and triumphs of wildlife. On a Fife and Kinross level, it is perhaps less easy to become so closely in touch with our nature reserves and special species and habitats. During lockdown all the reserves have been closed to travelling visitors and only used by those local people who can get there without an unnecessary journey. Although all regular vegetation and wildlife monitoring is on hold this year, it will be interesting to see if the reduction in visitors at some of the sites has had an impact on wildlife success. On the other hand, those reserves which are close to centres of population have been even busier than usual, and sadly, not always without effect. In early May there was a fire at Kilminning reserve which resulted in charred bluebells flowering from blackened ground.

Many of you will have been missing your visits to reserves and the wider countryside but I hope that your observations at a much more local level have been as rewarding as I have found them over the last few weeks. They might not be the most unusual or rare creatures but they are still interesting and have helped to keep me entertained and amused.

As I write this we are still in the first phases of strict lockdown and I expect that by the time you read this in FAWN, we will still be under restrictions of some sort. Strange times indeed, and I hope that you and your families have not been too badly affected by Covid 19.

I try in every chairman's notes to avoid going on about the weather, but honestly, so far this year it has been worthy of note! Such a wet February with record amounts of rain and never a day without wellies and waterproofs. Then April, so dry and sunny to welcome our summer visitors. I have noticed an increase in some of our migrants – whitethroats, chiffchaffs and willow warblers seem to be particularly abundant in my area this year. During lockdown, I have been writing a regularly wildlife note to circulate round our village "Friends" group and they have all become more attuned to the songs and behaviours of our bird population. It has also been really interesting to get feedback from



Robertson is delighted to sponsor the Scottish Wildlife Trust.

As an infrastructure, support services and construction company we realise how important the protection of biodiversity sites is and continually monitor and update our Environmental Policy to reflect this. Our on-site monitoring ensures that we will never knowingly damage or disrupt areas of natural interest.

A First Time Moth-er!

Paul Blackburn

Last year I acquired a moth trap which I put out overnight several times in the spring and summer. I am a morning rather than a late evening person and don't have the stamina for the late nights which our keen moth experts endure but running a trap in the garden is very civilised since the evening catch can be inspected the next day at leisure with a cup of coffee.

I am used to being reasonably familiar with various aspects of wildlife and found starting again very frustrating but the East Scotland Butterfly Conservation website, which gives an idea of the species active in each month, a digital camera and our resident moth expert were useful assets.

We have a reasonably sized back garden, 30 x 15m, with a mature oak, mature sycamore and a mixture of shrubs including hawthorn and hazel. The moth trap went out several times between April and September with the most species (12) being recorded on the 23rd June when the most attractive moth

(an Elephant Hawk Moth) was recorded. Clays and Yellow Underwings were the most common groups encountered with Large Yellow Underwings being the most frequent from June to September. Other species of interest included Dark Arches, Brimstone Moth, and Heart and Dart.



Elephant Hawk Moth

By the time this newsletter goes out I should be into my second spring of recording, and hopefully I won't have forgotten the identification tips from last year

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Fife & Kinross Group

We hope to have our AGM as follows – *but this will obviously depend on the coronavirus situation - check the website and/or Facebook for the latest information.*

Sunday 25 October 10am at The Lodgehouse, Loch Leven's Larder KY13 9HD (NO160041) followed by Family Friendly outdoor events.

AGM starts at 10am with outings at 11am.

Event details to be confirmed, but will include looking at birdlife and fungi near Loch Leven.

Meet in The Lodgehouse for complimentary Tea/Coffee and biscuits from 9.30 to 10.00 for members advising the secretary of AGM attendance before Friday 9 October 2020

For more information on the venue visit www.lochlevenslarder.com. As the Larder has a very popular restaurant it is recommended to book any lunch requirements in good time.

Events Updates and Latest News

Be sure to regularly check our web site:

(<http://www.swt-fife.org/>)

and Facebook pages

(<https://www.facebook.com/swtfifeandkinrossmc>)

for news and important changes and updates to the programme plus FAWN in colour!



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