

Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

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

Eskrigg Reserve

June 2024 News Bulletin



Scottish Charity No:
SC 005538

1. Eskrigg Centre on the 2nd of June.



2. Reported wildlife sightings at the Reserve during June.

a. Birds:

Blackbird, Blackcap, Blue Tit, Bullfinch, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Coal Tit, Collared Dove, Crossbill, Dunnock, Goldcrest, Goldfinch, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Greenfinch, Grey Heron, Greylag Goose, House Sparrow, Jackdaw, Jay, Lesser Redpoll, Long-tailed Tit, Magpie, Mallard, Mistle Thrush, Meadow Pipit, Moorhen, Nuthatch, Pheasant, Pied Wagtail, Raven, Red Kite, Reed Bunting, Robin, Siskin, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Starling, Stock Dove, Stonechat, Swallow, Treecreeper, Tree Sparrow, Willow Warbler, Woodpigeon, Wren.

b. Mammals:

Badger, Bank Vole, Common Shrew, Fox, Hare, Mole, Rabbit, Red Squirrel, Roe Deer, Stoat, Wood Mouse.

c. Reptiles: Common Lizard.

Amphibians: Young Frogs and Toads.

d. Insects:

Butterflies: Large Skipper (A), Large White, Orange Tip, Ringlet.

Moths: Chimney Sweeper.

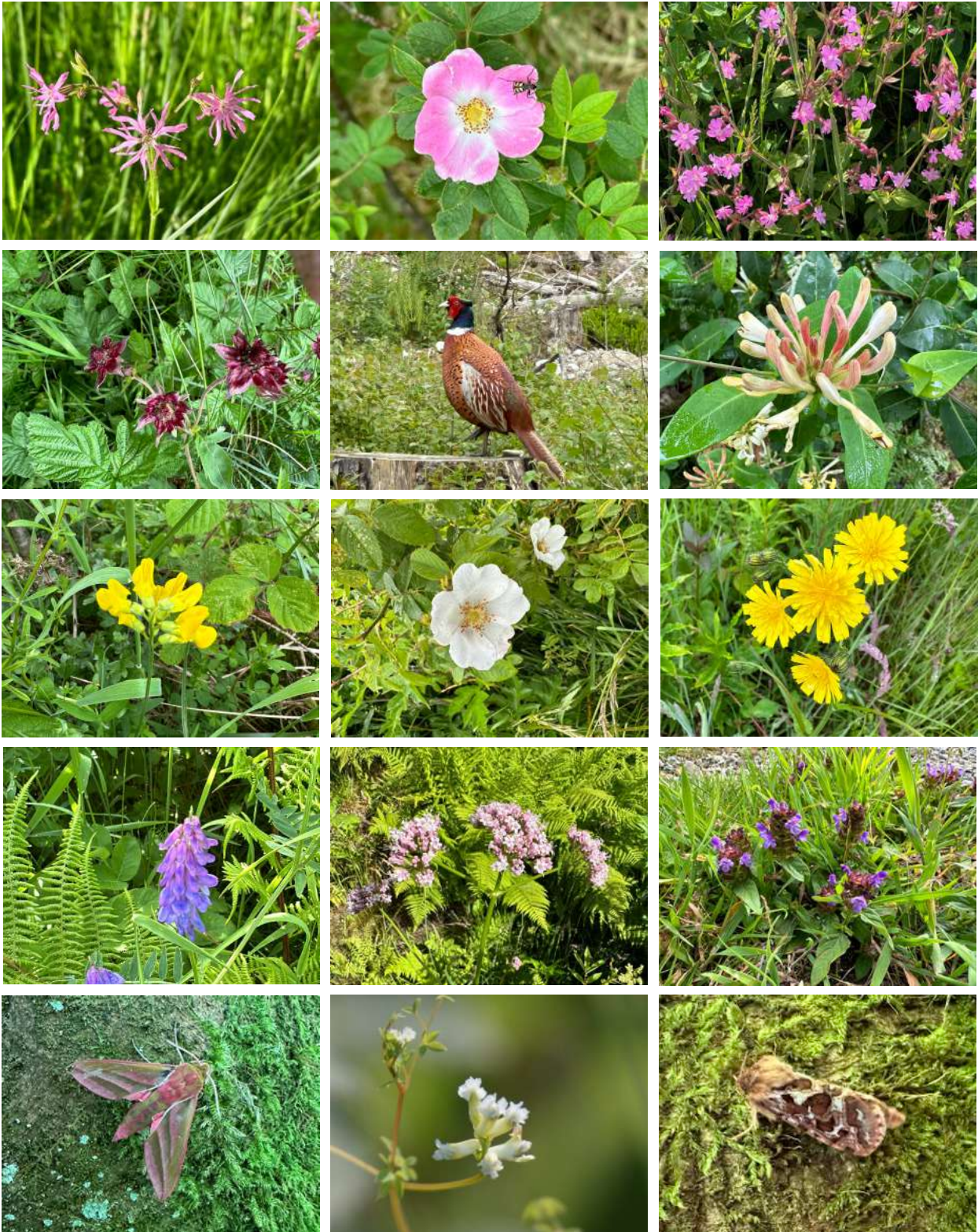
Damselflies: Common Blue, Large Red.

