

Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

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

Eskrigg Reserve October 2024 News Bulletin



Scottish Charity No:
SC 005538

1. Eskrigg Pond at sunrise on 3rd October



2. Reported wildlife sightings at the Reserve during October

a. Birds:

Blackbird, Blackcap, Blue Tit, Bullfinch, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Coal Tit, Dunnock, Goldcrest, Goldfinch, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Greenfinch, Heron, House Sparrow, Jackdaw, Jay, Kingfisher, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Long-tailed Tit, Magpie, Mallard, Moorhen, Nuthatch, Pheasant, Raven, Robin, Rook, Siskin, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Stock Dove, Teal, Treecreeper, Woodpigeon, Wren, Yellowhammer.

b. Mammals:

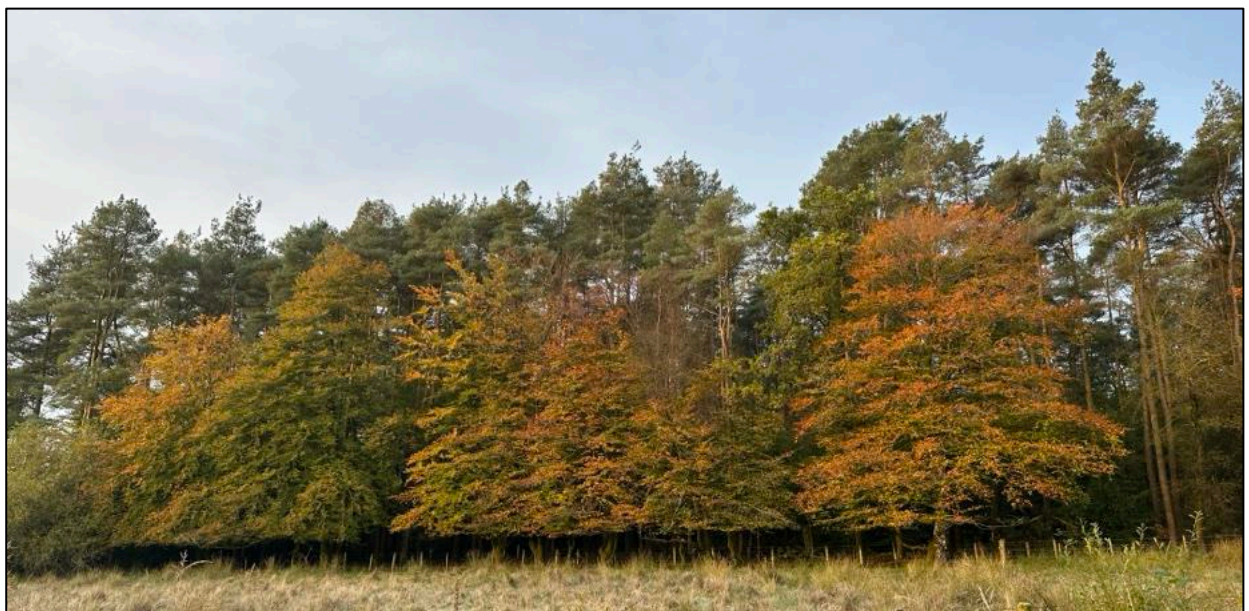
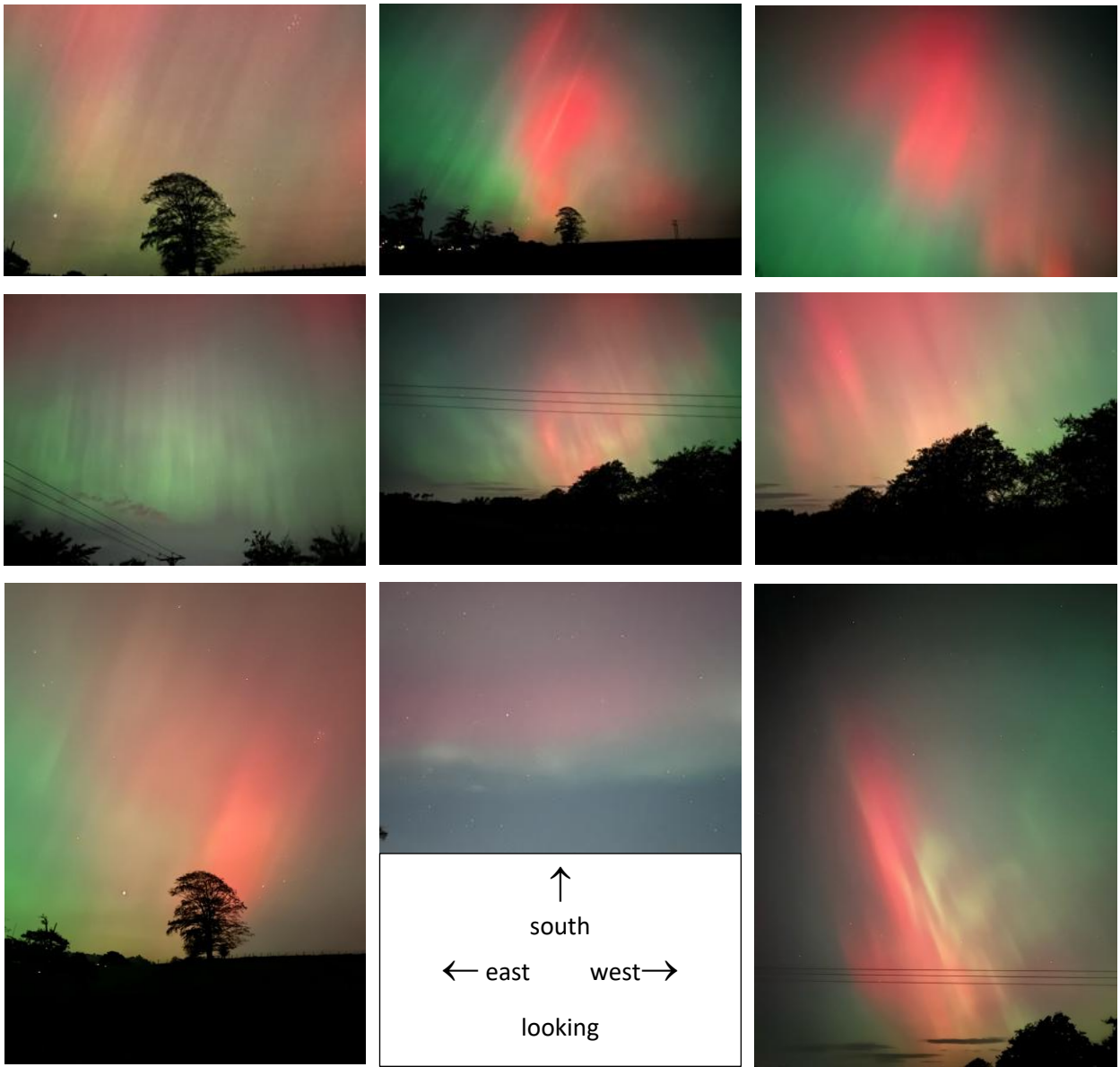
Bank Vole, Grey Squirrel, Hare, Mole, Rabbit, Red Squirrel, Roe Deer, Weasel, Wood Mouse.

