

Drumoig Wildlife Forum (DWF) Newsletter 12 – September 2019



Welcome to the twelfth newsletter for the Drumoig Wildlife Forum

I hope that you have all had a good summer, it's been a very good period for spotting butterflies, and I have enjoyed watching our lavender hedge buzzing with bees of all types. Now the temperature is dropping and the evenings drawing in, hopefully the lovely photos sent in by residents and included in this newsletter will brighten up your day.

Plant of the month – The above photo shows the Dog Rose (*Rosa Canina*)

The dog rose is a thorny climber, which has curved spines to gain a purchase as it weaves in between other shrubs and uses them to support its growth. It has large pink or white five petalled flowers with a faint sweet smell and the fruit is a striking red oval hip (15-20mm) that form in small cluster and each hip contains many seeds and the leaves are made up of 2-3 smaller leaflets. The dog rose can be found in hedgerows, woodland edges and on scrubland it is best seen in flower in May and June with fruit ripening around September and October. The dog rose flowers are an important source of nectar for insects and the fruits are a food source for birds such as blackbirds, redwings and waxwings. Rose hips are high in vitamin C and were traditionally used to make syrups taken to boost levels. The hairs inside the hips are an irritant extracted to make an itching powder.

2019 Big Butterfly Count

The Butterfly Conservation held their 10th Big Butterfly Count between 19 July and 11 August and 113,502 people took part. Almost 1.6 million individuals of the 19 target species (17 butterflies and 1 day flying moths) were counted during this period.

Scotland's Top Ten for 2019 were			
1	Painted Lady	6	Large White
2	Small Tortoiseshell	7	Green-veined White
3	Peacock	8	Meadow Brown
4	Small White	9	Ringlet
5	Red Admiral	10	Speckled Wood

For more information on the butterfly count see:

https://www.bigbutterflycount.org/2019mainresults?utm_source=Dotmailer&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=10803459_September&utm_content=BBC%20results&dm_i=DGT,6FK03,NLHC4K,PHKYK,1

Talks and walks – Dates for the diary

Tuesday 24 September 2019- 7pm at the Drumoig Hotel

Two talks will be given on the Fife Coast and Countryside Trust by West Sands Assistant Rangers, Dominic Rye and Rachael Hunter. Their talks will cover the work on West Sands, such as sand dune restoration and their work with the St Andrews Links Trust and on the wider North Fife area including the Eden Estuary Nature Reserve, on the projects, paths and reserves.

Monday 23 – Sunday 29 September - Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels

This organisation would like your help in taking part in the Great Scottish Squirrel Survey. For more information see: <https://scottishsquirrels.org.uk/great-scottish-squirrel-survey/>

Tuesday 22 October - 9.30 am - meet at Kinshaldy Forest car park - Tom Cunningham will guide us through the forest learning about the flora and fauna to Tentsmuir Point where we may spot seals and learn about the coastline. The walk will last about 2 hours.

Photos from residents

These lovely photos have been sent in by Martin Hepworth from Comerton



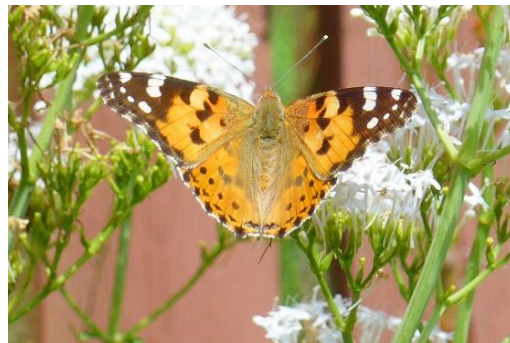
Small Tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae*)



Peacock Butterfly (*Aglais io*)



Small White butterfly (*Pieris rapae*) which is a smaller version of the large white, more commonly known as the cabbage white. The small white has 2 generations per year in May and August and its caterpillars like cabbages just like their larger namesake! The males tend to have one grey/black spot on the upper wing.



Painted Lady (*Vanessa cardui*)

Its name means "butterfly of the thistle" as this is its favourite plant. This is the most widely distributed butterfly in the world and is present on every continent except Australia and Antarctica. Painted lady caterpillars often weave a silk tent on thistles. They have an unusual migration habit in that they migrate independently of seasonal or geographical patterns. They can travel 100 miles per day and can achieve speeds of 30 mph!"



Forest Shield Bug (Nymph) in the late instar stage.

