

# Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

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

## Eskrigg Reserve

### May 2018 News Bulletin



Scottish Charity No:  
SC 005538

#### 1. View of the pond on the 28th of May.



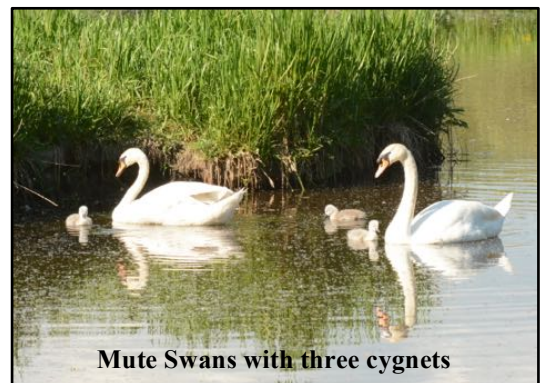
#### 2. Confirmed wildlife sightings at the Reserve during May.

##### a. Birds

Blackbird, Blackcap, Blue Tit, Bullfinch, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Coal Tit, Collared Dove, Crossbill, Dunnock, Goldcrest, Goldfinch, Grasshopper Warbler, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Greenfinch, Grey Heron, Grey Wagtail, House Martin, House Sparrow, Jackdaw, Jay, Kestrel, Lesser Redpoll, Mallard, Mistle Thrush, Moorhen, Mute Swan, Nuthatch, Oystercatcher, Pheasant, Pied Flycatcher, Pied Wagtail, Raven, Reed Bunting, Robin, Siskin, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Spotted Flycatcher, Starling, Stock Dove, Swallow, Tawny Owl, Treecreeper, Willow Warbler, Woodcock, Wood Pigeon, Wood Warbler, Wren, Yellowhammer.

##### b. Mammals

Bank Vole, Brown Hare, Mole, Rabbit, Red Squirrel, Roe Deer, Woodmouse.



Mute Swans with three cygnets



Flotilla of ten Mallard ducklings

Photographs by Jim Rae



### 3. May Photo Gallery



Row 1: Bugle, Bush Vetch, Crab Apple, Creeping Buttercup, Daisy

Row 2: Dandelion, Dog Violet, Germander Speedwell, Hawthorn, Lady's Smock

Row 3: Marsh Marigold, Meadow Vetchling, Narrow-leaved Bitter-cress, Pink Purslane, Primrose

Row 4: Red Campion, Rowan, Star-of-Bethlehem, Strawberry Clover, Tormentil

Row 5: Water Avena, Wavy Bitter-cress, Welsh Poppy, Whin, Wild Garlic

Row 6: Wild Hyacinth, Wood Avena, Wood Sorrel, Yellow Pimpernel, Herb-Robert

Row 7: Bilberry, Pignut, Heath Bedstraw, Ragged Robin, Russian Comfrey

Photographs by Jim Rae



#### 4. Planned Activities in May

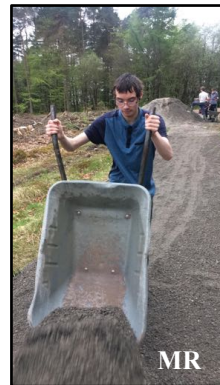
**Tue. 1<sup>st</sup>** Visit by **Lockerbie Academy pupils** working towards the John Muir Trust Award. On this short visit, the pupils laid some gravel on the northern loop of the Woodland Walks using wheel-barrows because the quad bike was away being repaired.

**Wed. 2<sup>nd</sup>** Visit by **Lockerbie Academy pupils** to carry out some field studies, including stream survey, pond sampling, tree beating and plant transect.

Those doing the stream study found the following organisms: Oligochaete worms, freshwater shrimps, fly larvae, midge larvae, blackfly larvae, mayfly nymphs, stonefly nymphs, cased caddis larvae, caseless caddis larvae and flatworms.

Those doing the pond sampling found: pond skaters, diving beetles, back-swimmers, lesser water boatmen, and midge pupae.

