

# Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

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



Scottish Charity No:  
SC 005538

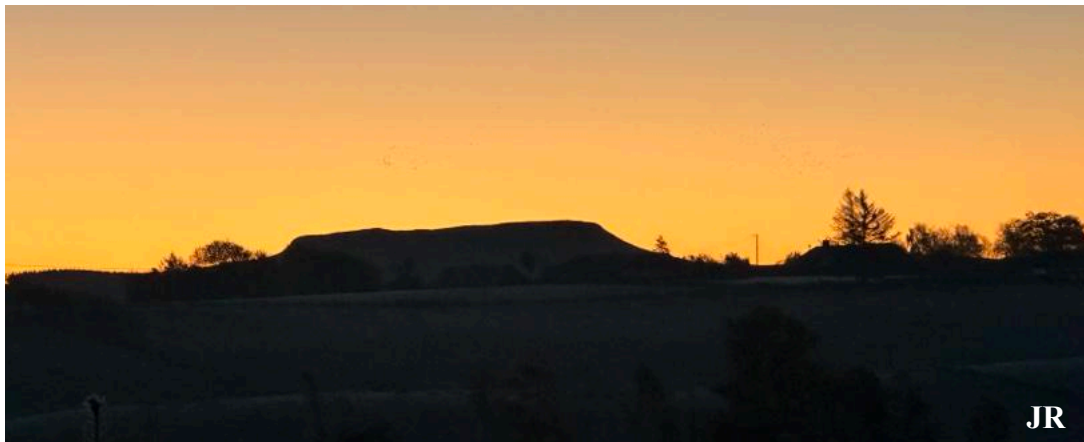
## Eskrigg Reserve

### November 2023 News Bulletin

**1. Eskrigg Pond on the 26th November and Burnswark from the Reserve at dawn.**



JR



JR

**2. Reported wildlife sightings at the Reserve during November.**

**a. Birds:**

Blackbird, Blue Tit, Bullfinch, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Coal Tit, Dunnock, Goldcrest, Goldfinch, Goshawk, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Grey Heron, Greylag Geese, Jay, Kingfisher, Long-tailed Tit, Magpie, Mallard, Moorhen, Nuthatch, Pheasant, Raven, Redwing, Robin, Rook, Siskin, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Starling, Stock Dove, Stonechat, Treecreeper, Tree Sparrow, Woodpigeon, Wren.

**b. Mammals:**

Bank Vole, Grey Squirrel, Mole, Rabbit, Red Squirrel, Woodmouse.

