

# Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

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

## Eskrigg Reserve

### April 2016 News Bulletin



Scottish Charity No:  
SC 005538

#### 1. View of the Heron Sculpture from the silt trap.



#### 2. Confirmed wildlife sightings at the Reserve in April.

##### a. Birds

Blackbird, Blue Tit, Brambling, Bullfinch, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Coal Tit, Cormorant, Crossbill, Dunnock, Goldfinch, Goosander, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Greenfinch, Grey Heron, Greylag Goose, Grey Wagtail, Jay, Lesser Redpoll, Little Grebe, Long-tailed Tit, Magpie, Mallard, Moorhen, Mute Swan, Nuthatch, Oystercatcher, Pheasant, Raven, Robin, Siskin, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Starling, Stock Dove, Swallow, Tawny Owl, Treecreeper, Tufted Duck, Willow Warbler, Wood Pigeon, Wood Warbler, Wren.



##### b. Mammals

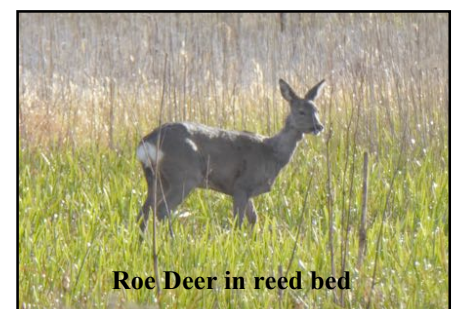
Badger (road kill), Bandit Pipistrelle Bat, Bank Vole, Hedgehog, Mole, Rabbit, Red Squirrel, Roe Deer, Wood Mouse.

##### c. Amphibia

Frog, Toad.

##### d. Invertebrates

Buff-tailed Bumble Bee, Large White and Orange-tip Butterflies, Hoverflies, Midges.



Photographs: Jim Rae

### 3. April Photo-gallery.



Row 1: Snowdrops (JR), Cross section of felled tree (JR), Daffodils (JR)

Row 2: Male Tufted Duck (JR), Grey Heron coming in to land (JR), Male Goosander (JR)

Row 3: Carrion Crow (JR), Male and female Mallard with 11 ducklings (JR), Willow Warbler (JR)

Row 4: Red Squirrel (BL), Lichen (*Evernia prunastri*) on dead twig (JR), Red Squirrel (NT)

Row 5: Primrose (JR), Buds of the Bog Myrtle (JR), Marsh Violet (JR)

Photographs: Bob Little (BL), Norman Tait (NT), Jim Rae (JR)

#### 4. Planned Activities

##### Sat. 2nd - Red Squirrel Guided Walk with Kate Thomson and Jim Rae.

The walkers met at Dryfesdale Lodge Visitors' Centre and were welcomed by Jim who then outlined the work of the Lockerbie Wildlife Trust and Eskrigg Reserve. Kate spoke about Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels and the organisation's role, along with other agencies, in the control of Grey Squirrels in Scotland as a whole and in Dumfries and Galloway in particular - briefly mentioning the developing role of the Annandale Red Squirrel Group. The party then set off through the woods looking for Red Squirrels and locating squirrel dreys before visiting the feeding station at the Red Squirrel Hide in the Reserve. Here, Kate and Jim explained how to tell the Grey and Red Squirrels apart. The Red Squirrels' daily and seasonal feeding behaviour was also discussed and how Greys and Reds would compete with each other if they occupied the same area. The group continued to watch the antics of the Red Squirrels for a while before heading home.



##### Tue. 5th - Visit by Keith Kirk

Keith Kirk, his wife and grandchildren visited the Reserve briefly, prior to the pond dipping event, in order to let Jim try out a thermal imaging camera.

##### Tue. 5th - Spring Pond-life with Jim Rae - D & G Wild Spring Festival Event.

34 children, with accompanying adults, spent an enjoyable afternoon at the Reserve. They used a variety of nets to sample the pond and find out which animals inhabited the murky waters at this time of the year.