**Tue. 8<sup>th</sup>** Full day visit by Lockerbie Academy pupils working towards the John Muir Trust Award.



Treating the picnic tables with preservative



Treating the shelter with preservative



Laying gravel path using barrow



Laying gravel path using quad bike and trailer

**Wed. 9<sup>th</sup>** Visit by second group of **Lockerbie Academy pupils** to carry out some field studies, including stream survey, pond sampling, tree beating and transect.



stream study group



pond study group



tree-beating group

**Wed. 9<sup>th</sup>** In the evening **David Hughes** and **Jim Rae** represented Lockerbie Wildlife Trust at a Parliamentary Reception in Edinburgh, organised by Tesco and Green Space Scotland, to outline how the pathwork sponsored by Tesco Bags of Help was progressing. It was a good opportunity to meet similar groups from across Scotland.

Photographs by Ms. Rogerson (MR) and Jim Rae (JR)



#### 4. Planned Activities in May continued:

**Sat. 12<sup>th</sup>** The **Lockerbie Wildlife Trust** held its **Annual Spring Coffee Morning** and raised nearly £560. Thanks to all who supported the event.

**Sun. 13<sup>th</sup>** **Jim Rae** took part in **Lockerbie and District Rotary Club's** annual **Walk the Walk**. He completed three laps of the Castle Loch at Lochmaben and raised £280. A big thank-you to all who sponsored him.

**Mon 14<sup>th</sup>** In the evening, members of the **Royal Four Towns Rural** were given a guided tour of Eskrigg Reserve.

**Wed 16<sup>th</sup>** Another group from **Lockerbie Academy** came down to do some biological fieldwork.

**Sat. 19<sup>th</sup>** **Sunday School Outing to Eskrigg Reserve**.  
The weather was fair for the Members of the Dryfesdale Church Sunday School who took part in a Gruffalo Hunt and Scavenger Hunt at the Reserve.



Sunday School Visit

**Sun. 20<sup>th</sup>** **Lockerbie Wildlife Trust** visit to **Williamwood Farm**  
Eight members of the of Trust were given a guided tour of the farm by the owner, Michael Clarke. The fact that Michael gave up three hours of his valuable time was greatly appreciated by the group.



a large pond at Williamwood

Williamwood is a working beef and sheep farm, which is farmed as much for nature as for food production. It extends to nearly 300 acres and contains a mixture of habitats, including ancient and semi-natural hardwoods, young native woods, old, new and extended hedgerows, grassland, heathland, wetland, wildflower areas, wood pasture and old and new ponds, each with its own associated flora and fauna. Highland cattle and Highland ponies graze the pastures and live outside all year around.

**Tue. 22<sup>nd</sup>** A full day visit by **Lockerbie Academy pupils** working towards the John Muir Trust Award.



The pupils worked very well as usual and treated the Red Squirrel Hide, the Compost Toilet and the ramp rails of the Eskrigg Centre with wood preservative as well as extending the gravel path at the start of the northern loop. Over recent visits the students have shifted around 20 tonnes of gravel and created 100 metres of path. Well done all.

**Wed. 30<sup>th</sup>** **P4/5 Pupils from Gretna Primary School** visited the Reserve between 10:00 and 14.00 hrs. The first activity was to study the Woodland Mini-beasts. They found 15 different species. After a snack they took part in a Scavenger Hunt, to find another 15 different items round the Woodland Walks. They identified all 15. On returning to the centre they had a go at pond-dipping and were amazed to find so many tadpoles amongst the other pond animals. Throughout the visit the pupils pointed out 30 different flowering plants and 10 different types of bird. A very busy, but enjoyable, visit.

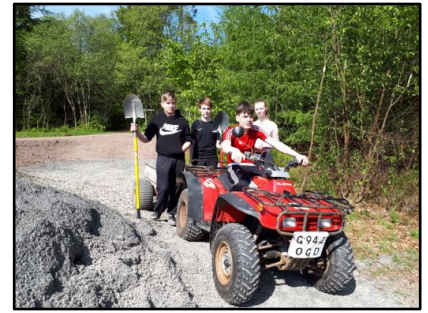


Photographs by Jim Rae

## 5. Volunteer Activities in May

**Sat. 19<sup>th</sup>** We welcomed two new members to the **E-Team**. **Anthony Ison** and **Lewis Carrick** joined **Neil Stewart** and **Heather Donaldson** to help extend the gravel path around the northern loop.

**Sat. 26<sup>th</sup>** After helping **Jim** to install the new sleeper bridge, **Michael Kerr** joined the rest of the E-Team who were working on the gravel path.



