



Whooper Swans at Caerlaverock, by Hazel Montgomerie



for birds  
for people  
for ever

North Ayrshire Local Group

# Newsletter

Edition 107

Spring 2007

## Arran Wildlife Festival 2007

**The second Arran Wildlife Festival, from Wed 16th - Wed 23rd May, is fast approaching and the Isle of Arran is gearing up for another fascinating week of wildlife related events.** Patrons of the festival can take part in all sorts of activities, from talks to walks, or even some water sports!

Last year the festival attracted over 600 people to the island, participating in over 20 events. The local Arran community, with the help of RSPB Scotland, the Forestry Commission Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage, created a unique concept for people of all ages to enjoy. The perfect opportunity to get your family better acquainted with mother nature.

Events last year included live hen harrier CCTV footage, photographic exhibitions, minibus safaris, guided moorland walks, boat rides along the shoreline, forest adventure walks, slide-shows, craft stalls, face-painting and games.

This year there will be plenty of the same - boat trips around Holy Isle and Ailsa Craig, as well as along the shoreline, hen harrier moorland walks, forest wildlife walks, geology walks, minibus safaris, sea kayaking, badger watches, bird ringing demonstrations, an optics demonstration, wildlife weaving classes and art workshops.

Talks, lectures and films throughout the week will include subjects such as butterflies, dinosaurs, the COAST project in Lamlash Bay and there is even a chance to see the RSPB film *Eagle Odyssey*.

As well as the events on the island, volunteers from the North Ayrshire Local Group will be on board the Calmac ferry crossing on the weekend sailings, helping visitors spot and identify sea birds.

For full details and booking information visit [www.arranwildlife.co.uk](http://www.arranwildlife.co.uk). Also for a selection of events go to page 10.

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# Editorial

Laura Montgomerie

**Welcome to the Spring edition of the North Ayrshire Local Group's newsletter!** The schedule was busy this year with indoor meetings, field trips and events and you will be able to read all about them in this newsletter, and see some of the photographs taken by the members of the group on these trips, or even some just taken out the back door!

Of course, this newsletter has plenty more events coming up, so get your diaries out and check out some of the events during the Arran Wildlife Festival in May or at Lochwinnoch during the summer.

I would just like to tell everybody of the change of venue for the new season, which is the Argyle Centre. Meetings will still include tea/coffee and a biscuit at break as well as the raffle. Meetings will have to be started promptly, as the centre is being opened especially for us on the Friday evenings, and everyone has to be off the premises for 10pm. The centre will be open from 7pm onwards to allow people in and get settled.

As normal, the Chairman's Report and AGM Agenda are found in this newsletter which both help on the night of the AGM to keep it short and allow us to enjoy our speaker's talk - who this year is Stuart Housden, Director of RSPB Scotland. It also gives you time to think about any questions you may wish to raise before the committee.

Please feel free to contact me if you have anything you would like to add to the next newsletter (out around September), holiday adventures, reserve reviews, etc. Email me at [xrockluvax@hotmail.com](mailto:xrockluvax@hotmail.com) or phone 01294 466334.



## Waverley Trip

Full details aren't available as the Newsletter goes to print, but there will be a special cruise on board the PS Waverley on Friday 18th May 2007 to which RSPB members and friends will be able to get a 25% discount on their tickets. The Waverley will be sailing from Ayr at 10am, heading for Brodick at 11.30am, before steaming round Ailsa Craig, returning to Ayr around 6.15pm. The cruise is taking place during the Arran Wildlife Festival and there will be RSPB staff and volunteers on board giving commentaries and manning displays. Full details and ticket prices will be available on our own website ([www.narspb.org.uk](http://www.narspb.org.uk)) and also at [www.arranwildlife.co.uk](http://www.arranwildlife.co.uk), as well as at our AGM in April. Let's get as many people as possible on board and make this an excellent day out.

## Forthcoming Events

**Black**=Indoor meeting (Ardrossan Civic Centre at 7.30pm)

**Blue**=Outdoor Trip

### Sunday 1st April

Rozelle/Ayr Gorge. Meet at Oswald Hall (Grid Ref. NS379237) at 10.30am.

### Saturday 21st April

Falls of Clyde, New Lanark. Minibus available. Meet at 11am.

### Friday 27th April

AGM, with talk from Stuart Housden, Director of RSPB Scotland.

