

# Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

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



## Eskrigg Reserve

### September 2018 News Bulletin

Scottish Charity No:  
SC 005538

1. Views of the pond: on the 18<sup>th</sup> with the cygnets exercising their flight muscles and learning to fly, and early on the 28<sup>th</sup> when the mist was beginning to clear.



2. Confirmed wildlife sightings at the Reserve during September.

#### a. Birds

Blackbird, Blue Tit, Bullfinch, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Coal Tit, Collared Dove, Common Gull, Cormorant, Dunnock, Goldfinch, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Greenfinch, House Martin, House Sparrow, Jay, Long-tailed Tit, Mallard, Moorhen, Mute Swan, Nuthatch, Pheasant, Pied Wagtail, Raven, Robin, Rook, Siskin, Sparrowhawk, Starling, Swallow, Treecreeper, Wood Warbler, Wood Pigeon, Wren.

#### b. Mammals

Brown Hare, Mole,  
Rabbit, Red Squirrel,  
Roe Deer.



#### c. Insects

**Butterflies:** Green-veined White, Large White, Painted Lady, Peacock, Red Admiral, Small Copper, Small White.

**Dragonflies:** Common Darter, Common Hawker.

**Moths:** Silver Y.

Photographs by Brian Taylor (BT) and Jim Rae (JR)



### 3. September Photo Gallery - Fungi



Row 1: Yellow Stagshorn, Wood Cauliflower, Bay Polypore, Beech Milkcap

Row 2: Charcoal Burner, Tawny Grisette, Common Puffball, Felt Saddle

Row 3: Shaggy Scaly-cap, Plums and Custard, Fly Agaric, Penny Bun (Cep)

Row 4: Dyer's Mazegill (05.09.18), Dyer's Mazegill (09.09.18), Dyer's Mazegill (24.09.18) Dyer's Mazegill (29.09.18)

Row 5: *Amanita franchetii*, Shaggy Inkcap, *Lactarius quieticolor*, Scarletina Bolete

There are many other fungi to be found in the woods around Eskrigg Reserve throughout the year. Please do not pick, kick or otherwise destroy them – they are an essential part of the woodland ecosystem.

Photographs by Jim Rae



#### 4. Planned Activities in September

**Sat. 15th** Freelance Ranger, **Elizabeth Tindal**, brought along a group of youngsters to the Reserve, with their befrienders, for a range of activities.

- a. The whole group stood round a large, circular, light-weight waterproof sheet and took hold of the edge. They raised the sheet, turned underneath it and sat down with the edge below them - thus making a communal shelter.



- b. They also made an assortment of group and individual tarpaulin shelters.



- c. Some then joined Jim Rae for a Woodland Mini-beast hunt while others had a go at woodland art.



Mini-beast identification



Piece of artwork



The Befrienders Group

**Tue. 25<sup>th</sup>** In the morning, Jim Rae took a group of **Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)** staff from different parts of Southern Scotland on a guided tour of the Reserve. They enjoyed seeing the various habitats, the Red Squirrels and the wide range of bird species. They were favourably impressed by the results of our 'Access For All Project'. Unfortunately, there was insufficient time to take them round any of the woodland walks.



In the afternoon, Jim was pleased to escort the Right Reverend Susan Brown, Moderator of the Church of Scotland, and some of her colleagues, round the Reserve and the Northern Loop of the Woodland Walks. In the picture, Susan is seen photographing the Red Squirrels.

Photographs by Jim Rae



**Fri. 28th Pupils, Staff and Parents from St Mungo Primary School** came on a **Sponsored Walk** round the **Eskrigg Woodland Walks**. They stopped off in the Reserve for a small snack and refreshments and to watch the Red Squirrels for a while.



1. Assembling at the car park. 2. Setting off round the Northern Loop. 3. Arriving at the half-way refreshment point. 4. Completing the Southern Loop. 5. Watching the Red Squirrels.

As well as raising funds for the school, the group also made a generous donation to the Reserve.

**Note: a.** Members of the **Ecclefechen Day Care** visited the Reserve on **Tue. 18<sup>th</sup>**, but because Jim had a prior engagement there is no photographic record of the visit.

**Note: b.** **Applegarth Primary School** had been due to come to the Reserve on **Wed. 19<sup>th</sup>** but the visit had to be cancelled due to the arrival of **Storm Ali**. The visit will be rescheduled.

## 5. Volunteer Activities in September

**Sat. 1<sup>st</sup>** Neil Stewart and Anthony Ison helped Jim put in a new footbridge to help stop the erosion of the stream banks caused by people jumping over the burn and constructing temporary timber bridges to create a short cut.



**Wed. 5<sup>th</sup>** Ross Gemmell came along with a mini digger to help create another section of the Northern Loop.



**Sat. 8<sup>th</sup>** Anthony Ison, Neil Stewart and Lewis Carrol helped lay another section of the Northern Loop.

Photographs by Jim Rae



**Wed. 12<sup>th</sup>** While clearing the ditches at the north end of the Reserve, one of the diggers inadvertently ripped out part of the silt trap. The Forest Manager, Andy Brown, immediately arranged for Castle Milk Estate staff to repair the damage. They rebuilt the silt trap over the next few days and erected a fence around it to prevent the same thing happening in the future. Thanks Andy.