The following organisms were identified:

##### **Invertebrates:**

Leeches, Pond Snails and their eggs, Pea Mussels, Gnat pupae, Phantom Midge larvae, Chironomid larvae (bloodworms), Caddis Fly larvae, Damselfly nymphs, Water Beetles, Lesser Water Boatmen, Water Spider and Water Mites.

##### **Vertebrates:**

Three-spined Sticklebacks, Frog spawn and Toad spawn.

When walking through the Reserve most of the visitors took some time to watch the antics of the Red Squirrels at their feeding station and to try and identify some of the many woodland and wetland birds around on the day.

##### **Woodland birds:**

Song Thrush, Blackbird, Dunnock, Robin, Chiffchaff, Chaffinch, Brambling, Bullfinch, Treecreeper, Nuthatch, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Coal Tit, Siskin, Wren, Jay, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Carrion Crow, Raven, Pheasant, Woodpigeon, Tawny Owl, Buzzard and Sparrowhawk.

##### **Wetland birds:**

Mallard, Moorhen, Little Grebe, Tufted Duck, Goosander, Grey Heron and Mute Swan.

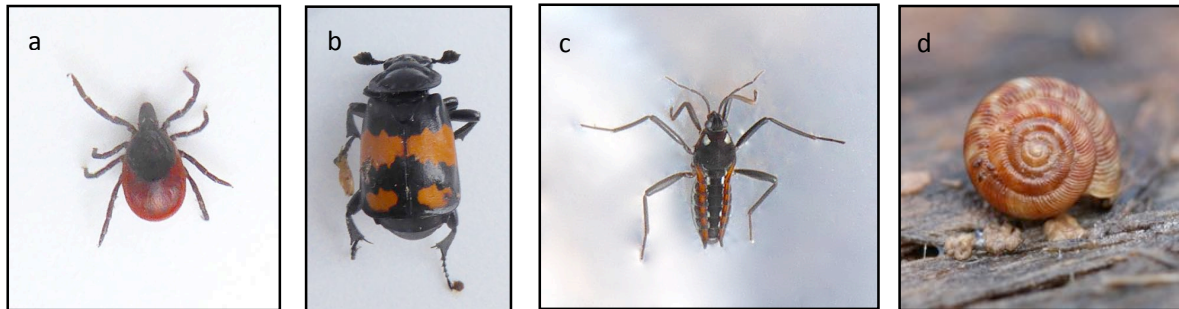
Photographs: Jim Rae and Dumfries and Galloway Standard Photographer (P)

**Thu. 7th - Wee Woodland Beasties with Jim Rae - D & G Wild Spring Festival Event.**

Eighteen children and ten adults came along on a pleasant afternoon to explore the woodland floor and find out what organisms were around at this time of year. The following organisms were identified:

**Invertebrates found previously:** Earthworms (2 species), Slugs (4 species), Woodlice, Millipedes, Centipedes, Springtails, Beetle larvae (4 species), Ground Beetles (2 species), Rove Beetle larvae,

**Invertebrates found for the first time:**



a) Deer Tick (*Ixodes scapularis*), b) Common Sexton beetle (*Nicrophorus vespilloides*), c) Water Cricket (*Velia caprai*), d) Rounded Snail,

**Sun. 10th - April Moths 1 with Jim Rae - D & G Wild Spring Festival Event.**

After a promising evening, when I spotted the Early Tooth-striped, the weather turned cold and wet so few moths were flying. We only caught five species including one new one for Eskrigg Reserve.



