

# Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

([www.lockerbie-wildlife-trust.co.uk](http://www.lockerbie-wildlife-trust.co.uk))

## Eskrigg Reserve

### May 2012 News Bulletin



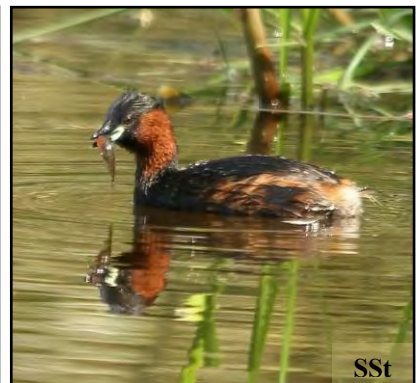
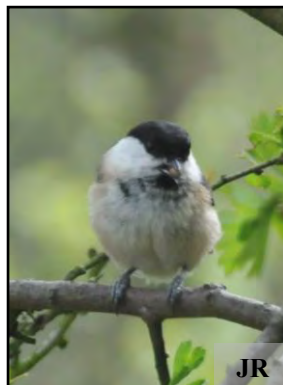
Scottish Charity No:  
SC 005538

1. View of pond from jetty.

2. Confirmed wildlife sightings:

a. Birds:

Blackbird, Blue Tit, Buzzard, Canada Goose, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Coal Tit, Collared Dove, Goldfinch, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Grey Heron, Greylag Goose, Grey Wagtail, House Martin, Jay, Kestrel, Kingfisher, Little Grebe, Long-tailed Tit, Mallard, Mistle Thrush, Moorhen, Nuthatch, Oystercatcher, Pheasant, Raven, Reed Bunting, Robin, Siskin, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Swallow, Tawny Owl, Tree Creeper, Tree Pipit, Willow Tit, Willow Warbler, Wood Pigeon, Wood Warbler, Wren.



Top row: Sparrowhawk, Greylag Goose, Willow Tit, Grey Wagtail.

Bottom row: Tawny Owl, Tawny Owlet, Young Robin, Little Grebe.

**Photographs in bulletin:** BBC Birmingham (BBC), Gordon Rae (GR), Jim Rae (JR),  
Lockerbie Nursery Staff (LN), Suzanne Storm (SSt), Sybille Spägele (SSp).

**b. Mammals:**

Bank Vole, Mole, Otter, Rabbit, Red Squirrel, Stoat.

This is the first time an otter has been spotted in the pond at Eskrigg since the Reserve was established in May 1988 (24 years ago).

**c. Amphibians:**

Common Frog, Common Newt, Common Toad, Palmate Newt.

**d. Reptiles:**

Common Lizard.



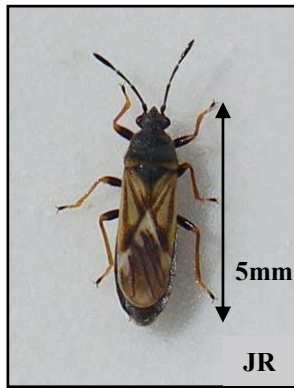
15.05.12 Otter in Eskrigg pond

**e. Fish:**

Minnow, Stickleback, Stoneloach. There may be a few eels in the pond. The otter was heard chewing/crunching something substantial but it was impossible to tell exactly what it was eating.

**f. Invertebrates**

**1. Unidentified insect:**



A swarm of these insects was spotted on the plants at the edge of the pond on the 22nd May. So far we have been unable to identify them.

**3. Activities at the Reserve during April:**

**2nd May: BBC Countryfile preparatory visit to Eskrigg**

Director Tom McTaggart and one cameraman visited in the morning to get some film footage of the red squirrels and to make plans for filming the next day.

**3rd May: Lockerbie Nursery groups 7 and 8 Pond Dipping and Gruffalo Hunt.**



Group 7 kindly presented Jim with a thank you card.



Group 8 filmed pond dipping by the BBC Countryfile team.



### 3rd May: BBC Countryfile Team visit Eskrigg.

The team recorded Ellie Harrison (presenter) interviewing Jim about the history of the Reserve and the red squirrels that have attracted so many visitors to the Reserve. They then filmed Ellie and Jim pond dipping with the Lockerbie Nursery children and the children playing in the picnic area. They finished up with some more shots of Ellie and the red squirrels.

Photographers from the Dumfries and Galloway Standard Newspaper Group and the Dumfries and Galloway Life Magazine also came along to record the event.



Ellie Harrison interviewing Jim Rae



Gp 8 in picnic area with Countryfile Team

### 5th May: Annual Coffee Morning at Lockerbie Town Hall

This year's coffee morning raised over £900 to support the work of the Trust, including the management of the Reserve. Thanks to all who supported the event.

