Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

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

Eskrigg Reserve

July 2020 News Bulletin

Scottish Charity No: SC 005538

1. **The rich variety of wild flowers on the the approach to the Reserve from the car park - 01.07.20**

2. **Confirmed wildlife sightings at the Reserve during July.**
   a. **Birds**
   Blackbird, Blackcap, Blue Tit, Bullfinch, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Coal Tit, Common Gull, Cormorant, Dunnock, Goldcrest, Goldfinch, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, House Sparrow, Jay, Mallard, Moorhen, Mute Swan, Nuthatch, Pheasant, Pintail, Raven, Robin, Siskin, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Starling, Swallow, Wood Pigeon, Wren.


Male Blackcap (GS)

   b. **Mammals**
   Bank Vole, Mole, Rabbit, Red Squirrel, Roe Deer, Woodmouse.

   c. **Reptiles** and **Amphibians**
   Common Lizard, Frog, Toad.

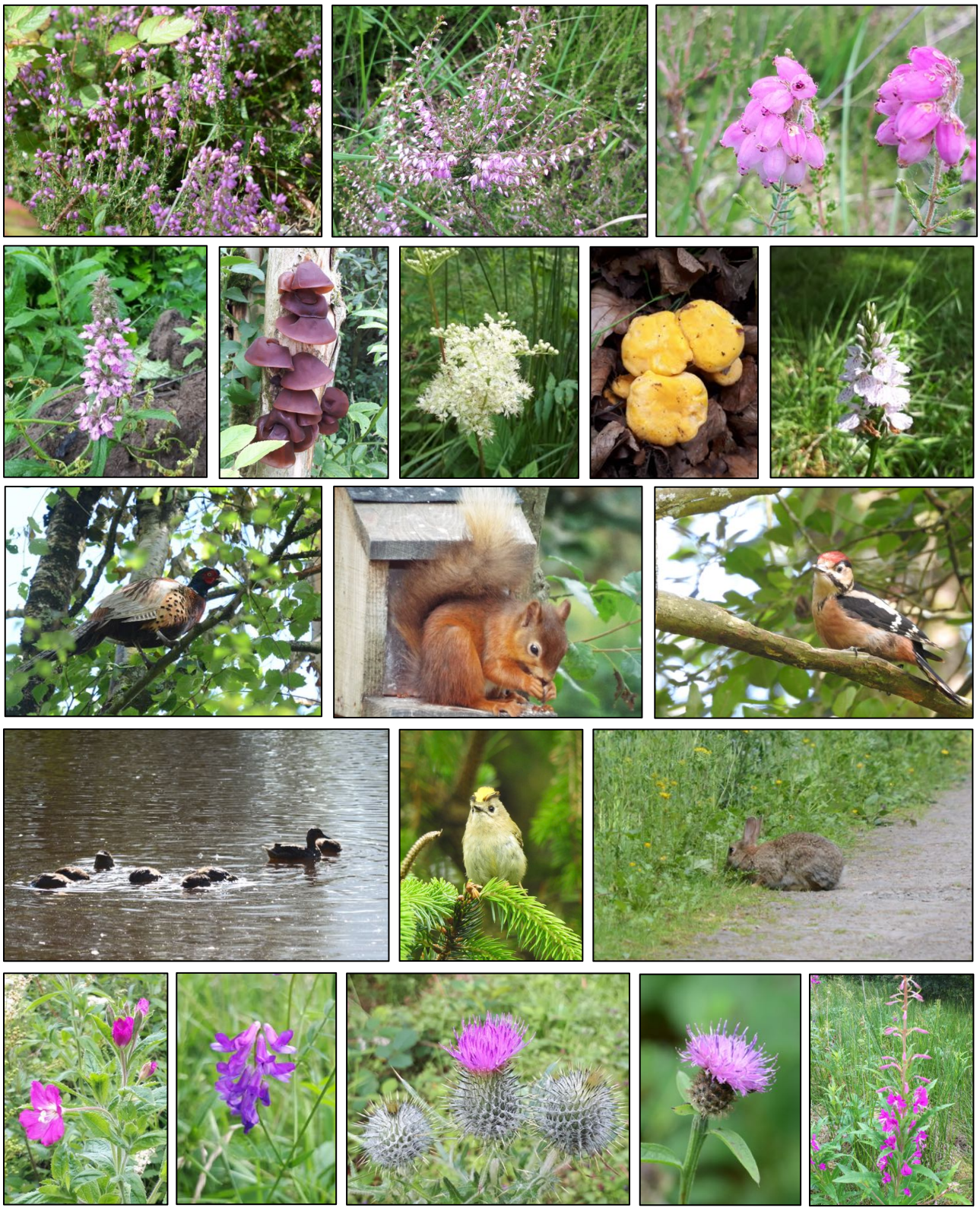
   d. **Butterflies**
   Green-veined White, Large White, Meadow Brown, Peacock, Red Admiral, Ringlet, Small Copper, Small Tortoiseshell, Small White.


