

Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

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

Eskrigg Reserve

July 2023 News Bulletin



Scottish Charity No:
SC 005538

1. Eskrigg pond from the Centre (09.07.23)



2. Confirmed wildlife sightings at the Reserve during July

a. Birds:

Blackbird, Blackcap, Blue Tit, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Coal Tit, Dunnock, Goldfinch, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Greenfinch, Hooded Crow, House Martin, House Sparrow, Jay, Linnet, Long-tailed Tit, Magpie, Mallard, Moorhen, Nuthatch, Oystercatcher, Pheasant, Red Kite, Reed Bunting, Robin, Siskin, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Spotted Flycatcher, Starling, Stock Dove, Swallow, Treecreeper, Tree Sparrow, Willow Warbler, Woodpigeon, Wren, Yellowhammer.

b. Mammals:

Common Shrew, Fox, Hare, Mole, Rabbit, Red Squirrel, Roe Deer, Stoat.

c. Amphibians and Reptiles:

Frog, Toad, Lizard.

d. Insects:

Butterflies: Green-veined White, Large White, Meadow Brown, Red Admiral, Small Tortoiseshell, Small White, Ringlet, Small Skipper.



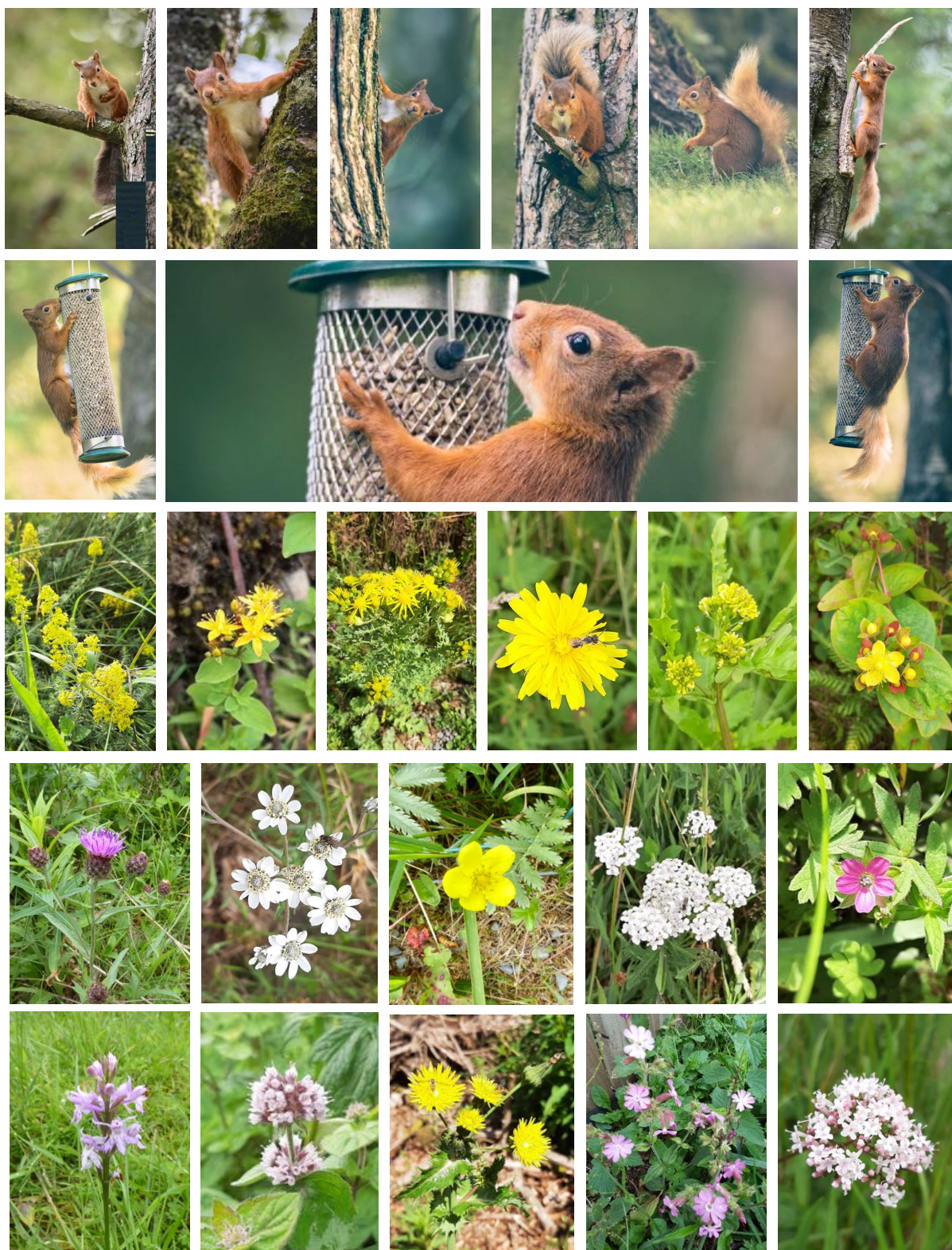
Argyresthia brockeella

Others: Micro-moths - *Argyresthia brockeella*. * Grasshopper.

