

Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

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



Eskrigg Reserve

February 2018 News Bulletin

Scottish Charity No:
SC 005538

1. Views of the Reserve

Just before sunrise on the 4th February.



Just before sunrise on the 6th February.



Snowstorm on the 13th February.



Between snow showers on the 28th February



2. Confirmed wildlife sightings at the Reserve during February.

a. Birds

Blackbird, Black-headed Gull, Blue Tit, Brambling, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Coal Tit, Cormorant, Dunnock, Goldcrest, Goosander, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Greenfinch, Grey Heron, Greylag, Grey Partridge, Jackdaw, Jay, Kingfisher, Long-tailed Tit, Mallard, Meadow Pipit, Moorhen, Mute Swan, Nuthatch, Oystercatcher, Pheasant, Pintail, Raven, Robin, Rook, Siskin, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Stock Dove, Tree Creeper, Tree Sparrow, Wood Pigeon, Wren.

b. Mammals

Badger, Mole, Red Squirrel.



Robin

Photographs by Jim Rae

3. February Photo Gallery - Harvesting time



Harvester at work - 01.02.18



Broken bridge 03.02.18



Stacked Sitka logs 03.02.18



Forwarder in action 07.02.18



Forwarder in action 07.02.18



Forwarder in action 07.02.18



Timber stacked beside road



Timber lorry removing crop



Collapsed stone bridge



Removing collapsed bridge



Log and brash bridge over burn



Removing brash bridge



Harvesting complete



Town visible from Reserve



Burn back in use for Nut Race

Eskrigg Reserve was closed for two weeks (Monday 29th January - Monday 12th February), for Health and Safety reasons while the trees on either side of the access path were harvested.

During this time, the wildlife within the Reserve were fed every morning as usual.

Lockerbie Wildlife Trust and Castle Milk Estate greatly appreciate the co-operation of local residents and visitors whilst the harvesting operations were in progress.

The forest road will be reinstated and there will be drainage work going on in the area before it is replanted next winter.

Photographs by Jim Rae

4. Planned Activities in February

Tue 6th **Jim** talked to the **John Muir Trust Group** at **Lockerbie Academy** about Red Squirrels because the Reserve was closed to the public.

Fri. 9th **Jim** gave a talk to **Moffat Wildlife Club** about **Eskrigg Reserve**.

Wed. 14th **Jim** met with **Calum Graham** to discuss the **Active Schools and Community Sports** event at Eskrigg Reserve during the Easter Holidays.

Tue. 20th **Jim** gave a talk about **Eskrigg Reserve** to the **Loreburn Retirement Group** at Maxwelltown West Church Hall in Dumfries.

Sun. 25th Annual Nut Race

The weather was cold, but dry and sunny. Around thirty youngsters and their parents came along to support the event. All children were given a cane to nudge any nuts that got stuck, back into the main stream. For their efforts, they were each given a chocolate egg or bag of chocolate coins.

The Trust would like to thank Mrs Elizabeth McDonnell for generously donating the following prizes:

1st Edna Eelbeck - prize £25

2nd Tricia Thomson - prize £15

3rd Emma Boyes - prize £5

Many thanks to all the people who sponsored a nut and helped to raise £650 for the work of Lockerbie Wildlife Trust at Eskrigg Nature Reserve.



5. Volunteer Activities in February

Sun. 11th Following the timber extraction, **Jim** tidied the path and edges between the shelter and the doggie bin.



Tue. 13th **Jim** cleaned out the brush from the feeder burn.



Sat. 17th The E-Team (Michael Kerr, Heather Donaldson, and Nathan Mckenzie) helped clean up the bank of the burn and the edges of the main path following the timber operations.



Tue. 20th John Muir Trust Gp 1 from **Lockerbie Academy** helped to clear brash left lying in the Reserve and on the paths during the tree felling operations.



Sat. 24th The E-Team (Michael Kerr, Heather Donaldson, Neil Stewart and Patrick Malone) helped fill in the pot holes on the Eskrigg Farm Road before tidying up the area around the finishing post for the Annual Nut Race.

Sun. 25th Reserve Maintenance Morning

David Hughes and Jim carried out some final tidying up of the feeder burn and Reserve paths prior to the Annual Nut Race.

6. Disabled Access - Mobility Scooters

Rosemary Curtis, a local resident, very kindly donated two mobility scooters to Lockerbie Wildlife Trust. Rosemary adored all creatures and wanted her legacy to provide everyone with the opportunity to observe Mother Nature in all her glory. The scooters are now available for use at Eskrigg Reserve by anyone with mobility problems. Please contact the Reserve Manager at least 24 hours before the scooter is needed so that it can be fully charged and delivered to the Reserve Car Park when required.

7. Scarlet Elfcup (*Sarcoscypha austriaca*) or Ruby Elfcup (*Sarcoscypha coccinea*)

The Scarlet Elfcup, in common with the macroscopically almost identical Ruby Elfcup, appears in winter on dead hardwood twigs in damp, shady places, usually partly buried in moss. Both of these ascomycetes are common in alder and willow carr woodland like that found at Eskrigg Reserve.

In recent years the Scarlet Elfcup has been the more frequently recorded species in Britain and Ireland, whereas, in the past, the Ruby Elfcup was more commonly recorded. Difficulties in identification may be a significant factor in this.

Description

In both species, the irregularly shaped cups have a smooth, red (hymenal/fertile) inner surface and a much paler, felty, outer surface. The edge of young cups is usually incurved. There is a short stipe, typically 0.5-3.5cm long and 0.3-0.7cm diameter, often buried in moss and leaf litter, and it is the same colour as the outer surface of the cup or slightly paler. Cup diameter, when mature, ranges between 1.5 and 7cm; height (excluding stem) is typically 1 to 2cm.

Using a microscope is the only way of being reasonably confident of identification. The outer (infertile) surface is paler than the inside, sometimes pinkish but often with an ochre tinge. It is **tomentose** (covered in tiny hairs). In the Ruby Elfcup some of the hairs are straight while others have one or more bends, but they are not coiled as they are in the Scarlet Elfcup.



Photographs by Jim Rae

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