### Saturday 12th May

BBQ and Birds on Loch Lomondside. Meeting point to be confirmed - 11am.

### Friday 1st -

### Sunday 3rd June

Weekend trip to Speyside. Fully booked.

## Important Info

### New Season

Due to closure of the Ardrossan Civic Centre for refurbishment at the end of August, the 2007-2008 indoor meetings will be held in Argyle Community Centre, Donaldson Avenue, Saltcoats. The map opposite shows how to get there. The new syllabus will be delivered shortly before the season begins on 14th September.

## AGM Agenda

1. Sederunt
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of Last Meeting
4. Matters Arising
  - i. Disbursement of Funds
5. Leader's Report
6. Treasurer's Report
7. Election of Committee
8. AOCB

# Chairman's Report

*Duncan Watt*

We have had another very successful year as the North Ayrshire Local Group, my thanks to our Committee for their hard work and patience and to you all for your support, this RSPB is your Society please keep us informed of your opinions and ideas. Anyone interested in taking part in the Group Committee would be most welcome!

Field trips have been very well attended and most turned up very good birds, my thanks to the top birders in our Group for so regularly joining in with these trips, our novices really do appreciate the assistance given!

Indoor meetings this year held an excellent mix of speakers and themes, this is not easy to achieve without folk scouting for new talent to invite. Next years syllabus is now complete and I am sure you will enjoy our selection but please keep names and topics coming to the committee!

The work we do on the Calmac Arran Ferry as volunteers bringing the RSPB and the seabirds into public view has been a very successful volunteers venture, we also have voluntary involvement at RSPB Lochwinnoch both inside the Centre helping people learn about birds and outside helping hands-on with maintenance of the Reserve.

A number of members have occupied Rotary Clubs, Church Guilds, Leisure Clubs, Art Clubs, Burn's Clubs, Gardening Clubs, other RSPB Groups, Wildlife Explorers, SWT, SOC Branches etc. giving talks around the County and beyond.

The hide at Hunterston Clydeport will soon look out upon floating islands designed to encourage Terns to nest again within the safety of the Lagoon and

Dorothy's Island continues to provide sanctuary for a wide variety of species including Greenshanks. Please phone 01475 568181 prior to visiting this rather special location.

The "Feed the Birds Day" initiative to put up and man a stand at Asda in Irvine is to be followed in October this year by a Day at Tesco as well. Could you give an hour or two of your time as a volunteer giving leaflets and chatting about feeding Garden Birds?

In the immediate future we are organizing a "Hustings" event on April 23rd in Ardrossan Centre at 7.30pm to give the Public an opportunity to meet the Candidates for election to District Councils and the Scottish Parliament on May 3rd. We have never done anything like this before so please come along and indulge in democracy! (Question candidates on their environmental credentials! - Ed)



*Volunteers for 'Feed the Birds Day' at ASDA, by John Tedd*

## Ayrshire Bird Race

**Here is an article that Jim McDill sent to the local press.**

Each of six teams of four "birders" attempts to win the race by seeing more bird species than the others, the rule is that three out of the four team members must see or hear each species claimed.

Participating in the Ayrshire Winter Bird Race run by the local branch of the Scottish Ornithologists' Club was local teenager Hazel Montgomerie, at the core of the North Ayrshire RSPB group team. Hazel has raised funds for the RSPB by sponsorship in Bird Races over recent years and is now a member of the SOC. Her team on the day consisted of John and Susan Montgomerie and Liz Leyden, with backup from Vall Firminger, Marco McGinty, Duncan Watt, and North Ayrshire's ace birder Jason McManus, who gave Hazel a lifetime first by flushing out a Jack Snipe (not an easy bird to find!) to the applause of the entire squad.

Hazel's team watched the only overwintering Blackcap seen by any team on the day and totalled 75 species seen within North Ayrshire by all team members, with a further six species only being seen by one or two members. The winning team recorded 96 species (!!!) with a total across the teams of 114 species seen in Ayrshire on the day.

The Scottish Ornithologists Club (SOC) is a charity which exists to promote the enjoyment of all wildlife, especially birds. "The Club offers an opportunity for young enthusiasts like Hazel to work with experienced birders who are eager to pass on their expertise" added SOC Council Member Duncan Watt, who added, "Apprenticeship is the best course to master any craft like ornithology."

