

November 2011

1. View of the pond taken at daybreak on the 14th.



2. Confirmed wildlife sightings:

a. Birds:

Blackbird, Blue Tit, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Coal Tit, Dunnock, Goldcrest, Goldfinch, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Jay, Kingfisher, Lapwing, Little Grebe, Long-tailed Tit, Mallard, Moorhen, Nuthatch, Pheasant, Raven, Robin, Siskin, Sparrowhawk, Teal, Tree Creeper, Tree Sparrow, Willow Tit, Wood Pigeon, Wren.



Little Grebe returned on 5th November



Goldcrest seen on 8th November (Adrina & Ray Laidler)



Many Chaffinches (above) and Coal Tits at feeders this month

b. Mammals:

Bank Vole, Rabbit, Red Squirrel, Roe Deer, Wood Mouse.

c. Amphibians:

Palmate newt (rescued from concrete base of shelter).

3. Fungi:

November turned out to be a mild but wet month so there were still many (over twenty) species of fungi to be seen around the Reserve and neighbouring woodland. The picture on the right is of the Stag's Horn or Candle Snuff fungus (*Xylaria hypoxylon*).



Xylaria hypoxylon

4. Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*)

Size: Length approximately 14cm. Wingspan 20-22cm. Weight 16-22g.

Distribution: Found throughout the UK.

Months seen: All year round.

Habitat: Parks, gardens and woodlands.

Life span: 3-5 years. Robins can live for up to 10 years, but only around 25% survive beyond their first birthday.

Food: Spiders, insects, worms, seeds and berries.

Voice: Short, sharp, abrupt *tik*, series of quick *tik-ik-ik-ik-ik*, high, thin *seep*; strong, rich, full, varied warbling in long, musical series; in autumn and winter more mellow and melancholy.

Flight: Short, flitting darts into cover; longer flights weak, flitting, with bursts of wingbeats.

Special features: This is a typical forest or woodland-edge species in most of its range. It is adapted to follow foraging animals such as wild boar and picks up food from the earth overturned by animals. In towns and cities the robin has become known as the gardener's friend because it will closely follow gardeners as they dig the soil and turn over worms and grubs which the robin will eat. Robins are often quite tame.

The robin's striking red breast plumage is most noticeable in the winter months. For this reason they're frequently associated with Christmas, and robins are often depicted on Christmas cards.

Adult robins pair up from late December through until March. Although the male sits in a tree singing for a partner, initially it is the female who does all the chasing. Once the female is accepted by a male, he brings her food as part of their courtship ritual.

The males and females look so similar it's difficult to tell them apart. Even the robins themselves have trouble. The only way for a female to be accepted by a male is to keep landing in the male's territory until he realizes what she wants. Adult males are fiercely defensive of their territory, and will attack other males that try to encroach, so the females have to take their chances.

The domed nest of leaves and grass may be built in a hole, either in a tree, a bank or a wall, or it may be in a dense bush or hedge or thick ivy. Sometimes they will also nest in garden sheds, if they can find an easy way in and out.

The female robin lays between three and seven eggs. The eggs are white with flecks of red. She incubates them for two weeks until they hatch. The young stay on the nest for a further two weeks, and during this time the male helps the female to feed the family.

Young robins have brown speckled plumage. They moult into their adult plumage in their first autumn.



Robin



One robin presents another with a gift
(Derek Miah)



Juvenile Robin

**5. There was only one school event at Eskrigg:
1st Nov. – Visit by 2G Enterprise Group with
teacher Aileen Marchant.**

Due to long spells of wet weather parts of the Woodland Walks around Eskrigg Reserve have become very soft and difficult to cross without wellington boots. As part of their Community Spirit Project, the above group brashed a path through the edge of one of the conifer plantations to make it easier for walkers to avoid the wet patches. The G-Team did a great job – Thanks.



6. Maintenance Work:

The path through the Reserve was raked several times as the autumn leaves accumulated.



The banks of the pond were
strimmed and
raked.

← Before
After →



Concrete paving slabs were collected from Annan and barrowed from the forest road into the Reserve where they will be used to create a clean, dry base beneath the toilet tent and a path up to the tent. Thanks to Innes Green, Lewis Carruthers and Ian Dunn for their assistance with this and other tasks.

On the last Sunday of the month the banks of the feeder burn were strimmed and the water channel cleared of debris. Meanwhile David Hughes raked the Reserve path and then the cut grass on the banks.



7. Visitor Records:

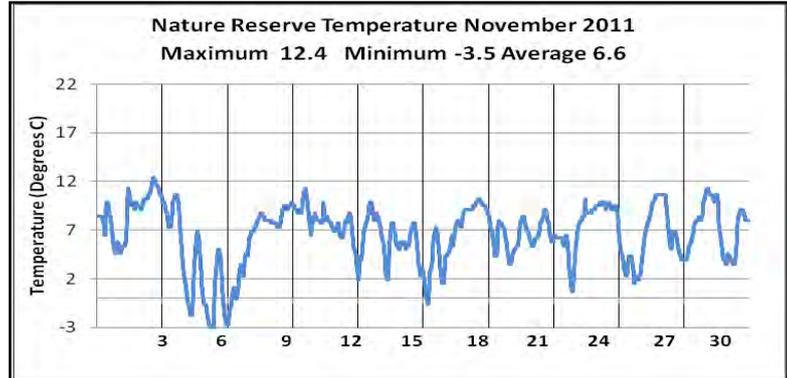
Month	Total number of Visitors	Daily Average Visitors
June	1504	50
July	1689	54
August	1661	54
September	1515	51
October	1763	57
November	1432	48



8. Weather Records:

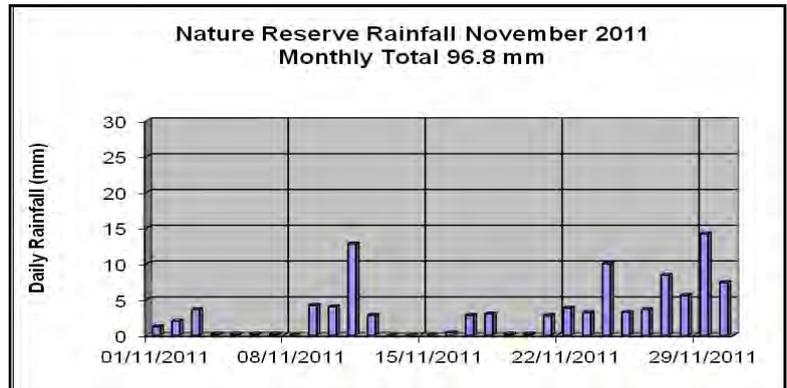
a. Air temperature

Month	Maximum	Minimum	Average
May	14.5	-2.7	7.9
June	19.8	2.7	10.3
July	19.8	5.4	12.09
August	16.3	4.6	12.1
September	20.2	3.9	12.1
October	17.0	-1.8	9.2
November	12.4	-3.5	6.6



b. Precipitation

Month	Rainfall (mm)
May	158.9
June	85.4
July	155.65
August	127.6
September	151.6
October	167.6
November	96.8



9. Monitoring Red Squirrel Feeding Behaviour



Thanks to John Riddet for his help in gathering and presenting the data.