**L to R:**  
**Neil Stewart**  
**Heather Donaldson**  
**Michael Kerr**  
**Lewis Carrick**  
**Anthony Ison**

## **Sun. 27<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Day**

In the morning, **David Hughes** and **Jim Rae** attached wire netting to half of the new bridge. The rest will be completed as soon as a new roll of netting has been obtained. David then gave the north wall of the Eskrigg Centre a coat of wood preservative while Jim cleaned the ramp ready for treatment. In the afternoon, Jim treated half of the ramp with preservative.

**Tue. 29<sup>th</sup>** Mid-Annandale Playcare cancelled the planned visit to Eskrigg, so **Jim** finished treating the Centre ramp with preservative.

## 6. **Thu. 17<sup>th</sup> Visit by Jonathan Noad**

Jon accompanied Jim to the site where Jim had photographed the 'Early Mining Bee' last month. They collected the following specimens which Jon later identified.

### **Nomad Bees**

Early Nomad Bee (*Nomada leucophthalma*)

Fabricius' Nomad Bee (*Nomada fabriciana*)

Marshall's Nomad Bee (*Nomada marshalli*)

### **Furrow Bees**

Orange-legged Furrow Bee (*Halictus rubicundus*) - tail was just visible in the burrow

Rufous-footed Furrow Bee (*Lasioglossum rufitarse*) - new record for D&G

### **Mining Bees**

Orange-tailed Mining Bee

or Early Mining Bee (*Andrena haemorrhoa*)

*Nomada fabriciana* is cleptoparasitic on both *Lasioglossum rufitarse* and *Andrena haemorrhoa*, but more usually with the *Andrena* species.

## **Wed. 23<sup>rd</sup> Follow-up by Jim Rae**

Jim went back to the same site to get photographs of as many of the bees as possible.



Early Nomad Bee (f)  
*Nomada leucophthalma*



Fabricius Nomad Bee  
*Nomada fabriciana*



Orange-legged Furrow Bee  
*Halictus rubicundus*



Orange-tailed Mining Bee  
*Andrena haemorrhoa*

**Photographs by Jim Rae**



## 7. The Early Nomad Bee - *Nomada leucophthalma* - female



Dorsal view



Ventral view

**Flight season:** Early March to mid-May.

**Habitat:** Various, including open woodland, brownfield sites of various sorts, heathland and moorland edge. The host bees require plentiful sallows.

**Flowers visited:** Sallows and other willows, dandelions, Colt's-foot, forget-me-nots, Bilberry and Barren Strawberry.

**Status and Distribution:** Widespread, but rather localised throughout Britain and Ireland.

**Host(s):** They are cleptoparasitic on spring-flying mining bees of the sub-genus *Andrena*, particularly *Andrena clarkella* - Clarke's Mining Bee.

These nomad bees are small and relatively hairless, with bold wasp-like markings. The female enters the host's nesting burrow and lays an egg in the wall of an unsealed nest cell. The first instar *Nomada* grub, with its large sickle-shaped mandibles, then destroys the host egg or grub and proceeds to eat the food store.

The above female has accumulated some clay particles on the back of its thorax when entering its hosts' burrows, leaving the impression of a greyish-white spot. This was a common feature of the specimens seen in the area.



Entrance to host's burrow



Clarke's Mining Bee

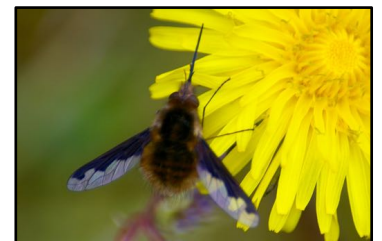
Clarke's Mining Bee, *Andrena clarkella*, is one of the larger mining bees and one of the first to emerge. It relies almost entirely on willows for pollen, but has also been seen visiting dandelions, probably for nectar. This bee will have been responsible for some of the larger "volcanoes" - burrow entrances - seen at the site.



*Leucophora obtusa*

The anthomyiid fly, *Leucophora obtusa*, also frequents the mining bee nests.

It is worth noting that, although female solitary bees can sting, they are not at all aggressive and can usually be observed safely at close quarters.



Bee-fly (*Bombylius major*)

I would like to acknowledge the help of Jonathan Noad and the following text in the preparation of this article: Steven Falk, Field Guide to the Bees of Great Britain and Ireland. Bloomsbury.

Photographs by Jim Rae

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