Dragonflies: Four Spotted Chaser (B).



Photographs by Jim Rae

3. June 2024 Photo-gallery.



Row 1: Ragged Robin, 'Pink Wild Rose', Red Campion
Row 2: Marsh Cinquefoil, Cock Pheasant, Honeysuckle
Row 3: Meadow Vetchling, 'White Wild Rose', Smooth Hawksbeard
Row 4: Tufted Vetch, Valerian, Selfheal
Row 5: Elephant Hawkmoth, Climbing Corydalis, Map-winged Swift

Note: I was unable to identify the 'Wild Rose' species

Photographs by Jim Rae

4. Construction and Maintenance Work during June.

Sun. 02 Jim Rae strimmed and raked the path from the dog bin to the wide bridge and the paths in the picnic area.



Mon. 03 Jim strimmed and raked the path to the Kingfisher Hide, the area around the duck feeder and the area in front of the Red Squirrel Hide.



05-07 June & Sun. 09 Jim stripped the rust and old paint from the inside, roof and rear of the old ammunition shed and then gave it a coat of Red Oxide, leaving a small area on the front that Alan Thomson, the blacksmith, will repair.



Sat. 08

On the Saturday, the young frogs and toads started to leave the pond in very large numbers next to the jetty.



Sun. 09

By the Sunday, thousands of young frogs and toads were leaving the pond and some were climbing over each other to get over the edge of the path. Jim had to create gravel ramps to help the amphibians get away to the fields and woods in order to grow and mature.



Fri. 14 Gordon Reid, Robert Gray and Jim Rae cleared some timber waste and took it to Oakbank in Dumfries.

Sun. 16 On the Monthly Volunteer Maintenance Day, Karen Miller, Robert Gray, Gordon Reid and Jim cleared the materials set aside during 'The Big Help Out' and went on to clear another long stretch of ditch and path edges of self-seeded trees etc...



Mon. 17 Jim cleared away the waste material from the previous day.

18-27 June When available, Jim worked at Johnstonebridge Primary School to clear the school garden and poly-tunnel of the weeds that had taken over the areas.

Fri. 28 In the morning, Norah Muirhead, Lewis Muirhead and Sam Pattinson removed most of the self-seeded trees from the heathland area while Jim strimmed and raked part of the gravel path through the Reserve. Jim continued working on the Reserve path in the afternoon.



Sat. 29 Jim strimmed and raked the rest of the path through the Reserve.

Photographs by Jim Rae

5. June Events.

Mon. 03 Jim Rae gave the **Ladies Group** from the **Royal Four Towns** a guided tour of the Reserve in the evening.



Sat. 08 **Lockerbie Gala Parade**

Jim did his usual charity collection during the parade and raised £366 for the Lockerbie Wildlife Trust.



Mon. 10 **Jim** met up with members of the **Stewartry Bird Group** at the Reserve and gave them a guided tour.



Thu. 13 Thirteen children from **Johnstonebridge Primary School** visited the Reserve to carry out some fieldwork, under the supervision of **Kaye Borthwick** and **Jim Rae**. They first investigated Woodland Minibeasts caught in pitfall traps that Jim had set up two days earlier. These included:

worms, insect larvae, slugs, woodlice, centipedes, millipedes, flies, springtails, ants, ground beetles, rove beetles, weevils, earwigs, bugs, spiders, harvestmen, mites and one tick.

They then practiced identifying the deciduous trees on the way down to the stream where they then sampled and identified the following freshwater organisms:

flatworms, annelid worms, freshwater shrimps, freshwater snails, dipteran larvae, chironomid larvae (bloodworms), blackfly larvae, mayfly nymphs (2 species), stonefly nymphs and two species of cased caddis larvae.

Thu. 13 **Death of the Cheekie Chappie.** Many readers will want to know that the Red Squirrel, whose left, lower, canine grew up through its lower lip leaving an ugly scar on his cheek, has died peacefully aged just over three years - the average lifespan of a Red Squirrel. Despite the problem with his teeth, he lived a healthy, active life right up to the end.