Peacock (JR)


Small Copper (JR)

Photographs by Jim Rae (JR) & Gary Shanks (GS)

3. Eskrigg Reserve - July 2020 Photo-gallery

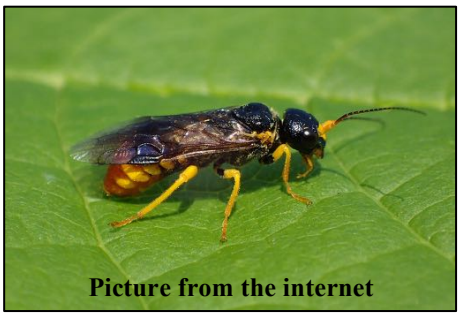


1st Row (JR): Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*), Ling Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*).
2nd Row (JR): Marsh Woundwort, Jelly Ear, Meadowsweet, Chanterelle, Heath Spotted-orchid.
3rd Row: Cock Pheasant (JR), Red Squirrel (PC), Juvenile Great Spotted Woodpecker (JR).
4th Row: Ducklings ducking for food (JR), Goldcrest (GS), Rabbit feeding at the roadside (JR).
5th Row (JR): Great Willowherb, Tufted Vetch, Spear Thistle, Knapweed, Rosebay Willowherb.

Photographs by Pam Copeland (PC), Gary Shanks (GS) & Jim Rae (JR)

4. New Records for Eskrigg

a. *Neurotoma saltuum* - Social Pear Sawfly - larvae


Picture from the internet

Jon Noad found the orange larvae of the Social Pear Sawfly on the 11th of July on a hawthorn bush just south of the Reserve, at grid reference NY 12554 479782. This species had not been previously recorded in Scotland.

Sawflies are in the same order of insects as bees, ants and wasps (the Hymenoptera). There is one generation of social pear sawfly a year. Eggs are laid on foliage in May and June. The orange, caterpillar-like larvae feed on the host plant in groups within a web that can cover entire branches. The larvae can reach 25mm long when fully grown. The larvae make the silk web to protect themselves from predators such as birds, small mammals and parasitoid wasps/flies. They are most often seen on pear, but will also feed on hawthorn, cherry, medlar, plum and cotoneaster. The larvae make quite a mess of the host bush, not only defoliating it but also leaving the webbing and frass (droppings) on the branches they have stripped. When the larvae have completed their feeding they go down into the soil, where they pupate and emerge as adults in the following spring.

b. *Ichneumon stramentor* (male) - An Ichneuman Wasp

This adult ichneumon is also in the order Hymenoptera, and was spotted by Jim Rae on a Hogweed flower on the 18th of July, at grid reference NY 12595 80539.

Thanks to Michael Stewart for his help with the identification.