Hazel raised over £120 which will be donated to the RSPB to use for corncrake habitat improvement.

# Field Trips

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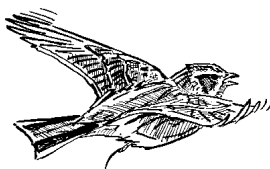
## Musselburgh

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*Vall Firminger*

**Sunday, October 22, 2006, a warm and sunny autumnal day, a perfect day for our trip to Musselburgh and Aberlady** – well that was the intent at the start. When we heard the words “all clear, all clear, all clear, all clear”, we knew our day had commenced.

Not long into our journey it was mentioned that a spoonbill was present at the Kinneil mudflats near Grangemouth. A quick consultation with all the present brought a unanimous “yes” to include this on our route. Kinneil mudflats and lagoon is designated a S.S.S.I and S.P.A, (Special Protection Area) for the conservation of wildfowl and wading birds. A hide was built there by the Scottish Wildlife Trust for protection from the elements but today we basked in sunshine and thankfully, no wind. A search, which only took minutes, revealed our target species – the spoonbill – which Susan picked up in her binoculars while some of us were peering through scopes! It provided us with good views of the sweeping action of its large spoon-shaped bill. Once everyone had a good opportunity to observe it, our attention moved to the rest of the vast area of mud – quite literally littered with wildfowl, waders and gulls. Highlights were shelduck, pintail, shoveler, wigeon, teal, lapwing, red-breasted merganser, golden plover, redshank, dunlin, black and bar tailed godwits. A sudden rise of everything on the lagoon behind us revealed a sparrowhawk flying over and so we were treated to an aerial display of various gulls and waders until everything resettled. A buzzard was also spotted on a post quite happily preening itself while all this took place. The sound of geese caught our attention next and a flock of Pink-foot did a fly past over our heads. Smaller things now brought us down to earth as skylark, reed bunting and 11 long-tailed tits added to the growing list of species. Before we knew it our morning had passed, spending longer than we had realised at Kinneil, so off we headed for lunch at Musselburgh.

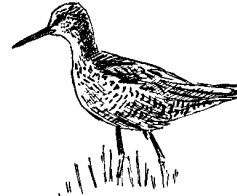


*Flying Skylark, by Dan Powell*

A visit to 5-star toilets in Musselburgh, followed by lunch, rejuvenated us for our long walk behind the seawall and to the lagoons. It was almost high tide so everything was clinging to the last bit of bare mud or riding in with the tide which gave us close views of many species of wildfowl, divers and grebes. Highlights along the seawall: goldeneye, long-tailed duck, velvet scoter, little, great-crested, slavonian and red-necked grebes; red-throated divers; greylag geese, kittiwake, sandwich tern, razorbill and guillimot. Close to the sea wall an arctic skua flew

past chased by gulls with a repeat performance further along our walk.

We now headed to the lagoon area and as we approached, everything lifted off – the culprit this time was a heron. Once everything returned we were treated to sunlit views of golden plover looking very golden indeed. We also saw here knot, lapwings, dunlin, redshank, black-tailed godwits, curlew, snipe and a grey partridge flying eye level across the front of the hide.



*Redshank, by Dan Powell*

As I continued to scan, my attention was taken by the appearance of a bird amongst the black-headed gull flock. It seemed so much smaller, had a black bill, red legs and feet and a different head pattern. My first reaction was ‘little gull’ because it was so small and dainty (two thirds the size of the black-headed) but I had never seen one before. Fortunately it was bathing and preening, giving everyone a chance to view it and time to check the bird books. The book confirmed that it was indeed a little gull, probably a 1st winter bird. This was a ‘lifer’ for myself and a few others as well – always a thrill. We were able to identify it before a sparrowhawk flew right over our heads and all the birds lifted again, including the little gull which never returned.

Time and daylight were now against us to get to Aberlady. We had made the most of a bright, sunny day, at the two places visited and so decided to leave Aberlady for another day. 79 species were seen in total. We headed back to the bus and while waiting for everyone to arrive we were treated to another spectacle. The tide had now turned and once again the cycle was starting all over again – everything flocking back to the sea. Thousands of gulls, waders and wildfowl came to gather once again and cover the sea as far as the eye could see, waiting for that wonderful, rich, nourishing mud to reappear. As we stood there we were also treated to a glorious sunset – the perfect end to a perfect day!

