



Fife and Kinross Group

Fife Area Wildlife News

No 106 Summer 2019



Message from Alison Irvine, Chair



This is the time of year when, despite the long hours of daylight, there is still not enough time to get everything done in the garden, or to visit all the SWT reserves. Almost all of the Fife and Kinross reserves are at their best in late June and through July, with wild flowers in abundance, insects and breeding birds. As the volunteer convenor at Fleecefaulds reserve near Ceres, I take particular delight in visiting in summer. There's always something interesting to see, or sweet perfumed fragrant orchids to smell and the steady hum of bees and hoverflies to listen to.

Knowing, as we now do, just how threatened many insect groups are by man's activities and chemicals, I just hope that we are able to restrict the particularly harmful chemicals in

time. Pollinating insects are essential for human food crops, as well as being a critical part of the natural world. As I write this in mid-May, I have a few of last year's kale and broccoli plants left in the garden which have come into flower, and the bumble bees love them! It illustrates perfectly that there would be no new brassica seeds if the bees did not do their pollination duties. It seems a shame to take them out!

It may be less well known that moths are just as important pollinators at night. Some plants, such as honeysuckle, depend on moths for pollination and release their strong, sweet perfume just as it begins to get dark.

If you have not managed to attend one of Tim Brain's mothing nights I can thoroughly recommend them. Even though I am usually tucked up in bed by then, seeing the moths up close is a fantastic experience – they are so beautiful! So please take advantage of Tim's experience and join us on one (or more) of these super outings.



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.

RESERVES ROUNDUP

Dumbarnie



The outstanding event of the last year at Dumbarrie has been the retiral of Gordon Corbet, Convenor for over twenty years. Gordon has made enormous contributions to the scientific observation, documentation and management of the Reserve and his successor has little hope of emulating him.

The development of Dumbarrie Links Golf Course has proceeded at pace over the last year and it is now growing in. The course adjoins the eastern and northern boundaries of the Reserve and the impact on the Reserve is hard to predict particularly with regard to water flow. The very low rainfall of the last twelve months has resulted in drying up of the field drain feeding into the Reserve and lack of water in the dune slacks, whether this is due in part to the earthworks associated with the Golf Course or simply low rainfall is uncertain. Construction of the course had a significant impact on the variety of bird life in and around the Reserve, it is to be hoped that this too will return to normal now construction is complete. **David Jenkins**

Carlingnose



It has been a quiet time at Carlingnose recently but things are changing. The blackthorn starts things botanically and we had a superb show for, as always, a few days. The gorse has also put on a great show.

We need to wait for the other plants to appear. These, of course, are why the reserve is at Carlingnose. Many of the birds that breed at Carlingnose are now busily claiming territories. Chiffchaffs, willow warblers and blackcaps return from Africa while residents such as blackbirds and various tits make their presence felt.

Common terns have been seen in the village in West Bay. We can only hope that they use the ruined pier as a nesting site again. Otherwise we wait for the lesser meadow rue, field gentian and dropwort to appear. Commoner plants such as bloody cranesbill and eyebright will also be on show. In June it is worth listening out for a lesser whitethroat which occasionally nest on the reserve. **John Done**

Fleecefaulds



In my chairman's notes I mentioned that I am reserve convenor for Fleecefaulds. I'd like to just expand a little on the reserve and what to expect if you visit the site. Firstly, a small word of caution – the reserve is on a steep slope and can be rough in places, especially where the conservation cattle have been grazing and making the ground uneven. I often take walking poles when I am exploring the reserve – useful for balance, for pushing any nettles and thistles out of the way and for pointing at things if you are with a friend!

Summer is a good time to visit Fleecefaulds. There is a small car park off the road between Balcormo and Ceres. From the car park, a short path leads past a seat and through a small metal gate into the central compartment of the reserve. It is divided into three compartments, each with its own character. There are no made paths but usually you can see where people have been walking before you. Heading to your right and downhill, you will pass a large cherry tree – the Queen's Gean – grown by Frank and Carol Spragge, (the previous owners of the site who donated it to SWT), from a cherry stone they picked up in Buckingham Palace! Surely a tree with a

pedigree! Keeping the boundary fence with the agricultural field on your right, you wander through an area with ox-eye daisies and down to a boardwalk over a damp area. Across the boardwalk, you are in an area with lots of wild flowers. Look out for yellow rattle, clovers, orchids and knapweed. Keeping on through this area leads you to a fence with a stile at the top and a gate at the bottom. If you go through, you are into the north compartment. This is the least “flowery” area and has most scrub and trees, but of course you will see and hear many kinds of birds in this area. The north compartment continues round the corner for another 500m or so, with damp areas near the burn and a real mixture of habitats. Returning the way you came, over the original boardwalk in the central compartment, try to keep above the large area of meadow sweet marsh but just at the bottom of the slope. It is a bit rough going I’m afraid but this takes you all the way across the central compartment to reach the south compartment. Crossing the fence at the stile or the gate, cross over a rather wet area and into one of the best wild flower and insect areas of the reserve. There are two or three patches of Globe flower just after you enter this compartment and many areas with Greater Butterfly orchid, fragrant orchid, lots of devil’s bit scabious and knapweed. At the far south end of the reserve, just before you reach the trees, the sheltered slopes are a haven for butterflies and hoverflies. This outing could easily take you all day to explore, so take a picnic and enjoy a truly wild wildlife experience in Fife. **Alison Irvine**

Kilminning



The Flying Flock were resident from November to March this year and, by all appearances, their presence has achieved the desired result. The taller rank grasses have been severely pruned generating light and space for our wildflowers. Lesser celandine was first to appear followed by primroses and bluebells which (as I write, in May) form a carpet along with clumps of birds foot trefoil. Soon, visitors should soon look out for orchids, purple milk vetch and other more exotic flora! We had a fascinating site visit from Dr Clare Maynard last year who drew our attention to the salt marsh at Kilminning - an often overlooked area. It is likely that we will carry out further monitoring of this important and fragile habitat.

