

# Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

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

## Eskrigg Reserve

### May 2022 News Bulletin



Scottish Charity No:  
SC 005538

#### 1. Reserve pond on 1 May.



JR

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

##### a. Birds:

Blackbird, Blue Tit, Bullfinch, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Coal Tit, Dunnock, Goldfinch, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Greenfinch, Grey Heron, Greylag Goose, House Sparrow, Jackdaw, Jay, Long-tailed Tit, Mallard, Moorhen, Mute Swan, Nuthatch, Pheasant, Pied Wagtail, Raven, Robin, Siskin, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Starling, Stock Dove, Stonechat, Swallow, Swift, Treecreeper, Tree Sparrow, Woodpigeon, Wren.

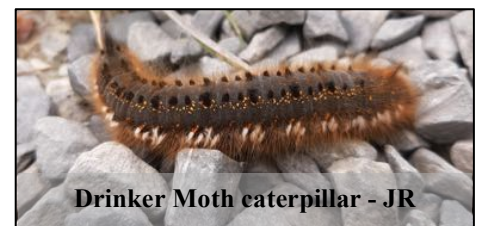
**b. Mammals:** Bank Vole, Fox, Hare, Mole, Rabbit, Red Squirrel, Roe Deer, Woodmouse.

**c. Butterflies:** Green-veined White, Orange-tip, Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell, Small White.