## Glasgow Parks

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*Susan Montgomerie*

**The weather didn’t look very nice on the 25th November but we hoped it would clear up for our field trip to Glasgow.** A few carloads of members arrived at the car park of the Transport Museum in Glasgow and were escorted to the spot where we had been promised a view of a spectacular bird. Dutifully scanning up and down the riverbank, we were delighted to see a female kingfisher, perched

# Field Trips

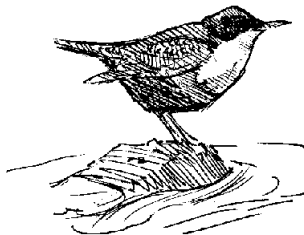
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in some branches on the other side of the swiftly flowing River Kelvin. She dropped into the river several times without catching anything, but was finally rewarded with a shiny fish, which she bashed on the branch before swallowing it headfirst. In spite of her bright colours, she was quite difficult to see until you knew where to look.

As we left the car park, we found a blackcap in one of the small trees beside the footpath along with some chirpy little sparrows. We crossed over to the old road bridge in time to see a dipper fly under us, downstream. As we walked along, there were blue tits, coal tits, greenfinches and chaffinches in the treetops, and blackbirds and song thrushes foraging underneath. Woodpigeons cooed to each other and flapped noisily about in the branches. On the river we saw herons and mallards sheltering in the reeds and grasses, and a cormorant diving in the turbulent water. The younger element among us had great fun trying to get a photo of a rat and then later on, hand-feeding the grey squirrels. Apparently, they held onto your hand and pulled it towards them to get the peanuts rather than come too close.

We reached the Kelvin Way roadbridge, where a street artist had placed a crumpled beer can in the hand of one of the statues, and looking into the treetops, we saw some redwings and fieldfares with the ubiquitous magpies flying from tree to tree. In one small field, we counted over twenty magpies, leaving us in a dilemma. One for sorrow, two for joy but twenty???

At the pond, we saw mallards and moorhens, while on the island a large flock of pigeons sat hunched in the bare branches looking for all the world like vultures on the African plains. In amongst them was a single black-headed gull looking rather out of place and, lower down, four siskin played in the branches. We got a much better view of a dipper avoiding the fast currents by searching among the flooded tree roots for food.



*Dipper, by John Busby*

As we stood on the bridge, we all got a good view of a female goosander as she swam in the swollen river. A nice little group of long-tailed tits passed through the bushes beside us as a late lunchtime beckoned. The weather closed in and, rather than journey further afield in the rain, we took the coward's way out and went to the museums for shelter. Some of us opted for a bit of culture at the Art Gallery while others chose to relive their misspent youth looking at VW Beetles in the Transport Museum. In spite of the weather, we all had a good day and saw plenty of birds.

## Irvine Harbour

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*Wendy Tedd*

**On Sunday January 21<sup>st</sup> the outdoor meeting was started at Irvine harbour.** Initially everyone sat in their cars and watched the rain pour down, but there was hope of better things to come, as a patch of blue sky appeared. Once it dried up, it was a perfect time for bird watching as the tide was coming in, forcing the birds to feed in a decreasing area of mud flats. There were plenty of wigeon, redshank and displaying male golden eyes to see. All the activity was supervised by a peregrine falcon, which sat quietly watching the area. A flock of golden plovers was seen flying in the distance, together with lapwings. Some lapwings were resting on the nearby breakwater. At the harbour wall there was a large group of swans, including 2 whooper swans, which were patrolling up and down waiting for people to feed them. They made a lot of noise as they powered through the water, heading for the next person armed with a loaf of bread. Duncan pointed out one mute swan which had a deformity. Some of the feathers on its wings had not developed, so that all that could be seen was the quills. This leaves the bird flightless, and is a genetic condition with the poetic name of angel wings.

As the sea was quite rough there was little to see at the harbour entrance, apart from a group of red throated divers. There was one guillemot which ended upon the shore, apparently exhausted. Marco picked it up and was rewarded with a bite. Duncan took it up to Hesselhead. A hastily emptied toolbox with a propped up lid acted as a perfect carrier for the guillemot. Unfortunately it didn't survive.



