

# Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

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

## Eskrigg Reserve

### March 2022 News Bulletin



Scottish Charity No:  
SC 005538

#### 1. The pond at Eskrigg Reserve – Sunrise on 1 March and late afternoon on 30 March.



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

##### a. Birds

Blackbird, Blue Tit, Bullfinch, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Coal Tit, Cormorant, Dunnock, Goldcrest, Goldfinch, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Grey Heron, Greylag Goose, Jay, Kestrel, Kingfisher, Long-tailed Tit, Mallard, Mute Swan, Nuthatch, Pheasant, Raven, Red Kite, Robin, Rook, Siskin, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Starling, Stock Dove, Tawny Owl, Teal, Treecreeper, Woodcock, Woodpigeon, Wren.

b. **Mammals:** Bank Vole, Fox, Hare, Mole, Red Squirrel.

c. **Amphibians:** Frog, Toad.



Female Sparrowhawk (AM)

Photographs by Alistair Moulstone (AM), Jim Rae (JR), Sybille Spägele (SS)

**3. March 2022 Photo-gallery.**



**Row 1 (BT): Grey Heron, Red Squirrel, Cluster of Toads  
Row 2 (BT): Blue Tit, Red Squirrel, Robin  
Row 3 (BT): Bank Vole, Toad, Bank Vole  
Row 4: Red Squirrel (SL), Frog Spawn (BT), Red Squirrel (SL)  
Row 5: Jay (DB), Red Squirrel (AKM), Siskin (DB)**

**Photographs by David Brantom (DB), Stephen Lipton (SL),  
Andrew K Murray (AKM), Brian Taylor (BT)**

**4. Maintenance and construction work at the Reserve and Woodland Walks in March.**  
**Work carried out this month included:**



**Mon. 7 Tom Hargreaves and Jim Rae** cut branches off part of a wind-blown beech tree so that walkers could get past without having to climb over the tree. They then raked a section of the Woodland Walks. **Jim** also planted a Rowan tree for **Nora Hastie**.

**Wed. 9 Jim** planted another tree for **Nora**.



**Tue. 15 Zack Nicholson** helped **Jim** to rake the northern half of the Pipeline Walk.

**Fri. 18 Jim** raked the southern section of the Pipeline Walk.

**Sat. 19 Jim** tidied what he could of the mid-section of the Pipeline Walk where there are several Scots Pines across the path brought down by Storm Arwen. Castle Milk Estate will remove these in due course.



**Mon. 21 Tom and Jim** cut down and started to clear four large willow branches that were hanging over the Reserve path near the silt trap to make sure they did not break off and fall on someone.

**Tom and Jim** later did some repair work at the Dryfesdale Cemetery Lodge entrance.

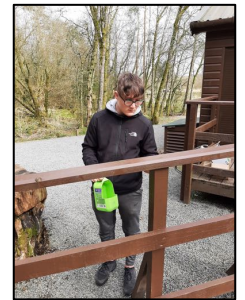


**Tue. 22 Jim** cut up and cleared the remaining willow branches near the silt trap.

**Wed. 23 Jim** planted a Scots Pine seedling, where one of the pines came down in the storm near the entry to the Red Squirrel Hide. This will be dedicated to Queen Elizabeth II, in celebration of her Platinum Jubilee (1952 – 2022). He then planted two others.

**Fri. 25 Jim** planted a Rowan tree.

**Tue. 29** A new volunteer, **Joe Moore**, started work at the Reserve. He was first given a tour of the Reserve, then, while **Jim** spring-cleaned the inside of the Centre, **Joe** treated the ramp railings and the trellis with Algon to kill the algae. In the afternoon they both treated the fence at the Cemetery Lodge entrance with Algon, before taking a stroll round the Woodland Walks.



**5. Visits and meetings.**

**Thu. 10 Maggie Driscoll** brought other members of the **Stewartry U3A** to the Reserve car park and Jim then gave them a guided tour of the Reserve and some of the Woodland Walks.

**Mon. 14 Jim** gave a talk to the **Johnstonebridge WRI** about the changes made at Eskrigg Reserve in recent years.

**Tue. 22** The **Annandale Red Squirrel Group** held a catch-up meeting at Eskrigg Reserve.

**Sun. 27 Jim** met up with **Peter Hands** to discuss the installation of solar panels at Eskrigg Centre.



## 6. Birch Sap.

**Birch sap, birch water or birch juice** is the sap that can be directly tapped from birch trees, usually Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*) or Silver Birch (*Betula petula*) in this area. Birch sap may be consumed both fresh and naturally fermented. When fresh, it is a clear and colourless liquid, often slightly sweet with a slightly silky texture. After two to three days, the sap starts fermenting and the taste becomes more acidic.

The best time to harvest the sap is in the month before the leaves appear, generally starting around the second week of March. Details of how to collect sap can be easily obtained online.

Once you have your sap, it won't stay fresh long, there are a few ways you can use it – drinking it 'neat' as a tonic, reducing it down to make birch sap syrup or alternatively – making birch sap wine. Birch sap syrup can in turn be used in a number of recipes including Birch Sap Syrup Sticky Pudding and Birch Syrup & Vegan Pancake.

### Contents of Birch Sap:

- heterosides - betuloside** ( $C_{16}H_{24}O_7$ ) - a glycoside linked to phenol which is produced in response to damage by insect bark borers and rabbits and **monotropitoid** ( $C_{19}H_{26}O_{12}$ ) - a natural plant extracted salicylate derivative that can be used as a natural aspirin substitute.
- amino acids** - up to 40% **glutamine**, but also **citruline, glutamic acid, isoleucine, valine** and **asparagine**.
- amylase enzymes - sucrogene-amylase** which converts starch to sucrose and **cellobiogene-amylase** which converts starch to cellobiose, a requirement for the construction of new cellulose cell walls as the leaves develop in spring.
- sugars - glucose, fructose** and small amounts of **sucrose**.
- minerals** - calcium (Ca), chromium (Cr), cobalt (Co), copper (Cu), iron (Fe), magnesium (Mg), manganese (Mn), nickel (Ni), phosphorus (P), potassium (K), sodium (Na), sulphur (S), zinc (Zn).
- polyphenol antioxidants**, which protect the cells against free radicals and **vitamin C**.

Here are some uses that Birch Sap have been put to around the world:

Region	Traditional medicinal use	Cosmetic use
Belarus	<u>lung</u> diseases, <u>gout</u> , sickness	washing hair
Bulgaria		hair growth
Czech Republic	poor health, <u>infertility</u>	against freckles
Estonia	(prevention of) eye diseases, skin diseases, source of vitamins	washing hair, against freckles and to bleach the skin
Hungary	stomach and <u>lung diseases</u>	against freckles
Latvia	“revitalization”	washing hair
Poland	“revitalization”, <u>kidney stones</u>	washing hair in order to strengthen it
Romania	<u>kidney stones</u> , <u>jaundice</u> , as milk-rennet, scab, diuretic	hair colouring, to remove sunspots and moles
Russia	externally against sores, to help children during teething	washing face
Sweden	<u>scurvy</u> , <u>cholera</u>	
Ukraine	treating skin diseases, source of vitamins, diuretic	against freckles
United Kingdom	tonic, rheumatism, first nourishment for new-born children	prevention of baldness
United States	Poor health	

**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**