Kilminning has also become a key stopping off point for spring migrants. This year has seen lesser whitethroat, pied flycatcher, black redstart, and a variety of warblers. **Ian Hunter**

WILDLIFE SURVEY VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

Fancy enjoying the lovely summer sunshine (hopefully!) and helping with some surveys? Calling all nature enthusiasts, botanists, birders, lepidopterists and entomologists alike, the more the merrier!

You will be assisting with a very important project coordinated by Fife Council’s Biodiversity Team, in the re-assessment of non-statutory designated Wildlife Sites, of which there are 82 in Fife.

The Wildlife Sites have not been assessed since the 90s/early 2000s so this project is of paramount importance in order to prevent developments on these valuable sites and maintain and enhance the biodiversity of Fife.

If you are interested in helping out, please contact Kirsty Orr at Fife Council by emailing kirsty.orr@fife.gov.uk or calling on 07525 038736 or 03451 55 55 55 extension 440006.

Events Updates and Latest News

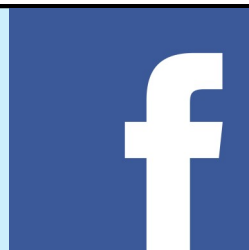
Be sure to regularly check our web site:

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

and Facebook pages

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

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



EVENTS SUMMER/AUTUMN 2019

Any suggestions? Able to lead a walk? Give a talk? Get in touch with Paul Blackburn on 01382 542826



All welcome. We advise sturdy footwear and suitable clothing for outdoor events.

Saturday 13 July 2 pm: Outing - Dragons of Devilla

A short walk in Devilla Forest along the Red Squirrel trail to Bordie Loch, one of the best sites in Devilla for dragonflies

Meet Car Park off A985, 1 mile E of Kincardine NS 964 871

Saturday 3 August 2 pm: Outing - Kinshaldy to Goosepools

A walk from Kinshaldy Car park to look at the insects and plants of the dunes.

Meet Kinshaldy Car Park, Tentsmuir Forest 2pm. NB there a £2 charge at the barrier.

Thursday 8 August 7 pm: Outing - Newburgh Waterfront

Mugdrum Island and the Tay waterfront. Possible Marsh Harrier, plus Starling / hirundines flying in to roost in the reed beds.

Meet Mugdrum Park Car Park at W end of Newburgh 7pm

Wednesday 16 October 7.30 pm: Joint talk with Pitcairn Society

Louise Ramsay from the Scottish Wild Beavers Group will give a talk "Why Scotland needs Beavers".

Collydean Community Centre, Glenrothes, Postcode KY7 6UL 7.30 pm

Sunday 27 October 10am AGM followed by family-friendly outing(s)

We will hold our AGM at 10am (see Agenda below) This will be

followed by family-friendly outings at 11am which will include a fungal foray. Complimentary Tea/Coffee and biscuits from 9.30 to 10.00 for members advising the secretary of AGM attendance before Friday 11 October 2019

(Email secfifekinswt@btinternet.com).

*Willie Clarke Centre, Lochore Meadows
Grid Ref NT 172 962 Post Code KY5 8BA*

AGM AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the meeting of Thursday 18th Dec 2018
3. Matters arising
4. Chair's Annual Report 2018-2019
5. Financial Accounts 2018-2019
6. Election of Office Bearers and Committee Members
 - 6.1 No office bearers due for election this year
 - 6.2 Election/Re-election of committee members (There are vacancies for committee members: nominations to be received by 26th Oct. (If you would like more information about joining the committee please contact Chair or Secretary)
7. AOCB

Sunday 24 November 10am: Outing - Seafeld Tower, Kirkcaldy

A walk along the coastal path to look at the high-tide wader roost. Possible Purple Sandpiper and Kingfisher.

Meet at the Car Park at Grid Ref NO 281 898 (Postcode KY1 1SJ)

MOTHING DATES FOR 2019

DATE	S.W.T. RESERVE	START TIME	MEETING PLACE	MAP REF.
Fri 26 Jul	Fleecefaulds	21.30	Car Park	NO401085
Fri 23 Aug	Cullaloe Reservoir	20.15	Car Park	NT188877
Fri 6 Sep	Dumbarnie Links	20.00	Car Park	NO437025
Sat 4 Oct	Bankhead Moss	18.00	Car Park	NO447103

- Please telephone Tim Brain on 01577 840317 to confirm the events as they are weather related and also it is possible that I may be having knee surgery.
- Please bring a torch and wear warm clothing and suitable footwear.
- If you get lost on route, Tim's mobile is 0756591331 (it is only used when away from home).
- Extra traps are always welcome, so long as you have a generator as well or they are battery powered.

CONTACTS

Chair: Alison Irvine, 01337 830366; prosen1@btinternet.com

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SWT Headquarters (Leith): 0131 312 7765 Website: www.swt.org.uk