*Ringed Plover, by Mike Langman*

The next point of call was Stevenston Point. Sadly there was another dead guillemot washed up on the beach. The reason for the deaths wasn't apparent, although they appeared to be starving. It could be that the continuously turbulent water of the previous few weeks made it very difficult for them to feed, or maybe there was a shortage of the food they normally eat. On a brighter note, the beach at Stevenston had plenty of dunlin, ringed plovers and sanderlings, all in easy view on the beach as the tide was high. There was a nice view of a snipe flying overhead. It was a good trip, in eventually dry conditions, and altogether 42 species were seen.

# Caerlaverock

## Field Trip

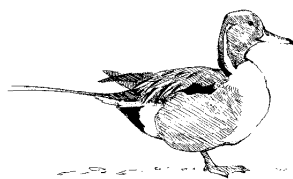
*Stuart McMahon*

**A group of 18 people had an enjoyable trip to the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust reserve at Caerlaverock, on the Solway Firth, on Saturday 24th February.**

Not many birds were seen from the minibus on the journey down to Dumfries - not even any Goosander on the River Nith at the White Sands! However, on arrival at Caerlaverock we were greeted with several large flocks of Barnacle Geese in the surrounding fields. These are one of the main attractions at Caerlaverock, having travelled there from Spitzbergen to overwinter in their thousands.

For people who haven't been to Caerlaverock, it is a wonderful place - they have several large and well built hides overlooking the fields, with a couple of equally impressive tower hides at the ends of the trails. However, the best hide is undoubtedly the one at the main centre which is heated (!) and looks out on to the large Whooper pond. This pond, which is itself heated to keep it ice free, is home to large numbers of wild, wintering ducks and swans. Twice a day, the warden goes round in front of the hide and feeds the wildfowl with grain - feeding time is most impressive, and the large windows allow visitors to view the Wigeon, Teal, Mallard, Tufted Ducks, Pochard and Whooper and Mute Swans at very close range - only a few feet away. We were very lucky at the time of our visit as there was also a rare American visitor on the pond - a female Lesser Scaup - very easy to overlook it and dismiss as a female Tuftie, but once spotted, the slight bump on its crown and it's slightly paler colours made it easier to spot (see photo p.9). Also around the Whooper pond were Moorhen, Gadwall and a lucky few even saw a glimpse of a Great Spotted Woodpecker.

Along the trails, some Pintail and Shoveler were seen, along with Curlew, Redshank and Bar Tailed Godwits. The only raptor sighting on the reserve was a distant view of a male peregrine which landed on a dead branch over the saltmarsh.



*Pintail, by John Busby*

However, some of the nicest birds to be seen were those in and around the main hide and the nearby garden. Some lovely views of Yellowhammer, Reed Bunting, Siskin and Great and Blue Tits were obtained, but the nicest bird, for myself anyway, was



seeing my first Tree Sparrows in as many years - they really are gorgeous wee birds and sadly becoming a very rare sight in Ayrshire nowadays. The tearoom and giftshop had live CCTV pictures of a Barn Owl roosting in the barn next door.

On our way home we stopped off at Glencaple for a quick look over the river towards Kirkconnell Merse where we watched another large flock of several thousand Barnacle Geese head downriver towards their roosting sites. All in, we saw 64 species during the day. Further information on Caerlaverock and it's self catering accommodation is available at [www.wwt.org.uk](http://www.wwt.org.uk).

## A Stay at Caerlaverock

*Isabel Passway*

For many years now a winter visit to Caerlaverock has been a highlight of my birding year. I was therefore thrilled when a birding friend from Jedburgh suggested that four of us should go and STAY for a couple of nights.

The self-catering accommodation is at the farmhouse adjoining the tower, just after the offices and before the Peter Scott hide. The house is comfortable, offering a range of bedrooms from family size to the twin with en-suite facilities, which Marita and I shared. The heating is electric and each radiator is thermostatically controlled. The large square kitchen/diner is well appointed and should be able to seat the fourteen or so possible guests. There were four others there on our first night and on the second we had it all to ourselves. The lounge has comfy seating but the big attraction is the porch/hide built across the rear of the building, overlooking the Folly pond and directly accessed from the lounge. It is heated.