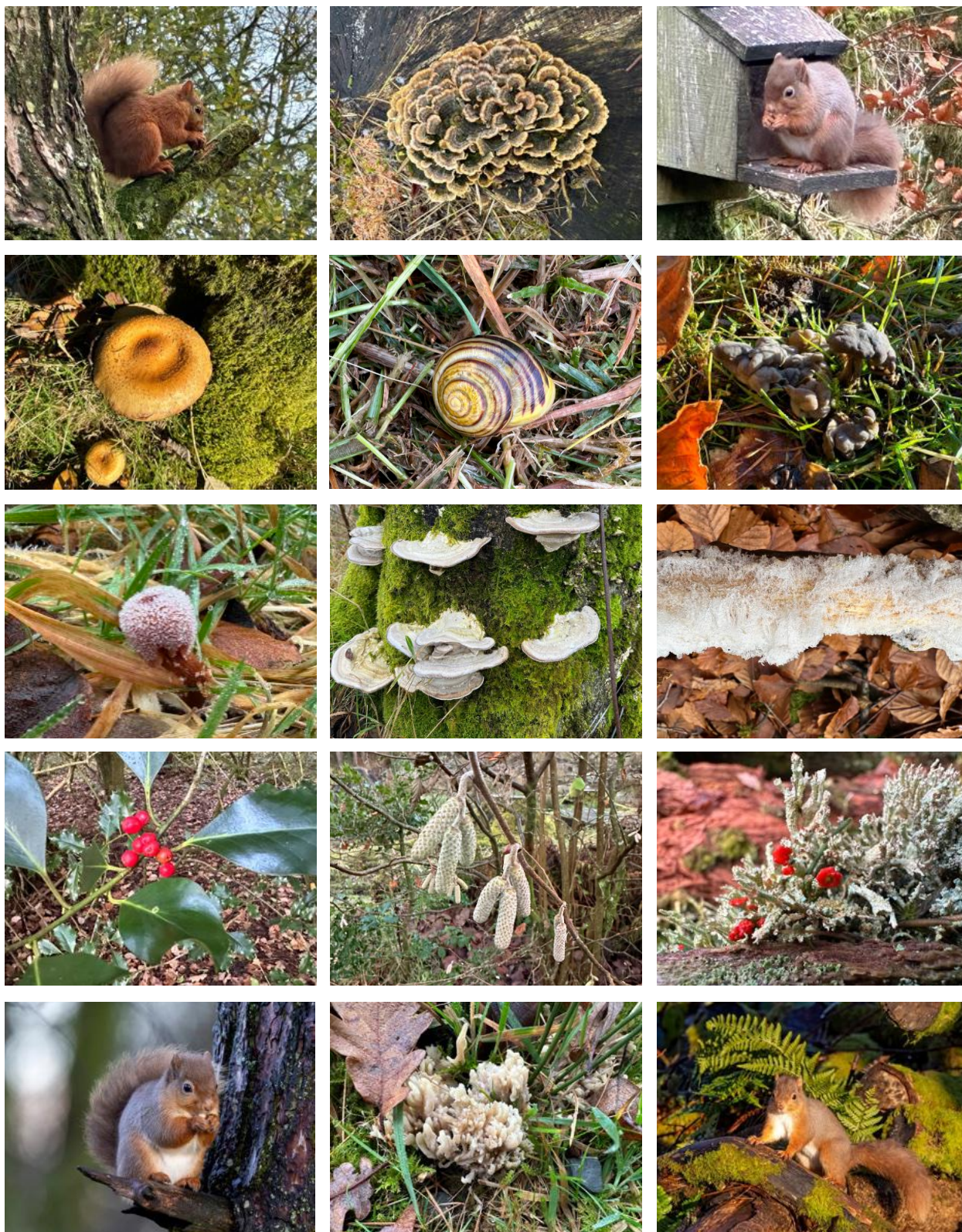


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Photographs by Caroline Legg (CL) and Jim Rae (JR)



### 3. November 2023 Photo-gallery.



Row 1 (JR): Red Squirrel, Turkeytail, Red Squirrel

Row 2 (JR): Shaggy Scalycap, **White-lipped Snail (*Cepea hortensis*)**, Elfin Saddle

Row 3 (JR): Frosted Fungus, Lumpy Bracket, Hair Ice

Row 4 (JR): Holly Berries, Hazel Male Catkins, British Soldier Lichen (*Cladonia cristatella*)

Row 5: Red Squirrel (AM), Wrinkled Club (JR), Red Squirrel (AM)

**Recently recorded at Eskrigg Reserve.**

Photographs by Alistair Moulstone (AM) and Jim Rae (JR)



#### 4. Construction and Maintenance Work during November.



**Fri. 03** Sybille Spägele, Brian Mauson and Gordon Reid helped Jim Rae put in new wooden rails along the edges of the first section of path to the Kingfisher Hide.

Pupils from **Lockerbie Academy** came in the afternoon and helped clear the old gravel from the first section of the path and fill in potholes along the forest road. Unfortunately, the quad trailer got a puncture and we could not complete the job. Helping **Jim** on the day were **Ben Karim, Aaron Howatson, Archie Dalglish, Levi Houston** and their teacher, **David Warner**.

**Sun. 05** **Jim** had to go into hospital for an operation and came home on Thursday 09. He was instructed not to do any heavy lifting for several weeks. **Gordon Reid** very kindly stepped in to do the opening and closing of the hides and the topping up of the feeders for the rest of the month to let **Jim** recuperate. **Many thanks Gordon.**



**Fri. 17** **David Warner** (teacher) and three of his pupils resurfaced the first section of path to the Kingfisher Hide with clean 10mm gravel.

On the left: **Aaron Howatson** and **Archie Dalglish**.

On the right (foreground) **David Warner** and **Levi Houston**.



#### 5. Activities involving the Lockerbie Wildlife Trust during November.



**Fri. 10** **Mairi Pringle, Gordon Pringle, Sybil Williamson** and **Gordon Reid** put up the **Poppy Cascade** at Eskrigg Centre. It was up over the weekend in order to mark Remembrance Day and Remembrance Sunday.