It is a solitary, parasitoid wasp that lays its eggs in a live host. The eggs hatch into carnivorous larvae that eat and kill the host. The wasp larvae parasitize the larvae and pupae of the Large Yellow Underwing and Hebrew Character moths. They can be found in meadows, hedgerows, woodland margins and gardens.

c. Robin's Pincushion


Picture from the internet

The Robin's pincushion, or Bedeguar Gall, is caused by the larvae of the **Mossy Rose Gall Wasp - *Diplolepis rosae***. The gall develops as a chemically induced distortion of an unopened axillary or terminal bud on the Dog Rose. The female wasp lays as many as 60 eggs in each bud during the late spring or early summer. Inside the gall there are a number of chambers in which the grubs develop. By August the galls are fully developed. The insects overwinter as pupae and the adult wasps emerge in the spring. The wasp is parthenogenetic, with fewer than one percent being males.

The galls occur more commonly on plants under stress, i.e. very dry conditions (like we had at the Reserve this spring), waterlogging or hedge cutting, whereas vigorously growing plants are less commonly found to have galls. Whether the vigorous plant suppresses gall formation or is avoided by the wasp in favour of easier targets is unknown. Young and damaged plants tend to produce larger and more numerous galls than old and intact ones. In the latter, many eggs are laid, but the number of galls formed is relatively few.

Photographs by Jim Rae or downloaded from the internet.

5. Classification of insects - Order Hymenoptera

(Adapted from an article by David Britton in an Australian Museum fact sheet, 2018.)

Ants, wasps, bees and sawflies play key roles in most ecosystems as predators, parasites and pollinators. Common characteristics of the order Hymenoptera include:

a. Two pairs of membranous (thin, often see-through) wings. The forewings and hind wings are held together by small hooks. The hind wings are smaller than the forewings and the wing venation (vein arrangement) is often much reduced. However, in many species the wings are not present or are present only during mating flights (e.g. ants).
b. Chewing mouthparts. However, in some groups, the lower lip has been modified to form a tongue (e.g. bees).
c. Compound eyes that are usually large (although many are blind e.g. ants and fig wasps).
d. The females generally have an ovipositor, which may be modified for sawing, piercing or stinging.
e. Complete metamorphosis.

Worldwide there are over 100,000 species included in the Hymenoptera group.

Hymenoptera is further divided into two suborders:

Suborder Symphyta (sawflies)

Sawflies most closely resemble the hymenopteran ancestor group and show the following characteristics that distinguish them from wasps, bees and ants:

a. The body has no waist. Most females have a saw-like egg-laying device for cutting slits in plants into which eggs are laid.
b. The larvae are caterpillar-like and feed on the outside and inside of plant tissue.
c. There are one or two parasitic families.

Suborder Apocrita (wasps, bees, ants)

Wasps, bees and ants all share the following characteristics:

a. The body has a distinct waist. The first segment of the abdomen is incorporated into the thorax. A narrow region called the petiole joins this to the rest of the abdomen, called the gaster.
b. The larvae are maggot-like.

However, members of this suborder also show an extremely wide range of habits and biology. Some are parasites, while others are predators, herbivores, gall-formers, fungus feeders, leaf miners or nectar and/or pollen gatherers. Most species are solitary, while others are organised into social communities of varying size and complexity. Wasps and bees are classified into several families, but ants all belong to a single family, Formicidae.

6. July Volunteer Activities at Eskrigg Reserve

Jim was still lone-working during most of July. In addition to the normal daily and weekly routines he:

a. repaired the door into the Red Squirrel Hide, after someone forced open the locked door and knocked off the board on the back of the door that held the lock.
b. filled in the potholes on the Eskrigg Farm road.
c. cut and cleared various trees that had fallen across the Woodland Walks.
d. strimmed and raked the sides of the following paths: behind the hedge opposite the Dryfesdale Lodge Visitors' Centre; one side of the forest road from the Dumfries road to the Northern Loop; from the Centre to the East Hide; beside the Centre ramp; along to the duck feeder; next to the Red Squirrel Hide, the main path through the Reserve, the path from the Reserve to the car park, the paths from the Reserve to the forest road; the Bilberry Walk and the Honeysuckle Walk.
e. carried out a flowering plant survey, butterfly survey and a fungal foray.

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