We had our own private view of the morning and evening feeding of the swans, geese, and ducks. Curiously after the evening feed the warden produced

# Caerlaverock

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a jar of honey and spooned it on the fallen branches in front of the hide. He then turned over large stones and hid peanuts under each! By 6.30 pm we understood. A family of badgers slowly appeared from the woods. Experience led them straight to the sticky branches and their little pink tongues made short work of the honey. Then they moved on to dessert and heaved over the stones to find the peanuts. Another actor on the scene was a tiny field mouse, who stole some nuts when the badgers were not about. Unfortunately my camera could not cope with the glass window. I plan to return with a better camera.

I had gone to see more of the wildfowl and for longer. This I did most easily and happily. I do have to admit that the three badgers added delight to a brilliant weekend.

I would thoroughly recommend at least one nights stay at the farmhouse. Late January was a good time as dawn was about 7.30am. The dawn chorus is also unique. One night self-catering costs £25 if you are a member of WWT and £30 per person if you are not. The café does not have a caterer at the moment, however soup and filled rolls, plus gorgeous gateaux were brought in from Dumfries.

## City Birds

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*Here's a different point of view from Susan's.*

*Duncan Watt*

**Thirty years ago the idea of a birdwatching visit to the City of Glasgow would have seemed laughable, indeed when Susan and I were students in the 'sixties the Kelvin was a sickly green sewer!**

How very different it is today, the field trip to Kelvingrove Park began at the car park of the Transport Museum overlooking the River Kelvin where our very first bird of the trip was a Kingfisher!

Sometimes on a field trip the birds are just fleeting glimpses but this was an opportunity to watch, to observe the bird, to drink in the beauty of its plumage and then to be rewarded by it demonstrating it's technique of actually, before our very eyes, fishing! Here we also show some digital pictures taken by Hazel (see below) of the bird before it took flight upstream as if to lead us on our City Bird Quest!

Crossing Argyle Street we took a long look from the Old Bridge at Mallard and a Grey Heron feeding in a calm back-eddy of the river, swollen high by the recent heavy rains.

We walked around the back of the Kelvingrove Art Gallery to find Dippers under the trees by the weir turning over leaves in search of insect prey rather than enter the flooded stream. These are "Water-Ouzels" by their old name reminding us that they have the foraging instincts of the Thrush family. After picking up Grey Wagtail and Redwings from the bridge

on Kelvin Way, we entered The Park proper by crossing the foot-bridge and who should we meet coming the other way but Jackie Brown of the Glasgow HQ going to the Museum to check out the RSPB Display. Since the reopening of the Kelvingrove Museum, the RSPB has had a presence within the Natural History educational remit and the Society will welcome Volunteers to assist with meeting the public to promote our aims with friendly enthusiasm! While talking with Jackie we were treated to a fishing demo by a female Goosander in the river and a foraging Brown Rat on the bank. Our field trips are always well attended but it is always better when one or two new faces from the groups indoor faces come out on a first field trip with us, as happened on this occasion. With live wild nature to engage with, the chance of getting to know others of our own kind better, seems to happen more easily!

## LIPU News

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### Environmental Crimewatch is born

As promised, Minister Alfonso Pecoraro Scanio, from the LIPU meeting held in May last year, has set up the 'National Environmental Crimewatch'. Donato Ceglie and Maurizio Santoloci, two dedicated judges have been named consultants to the organisation, and environmental associations (including LIPU) have been invited to take part in its work. The NEC will have to set out the ways and means of collaboration between the National and local police in order to reinforce investigative and preventative actions against environmental crimes and promoting a proper enforcement of the laws. It will also set out proposals for the inclusion of environmental crimes within the penal code, creating a more effective investigative code of practice with which to pursue more serious illegal activities. Including those forms of poaching of and illegal trade in wild life which because of the methods employed, the numbers of people involved, the large volume of items traded and the sums of money involved, constitute one of the prime causes of the impoverishment of our biodiversity.



# Lochwinnoch

**Over the winter Lochwinnoch has been busy, with record numbers of wigeon on Barr Loch - up to 650 at one point - and up to and around the 300 mark for coots.** Whooper swans have also been hanging about all winter, this is thanks to the big bloom of Nuttals pond weed which provide the birds with plenty of nutrition. During December there were regular sightings of pintail on the reserve.