**Mon. 13** **The Prince's Foundation** (now called **The King's Foundation**) invited **Jim Rae** to a **Tea Dance at Dumfries House** to celebrate "**HIS MAJESTY THE KING CHARLES III'S 75TH BIRTHDAY**".



**John Reid** (Chairman of Lockerbie Wildlife Trust) had kindly nominated Jim to attend the event because, like all other guests, he was 75 this year and had, over the years, made a valued contribution to the local community. In return, Jim invited John to accompany him to the event. They had a splendid time. While they had a delicious tea, they were entertained by renowned harpist **Meredith McCrindle**. Afterwards guests were invited to dance to an **Elvis Presley impersonator**, also called **John Reid**.

**"Many thanks, John."**

**Sat. 18** **Lockerbie Wildlife Trust** ran a stall at the switching on of the **Lockerbie Christmas Lights**.

**Tue. 21** **Margaret Heeley** and other members of the **Dumfries U3A Ambling Group** were met by **Jim** at the Reserve Car Park and then given a guided tour of the Eskrigg Nature Reserve and Woodland Walks.

Photographs by Jim Rae



## 6. Plant of the Month – Scots Pine Tree (*Pinus sylvestris*)



The Scots Pine is an evergreen conifer native to northern Europe and is our only native pine. Mature trees grow to 35m and can live for up to 700 years. In the North of Scotland, the Scots Pine woodlands are the perfect home for iconic Scottish wildlife such as the Red Squirrel, Capercaillie, Scottish Crossbill and the Scottish Wildcat. Here in the South of Scotland we only have the Red Squirrel.

**Bark:** The bark develops plates and fissures. The plates are orange-brown, often becoming purple-brown with age.



Young



Mature

The twigs are green-brown and hairless.

**Needles:** The needle-like leaves are blue-green and slightly twisted, and grow in pairs on short side shoots. When broken, the needles have a fine white fringe of hairs. The needles on young trees grow longer than those on older trees.



The Scots Pine is **monoecious**, meaning both male and female flowers grow on the same tree.

**Male flowers:** These are clusters of yellow anthers at the base of shoots. They darken once the pollen is released.



**Female flowers:**

- These are small, red-purple and globular, and grow at the tips of new shoots.
- Close-up of open female cone in May.
- Close-up of closing female cone.
- Close-up of closed cone in June.



a.



b.



c.



d.

**Fruits:** After pollination by wind, the female flowers turn green and develop into cones. They mature the following season, so there are always cones of different ages on the one tree. Mature cones are grey-brown with a raised, circular bump at the centre of each scale.



1 year old



2 year old



Mature cone

**In 2014, the Scots pine was voted the national tree of Scotland.**

**Article compiled by Jim Rae from a variety of internet sources.**

## 7. Animal of the Month - White-lipped Snail (*Cepea hortensis*)



The White-lipped Snail is similar in appearance to the Brown-lipped Snail (*Cepea nemoralis*), but is generally smaller and has a white band around the edge of the shell opening, rather than a brown one. It varies in colour, but is typically yellow or pinkish. It has up to five brown bands around the whorl of the shell.

This species can be found throughout Western and Central Europe and has been introduced to north-eastern parts of the USA.

The White-lipped Snail is commonly found in a variety of damp habitats, including gardens, hedgerows, woodland, grassland, wasteland, sand dunes and clifftops all year round. It can also be found in dry conditions tightly attached to tree trunks or fences.

It prefers to eat Nettles, Ragwort and Hogweed.

White-tipped snails are hermaphrodite, having both male and female sex organs and are able to self-fertilise. However, they need to mate for this to happen. The breeding season takes place from spring to autumn. Courtship begins with a snail piercing the skin of its partner with a 'lover dart' made of calcium carbonate. Once this ritual has taken place mating can begin.

The snails then part ways and both partners bury their eggs in the soil. One clutch is usually over 100 eggs strong and takes around a month to hatch. Juvenile snails have a soft shell which hardens and grows with them as they mature. Individuals can live for up to three years.

**Predators:** birds, amphibians. The Song Thrush is one of the top predators of the lipped-snails and the shells can often be found around thrush anvils, stones that thrushes use to break open snail shells.

Snails and slugs are Gastropods, which translates to animals that have their stomach and foot contained within the same body part. Gastropods are one of the very few animals that have managed to conquer land, sea and freshwater.



Article compiled by Jim Rae from a variety of internet sources.

**Total people count for November = 1,275**  
**Average number per day = 42**

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