c. Reptiles: Adder, Common Lizard.



Photographs by Jim Rae

3. October 2024 Photo-gallery - The Aurora on 10th October



Autumn Colours

Photographs by Jim Rae

4. Construction and Maintenance Work during October

Tue. 01 Jim Rae used the blower to clear pine needles and dead leaves from the Reserve path.



Fri. 04. Derek Campbell and Jim Rae cut down some of the tree branches that were overhanging the feeder burn.



Sat. 05 Felicity Jardine and Jim Rae strimmed the grass and cut back the trees at the sides of the path north of the shelter.



Sun. 06 Jim cleared some of the weeds from the feeder burn and cut back some more of the branches.

Fri. 11 Jim and Derek cut back more of the branches overhanging the feeder burn.

Fri. 18 Robert Gray and Sam Pattinson cleared boards and pegs from the sides of the Reserve path while Derek and Jim cut back more of the trees along-side the feeder burn.



Sun. 20. The weather was so poor on the Reserve Volunteer Maintenance Day that the event was cancelled. However, Jim did manage to clear the remaining weeds from the feeder burn.



Wed. 23 Jim strimmed the sides of the Reserve path and raked up the grass cuttings and dead leaves.

Fri. 25 Derek and Jim cleared some posts from the sides of the Reserve path before cutting down more of the branches overhanging the feeder burn.



Wed. 30 Sybille Spägele and Jim Rae cleared more of the boards and pegs from the sides of the Reserve path and then took two loads of the old boards and pegs to the Oakbank disposal site in Dumfries.



Thu. 31 Sybille Spägele and Jim Rae took another load of old timber to Oakbank in Dumfries.



5. October Events

Tue. 01 Jim was interviewed by Border TV about the squirrels at Eskrigg Reserve as part of the **Great Scottish Squirrel Survey**.

Sat. 26 Pumpkin Lantern Competition and Lantern Parade

There was a good turnout for the event and the entries for the competition were of a very high standard. Lockerbie Wildlife Trust is very grateful to **Mairi Pringle** and **Sybil Williamson** for judging the Lantern Competition.



1st Prize - Nina Fell



2nd Prize - Heather Mitchell



3rd Prize - Isabelle Jardine

Very Highly Commended - Alex Arthur, Highly Commended - Chelsea Gass & Bloom Smith

Following the competition, the families made their way back up to the car park along the path which was lit up by lanterns at regular intervals and they were able to spot a range of Halloween Characters - witches, ghosts, skeletons, giant spiders and werewolves - along the way.

6. Fungus of the Month - Common Earthball (*Scleroderma citrinum*)

This fungus is easy to find along woodland paths but harder to spot in mossy areas. It is an ectomycorrhizal fungus mostly associated with pines. The common earthball is generally rounded, with no significant stem. It has a rubbery, unpleasant smell.



Flesh: the 'cap' is rounded, can be 4–12cm across and 3–6cm tall. The tough skin is dirty-yellow to ochre-brown and covered in coarse, warty scales in irregular shapes. As the fungus matures, it can turn ochre-brown or green. The flesh inside a young earthball is whitish, sometimes with a pink-purple tinge. As it ages, the flesh becomes purple-brown to black with what looks like small white 'veins' running through it.

Spores: the spore mass is greyish, becoming purply-black, marbled at first by white veins and powdery when mature. The individual spores are spherical and spiked. When mature, the outer skin ruptures, creating a large, irregular opening which releases the spores which are then dispersed by wind and rain.

The common earthball may not be deadly, but it is poisonous and is responsible for lots of mushroom poisonings in the UK each year. It might be because they can be confused with common puffballs, which are edible. In the past, common earthballs were sometimes even passed off as truffles.

Photographs by Jim Rae

Total people count for October = 1,569 Average number per day = 51

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