With the winter months coming to an end, Lochwinnoch must prepare for the summer months, with their large range of events for members and visitors. Here are a few dates to put in your diary:

## Mini-beast Safari

Friday 6th April;

3 sessions: 10-11am, 11.30-12.30 OR 1-2pm

Search for beasties in the grassland, woodland and pond with our field teachers. Children of all ages welcome. Please book in advance.

## Easter EGGStravaganza

Tuesday 10th April; 11am-3pm

Fun filled, wildlife-themed activities for children of all ages. Come along on our Easter treasure hunt and join in with Easter activities such as egg decorating, mask making and face painting.

## Plant and Produce Sale

Saturday 28th April; 10am-2pm

The annual plant and produce sale organised by the Renfrewshire local group is always eagerly awaited, so arrive early to bag some bargains!

## Dawn Chorus

Sunday 6th May; 4.30am-6.30am

Today is International Dawn Chorus Day. Why not make the effort to rise early to join us on a guided walk of the reserve to listen to the wonderful dawn chorus? Tea and toast will be provided afterwards. Please book in advance.

## RSPB Optics Weekend

Saturday 19th & Sunday 20th May; 10am-4pm

An opportunity to view and buy from a selection of RSPB Optics with expert advice on hand. Complimentary tea and coffee available throughout the day.

## Wonderful Wildlife in... Summer: An Introduction to Wildlife Watching

Saturday 2nd June; 10am - 12noon

Join us on a guided walk to learn about 'how to watch wildlife' in the summer. We will be on the look out for birds and butterflies and much more! Please book in advance.

## Springwatch at Lochwinnoch!

Sunday 10th June; 1 - 4pm

Springwatch is here again, so we will be hosting a day of fun filled activities for all the family to enjoy. Look out for nesting birds, listen for chirping chicks, and find out what special wildlife has visited the reserve during the spring.



Reserve building, by Laura Montgomerie

## Wildlife Gardening Day

Sunday 24th June; 11am-3pm, sessions 11am-12.30 and 1.30-3pm

Find out about how to create your own space for wildlife, hints and tips on what to plant and where to get it. Other wildlife demonstrations will be on offer, from bee-keeping to birdfeeder making. Booking required for wildlife gardening sessions only.

## Lochwinnoch Summer Holiday Club!

Every Friday in July/August (6th, 13th, 20th & 27th July, 3rd & 10th August); 11am-2pm

Throughout the summer holidays, join us to take part in mini-beast safaris, pond dipping, bird watching, wildlife gardening or indoor activities if the weather is poor. A great way to keep the kids amused. Please book in advance. Please bring a packed lunch.

## Bat and Moth Night

Friday 27th & Saturday 28th July; 7.30pm-late on Fri and 10am-12noon on Sat

Join the Butterfly Conservation and the Clyde Bat Group for a joint bat and moth extravaganza, and then come back the following morning to see what we have caught in the moth trap. Please book in advance.

## Bird Ringing Demonstration

Saturday 11th August; 7am-10am

Join the team at Lochwinnoch to find out about bird ringing from a local expert, and find out why we ring birds and how it can help with conservation efforts. Please book in advance.

## RSPB Optics Weekend

Saturday 11th & Sunday 12th August

See RSPB Optics Weekend in May.

Please remember there may be a small fee for some events and some events may require suitable clothing and footwear. For more details visit the reserve at Lochwinnoch or phone Lochwinnoch on 01505 842663 or email [lochwinnoch@rspb.org.uk](mailto:lochwinnoch@rspb.org.uk).

# Member's Photographs

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*Little Gull on the Musselburgh Trip, by Vall Firminger*



*Turtle Dove (with a bump on the head, after hitting a window!), by John and Wendy Tedd*



*The Infamous Rat at Kelvingrove Park, by Laura Montgomerie*



*Roe Deer, in the back garden, by John and Wendy Tedd*



*Sunset at Musselburgh, by Vall Firminger*



*Hawfinch at Scone Palace, by Hazel Montgomerie*



*Lesser Scaup (left) at Caerlaverock, by Stuart McMahon*



*Gull among the pigeons in Kelvingrove, by Laura Montgomerie*



*Wigeon at Caerlaverock, by Hazel Montgomerie*

# Arran Wildlife Festival

There are over 30 events at the Arran Wildlife Festival 2007, with all the details available at [www.arranwildlife.co.uk](http://www.arranwildlife.co.uk) or by calling 0141 331 0993 for a full programme. Below we have listed just some of the events that Local Group members might enjoy. To book an event, visit the website for the booking line details or call 0141 331 0993.