* New species for Eskrigg

Photographs by Jim Rae (JR)

3. July 2023 Photo-gallery



Row 1 (SW): Red Squirrel

Row 2 (SW): Red Squirrel

Row 3 (JR): Lady's Mantle, Square-stalked St. John's-wort, Common Ragwort, Autumn Hawkbit, Marsh Yellowcress, Tutsan

Row 4 (JR): Knapweed, Sneezewort, Silverweed, Yarrow, Cut-leaved Crane's-bill,

Row 5 (JR): Heath Spotted Orchid, Water Mint, Prickly Sow Thistle, Red Campion, Common Valerian

Photographs by Jim Rae (JR), Sharon Watson (SW)

4. Construction and Maintenance Work during July

Sat. 01 John Spence and Cairn Douglas helped Jim to weed, trim and rake the path to the Kingfisher Hide.

Wed. 05 Jim raked the path to the Kingfisher Hide once again. He then trimmed and raked the area next to the Red Squirrel Hide and trimmed and raked the sides of the forest road from the Cemetery entrance to the first bend.



Thu. 06 Jim weeded a section of the Reserve path.

Fri. 07 Gordon Reid and Jim cut back the broom and spear thistles on a section of the Northern Loop and then trimmed and raked the sides of the path.

Sat. 08 Jim was tidying the heathland area when he got stung on his ear by a bee. When his face swelled up later in the day he had to go to the A&E in Dumfries to get anti-histamine tablets.

Sun. 09 Jim showed Liam McNeillie the opening-up routine in preparation for him to open and close for a week and thereby gain the hours of voluntary work needed for him to gain a **Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award**, and allow Jim to have a week off at the end of the month. He then met up with John Spence and Cairn Douglas to prune, trim and rake the sides another section of the Northern Loop. After lunch, Jim trimmed the sides of another section of the forest road.

Mon. 10 Jim pruned, trimmed and raked the north section of the pipeline walk, which had become overgrown with brambles and other plants.

Wed. 12 Jim trimmed the sides of another section of the forest road. Whilst locking up, Jim was stung by a wasp and had to take more anti-histamine tablets. The wasp had come from a nest in the south wall of the Eskrigg Centre. As a result Jim kept the shutters on the south side closed for the next few days to stop anyone else getting stung.

Thu. 13 Jim trimmed and raked the sides of the Reserve Car Park and the first part of the path down to the Reserve.

Fri. 14 Gordon, Brian Mauson and Jim trimmed and raked more of the path to the Reserve in the morning and Jim carried on clearing the path in the afternoon.

Sat./Sun. 15/16 Jim completed trimming and raking the entrance path as far as the Shelter.

Fri. 21 Gordon, Brian and Jim trimmed and raked part of the Reserve path in the morning and, in the afternoon, Jim trimmed the area at the Cemetery entrance and the path along the side of the Dumfries road.



Mon. 24 Jim raked up the grass cuttings at the Cemetery entrance and Dumfries road path.

Tue. 25 Jim set up the pitfall traps ready for the MAP visit on Thursday.

Fri. 28 Gordon, Brian and Jim filled up the potholes on the Eskrigg Farm Road.

23-28 Jim hand-weeded stretches of the Reserve Path during any free time.

Photographs by Jim Rae

5. Activities involving the Lockerbie Wildlife Trust during July

Thu. 06 A group from **Mid-Annandale Playcare (MAP)** visited the Reserve.

Sat. 22 Jim manned a **Lockerbie Wildlife Stall** at the **RH Youth Organisation Activity Day 2023**, held at the Lockerbie Ice Rink between 9.00am and 3.00pm.

Thu. 27 Some youngsters from **Mid-Annandale Playcare (MAP)**, and their Leader, visited the Reserve to carry out some wildlife activities.

a. Stream Sampling: the group caught and identified Minnows, Mayfly larvae, Flatworms, Roundworms, Freshwater Shrimps.

b. Woodland Mini-beasts: the group examined the contents of some Pitfall Traps and found Earthworms, Ground Beetles, Beetle larvae, Spiders, Mites, Crane flies, Springtails, Slugs.



6. Plant of the Month - Red Bartsia (*Odontites vernus*) - Flowers: June – September

Red Bartsia is a common plant of roadside verges, railway cuttings, waste ground and other disturbed ground. These areas often have low-fertility soils, so it is a hemi-parasite, gaining extra nutrients from the roots of its nearby host grasses.

Red Bartsia is a relatively short (under 30cm), straggly, downy plant with narrow, toothed leaves that sit opposite each other along the stems. The stems are fairly erect and often squarish. Pinky-purple flowers, 8-10 cm long, appear on the stems in clusters, nestling in the leaf axils. The lower lip is somewhat deflexed and the anthers often protruding.

Like its relative Yellow Rattle, Red Bartsia seeds require a chilling period to break dormancy.

As well as being popular with carder bees and wasps, one particular solitary bee (*Melitta tricincta*), found in the south east of Britain, feeds solely on Red Bartsia.

Did you know?

The botanical name derives from ‘odons’ the greek for tooth and relates to its past use as a cure for toothache.



Red Bartsia
New Species for Eskrigg

7. Animal of the Month – The Stoat (*Mustela erminea*)

The stoat is an opportunistic predator that moves rapidly and checks every available burrow or crevice for food. Its small, low-slung body makes it well suited to hunting small rodents and rabbits during the day or night. They mate in summer, but delay implantation of the fertilized egg until the following spring. They have one litter of six to twelve kits per year.

The stoat has an orangey-brown back, a creamy white throat and belly and a black-tipped tail. It has a distinctive bounding gait, arching its back as it moves. In winter, stoats living in cold areas may turn almost completely white, with just the black tip to the tail. The white fur, known as ermine, is extra dense to help them keep warm.



Photograph taken at the
reserve by
Jim Brunton 29.07.23

People count for July = 2,390 (average 77 per day)

Top two photographs by Jim Rae

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