

Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

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

Eskrigg Reserve March 2025 News Bulletin



Scottish Charity No:
SC 005538

1. Eskrigg pond on the 8th of March



2. Reported wildlife sightings at the Reserve during March

a. Birds:

Blackbird, Blue Tit, Bullfinch, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Coal Tit, Dunnock, Goldcrest, Goldfinch, Goosander, Great White Egret, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Greenfinch, Greylag Goose, Grey Wagtail, House Sparrow, Jackdaw, Jay, Kingfisher, Lesser Redpoll, Little Grebe, Long-tailed Tit, Magpie, Mallard, Moorhen, Mute Swan, Nuthatch, Pheasant, Pink-footed Goose, Reed Bunting, Robin, Rook, Siskin, Skylark, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Stock Dove, Stonechat, Treecreeper, Willow Warbler, Woodcock, Woodpigeon, Wren.

b. Mammals:

Hare, Mole, Rabbit, Roe Deer.

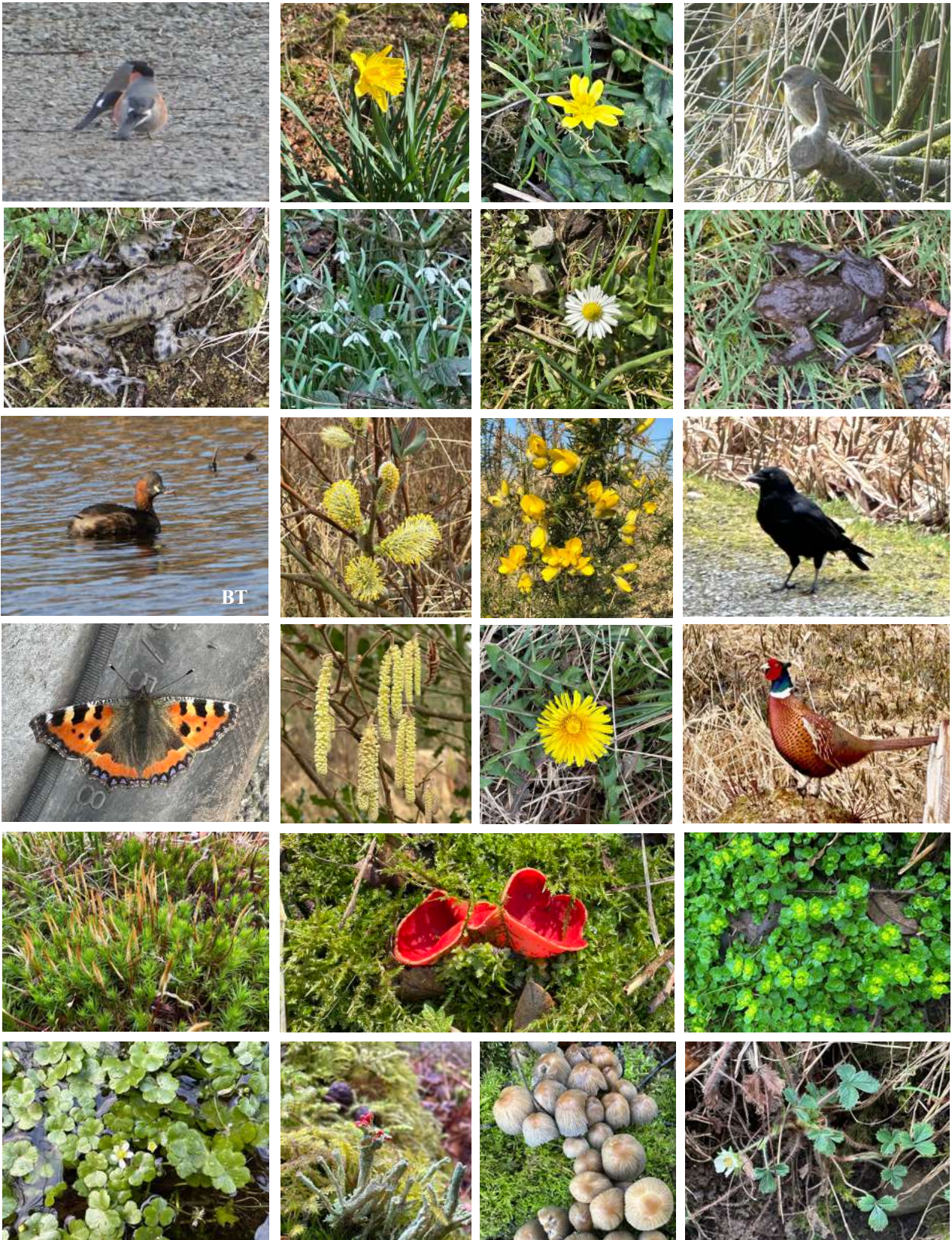
c. Amphibians & Reptiles:

Adder, Frog, Lizard, Toad.