### 13th May: Visit to Carstramon 'Bluebell' Wood.

Brian Smith took some members of the Trust on a guided walk through Carstramon Oak Woods whilst the 'bluebells' (Wild Hyacinths - *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) were in full bloom. He explained how the management of the woodland had changed over the years and what the Scottish Wildlife Trust was doing to encourage migrant birds like the pied flycatcher and redstart to nest in the woodlands. The picture on the right shows a pied flycatcher's nest inside one of the nest boxes. Note how the bird uses honeysuckle bark to help construct its nest.



Brian Smith talking to the LWT party



Bluebells carpeting the woodland floor

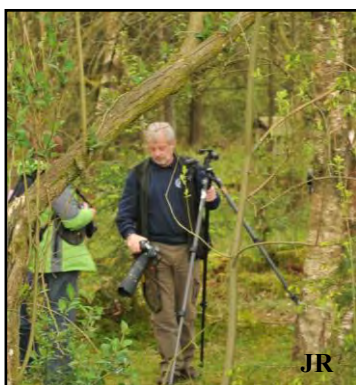
### 15th May: New Sightings

On the same day as an otter was spotted in the pond, a tawny owlet emerged from the barrel in which it had been reared onto a nearby tree, much to the delight of many visitors.



## 16th May: Photography Course

Keith Kirk ran another successful photographic workshop for digital SLR users. Ten photographers turned up on the day to take advantage of Keith's knowledge and experience. Many of the Reserve's inhabitants willingly acted as models.



Keith Kirk



Tawny Owl



Red Squirrel

**16th May:** Stuart Black cut down the tree stump next to Eskrigg Centre and Ian Little helped set out the moth traps in order to catch moths overnight.

## 17th May: Moth Trapping

Anna White kindly helped David Foreman, Jim and two visitors from Dumfries to identify the following May Moths.

**Brindled Pug (*Eupithecia abbreviata*)**

Clouded Drab (*Orthosia incerta*)

Common Carpet (*Epirrhoe alternata*)

Common Marbled Carpet (*Chloroclysta truncata*)

Common Quaker (*Orthosia cerasi*)

Common Wave (*Cabera exanthemata*)

Engrailed (*Ectropis bistortata*)

Flame Carpet (*Xanthorhoe designata*)

Hebrew Character (*Orthosia gothica*)

**May Highflyer (*Hydriomena impluviata*)**

**Micro-moth - *Agonopterix ocellana***

Nut Tree Tussock (*Colocasia coryli*)

**Ochreous Pug (*Eupithecia indigata*)**

Spruce Carpet (*Thera britannica*)

Water Carpet (*Lampropteryx suffumata*)



Unidentified Moth



*Agonopterix ocellana*

**The species in red are new to Eskrigg Reserve.**

## 19th May: Wetland Butterfly Garden

Innes Green, Lewis Carruthers and Duncan Burgess helped Jim prepare the wetland garden area next to Eskrigg Centre. The soil had been removed from the area in earlier weeks. With the tree stump cut down we were able to cover the area with a thin layer of soil, fit in a pond liner and then fill the plot with soil.

The plan is to sow the seeds of wetland species and plant a few shrubs that will eventually attract butterflies, moths and other insects to the area for people to watch and photograph.



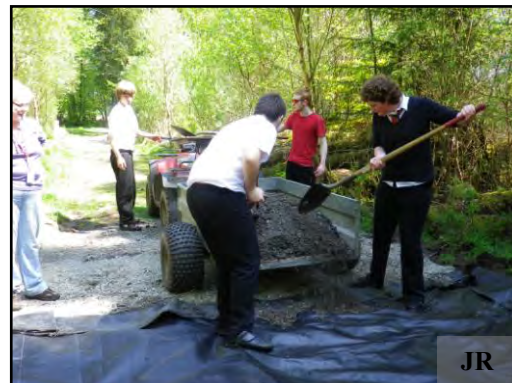
**21st May: Visit by Lockerbie Academy S1 Environmental Studies Class.**



Isaac Hann and Lee Gage learned how to drive the quad bike and then used the bike and trailer to take a load of gravel to the opposite end of the Reserve in order to improve the path.

**23rd May: Visit by Lockerbie Academy S2 Environmental Studies Class.**

Christina Spence, Jamie McCormick, Prentice Irving and Ross Thorburn also used the quad bike and trailer to help them improve another section of path.



