

Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

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

Eskrigg Reserve

March 2021 News Bulletin



Scottish Charity No:
SC 005538

1.



A view of the Annan valley to the west of Well Springs plantation.

The path along the west edge of Well Springs plantation.



2. Confirmed wildlife sightings at the Reserve during March.

a. Birds

Blackbird, Black-headed Gull, Blue Tit, Bullfinch, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Coal Tit, Collared Dove, Crossbill, Dunnock, Fieldfare, Goldfinch, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Grey Heron, Jay, Long-tailed Tit, Mallard, Mandarin, Moorhen, Mute Swan, Nuthatch, Pheasant, **Red Kite**, Robin, Siskin, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Treecreeper, Tree Sparrow, Woodpigeon, Wren.

b. Mammals

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

c. Amphibians and Reptiles

Frog, Toad.

d. Invertebrates

Peacock Butterfly, Early Tooth-striped Moth.



Early Tooth-striped Moth

Photographs by Jim Rae

3. Eskrigg Reserve - March 2021 Photo-gallery



1st Row: Scarlet Elfcup, Dunnock, Devil's Matchsticks
2nd Row: Dandelion, Toads arriving to breed, Gorse flower
3rd Row : Willow buds, Snowdrops, Larch buds
4th Row: Grey Heron, Polypore (*Xylodon* sp.), Swan in the woods
5th Row: Frog and Toad spawn, Daffodils, Goldfinch

Photographs by Jim Rae

4. March Activities at Eskrigg Reserve

Once again there were no organised activities due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

5. Maintenance work at the Reserve and Woodland Walks

5th: **Jim** and **Jessica** laid gravel on the sections of path between the Reserve path and the forest road.



6th: **Jim** and **Zack** dug up the muddy patch next to the large picnic table and built an amphibian bank beside the path to the Kingfisher Hide.

7th: **Jim** and **Zack** laid Terram membrane and gravel next to the large picnic table.

8th: **Jim** removed branches from the pond and cleared a blocked drainage pipe next to the Roberthill field gate.

12th: **Jim** treated the sides of the Centre ramp and trellis with Algon; **Jessica** treated two bench seats and the toilet fence with Algon, **Zack** and **Jack** treated other timber structures within the Reserve with Algon.



13th: **Zack** and **Jack** helped to clear the mud and lay gravel at the Dumfries road entrance.

14th: **Jim** treated the Centre ramp with wood preservative then laid gravel at the start of the Bog Myrtle Walk on the southern loop of the **Red Squirrel Trail (RST)**.

15th: **Jim** laid gravel up to Whin Alley on the southern loop of the RST.

16th: **Jim** laid gravel to Dod's Bench on the southern loop of the RST.

17th: **Jim** laid gravel to Red Squirrel Trail post no. 3 on the southern loop of the RST.

18th: **Jim** and **Zack** laid gravel along the open farm stretch of the southern loop of the RST.

19th: **Jim** and **Zack** laid gravel along the pinewood stretch of the southern loop of the RST.

20th: **Jim** and **Zack** gravel along the pinewood stretch of the southern loop of the RST.

22nd: **Jim** and **Zack** applied Algon to the fence at the Dumfries road entrance.

23rd: **Jim** and **Zack** treated the fence and sign at the Dumfries road entrance with wood preservative.



24th: **Jim** fitted non-slip plates to the ramp and bridge and treated the inside of Red Squirrel Hide with preservative, while **Alexandros (Alex)** washed the outside of the Centre and treated the outside of the Red Squirrel Hide with preservative.

30th: **Jim** removed the netting from, and fitted non-slip plates to, the narrow bridge, while **Alex** treated the Red Squirrel Hide ramp and platform with wood preservative.

31st: **Zack** and **Zander** treated several signs and posts along the Reserve path with Algon.

6. Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*)

On the 27th of March, a Red Kite was spotted on the west side of Lockerbie. (Thank you to **Nan** and **Graham Rew** for the timely phone call.) Carrion Crows and Black-headed Gulls were harassing the bird of prey for quite some time over the Dumfries road before it flew off towards Eskrigg Nature Reserve. The kite was soaring high above the Reserve for some time and **Jim Rae** took the following photographs - not great quality but good enough to confirm the bird's identity.



7. Red Squirrel Teeth

All rodents have a pair of upper and lower incisors. Unlike our teeth, these incisors don't have closed roots, and they never stop growing. When they are not gnawing on solid food, rodents grind their upper and lower incisors together to keep them from growing into their brains. **John Robson** took the following photographs of a Red Squirrel skull.

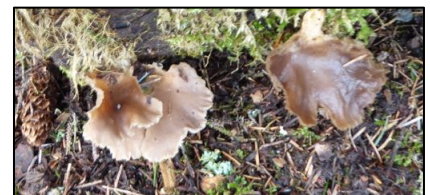


This photograph shows a side view of the red squirrel's skull. You can see how the large incisors meet when the jaws are closed.



This picture shows the lower jaw with the lower, right incisor removed and placed along side. Note how far back in the jaw the tooth reaches.

Note: **Duncan Ford** has verified that the **Pale Oyster (*Pleurotus pulmonarius*)**, featured in the December 2020 bulletin and seen again in February, was correctly identified.



The answer to February 2021 activity a: The deciduous tree not in the wordsearch was the Hazel.
The answers to February 2021 activity b: The fifteen coniferous trees were
1. Lawson's Cypress, 2. Douglas Fir, 3. European Silver Fir, 4. Grand Fir, 5. Western Hemlock, 6. European Larch, 7. Hybrid Larch, 8. Japanese Larch, 9. Corsican Pine, 10. Lodgepole Pine, 11. Scots Pine, 12. Radiata Pine, 13. Western Red-cedar, 14. Sitka Spruce, 15. Norway Spruce.

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