Early Thorn

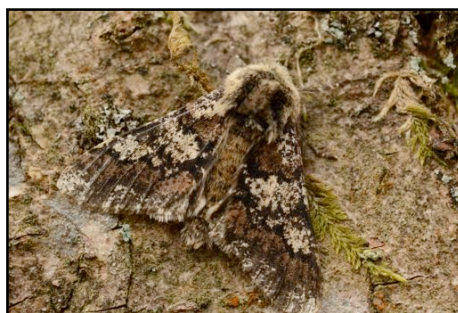
Clouded Drab

Hebrew Character

Common Quaker



New Species: Oak Beauty (*Biston strataria*)



Early Tooth-striped

**Tue. 26th - April Moths 2 with Jim Rae - D & G Wild Spring Festival Event.**

It turned out to be a cold night with few moths flying. Only three Hebrew Characters were caught.

**5. The Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*)**

The Jays have started nesting. The female incubates 4 or 5 eggs for about 18 days. The young are fed by both parents and are ready to leave the nest after 3 weeks, but continue to be fed by the adults until they are 6 - 8 weeks old.

The Reserve is visited by at least 2 pairs of Jays.



NB

photographs: Joy Newbould (NB) and Jim Rae

## 6. Volunteer Activities

**Thu. 14th - Connor Jardine** assisted Jim with the final check of the Squirrel feeders for the Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels (SSRS) Spring Survey before helping to tidy out the equipment store at the Reserve.



**Sat. 16th - Maya Saunders** helped chop up logs which were then sold to raise funds for the Reserve.

**Mon. 18th - Three S1 Boys from Lockerbie Academy** came down with Jan Andrews to help treat the wooden fence opposite the Dryfesdale Lodge Visitors' Centre with wood preservative. Unfortunately the rain brought work to an early finish so the group came down to shelter at the Eskrigg Centre.

**(L to R: Stephen Jackson, Jan Andrews, Kienan James and Billy Tyler)**



**Thu. 21st - Connor Jardine** helped carry out repairs to the boardwalk.

**Sat. 23rd - Members of the E-team** (Patrick Malone, Michael Kerr, Rory Holden and Keir Stewart) helped to construct new steps up to the East Hide at the end of the boardwalk.



**Sun. 24th - Maintenance Day**

Sybille Spägele and David Hughes pinned wire netting to the new steps and to several sections of the board walk while Jim cleared some previously cut branches from the sides of the boardwalk.

They then felled three small birch trees to prepare the site for installing the composting toilet.

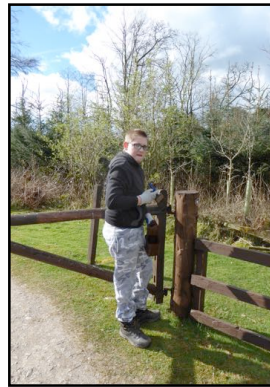


**Photographs: Jim Rae and Sybille Spagele (SS)**

**Mon. 25th - The S1 Boys from Lockerbie Academy (Stephen Jackson, Kienan James and Billy Tyler) finished treating the fence at the Dumfries Road entrance with wood preservative. They then helped Jim to treat the posts of the Information Board.**



**Stephen**



**Billy**



**Kienan**



**The 3 boys with Jim**

The boys topped up the bird and squirrel feeders before Jim taught them how to use an axe and bushman saw to cut up some of the extracted timber. All three boys demonstrated that they had learned how to use the tools safely and were complimented on their excellent attitudes and teamworking skills.

**Sat. 30th - Members of the E-team - Maya Saunders, Rory Holden and Keir Stewart worked on the new woodland path, cutting and clearing tree roots.**



**7. Access For All - Phase 3 - Installation of a Composting Toilet with disabled access**



**Photographs: Jim Rae**

A NatSol Composting Toilet was installed at the Reserve at the end of April. Work will continue over the coming weeks to treat the outside timber with wood preservative, paint the inside, construct an appropriate platform and wheelchair access ramp at the front, landscape the area around the toilet and get it ready for use.

**Many thanks to the construction team (LtoR): Ving Thomson, Stephen Hunter, David Penman, Bob Glaister, Jim Rae, George Bloor and (not in the picture) David Hughes.**

**For more information call Jim Rae or visit our website.**

**Jim Rae (Eskrigg Reserve Manager)**  
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