

Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

(www.lockerbie-wildlife-trust.co.uk)



Scottish Charity No:
SC 005538

Eskrigg Reserve

August 2014 News Bulletin

1. View of the pond at daybreak on the 22nd of August.

2. Confirmed wildlife sightings at the Reserve in August.

a. Birds

Blackbird, Blue Tit, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Coal Tit, Dunnock, Goldfinch, Goshawk, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Grey Heron, Grey Wagtail, House Martin, House Sparrow, Jay, Kestrel, Kingfisher, Little Grebe, Long-tailed Tit, Magpie, Mallard, Mistle Thrush, Moorhen, Nuthatch, Pheasant, Pied Flycatcher, Raven, Robin, Siskin, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Swallow, Swift, Treecreeper, Willow Tit, Willow Warbler, Wood Pigeon, Wood Warbler, Wren, Yellowhammer.



b. Mammals

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

c. Other wildlife

Black Slug, Alderfly, Blackfly, Cleg, Green-veined White, Large White, Peacock, Red Admiral, Small Tortoiseshell and Small White Butterflies, Peacock caterpillar, Macro-moths - July Highflyer and Silver Y, Elephant Hawk-moth and White Ermine moth caterpillars, Azure, Blue-tailed, Common Blue, Emerald, Large Red and Variable Damselflies, Common Darter and Emperor Dragonflies, Carder Bee, Green Dock Beetle, Hoverflies - Marmalade Fly and Sunfly, 6-spot and 7-spot Ladybirds, Scorpion Fly, Wasp, Leaf-curling Sac Spider, Frog, Toad, Common Lizard, Minnow, Three-spined Stickleback.

Photographs by Jim Rae

3. August Flower Photo-gallery



Row 1: Corncockle, Cornflower, Corn Marigold, Corn Chamomile. Row 2: Water Mint, Rosebay Willowherb, Marsh Valerian, Tormentil. Row 3: Red Campion, Bird's-foot Trefoil, Ling Heather, Devil's-bit Scabious. Row 4: Sneezewort, Tufted Vetch, Spear Thistle, Ragged Robin. Row 5: Redshank, Water Avens, Yarrow, Water Forget-me-not. Row 6: Cross-leaved Heath, Hairy Bittercress, Knapweed, Pink Purslane.

Photographs by Jim Rae

4. Planned Activities in August.

a. 13th August:

Visit by Kids, Staff and Parents from the Aberlour Child Care Trust (Annan Branch) with Maureen Armstrong in charge.



The kids had great fun exploring for wild creatures, playing party games and having a picnic. Animals spotted included Frogs, Carder Bees, hoverflies, Large White, Green-veined White and Peacock butterflies, Cinnabar moth caterpillars, Silver Y moth, 7-spot Ladybird, Common Darter dragonfly and variety of spiders. One of the parents baked some rather tasty cup-cakes for everyone.

b. 22nd August: August Moths

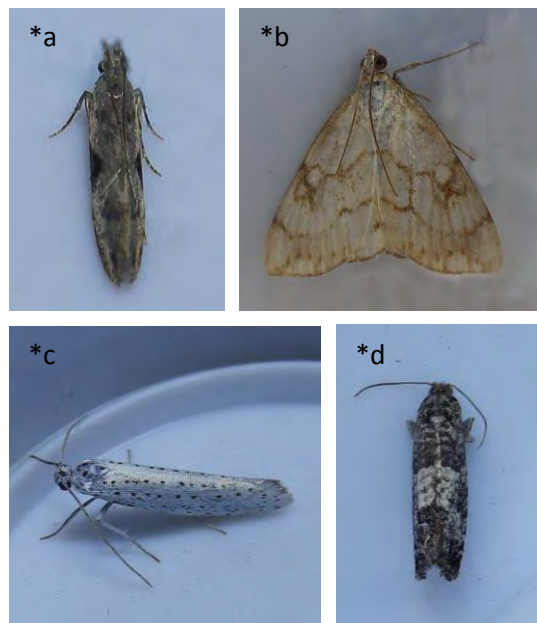
The trap was put out on the evening of the 21st August and the moths identified the following day.

Macro-moths

Common Marbled Carpet	<i>Chloroclysta truncata</i>	1
Common Rustic	<i>Mesapamea secalis</i>	4
Crescent	<i>Celaena leucostigma</i>	5
Drinker	<i>Euthrix potatoria</i>	1
Dun-bar	<i>Cosmia trapezina</i>	1
Flame Carpet	<i>Xanthorhoe designata</i>	1
July Highflyer	<i>Hydriomena furcata</i>	9
Large Yellow Underwing	<i>Noctua pronuba</i>	1
Lesser Yellow Underwing	<i>Noctua comes</i>	1
Sallow	<i>Xanthia icteritia</i>	1
Small Square-spot	<i>Diarsia rubi</i>	4
Small Wainscot	<i>Chortodes pygmina</i>	1

Micro-moths

Brown China-mark	<i>Elophila nymphaeata</i>	1
	<i>Evergestis pallidata</i>	1 *b
	<i>Gypsonoma sociana</i>	1 *d
	<i>Hypatima rhomboidella</i>	1 *a
Bird-cherry Ermine	<i>Yponomeuta evonymella</i>	1 *c



22nd, 23rd, 24th and 27th August: Vote for Bob

RSPB Film Cameraman, Toby Hough, spent many hours trying to film the Red Squirrels at Eskrigg Reserve in order that the RSPB could publicise their Vote for Bob campaign. At this time of year there is an abundance of natural food available for the squirrels and they spend relatively little time in the area around the hides. However, with a great deal of patience, Toby managed to get some good footage. We look forward to seeing clips of the Eskrigg Squirrels, on television, in the months leading up to the General Election.



