

Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

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



Scottish Charity No:
SC 005538

Eskrigg Reserve February 2026 News Bulletin

1. Ice-covered pond on the 14th of February



2. Reported wildlife sightings at the Reserve during February

a. Birds:

Blackbird, Blackcap, Blue Tit, Bullfinch, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Coal Tit, Collared Dove, Dunnock, 'Farm Duck', Fieldfare, Goldcrest, Goldfinch, Goosander, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Greenfinch, Greylag, Heron, Jay, Kingfisher, Little Grebe, Long-tailed Tit, Magpie, Mallard, Moorhen, Nuthatch, Oystercatcher, Pheasant, Pied Wagtail, Red Kite, Redwing, Robin, Siskin, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Starling, Stockdove, Stonechat, Treecreeper, Woodpigeon, Wren

b. **Mammals:** Bank Vole, Grey Squirrel, Hare, Mole, Rabbit, Red Squirrel, Stoat, Weasel

c. **Amphibians and Reptiles:** Frog, Toad, Lizard

d. **Insects:** Twenty-plume Moth



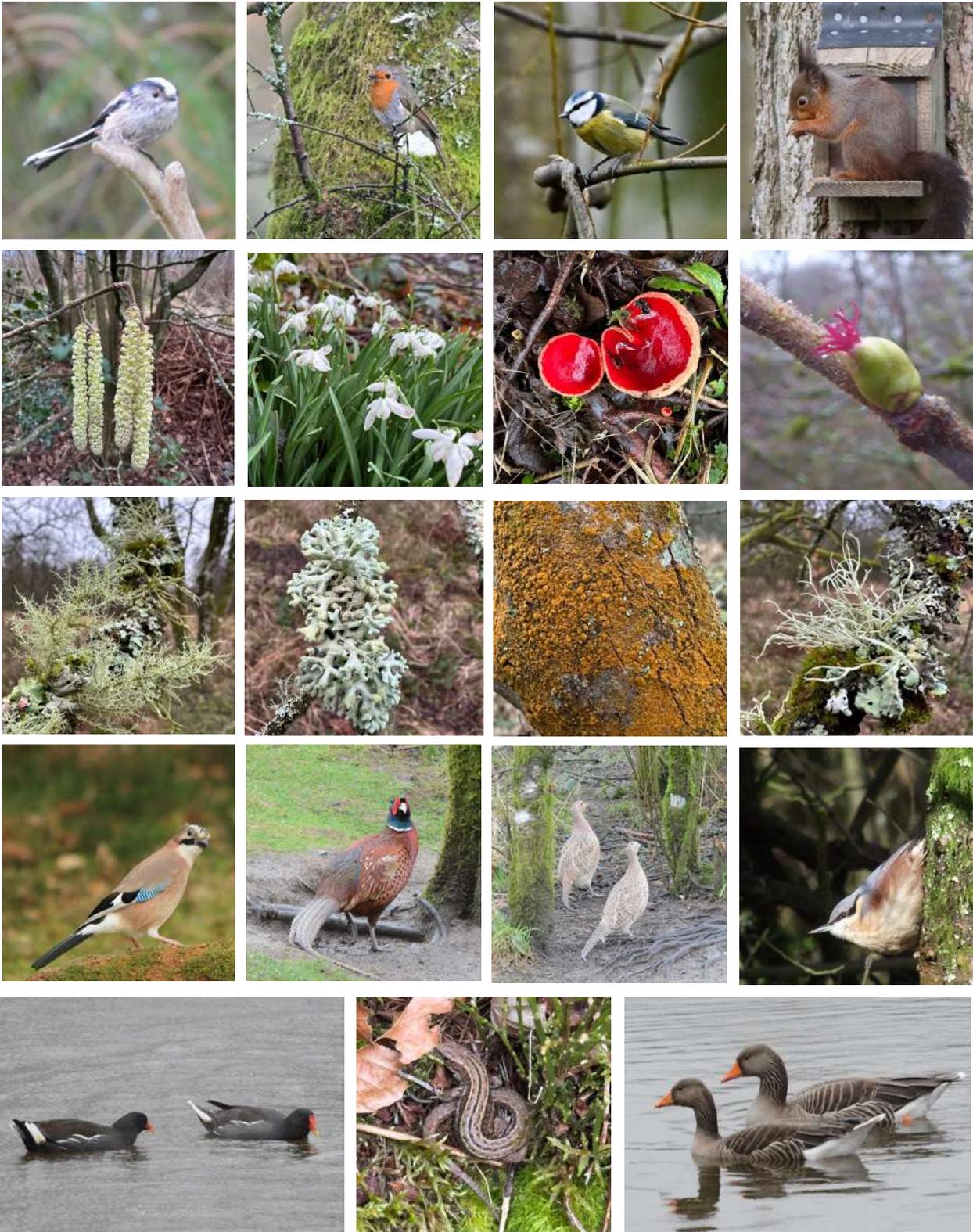
Cock Pheasant



Twenty-Plume Moth

Photographs by Jim Rae

3. Selection of February Wildlife photographs



Row 1: Long-tailed Tit, Robin, Blue Tit, Red Squirrel

Row 2: Hazel male catkins, Snowdrops, Scarlet Elfcup, Hazel Female Flower

Row 3: Selection of tree lichens

Row 4: Jay, Cock Pheasant, Hen Pheasants, Nuthatch

Row 5: Moorhens, Common Lizard (AH), Greylag Geese

Photographs by Jim Rae & Anne Hills (AH)

4. Maintenance Work

Mon. 09 Scott Young laid some course gravel on the Eskrigg Farm Road.



