

Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

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



Eskrigg Reserve

November 2018 News Bulletin

Scottish Charity No:
SC 005538

1. Eskrigg pond on the 21st of November, the day the first cygnet flew off.



2. Confirmed wildlife sightings at the Reserve during November.

a. Birds

Blackbird, Black-headed Gull, Blue Tit, Brambling, Bullfinch, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Coal Tit, Collared Dove, Dunnock, Fieldfare, Goldfinch, Goosander, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Greenfinch, Grey Wagtail, House Sparrow, Jackdaw, Jay, Kestrel, Lapwing, Long-tailed Tit, Mallard, Moorhen, Mute Swan, Nuthatch, Pheasant, Raven, Robin, Rook, Siskin, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Starling, Stock Dove, Treecreeper, Wood Pigeon, **Wren**.



b. Mammals

Brown Hare, Mole, Pipistrelle Bat, Rabbit, **Red Squirrel**, Roe Deer, **Stoat**, Woodmouse.



Photographs by Jim Rae (JR), MJS Ferrier (MF), Gary Fox (GF), Alistair Moulstone (AM).

3. November Photo Gallery



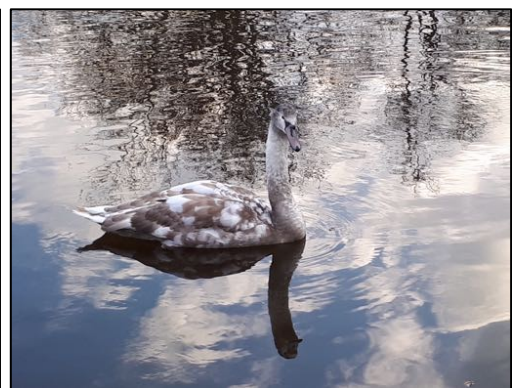
Row 1: Unidentified Bolete growing on dead tree trunk, Dog Lichen (*Peltigera canina*), Bay Polypore (*Polyporus durus*).
 Row 2: Candlesnuff Fungus (*Xylaria hypoxylon*), Turkeytail (*Trametes versicolor*), Wrinkled Club (*Clavulina rugosa*).
 Row 3: Leafy Brain (*Tremella mesenterica*), Holly Speckle (*Trochila ilicina*), Sulphur Tuft (*Hypholoma fasciculare*).

Mute Swans at Eskrigg

The adult swans tried to breed in 2016, but were just too young. The pen laid 5 eggs but they were infertile. In 2017, they produced seven cygnets, but all were taken by one predator or another during week 3. This year 4 eggs hatched, after the 36 day incubation period, on the 26th of May. One cygnet died within hours and a second was on the 2nd of June. The other two cygnets have matured successfully. On the 21st of November, at 179 days old, the first of the young swans flew off. The following day, there was an unconfirmed report of a young swan appearing at the Johnstonebridge Service Station. The remaining young swan is in good health and may fly off any day, or it may overwinter at Eskrigg. Hopefully, the adults will stay to breed again in 2019.



Swan family taken on the 20th of November.



Single remaining young swan on the 21st.

Photographs by Jim Rae

4. Fund Raising Activities in November

Sat. 10th The Lockerbie Wildlife Trust Autumn Coffee Morning was held at Lockerbie Town Hall and raised **£608.09**.

Sat. 17th Members of the Trust Management Committee ran a stall at the turning on of the **Lockerbie Christmas Lights** to raise funds for the Reserve and raised **£323.10**.

Fri. 23rd The Trust also ran a **Christmas Stall at Tesco**, Lockerbie and raised **£683.66**



Many thanks to everyone who contributed to the success of these events.

5. Planned Activities in November

Mon. 26th Twenty-one Primary 7 Pupils and four members of staff from **Murray Primary School at East Kilbride** visited the Reserve for three hours. After a brief introduction and a snack, the youngsters took part in a Wildlife Foray and Scavenger Hunt. After their lunch break, the pupils took turns to report on the wildlife specimens they had encountered en route.



6. Volunteer Activities in November



Tue. 13th **Steven Jackson** helped **Jim** treat a bench seat with wood preservative before he and **Rory Holden** helped Jim fill up some holes along the forest road.