28th August:

Ms Jones' 3rd year English class visited the Reserve to get some ideas for a writing project. They carried out a number of sensory exercises in order to investigate their environment and build up a word bank to help with their creative writing.

5. Maintenance work during August.

19th August:

Pamela Beeton helped weed the path near the shelter and return an Elephant Hawk-moth caterpillar to its natural habitat and food plant – the Rosebay Willowherb.



26th August:

Pamela Beeton and Thomas Gibbs helped tidy more of the path and prune a number of trees in the Reserve, on the forest road and woodland paths.



29th August:

Lockerbie Academy pupils, Lee Gage and Connor Jardine helped to install a bin for dog waste at the bottom of the new path. Hopefully dog owners will take the hint and use the bin instead of leaving a mess for others to clear up.



11th, 13th, 19th, 20th and 31st August: Pond Clearance



I am very grateful to Kathy Davidson, Bob Glaister, David Hind, Sylvia Hind, Robert Petry, John Reid, Sybille Spägele and Moira Weatherup, who spent a total of 50 man-hours helping to clear Canadian Pondweed from the pond and reed-grass from around the margins. The Canadian Pondweed was introduced by someone several years ago and is an invasive species. If not controlled, it spreads throughout the pond preventing the free flow of water and trapping the silt. The reed-grass grows in from the banks at the rate of two to four metres per year and if not controlled would very quickly take over the whole pond area.

Photographs by Sylvia Hind (SH), Nan Rew (NR) and Jim Rae (others)

6. Red Squirrel ‘Leprosy’

There have been a number of reports recently about a new threat to Red Squirrels in Scotland from a disease, similar to Leprosy, caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium lepromatosis*. In practice, very little is known about the disease and there have been only six confirmed cases in the whole of Scotland since 2006. One of the confirmed cases was at Eskrigg Reserve in May 2010. A dead squirrel had been found and sent off to the Royal Dick School of Veterinary Studies at Edinburgh University to find out if it carried the Squirrelepox disease. At the time word came back saying that the test for the Squirrelepox had proved negative. No mention of the *Mycobacterium lepromatosis* was made in the reply.

In February of this year, I took a photograph of another Red Squirrel that may have been infected by the bacterium – it certainly showed all the symptoms, hair loss and swelling round the snout, eyes, ears and feet. However, there was no indication that the infection had spread to other squirrels coming to the feeders and the squirrel concerned continued to be spotted from time to time, leading an active life, right up until around May or June. No body was found so no tests could be carried out.

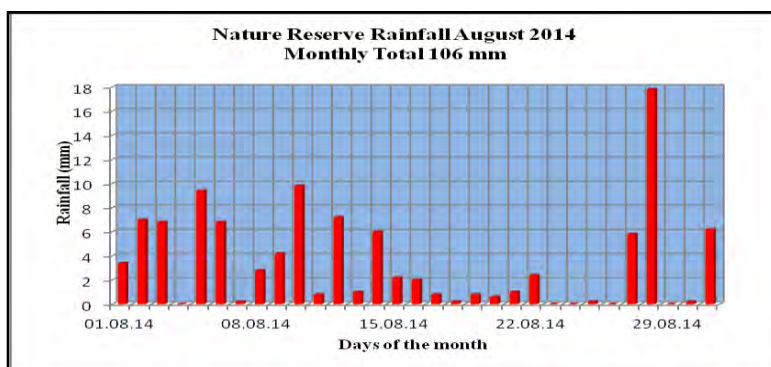
Much more serious is the continuing threat from the Squirrelepox virus which is almost always fatal to Red Squirrels but can be carried by the Greys. Research has shown that the squirrelepox disease was responsible for accelerating the rate at which Greys have replaced Reds throughout most of England and Wales. However, conservation work carried out in the North of England and parts of Scotland has shown that if we keep the numbers of Grey Squirrels down to a low level the Reds will survive and even recolonise areas they have not occupied for years.

I greatly appreciate the calls I receive from visitors to the Reserve and from other local residents with their squirrel observations. Some report Red Squirrels in areas they haven't been seen before or not for a long time. Occasionally someone sees a Red Squirrel that is ill, showing signs of distress or behaving in an unusual manner. Dead squirrels, whether or not they show signs of disease, have been pointed out or left where I would find them. I particularly appreciate being informed about Grey sightings in the area and will elicit the help of the Grey Squirrel Control Officer - Ian Kerr, immediately.



7. Precipitation

Month	Rainfall (mm)
Mar. 2014	135
Apr. 2014	89.6
May 2014	88.8
June 2014	42
Jul. 2014	79
Aug. 2014	106



For more information call Jim Rae or visit our website.

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