Silt trap damaged



Silt trap rebuilt

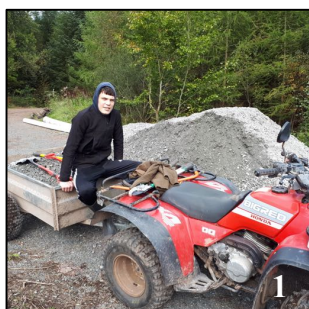


Silt trap fenced off

**Wed. 19<sup>th</sup>** Following the worst of Storm Ali, Jim visited the Reserve and cleared a number of the small trees that had been blown down, a Hawthorn<sup>1</sup> on the path from the car park, two Willows in the Reserve and a Scots Pine<sup>2</sup> on the Forest Road. The Beeches<sup>3</sup> and Willow on the Northern Loop were too big to Handle.



**Sun. 23<sup>rd</sup>** During the morning, **Jim Rae** filled in the pot-holes on the Eskrigg Farm Road. The weather was fair and the car park was full most of the time as visitors came and went. In the afternoon, he completed another section of gravel path on the Northern Loop.



**Sat. 29<sup>th</sup>** **Neil Stewart<sup>1</sup>** and **Jim** worked on the Northern Loop.

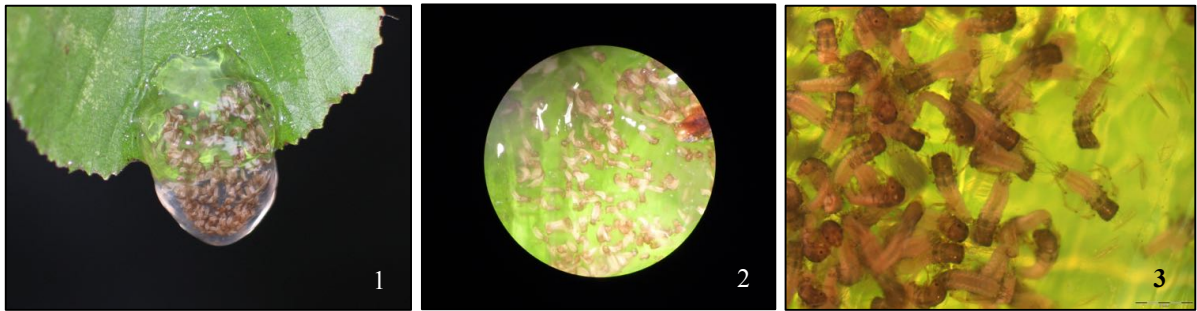
**Sun. 30<sup>th</sup>** **David Hughes<sup>2</sup>** and **Jim** worked on the Northern Loop



We are grateful to the forestry staff on Castle Milk Estate for working to clear fallen and partially fallen trees in South Turnmuir and Well Springs Plantations in order to make the Woodland Walks safe to navigate.

## 6. On a Woodland Walk

While walking through the woods with James Hall, James drew my attention to several blobs of clear jelly hanging from some leaves<sup>1</sup> on a branch overhanging the damp woodland path. On closer inspection, the jelly was found to contain tiny creepy-crawlies. I took a sample home to examine under a microscope<sup>2</sup> and the wee bugs turned out to be tiny caddisfly larvae<sup>3</sup>.



This type of caddisfly normally lays its eggs, in the protective jelly, on trees at the edge of a pond or river. Shortly after hatching the larvae drop into the water. This is one good reason for having trees and shrubs around ponds.

Caddisflies are moth-like animals with aquatic larvae. The adult insects are often seen near the pond at the Reserve and are often caught when trapping moths. Like the moths, they are released back into the wild. During their life cycle, caddisflies undergo complete metamorphosis – the cycle includes four stages – egg, larva, pupa and adult.

There are about 250 different species of caddis in Britain alone, and they normally live in all kinds of freshwater habitats from tiny temporary ponds to rushing mountain torrents.

One reason why caddis flies are so successful and widespread is their ability to produce a silken thread.

**Case-building caddisfly larvae** use the silk to construct various portable shelters. The cases protect the soft abdomen from predators and abrasion by coarse particles drifting in a stream. If disturbed, larvae can retreat into their cases. The cases are constantly being repaired when damaged, or rebuilt as the larvae grow. Some caddis larvae have cases made purely of silk, others incorporate a wide range of materials. The type of material used can be an important means of identification, although some larvae change the material as they grow, or as seasonal materials become available. In general, larvae living in running water use heavier components, such as sand grains, to increase their overall weight. It helps when moving in the current, or even prevents them being washed downstream. On the other hand, larvae living in still water tend to use lightweight materials such as various parts of living or dead vegetation.

**Net-spinning caddisfly larvae** construct fixed retreats of both organic and inorganic materials, on rocks, in the clefts between stones or in tangles of aquatic plants. The constructions are spliced together and glued down to the substrate by a silken thread. Retreats are equipped with trapping nets, positioned perpendicular to the current to capture organic particles or even small animals drifting in a stream. Species depending on algae use smaller mesh size than those specialising on animal prey.

**Tube-making and Trumpet-net caddisfly larvae** feed on organic debris and invertebrates that get caught in their nets. The nets may be equipped with silken threads extending from the entrances. When a passing prey touches the threads, the larva grabs it in a similar way to that of a spider.

**Free-living caddisfly larvae** feed on a variety of insect larvae and other small invertebrates.

Larvae are sensitive to pollution and for this reason are used worldwide as indicators of water quality.

Photographs by Jim Rae

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