**23rd May: Ian Little used his chainsaw to help clear some of the willows along the Eskrigg Farm side of the Reserve.**

**25th May: Visit by Lockerbie Academy S3 Environmental Studies Class.**

Danny Brannan used his height to advantage and pruned the overhead sitka spruce and lodgepole pine branches of at the Reserve entrance while Teri Fraser and Pamela Beeton raked up the wind-blown twigs from the path. As this was their last day working at the Reserve the pupils and support staff finished early and were treated to ice creams at the Café 91.

**26th May: Assistance from Lockerbie Academy boys doing Duke of Edinburgh Award.**



**Innes Green** and **Lewis Carruthers** helped cut and rake up the grass on the path at the Dumfries Road entrance and from the lay-by down to the Muirhead Farm Road.



**27th May: Maintenance Day**

**John Reid** and **Crispin McCreery** helped Jim to clean out the silt trap and feeder burn before diverting the burn back into the pond.

**29th May:** The grass at the sides of the Reserve path was cut and **Ian Dunn** helped rake it up. The vegetation at the sides of the boardwalk was also strimmed.



#### 4. Visitor Records:

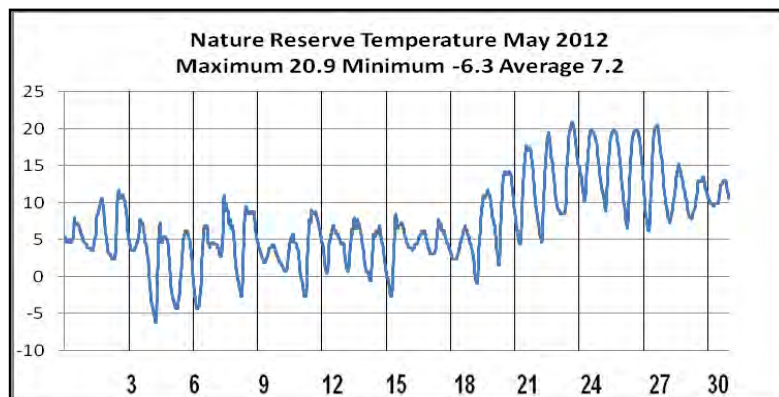
Month	Total number of Visitors	Daily Average Visitors
December	1373	44
January	2180	70
February	1597	55
March	2795	90
April	4262	142
May	2681	89



#### 5. Weather Records:

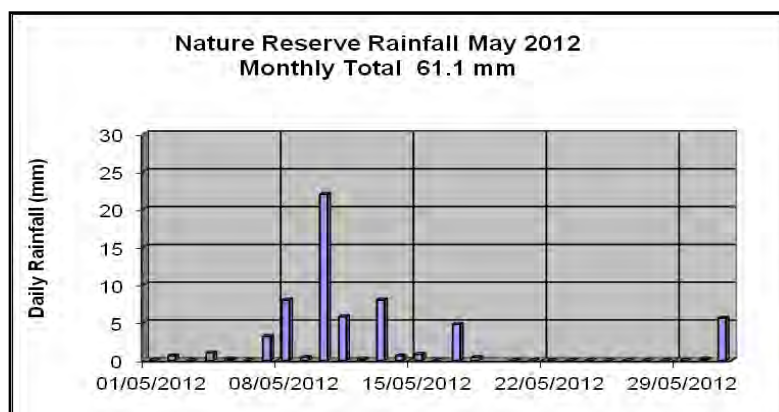
##### a. Air temperature

Month	Maximum	Minimum	Average
December	14.1	-3.5	2.89
January	5.8	-8.2	-0.24
February	8.0	-9.7	0.39
March	-	-	-
April	11.7	-7.2	3.4
May	20.9	-6.3	7.2

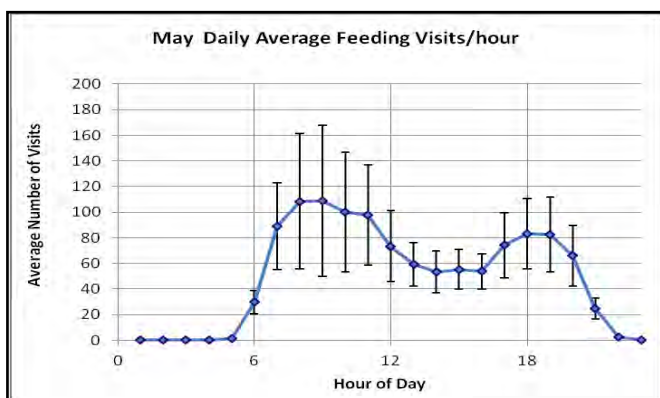


##### b. Precipitation

Month	Rainfall (mm)
December	148.8
January	88.5
February	36.6
March	37.4
April	78.8
May	61.1



#### 6. Monitoring Red Squirrel Feeding Behaviour



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