**Moths:** Drinker Moth caterpillar.



Duckling catching a fly - BT

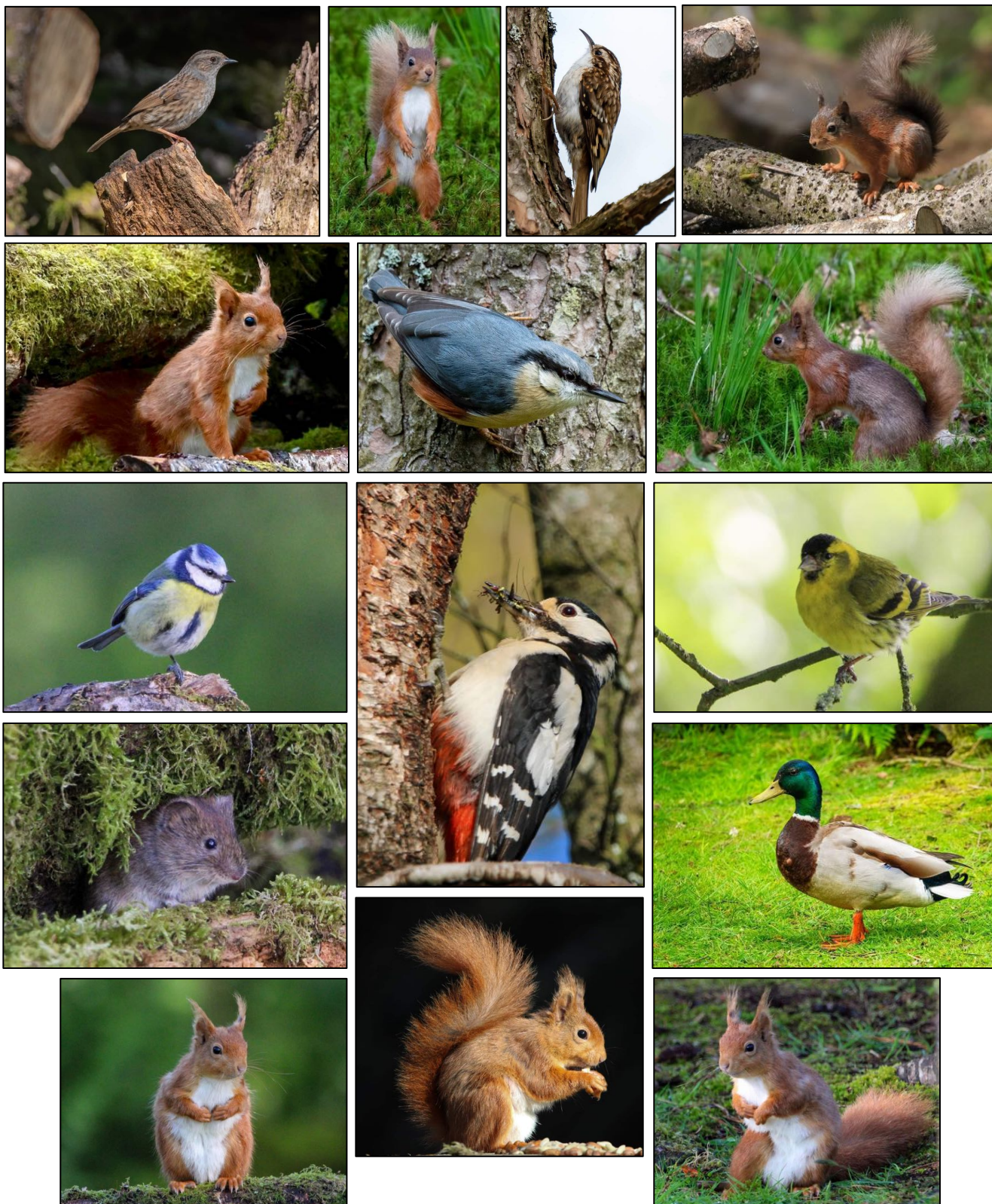


Drinker Moth caterpillar - JR

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



### 3. May 2022 Photo-gallery.



**Row 1: Dunnock (BT), Red Squirrel (TS), Tree Creeper (J M-B), Red Squirrel (BT)**

**Row 2: Red Squirrel (J M-B), Nuthatch (J M-B), Red Squirrel (TS)**

**Row 3 (KCN): Blue Tit, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Siskin**

**Row 4 (KCN): Bank Vole, GSW, Mallard**

**Row 5 (KCN): Red Squirrels**

**Photographs by Jim M-Bell (J M-B), Keith Chippy Nicoll (KCN), Tony Scruton (TS), Brian Taylor (BT)**



#### 4. May Events. Mon. 2 Tree Felling

The last of the Sitka Spruce plantation next to the Reserve was cut down. This was done skillfully by **Johnny Armstrong** driving the harvester and **Doug Luxton** with the chainsaw.



The harvester



Last tree standing



Over the following week, the logs were forwarded to, and stacked at, the side of the forest road ready for removal by a timber lorry. It could take some time for the timber to be taken away and the forest road to reopen for walkers. The picture on the left was taken on 6 May, when most of the timber on the site had been cleared.

#### 5. May Visits.

##### Fri. 6 Visit by Murray Primary School

The planned visit to Eskrigg Reserve could not go ahead because of the forestry work in the area. Instead, Jim took the group of 27 children and 3 staff to Lochmaben and gave them a guided tour of the Castle Loch Walk and Lochmaben Castle.



##### Wed. 11 Visit by two members of the SVEC

Members of the **Solway Vehicles Enthusiasts Club**, **Peter Geddes** and **Jock Crawford**, met the **Reserve Manager, Jim Rae**, at the Reserve car park and presented him with a cheque for two hundred pounds. **Jim** thanked them and all the members of the SVEC for their generous donation.

**Tue. 17** Members of a **Local Craft Group** have put up, on the side of the centre, a display depicting the theme '**A Wildflower Meadow**'. Visitors to the Reserve can't help but be impressed by the skillful ways by which the ladies in the group have represented the range of flowers to be seen in and around the Reserve during the months of May and June. The display will stay up until the end of June.

**Many thanks to Carole, Christine, Jessie, Mairi, Maureen, Min, Norah, Sybil and Tracey.**



Photographs by Jim Rae



## 6. Maintenance and construction work at the Reserve and Woodland Walks in May.

**Sat. 7, Sun. 8 & Sat. 28**

**Peter Hands** and **Jim Rae** assembled a solar panel frame and attached the two new solar panels to it. **Peter** then wired up the panels to the control units and storage battery in the Centre. He replaced the original strip lights, which had been powered by a generator, with LED strip lights that are now powered by the solar panels/battery. The electricity wall sockets were also connected to the new system. These alterations will allow the Trust to run day- and night-time events without the background noise of the generator.



However, another reason for installing the new system was to power the heated defibrillator cabinet that **Peter** and **Jim** have mounted on the front wall of the Centre. A defibrillator is **now available** for use in emergencies.

**Many thanks to Peter for helping to arrange the necessary finance and then ordering and fitting the new system for Lockerbie Wildlife Trust.**



**Tue. 10, Fri. 13 & Mon. 16**

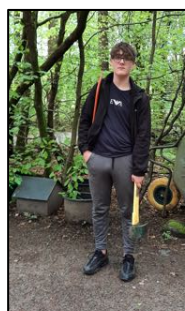
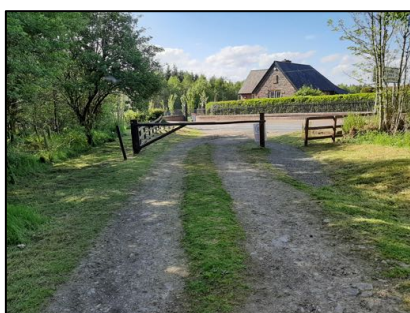
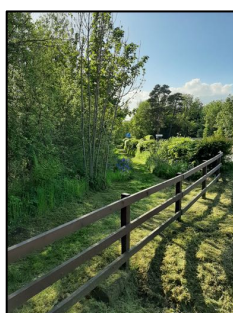
The willows along the east bank of the pond had grown to such a size over the years that they had fallen over and some branches were overhanging the path to the Kingfisher Hide. Over a number of days **Jim** cut them back with the pole chainsaw and bushman to make the area safe.

