



Tayside Recorders' Bulletin

February

2015



Tayside Biodiversity Partnership



BIODIVERSITY
THE VARIETY OF LIFE



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Welcome to the Eighth Tayside Recorders' Day

Perth Museum and Art Gallery hosted this event in 2008, 2011 and 2013; at other times the Forum has visited both Dundee and Forfar, as it did last year. This year the event will be taking place at Camperdown, hosted by Leisure & Culture Dundee.

Last year's meeting was very busy for the Recorders'. We welcomed everyone to Forfar and heard from a wide variety of speakers including Biological Recording in Scotland, Dragonfly recording and conservation in Scotland, a NESBReC projects update, and an update on what was happening at Butterfly Conservation Scotland.

Lorna Oldershaw, Adrian Sumner and Mike Nicol talked about the "What's Up" upland bird project, Slugs and Snails in Scotland and Ringing Dippers in Tayside respectively. The day also included talks by the Scottish Wild Beaver Group, Gordon Corbet on recording on a single site, and Catherine Lloyd outlined the new UK Heritage Pear Survey and how that fits in with the Tayside Orchards projects.

This year's Recorders' Day will, we hope, again bring people together to discuss local interests, find out about the wider picture, and to keep in touch with one another. This year's event will include updates on: Glenquey Moss (Glen Devon) and Other Bogs from Alistair Godfrey, the County Recorder for the Botanical Society of the



Cupido minimus

British Isles; Kirriemuir Town Centre Swift Survey & Project from Daniele Muir of Perthshire Wildlife (and Tayside Swifts); Recording Invasive Plant Species Using PlantTracker from Dr Carol Pudsey; An Historical Resume of the Importance of Local Sites focusing on Kinnordy from Dr Roy Watling of the Scottish Fungi Group and Citizen Science Opportunities in Coastal Surveying from Matt Barnes, the Sea Champion Volunteer Co-ordinator from Marine Conservation Society. We greatly welcome an introduction to The Urban Flora of Scotland from Professor John Grace, President of the Botanical Society of Scotland, and there will also be talks on the new Wildcat Action from Jenny Bryce of Scottish Natural

Heritage; The North East Scotland Mammal Atlas Initiative from Glenn Roberts of NESBReC; Tayside Moths and Angus' Small Blue Butterfly from David Lampard, the County Moth Recorder for Angus; the Barn Owls and Tree Sparrows Angus Projects from Carol Littlewood of Littlewood Land Care and last but not least; an Overview of Birds and Bird Recording in Perth & Kinross with a Focus on Rare and Scarce Sightings from Scott Paterson, the County Bird Recorder for Perth & Kinross.

Recorders' Forum Website

The Tayside Recorders' Forum continues to have a section on the Partnership's website:

www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk and the list of Recorders and associated organisations are very well used.

Please check if your details, or your organisation's details, are correct (or worse, if we have inadvertently omitted you!), and please let us know as soon as possible via Andrew Law, the Biodiversity Assistant - anlaw@pkc.gov.uk.

The Partnership's Facebook page publicises as many biological recording events and training days as possible, so if you have any news, let us know and we will pass it on through this media – it is becoming a useful 'selling tool' to highlight events, not just in Tayside, but right across Scotland. Please click "like" on "Tayside Recorders Forum" to join. There are also Facebook pages on Tayside Biodiversity, Tayside Swifts and the Tayside Amphibians & Reptiles Group.



Tayside Geodiversity

This small group is going from strength to strength and has already published four geology Trail leaflets for areas near Perth, Dundee Law, Arbroath and Strathardle, by Pitlochry. Two others are currently in the works for Balkello Hill and Schiehallion which will hopefully be well used by the wider public as well as more Geology-minded enthusiasts.

The group is currently focused on increasing the number of local Geodiversity Sites in Tayside. It has now been a member of the Scottish Geodiversity Forum for over a year. In other recent news, Angus Council is now joining Tayside Geodiversity, Perth and Kinross Council and Tayside Biodiversity Partnership in signing the Scottish Geodiversity Charter. The Charter sets out why geodiversity is important, and presents a vision that geodiversity is recognised as an integral and vital part of our environment, economy, heritage and future sustainability to be safeguarded for existing and future generations in Scotland. Also this year, a tayside Geodiversity Action Plan is being drawn up to be included in the 2nd edition LBAP

New members are always welcome. Contact Carol Pudsey at carol_pudsey@btinternet.com.