Click here for more information:

heteroptera/Pentatomidae/pentotoma_rufipes.html



Caterpillar of the Poplar Hawk-moth

This was sent in my Alec Burden from Craigie



Palmate Newt (*Lissotriton helveticus*)

This was sent by Paul Edwards from Craigie



Caterpillar of the Knot Grass Moth

What's that bird? Owls



Barn Owl

Where to see them: They can be seen in open country, along field edges, riverbanks and roadside verges.

When to see them: All year round; during the day, but best at dusk.

What they eat: Mice, voles, shrews and some larger mammals and small birds.

Description: With heart-shaped face, buff back and wings and pure white underparts, the barn owl is a distinctive and much-loved countryside bird.



Little Owl

Where to see them: They can be found in England and Wales, with a few in southern Scotland. It likes lowland farmland with hedges and copses, parkland and orchards. Most common in central, southern and south eastern England and the Welsh borders.

When to see them: All year round; during the day. It hunts at night and dawn

What they eat: Small mammals and birds, beetles and worms

Description: This small owl was introduced to the UK in the 19th century. It can be seen in the daylight, usually perching on a tree branch, telegraph pole or rock. It will bob its head up and down when alarmed. In flight it has long, rounded wings, rapid wingbeats and flies with a slight undulation.



Long-eared Owl

Where to see them: Long-eared owls are nocturnal and secretive, so unlikely to be seen other than on migration (when birds may turn up on coasts at any time of day) or when leaving or returning to a communal roost site in winter.

When to see them: All year round.

What they eat: Small rodents, and small birds in winter

Description: This is a medium-sized owl, smaller in size than a woodpigeon. It often looks long and thin, with head feathers (known as ear tufts, even though they are not ears) which it raises when alarmed. It is buff-brown with darker brown streaks and deep orange eyes.



Short-eared Owl

Where to see them: In the UK Short-eared owls breed primarily in Northern England and Scotland but are seen more widely in winter. Short-eared owls are best looked for in winter on coastal marshes and wetlands.

When to see them: All year round.

What they eat: Small mammals, especially voles.

Description: This is a medium sized owl with mottled brown body, pale under-wings and yellow eyes. They are commonly seen hunting during the day. In winter, there is an influx of continental birds (from Scandinavia, Russia, Iceland) to northern, eastern, and parts of central southern England, especially around the coast.

Tawny Owl



Where to see them: The tawny owl is nocturnal, so it is often heard calling at night, but much less often seen. In the daytime, you may see one only if you disturb it inadvertently from its roost site in woodland up against a tree trunk or among ivy. Look for pellets below roosting places.

When to see them: All year round.

What they eat: Small mammals and rodents, small birds, frogs, fish, insects and worms.

Description: This is the size of a woodpigeon. It has a rounded body and head, with a ring of dark feathers around its face surrounding the dark eyes. Tawny owls in the UK are mainly reddish brown above and paler underneath. It is a widespread breeding species in England, Wales and Scotland but not found in Ireland. Birds are mainly residents with established pairs probably never leaving their territories. Young birds disperse from breeding grounds in autumn.

For more information on Owls see the RSPB website here:

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/owl-family/>

2019 Used Stamp Appeal



Please don't forget to collect stamps for this year's appeal (and encourage your friends, relatives and colleagues to do the same). The collection is in aid of the **RSPB Albatross Task Force**. The project works with fishing crews to reduce the number of albatross's killed by being accidentally caught in trawl and longline fishing nets, and The Drumoig hotel is supporting the appeal and there is a collection box in the entrance hall. Further collections will be made in December or contact Christine Edwards Who will arrange to collect them. drumoig.wildlife@gmail.com

For more information see: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/our-work/our-positions-and-casework/our-positions/marine-and-coastal/saving-seabirds-globally/the-albatross-task-force/>

And finally – Did you know?

That the Kingfisher's beak helped inspire the shape of Japan's 500 series Shinkansen (bullet train). The chief engineer is a keen birdwatcher and used the shape of the Kingfisher's beak as inspiration for a new nose design to reduce the 'sonic boom' the trains make while transiting tunnels at very high speeds. Other parts of the same train use ideas from owls and penguins to help noise reduction too.



Japanese companies have operated bullet trains since 1964. They typically travel up to 300 km/h (186 mph). Image Credit: D A J Fossett.



If you have any questions or would like more information on the Drumoig Wildlife Forum please contact me at drumoig.wildlife@gmail.com

Don't forget to visit the web page. If you can think of any other information that would be useful please let me know. The link is: <http://drumoig.btck.co.uk/DrumoigWildlifeForum>

Christine Edwards, Drumoig Wildlife Co-ordinator