Sat. 14 Jim Rae cleared the feeder burn of pondweed, in preparation for the Annual Nut Race.

Sun. 15 The weather on the Reserve Maintenance Sunday was rather wet and none of the usual volunteers turned up. However, Stuart Black kindly came along to help Jim cut up some of the large logs left at the side of the Forest Road following the storms in 2025. In time, these will be cut up into logs that people can use on their log fires.



Tue. 17 Jim cut back the vegetation along the banks of the feeder burn and then cleaned out the silt trap.

Fri. 20 During the morning, Sam Pattinson, Derek Campbell and Jim Rae applied a layer of clean, 10 mm gravel to the path through the Reserve.



Sat. 21 Jim laid Terram membrane and 10mm gravel at the corner of the silt trap fence, where the grass path had become soft and muddy.

Wed. 25 During the morning, Jim filled up the potholes on the Eskrigg Farm Road.

5. Sun. 22 The 25th Annual Nut Race

The weather was favourable for this year's Nut Race and more than thirty people attended.

The winning nuts were sponsored by:

1st - Oliver Findley

2nd - Jessie Richardson

3rd - Martin Moore

Many thanks to all who took part on the day, all who sponsored a nut, all who made donations and Liz McDonnell for donating the prizes and chocolate rewards for those present.

The sum of £695 was raised in support of the Reserve.



Photographs by Jim Rae

6. Visitors

Wed. 11 Visit by 34 P7 pupils from Mount Cameron Primary School in East Kilbride

The youngsters were divided into three groups and each group carried out a series of activities.

1. **Anne Hills** and **Karen Miller** gave the children '**An Introduction to Forestry**'. This was a new activity where the youngsters were taken on a guided walk around areas of forestry of different ages.

a. area ditched and mounded ready for planting.

b. area of 2-year-old Norway Spruce trees. Here they were told why the young trees are sprayed with various chemicals.

c. area of 8-year-old Douglas Fir and Western Hemlock, where the conifer trees were now out-growing the competing self-seeded trees such as Silver Birch, Downy Birch, Pussy Willow and Oak and a ground layer of Bilberry, Broom, Reeds, Brambles, Grasses, Ferns, Mosses and Lichens.

d. area of maturing Sitka Spruce, where the trees had not been thinned and where the branches of the trees cut out most of the light and growth in the ground layer was limited to mosses and the occasional fungus or hard fern.

e. area of mature Scots Pine, where the trees had been thinned and there was now an understory of Beech, Oak, Downy Birch (some with Witch's Broom), Hazel and Holly. There was climbing Honeysuckle and a sparse ground layer of Brambles, Ferns, Mosses, Lichens and Grasses due to the depleted level of nutrients.

f. The route took the group on past an area of Grand Fir and a range of deciduous trees, Willow, Hawthorn, Beech, Silver Birch and Downy Birch - some with Bracket Fungi, patches of Heather Honeysuckle and dead Bracken.

2. **Kaye Borthwick** gave the children a chance to:

a. '**Identify some Common Birds**': Barn Owl, Blackbird, Goldfinch, Magpie, Blue Tit, Wood Pigeon, Starling, Kingfisher, Robin and Great Spotted Woodpecker.

b. '**Sample a Stream**': to find out which animals were present in the stream during the winter months. These included Minnows and Freshwater Shrimps.

3. **Jim Rae** gave the children a go at:

a. '**Pond Dipping**'. Organisms identified included: Sticklebacks, Diving Beetles, a Damselfly Nymph, Lesser Water Boatmen, Pond Snails, Dwarf Flat Ramshorn Snail.

b. '**Clock Orienteering**', where they had to find some of the **Gruffalo's Pals** who were hiding in the Heathland Area.

Fri. 27 Visit by 23 P6 pupils from Lockerbie Primary, accompanied by **Lauren Carpenter** and four other adults.

These youngsters were also divided into three groups and each group carried out a series of activities similar to those mentioned above. Area a was in the process of being planted by Castle Milk staff.



Photographs by Jim Rae

7. Visitor's Photographs

Pam Copeland is a local wildlife photographer. Here are some of her recent pictures taken at the Reserve.



Row 1: Red Squirrel, Kingfisher, Goldfinch

Row 2: Cormorant, Kestrel on treetop, Dunnock

Row 3: Nuthatch, Red Squirrel, Stonechat

8. On Saturday 28th of February, Jim carried out his normal weekly "Poo Patrol" when he emptied the dog bins and picked up, and bagged, any dog dirt that was left by irresponsible dog walkers along the stretch of woodland walks between the Reserve Car Park and the Cemetery entrance.

On this occasion he was appalled to have to pick up 32 patches of dog dirt.

Come on folks, respect the law and all the others who enjoy a walk in the countryside.



Total people count for February = 961 - Average number per day = 34

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