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

3. March 2025 Photo-gallery



Row 1: Courting Bullfinch, Daffodil, Lesser Celandine, Dunnock

Row 2: Frog, Snowdrop, Daisy, Toad

Row 3: Little Grebe (BT), Goat (Pussy) Willow, Whin/Gorse, Carrion Crow

Row 4: Small Tortoiseshell, Hazel Catkins, Dandelion, Pheasant

Row 5: Polytrichum Moss, Scarlet Elf Cup, Yellow Saxifrage

Row 6: Floating Pennywort, British Soldier Lichen, Glistening Inkcap, Barren Strawberry

Photographs by Jim Rae & Brian Taylor (BT)

4. Maintenance Work

Mon. 03 Castle Milk Estate staff cut the tree stumps off the windblown trees and a contractor then used the harvester to strip off the branches and clear the trunks from the forest road. He will be back at a later date to cut the trunks to the required lengths.



Jim had the root systems cut off two trees that had fallen beside the path between the forest road and the Reserve and then the stumps were rolled back into the holes. This allowed him to start cutting back the roots to clear and reinstate the path.



Jim cleared the brash between the Reserve path and the area in front of the Red Squirrel Hide with the squirrel and bird feeders. This was in preparation for erecting a Squirrel Fence to allow visitors to watch the area in front of the hide and learn about the feeding habits of the squirrels but to stop people from crossing the area and spoiling it for the observers and photographers in the hide itself.

Tue. 04 **Jim** raked up and cleared the tree debris from the forest road between the gravel heaps and the storage containers.

Fri. 07 **Derek Campbell** and **Jim** cut more of the fallen tree roots to further clear the path to the Reserve.



Sat. 08 **Felicity Jackson** and **Jim** removed some prominent tree roots which were becoming a trip hazard on the path to the Reserve.



Fri. 14 **Gordon Reid** and **Jim** tidied the forest road south of the storage containers in the morning. In the afternoon, **Jim** took delivery of a load of gravel - courtesy of **The Grange** - for maintaining the paths.

Sat. 15 **Derek Campbell** and **Jim** cut up some of the Scotts Pine branches into shorter lengths and stacked them at the roadside ready for logging.



Sun. 16 **Volunteer Maintenance Day**
During the morning, **Gillian Ross**, **Cameron Ross**, **Gordon Reid** and **Jim** laid fresh gravel on the path between the forest road and the Reserve.



During the afternoon, **Janet** and **Nigel Priestly** cut up the logs using a tractor-mounted log-splitter, while **Terry Fallows** and **Jim** bagged the logs.

Mon. 17 **Jim** set out 24 pitfall traps and made preparations for a Primary School visit on the 19th.

Tue. 18 **Jim** started adding gravel to the path to the Kingfisher Hide, in order to raise the surface to the height of the timber edgings, so that when the young frogs and toads leave the pond at the end of June/beginning of July they do not have difficulty crossing the path and getting away into the surrounding areas to grow and mature.

Photographs by Jim Rae



Fri. 21 Gordon Reid, Derek Campbell and Jim continued resurfacing the path to the Kingfisher Hide.

Sat. 22 & Sun. 23 Jim added 2 trailer loads of gravel to the path each day to complete the section from the outflow pipe to the Kingfisher Hide.



5. March Events

Mon. 03 A fortnight earlier than usual, the frogs and toads started to arrive at the pond to breed. Some had already paired up before arriving at the pond, others paired up once they were in the pond and some were still looking for a mate.



Sat. 08 Lorna Kempself (Manager and Education Officer at the South of Scotland Wildlife Hospital) brought two mute swans over to Eskrigg Reserve and released them together onto the pond. One was a smaller-than-usual female (Ailsa), the other was a younger, but larger, male (Sammy).



Within hours of arriving at Eskrigg Sammy took his very first flight. However, he returned within minutes to keep Ailsa company and to encourage her to exercise her wing muscles and fly too.

Tue. 11 Jim gave **Steven Clark** (Network Officer) and **Senga Greenwood** (Senior Climate Officer) of the **D&G Climate Hub**, a guided tour of the Reserve and discussed ways by which they could support each other.



Wed. 19 Jim welcomed a party of **36 P7 pupils** and **4 staff** from **Hallside Primary, Cambuslang**, to Eskrigg Reserve.

The party was divided into 3 groups of 12 pupils and a member of staff. These groups then rotated round three activities - **Pond Dipping** with **Jim Rae**, **Woodland Minibeasts** with **Karen Miller** and a **Scavenger Hunt** with **Terry Fallows**.

There were many species of pond organisms caught indicating that the pond was in good condition. These included: cyclops, daphnia, leeches, pond snails, water mites, freshwater shrimps, bloodworms, midge larvae, water beetles, beetle larvae, damselfly nymphs, mayfly nymphs, lesser water-boatmen, water-boatmen (backswimmers), three-spined sticklebacks, frogs, frog spawn, toads.

Total people count for March = 1160, Average number per day = 37.

Photographs by Jim Rae

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