Fri. 14 **Lockerbie Scouts, Cubs, Explorers, Leaders and Parents** took part in **'The Big Help Out'** at Eskrigg Reserve. They made a great job of clearing self-seeded trees, whin, brambles and thistles from the sides of the ditch along the path south of the Reserve and stacked them ready for removal.

Fri. 21 **Jim** attended a **Butterfly Recording Training Day** at Borgue, near Kirkcudbright. After a general introduction about the butterflies to be found in Scotland, the event concentrated on the distribution of the relatively rare Northern Brown Argus. In the afternoon, there was a visit to Brighthouse Bay, on the Solway Coast, in the hope of finding specimens of the Northern Brown Argus. Unfortunately, the weather was very poor and there were no butterflies around, so the participants searched for the butterflies' eggs on the host plant, the Common Rock Rose. However, no eggs were found suggesting that the butterflies had not yet started laying.



Moth Trapping at Eskrigg Reserve 22/23 June 2024

		Pond Fringe	Pinewood 1	Pinewood 2
Macro-moths				
Barred Red	<i>Hylaea fasciaria</i>	-	2	-
Beautiful Snout	<i>Hypena crassalis</i>	1	2	-
Buff-tip	<i>Phalera bucephala</i>	-	2	-
Clay Triple-lines	<i>Cyclophora linearia</i>	-	1	-
Clouded Border	<i>Lomaspilis marginata</i>	-	1	1
Common Carpet	<i>Epirrhoe alternata alternata</i>	1	-	-
Common White Wave	<i>Cabera pusaria</i>	-	-	1
Coxcomb Prominent	<i>Ptilodon capucina</i>	-	1	-
Dark Brocade	<i>Mniotype adusta</i>	1	-	-
Elephant Hawk-moth	<i>Deilephila elpenor</i>	-	-	1
Flame Shoulder	<i>Ochropleura plecta</i>	1	-	-
Gold Spot	<i>Plusia festucae</i>	1	-	-
Green Carpet	<i>Colostygia pectinataria</i>	2	-	3
Ingrailed Clay	<i>Diarsia mendica</i>	-	1	4
July Highflier	<i>Hydriomena furcata</i>	1	-	-
Light Emerald	<i>Campaea margaritaria</i>	-	-	1
Map-winged Swift	<i>Korscheltellus fusconebulosa</i>	7	4	5
Marbled Minor	<i>Oligia strigilis</i>	-	-	1
Middle-barred Minor	<i>Oligia fasciuncula</i>	-	1	-
Mottled Beauty	<i>Alcis repandata</i>	-	3	4
Northern Spinach	<i>Eulithis populata</i>	-	1	4
Pebble Hook-tip f. scotica	<i>Drepana falcataria scotica</i>	-	1	-
Poplar Hawk-moth	<i>Laothoe populi</i>	-	1	-
Purple Bar	<i>Cosmorhoe ocellata</i>	-	1	-
Purple Clay	<i>Diarsia brunnea</i>	1	-	1
Riband Wave	<i>Idaea aversata</i>	-	-	1
Satin Beauty (M)	<i>Deileptenia ribeata</i>	-	1	-
Scalloped Hazel	<i>Odontopera bidentata</i>	1	-	-
Silver-ground Carpet	<i>Xanthorhoe montanata</i>	-	1	-
Small Angle Shades	<i>Euplexia lucipara</i>	-	1	-
Small Fan-foot	<i>Herminia grisealis</i>	-	-	2
Small Square-spot	<i>Diarsia rubi</i>	-	1	1
Tawny-barred Angle f. nigrofulvata	<i>Macaria liturata</i> <i>nigrofulvata</i>	-	-	1
Micro-moths				
Bee Moth	<i>Aphomia sociella</i>	-	1	-
Bramble Shoot Moth	<i>Notocelia uddmanniana</i>	-	-	1
Grass Moths	<i>Crambus sp.</i>	-	2	2
Marbled Orchard Tortrix	<i>Hedya nubiferana</i>	-	1	-
Pied Grey	<i>Eudonia delunella</i>	1	4	-
-	<i>Epinotia bilunana</i>	1	-	-

New species for Eskrigg Reserve:



Clay Triple-lines



Satin Beauty (M)



Marbled Orchard Tortrix

6. Plant of the Month - Hedge Woundwort (*Stachys sylvatica*)

Hedge Woundwort is ubiquitous throughout the British Isles, except for parts of the Scottish Highlands, where it is scarce. It is a common plant of hedge banks, dapple-shaded woodlands and shaded gardens and waste places on fertile, mildly acid to calcareous soils to an altitude of 460m.