Tue. 20th In the morning, **Steven Jackson** and **Jim** cut up the willow logs for firewood. In the afternoon, **Jim** raked the Reserve path and took the generator to R. C. Dalgliesh for repair and servicing.



Sat. 24th **Neil Stewart** helped **Jim** return a bench seat, that been under repair, to its normal position overlooking the Annan Valley. Many thanks to **Alistair Gordon** for his woodworking expertise. **Neil** and **Jim** then gave an old bench seat a new coat of wood preservative while **Anthony Ison** and **Lewis Carrick** treated a new bench seat. The team then filled in the holes along the Eskrigg Farm Road.



L to R - Neil Stewart, Anthony Ison and Lewis Carrick.

Tue. 27th **Steven Jackson** helped **Jim** top up the bird and squirrel feeders, then do a general tidy-up around the Reserve and Woodland Walks.



Photographs by Jim Rae

UK Pipistrelle Bats

Introduction

Pipistrelles are the commonest, smallest and the most widespread of all British bat species. Two pipistrelle species are found in this area - the **Common Pipistrelle** (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and the **Soprano Pipistrelle** (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*). Both species are very similar.

They are generally medium to dark brown in colour, darker on the face and around the eyes. They have a fast 'jerky' flight. An individual can eat up to 3,000 insects a night.

Size: wingspan: 200-235 mm, head and body length: 35-45 mm, forearm length: 30-35 mm, weight: 3-8 g.

The easiest way to tell these two species apart is by the frequency of their echolocation calls. *P. pipistrellus* echolocates at 45 kHz, and *P. pygmaeus* at 55 kHz.



Habitats

Pipistrelles are active between March and November in a wide range of habitats - woodland, grassland, marshland, farmland, over water and in parks and gardens in rural, suburban and urban areas. They hunt and eat insects on the wing in open spaces between vegetation. They emerge from their roost around twenty minutes after sunset and fly 2-10m above ground level searching for, catching and eating their insect prey - including small moths, midges, mosquitoes and lacewings.

Summer roosts are usually found in crevices around the outside of buildings, in tree holes and bat boxes. Colonies can number as many seventy or eighty. Pipistrelle bats hibernate in winter, usually singly or in small colonies.

Reproduction

Male bats usually roost singly or in small groups during the summer months. During the mating period, from July to early September, they defend individual territories, known as mating roosts, and attract females by making repeated song-flights around their roost.

The following year, between May and August, the females will congregate in maternity or nursery roosts. Between June and mid-July, each female will give birth to one young. The young will suckle their mother's milk for three to four weeks, by which time they are able to fly. By about six weeks, they can forage for themselves.

Status

In the UK these species, like all UK bats, are protected under Schedules 5 and 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Schedule 2 of the Conservation Regulations 1994 (as amended). All UK bats are priority species under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP). The Species Action Plan aims to restore the population to pre-1970s numbers.

Threats

The decline in bat numbers in recent years is probably due in part to changes in agricultural practices that have reduced the availability of insect prey. All bats are also vulnerable to disturbance and loss of roost sites and foraging sites; toxic timber treatment chemicals in buildings are a particular threat.

A third pipistrelle species, the Nathusius' Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*) is a visiting migratory species that has been recorded as far north as the Shetland Isles. Its maternity roosts are rarely found in Britain and it does not appear to hibernate here. It has only recently been considered as a Scottish species.

Size: wingspan: 220-250 mm, head and body length: 46-55 mm, forearm length: 32-40 mm and weight 6-15.5g. It has a peak echolocation frequency of 41 kHz. Its fur is medium-dark reddish-brown above, often with paler tips, and is pale brown below. The fur is longer and less uniformly coloured than the Common Pipistrelle. It is also larger than the Common Pipistrelle with broader wings. The face, ears, wings and tail are dark. It emerges early to hunt, flying in straight lines with rapid, deep wing beats at around 3 to 15 metres above the ground. It feeds on small to medium-sized flying insects, particularly chironomid midges.

Jim Rae (Eskrigg Reserve Manager)

Address: Carradale, 12 Douglas Terrace, Lockerbie, Dumfries and Galloway, DG11 2DZ.

Home Tel.: 01576 203 314 / Mobile No.: 07739 987 009

Email: jim.rae2012@gmail.com