

Drumoig Wildlife Forum (DWF) Newsletter 7 – July 2018



Welcome to the seventh newsletter for the Drumoig Wildlife Forum, I hope you are all enjoying this wonderful period of summer sunshine.

Firstly, a big thank you to residents who donated plants or books for the DWF stalls at the Drumoig Summer Fayre. Thanks also to those who attended and purchased these items, we raised £87.45 which will be put towards future projects.

Plant of the month – The photo above shows the Red Campion (Scientific name: *Silene dioica* / Family: Caryophyllaceae).

This plant can grow to around 1m tall and flowers from May to September and fills woodlands, hedgerows, fields, ditches and roadside verges with a warming dash of pink colour. The flowers are important for various pollinating insects including bees, butterflies and hoverflies.

It has a downy stem and the leaves have opposite pairs with hairs on the leaf. Flowers are pink-red in colour with five petals that are fused at their base forming a tube that is surrounded by a purple-brown calyx. Red campion is dioecious, a botanical term, meaning the male and female flowers grow on separate plants, hence the species name dioica. Traditional medicines used red campion seeds to treat snakebites.

News from the wildlife nursery



If you have any news or photos to share on new arrivals, then please send it to me at drumoig.wildlife@gmail.com

We have watched our blackbird father busy feeding his two young offspring. Apparently, the father takes on this role whilst the mother gets ready for her second brood.

Our water bath has been visited by young starlings and we are having to fill our seed feeders twice a day to keep up with the young sparrow's voracious appetite. We are pleased to see that we have a swallow's nest on the side of our house. Other residents have reported House Martins nests and a wren.

I have been advised that the work on the building site has stopped because Sand Martins are nesting.







The pair of Canada Geese had a gosling but appears to have gone missing. The pair of Swans have produced 5 cygnets.

The Drumoig nature webcam revealed our pair of foxes had four cubs, and also recorded a group of 6 badgers.

Don't forget it's still important to provide food for the birds in your garden, some may be nesting for a second time and with this current weather a water source for both drinking and bathing is essential.

What's that bird?

If you visit the coastal cliffs or islands around Scotland at this time of year you will no doubt catch sight of breeding seabirds. Below are few species that you may see, with a link to the RSPB information page.

 <p>Guillemot https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/guillemot</p>	 <p>Black Guillemot https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/black-guillemot/</p>
 <p>Fulmar https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/fulmar/</p>	 <p>Kittiwake https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/kittiwake/</p>
 <p>Arctic Tern https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/arctic-tern/</p>	 <p>Puffin https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/puffin/</p> <p>You may also be interested in: http://ww2.rspb.org.uk/our-work/conservation/project-puffin/index.aspx</p>

The Isle of May



The Isle of May can be reached by boat from Anstruther and is a good place to see seabirds. If you are considering a trip to island the following links may be useful.

<https://isleofmaynr.wordpress.com/>
<https://www.isleofmayferry.com/>
<https://www.isleofmayboattrips.co.uk/>

Events

On Thursday 10 May 2018 twenty-two residents attended a two-part talk at the Drumoig Hotel by Professor Will Cresswell from the University of St Andrews entitled *"Your local birds: the stay at homes, the migrants and the wanderers and adventurers"*.

These talks were based around Will's two research topics: 'Behavioural ecology' and 'Conservation ecology of birds' and in particular his work in West Africa in association with the AP Leventis Ornithological Institute in Jos, Nigeria on migrating birds. They covered the ringing, tagging and monitoring of birds from as close as Crail harbour to destinations across the world and was both informative and delivered with great enthusiasm. It also gave a fascinating insight into the distance, height and speed that birds fly when migrating and how important it is that we look after the habitat and food sources that they need whilst they are visiting us here. A cheque for £50 has been sent to Will towards his work and in appreciation for his talk and giving up his time to attend our meeting. He will put this towards a geolocator used in this monitoring and he has promised to send a report on the journey of a tagged Whinchat, so watch out for that in a future newsletter.

I then gave an update on the Drumoig Wildlife Forum and recent sightings, Red Squirrels have been seen more regularly, however this year's first Swallow was not seen until 27 April, over the lake, this was 8 days later than last year, and the numbers are still low. The first House Martin was seen over Craigie on the same day.

The Drumoig Community Trust (DCT) kindly supported the purchase of a nature webcam, and the first of the short videos that have been taken were shown. These had captured the diversity of the wildlife we have on Drumoig and included Badger, Deer, Fox, Jay, Mouse and Red Squirrel.