It is a perennial, growing to about 75cm. It has hairy stems and hairy, dark green, toothed leaves. The long-stalked, ovate leaves distinguish it from the Marsh Woundwort (*Stachys palustris*) which has short-stalked, lanceolate leaves.

It flowers mainly in July and August, but can be seen from late June to early October. The whorls of flowers, which are 'hooded' and coloured magenta-pink with white markings, are very beautiful when studied at close quarters. It is pollinated by bees, particularly long-tongued bumblebees. Once the seeds are dispersed the plant spreads using its underground rhizomes.



The plant has an unpleasant, astringent smell which is particularly apparent when the plant is crushed. Its leaves contain a volatile oil with antiseptic qualities and were used for healing wounds.

7. Animal of the Month - Longhorn Beetle

What is a Longhorn Beetle?

Longhorn beetles belong to the family *Cerambycidae* (Order: Coleoptera). Many species have interesting patterns, colouration and are generally quite large in size which makes many species easily recognisable in the field. Worldwide there are more than 30,000 species described to science, in Britain 69 are considered native or naturalised while many other species are recording as occasional imports.

Most of these beetles have fairly slender bodies and very long antennae, those of the males often being longer than the body. Most longhorns fly well, often at dusk, and many stridulate loudly by rubbing one part of the thorax against another. Most longhorn larvae are wood-borers of deciduous and coniferous wood. They feed on living and dead timber and some are serious forest pests.

Life Cycle

The life cycle begins with the female beetle laying eggs in rotting fungus on living or dead wood. Once the eggs hatch, the larvae begin feeding upon their food source. The length of the time spent in the larval stage varies among species but this time can range from months to years. Wood is not a very nutritious food, and larval life is consequently rather long. Once the larvae reach a suitable stage in their development they begin to pupate and then after pupation is finished, they emerge as adult beetles. Adults are often found on flowers or on recently fallen or felled timber.

Some species such as the house longhorn *Hylotrupes bajulus* can be considered as a pest in houses by developing in structural timbers. However, Longhorns are also of great ecological importance in many ecosystems; many species provide an invaluable pollination service and the larvae eat decaying matter, in turn recycling nutrients through the ecosystem.

How to find Longhorn Beetles

Longhorn beetles begin to emerge from April to August, although some species can be found as early as March and as late as September. A few species can be found all year round as adults, for example *Rhagium* species. The adult beetles can be found feeding on flowers with Hawthorn, Dogwood, Hogweed and many Umbellifers being fantastic host plants.

The following are three of several Longhorn Beetle species found at Eskrigg Reserve.

Speckled Longhorn (*Pachytodes cerambyciformis*)



Description: 7-12mm in length. The wing covers (elytra) are light-brown with black spots, which are variable and sometimes absent. The head, antennae and legs are dark brown/black.

Habitat: Can be encountered on deciduous trees, conifers and flowers from May to August.



Two-banded Longhorn (*Rhagium bifasciatum*)



This is one of our commonest species. It is a brownish beetle covered with patches of greyish hairs and with two pale bands across the elytra. It reaches up to 18mm in length and lives wherever suitable moist, decaying logs and stumps can be found. Although it prefers to breed in Scots Pine, larvae have also been found in other conifers and in a wide variety of broad-leaved tree stumps. They live in long galleries deep in the sapwood for two years, before pupating in the summer. After about a month, the pupa changes into the adult beetle, which does not emerge from the wood until the following spring or summer.



Four-banded Longhorn (*Leptura quadrfasciata*)



The Four-banded Longhorn Beetle is very distinctive. It is predominantly black, with four wavy orangey-yellow bands on the wing cases, which can vary in patterning. Their legs, head, pronotum and antennae are all black. Adult beetles begin to emerge in May and can be seen visiting flowers on sunny days, through to September. The four-banded Longhorn Beetle has an attraction to birch trees. They are pollen feeders and will often be found on flowers, such as umbellifers, near to birch trees. As larvae, the Four-banded Longhorn Beetle lives in dead wood, boring their way through old tree trunks, stumps and logs. They are polyphagous in a variety of deciduous trees, including Alder, Beech, Birch, Hazel, Oak, Poplar and Willow, though they have a preference for Birch. The species has a widespread but patchy distribution across Britain.

Photographs by Jim Rae & Sybille Spägele (SS)

Total people count for June = 2950 Average number per day = 98

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