**Mon. 16 & Tue. 17** **Tom Hargreaves** and **Joe Moore** weeded the path to the Kingfisher Hide while **Jim** cut back more of the willows.



**Tue. 17** **Joe Moore** and **Jim** then set about removing the 'tree stump table' next to the ramp into the Centre because the table had rotted and collapsed.

**Jim** completed the stump removal on **Wed. 18 May**.



**Thu. 19** **Jim** strimmed and raked the grass at the Cemetery entrance and along the path beside the Dumfries road.

**Tue. 31** **Doug Luxton** kindly returned to the Reserve to fell the three Ash trees along the path to the Kingfisher Hide because they were infected with the **Ash Dieback Fungus - *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus***. While he was there he used his chainsaw skills to modify one of the Sitka Spruce stumps into a seat. He will return at a future date to do the same with a second stump beside the entrance path from the forest road. Thanks Doug.



Photographs by Jim Rae



## 7. May Flowers.



Row 1 : Wild Garlic, Crosswort, *Taraxacum palustre*, Hairy Bittercress, Garlic Mustard

Row 2 : Hawthorn, Red Campion, White Bluebell, Germander Speedwell, Pignut

Row 3 : Welsh Poppy, Common Woodrush, Common Chickweed, Creeping Buttercup

Row 4 : Daisy, Cuckooflower, Round-leaved Crowfoot

Row 5 : Yellow Pimpernel, Holly, Pink Purslane

Plants in flower at the end of the month included: Bugle, Elder, Heath Speedwell, Nettle, Red Clover, Ribwort Plantain, Star of Bethlehem and Wood Aven.

Photographs by Jim Rae



## 8. Plants of the Month.

### 1: Bugle (*Ajuga reptans*) Flowers May – July

Bugle is ubiquitous throughout the British Isles except for the extreme North of Scotland and parts of Central Ireland. It is a common plant of woodland clearing and rides, recent coppice, scrub, hedge banks, meadows and pastures, usually on fairly fertile, damp, mildly acid to calcareous soils.

It is a short, creeping plant, which spreads above ground by means of stolons that send down roots at their nodes. It has large oval leaves, which spread out like a rosette at its base, and smaller leaves growing up its flower spike. Small, purple flowers, with protruding stamens, sprout in between the leaves on the upright, coloured and hairy stems. They are formed from petals that have fused together during their development to form a tube like structure with five ‘teeth’ on the outer edge. Beneath the flower is a leaf-like bract.

The flowers are attractive to a variety of insects including the White-tailed Bumblebee, Green-veined White Butterfly, Silver Y Moth and Common Carder Bee. Bugle is usually pollinated by bees, although self-pollination is possible.

The ‘reptans’ in its Latin name is derived from ‘repto’, meaning ‘creeping or crawling’.

Bugle is a popular ingredient in herbal remedies, particularly for stopping bleeding.



### 2: Star of Bethlehem (*Ornithogalum umbellatum* ssp. *campestre*) Flowers May – June

This hardy plant, of the Asparagus family, is native throughout much of Europe, as well as north-west Africa and south-west Asia. It is naturalised in much of Britain but never common. It grows in grassy places, meadows and roadside verges on most soil types.

It is a bulbous perennial, often spreading rapidly by offsets. This short, hairless erect plant has 6 to 9 narrow green leaves, each with a white mid-vein. It has umbel-like racemes of star-shaped white flowers. Each flower has 6 **tepals**\* that have a broad band of green on the outside. The 3 outer tepals are longer than the inner 3 and originally encased the flower bud before unfolding.



Single flowers atop long, curving, alternate stalks. Emerging in the stalk axils are long, whitish, tapering ligules, with lime-green longitudinal stripes. The sub-species *ssp. campestre* has fewer flowers (up to 12) than does the larger *ssp. umbellatum* which has up to 20.

The nectar/pollen rich flowers open up when it is sunny and attract bees and other pollinators. It is non-toxic to birds but can be poisonous to people, domestic animals and livestock. In the middle of each flower is a green ovary with a single, egg-yellow, starred stigma and style atop. This is surrounded by six *white* and (unusual in the floral world) *wide*, but narrowing filaments atopped by broad white anthers bearing the creamy-yellow pollen.

\***Tepal** – A segment of the outer whorl in a flower that has no differentiation between petals and sepals.

Photographs by Jim Rae

**Jim Rae (Eskrigg Reserve Manager)**

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