## Hen Harrier Moorland Walk

All days; 3pm-5pm, also 10am-12noon & 12.45-2.45pm on Sun 20th

Kilmory Hall

Please bring binoculars, suitable clothing and footwear.

## Wildlife Weaving Class

Wed 16th, Thurs 17th, Fri 18th, Sun 20th, Mon 21st, Tues 22nd & Wed 23rd; 11.30am-1pm

The Burnside Gallery, Auchrannie Road, Brodick  
Booking required - max. 10 people.

## Wildlife Art Workshop

Wed 16th, Thurs 17th, Fri 18th, Sun 20th, Mon 21st, Tues 22nd & Wed 23rd; 2pm-3.30pm

The Burnside Gallery, Auchrannie Road, Brodick  
Booking required - max 10 people.

## Holy Isle Sea Life Special

Wed 16th, Thurs 17th, Fri 18th, Sat 19th, Sun 20th, Mon 21st & Tues 22nd; 2pm-3.30pm

Arran Adventure Centre, Shore Road, Brodick  
Booking required.

## Sea Kayaking Wildlife Special

Thurs 17th, Sat 19th, Mon 21st & Wed 23rd; 10am-1pm

Arran Adventure Centre, Shore Road, Brodick  
Booking required.

## Ailsa Craig Sea Life Special

Fri 18th & Tues 22nd; 10am-2pm

Arran Adventure Centre, Shore Road, Brodick  
Booking required.

## Holy Island Boat Trip and Walk

Wed 16th; 10am-1pm & Sun 20th; 2pm-5pm

Lamlash Bay Pier

Booking required.

## Eagle Watch

Thurs 17th; 10am-12noon & Sat 19th; 1pm-2.30pm & 3.30pm-5pm

Lochranza Distillery

Booking required - max. 12 people.

Please bring binoculars, suitable clothing and footwear.

## Butterflies of Arran

Thurs 17th; 7pm-8.30pm

Kilmory Hall

No need to book.

## COAST Film Evening

Fri 18th; 7.30pm-9pm

Lamlash Golf Club

No need to book - max. 60 people.



Comma, by Dan Powell

## Optics Demonstration

Sat 19th; 10am-4pm

Lochranza Distillery

No need to book.

## Craft Creatures Go Wild!

Sat 19th; 11am-1pm & 2pm-4pm

The Burnside Gallery, Auchrannie Road, Brodick

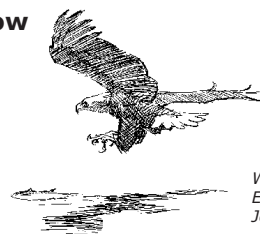
Booking required - max. 10 people.

## Eagle Odyssey Film Show

Sat 19th; 7pm-8.30pm

Kilmory Hall

No need to book.



White-Tailed Eagle, by John Busby

## Wildlife Fun Day

Sun 20th; 12noon-4pm

Kilmory Hall

No need to book.

## Birds and Bacon Butties

Mon 21st; 7am-9am

Kilmory Hall

Booking required - max. 20 people.

Please bring binoculars, suitable clothing and footwear.

## Bumblebee Workshop

Mon 21st; 1pm-3pm

Kilmory Hall

Booking required - max.20 people.

## Arran Dinosaurs Lecture

Mon 21st; 2pm-4pm

Brodick Hall

No need to book.

## Geology of Arran for Beginners: Talk and Workshop

Mon 21st; 6pm-7pm

Lagg Hotel

No need to book. Please bring a rock or fossil for identification.

## Hen Harriers and other West Coast Island Raptors

Mon 21st; 7.30pm-9pm

Kilmory Hall

No need to book.

## Farming with Wildlife

Tues 22nd; 2pm-4pm

Braehead Farm, Sliderry

Booking required - max. 20 people.

Please bring suitable clothing and footwear.

## Link the Drink, Cheese and Ice Cream to the Farm

Wed 23rd; 2pm-4pm

Clauchlands Farm, Lamlash

Booking required - max. 20 people.

Please bring binoculars, suitable clothing and footwear.