Attendees also took part in a wildlife quiz, the photo below shows Ian McDougall who won the quiz prize, a CD of Bird songs and a bird Tea Towel with Will.



A book called Extreme birds was raffled and raised £24, the winner was Ian Wilson who was presented the book by Paul Edwards



A contribution towards the refreshments raised £30.

A copy of the quiz and answers is on the website in the folder – Events Archive

2018 Big Butterfly Count

Friday 20th July to 12th August the Butterfly Conservation are holding their Big Butterfly County. They just ask you to pop outside on a sunny day and count butterflies and moths for 15 minutes. All the information, including a downloadable ID chart can be found at www.bigbutterflycount.org. You can then record your sightings online or via the free Big Butterfly Count app and you can do the count as often as you like.

Scotland's Top Ten for 2017 were:			
1	Small White	6	Large White
2	Green-veined White	7	Red Admiral
3	Ringlet	8	Six-spot Burnet
4	Small Tortoiseshell	9	Speckled Wood
5	Meadow Brown	10	Common Blue



Common Blue - is the only widespread blue butterfly in Scotland but has been declining. Butterfly Conservation Scotland would like your help to tell them where you have seen these. You can submit your records online at www.butterfly-conservation.org/scottishcommonblue Or complete the postcard which is available in the Drumoig Hotel reception.

Large Emerald Moth (*Geometra papilionaria*)

This beautiful moth was seen in Craigie Hill. For more information please click on <https://butterfly-conservation.org/moths/large-emerald>

The photograph is by kind permission of Lesley Burden



To help with identification of butterflies, moth and caterpillars the following organisations have excellent websites to help you.

Butterfly Conservation for butterflies and moths

For butterflies click on: <https://butterfly-conservation.org/butterflies/identify-a-butterfly>

For moths click on: <https://butterfly-conservation.org/moths/identify-a-moth>

Wildlifeinsight for caterpillars

For butterfly caterpillars click on: <http://www.wildlifeinsight.com/british-caterpillar-galleries/british-butterfly-caterpillar-galleries/>

For moth caterpillars click on: <http://www.wildlifeinsight.com/british-caterpillar-galleries/british-moth-caterpillar-galleries/>

Talks and walks – Dates for the diary

Summer / Autumn Programme

1. **Tuesday 31 July at 9.30am – Guided walk around Morton Lochs (*)** with Tom Cunningham, Reserve Manager of Tentsmuir Forest where we hope to spot woodland and water birds butterflies, wildflowers and Red Squirrels.
2. **Thursday 20 September – Talk at Drumoig Hotel** by Colin Edwards (Butterfly Conservation) on his role within the forestry commission – he used to manage Tentsmuir forest and other woodlands within Fife and he is a trained forester and woodland ecologist.
3. **Autumn - Date TBC (*)** - Walk around Tentsmuir Point with ranger from Scottish National Heritage.

Please note: (*) numbers for the guided walks will be limited and more details will be circulated by email nearer the time.

Red Squirrels

There have been even more sightings of Red Squirrels on Drumoig, the majority around Comerton but also in Craigue and on the golf course.

Please keep sending in your sightings and any photos, and don't forget to also report your sightings of grey squirrels (and red squirrels) through the Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels website at:

<https://scottishsquirrels.org.uk/squirrel-sightings/>

This information is very important to them in assessing the numbers of Red Squirrels and concentrating on areas where support is needed.



By kind permission of James Worsley, Comerton

Local News

Tentsmuir National Nature Reserve have a new website

There is now a new website for Scotland's National Nature Reserve (NNR) and there is a quick way to access Tentsmuir NNR: www.nature.scot/Tentsmuir. You can also follow what is going on in SNNR on their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ScotlandsNNRs/> There is also a website where you can see all of Scotland's nature: www.nature.scot

Tentsmuir Forest Newsletter No 38 dated June 2018 can be found here:

<http://drumoig.btck.co.uk/DrumoigWildlifeForum/WildlifeForumNewsletters>

And Finally

Another newcomer to Drumoig



In the last newsletter we had a Cormorant in Comerton. This time it is a Peacock in Pickletillum!

This was spotted by Margaret Wells and Anne McLeod of Comerton whilst out for a stroll. They saw it between the sub-station and the golf course loch just beyond the new earthworks on Pickletillum Avenue

The photo is by kind permission of Anne.

If you have any questions or would like more information on the Drumoig Wildlife Forum or have any sightings or interesting information you would like to report or photos you would like to share, then please contact me at my new address drumoig.wildlife@gmail.com

I hope to start a wildlife gallery on the website soon.

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