The group now has its own website under construction which can be found at <http://www.taysidegeo.org.uk/>

Dundee Museums and Art Galleries

Last year the museum Natural Sciences curators concentrated their resources on developing links with local environmental projects and groups. It is part of our efforts to encourage local groups to become involved with biological recording and support them. Amongst the groups we worked with are Dighty Connect, the Friends of Riverside Park, Greenbuds, Dundee Naturalists and the Scottish Wildlife Trust local member centre. Our involvement has ranged from providing simple advice on recording, through to training workshops and taking part in events such as Bio-Blitzes.

Our main focus at the museum is on improving our collections cataloguing, and the public access to the collections. Collections projects have focussed on polar animals and butterflies.

We are currently re-examining our computer cataloguing system, with a view to upgrading it. The improved system will be aimed at improving collections management, conservation and improving online public access. As part of our activities programme we organise regular behind the scenes tours of our collections and also host special subject study days. For more information contact David Lampard;

Tel. 01382 432364 or 432392 david.lampard@leisureandculturedundee.com Website: www.mcmanus.co.uk

Angus Museums

Museums in Arbroath, Brechin, Forfar, Kirriemuir and Montrose have fascinating displays of objects and photographs relating to life and work in Angus. Behind the scenes there is a wealth of local history, archaeology, natural history and geology and art resources. The museums hold regular activities for children, family groups and adults.

The museums also run a number of galleries where regularly display the work of local, national and international artists. The exhibitions cover a wide range of media and disciplines, from traditional landscape painting and portraiture to cutting edge installations and video/CD-ROM work.

Visit www.angus.gov.uk/museums for further details of all Angus Council's museums.

The Necessary Beaver

An exciting conference hosted by the Scottish Wild Beaver Group will be held in the Dunkeld Hilton on the 28th March 2015 exploring the history and ecology of the beaver, their role in biodiversity and wetland management and how they can help us in flood prevention and ecotourism.

2015 will be a landmark year for the Scottish wild beaver as following the five year Scottish Beaver Trial the Scottish Government will make its decision later in 2015 on the reintroduction of this iconic species which was



hunted to extinction some 400 years ago. This is part of the Scottish Government's obligation under the 1984 European Habitats Directive to look into the reintroduction of extinct native species where feasible. There are a fantastic range of speakers who are to be talking at the conference:

- Nick Dixon from the Scottish Crannog Centre will be talking about beavers in archaeology
- Victor Clements will be discussing impacts of wild beavers on riparian woodland around Aberfeldy
- Nigel Wilby and Alan Law from Stirling University on the results of a study into the impacts that beavers have had on the biodiversity of Bamff Estate in Perthshire
- Pieter Noordanus from the Netherlands will show how the landowners, farmers and government worked out the "Ruimte voor de Rivier plan".
- Sir Charles Burrell will talk about practical rewilding on his Knepp Estate in Sussex
- Bob Smith from the SWBG will show what economic benefits wild beavers have brought to East Perthshire – Liz Halliwell from the Welsh Beaver Project who are investigating reintroducing beavers into Wales.
- Uwe Stoneman, Tayside Reserves Manager for the RSPB, who will talk about managing the RSPB Nature Reserve Loch of Kinnordy in the North East of Scotland which has a resident population of wild beavers.
- Peter Smith will discuss the emerging world of environmental economics and ecosystem services and why the benefits go unrecognised and much of the cash costs cause fear and opposition to the return of wildlife.
- Mark Elliot from the Devon Wildlife Trust is a wetland ecologist who will provide an overview of the current situation with beavers in Devon
- Sir John Lister-Kaye OBE from the Aigas Field Centre near Beauly will round off our day with his thoughts on the future of beavers in our modern world.

For bookings, more information on the conference and how to join SWBG you can visit:

www.scottishwildbeavers.org/scottish-beaver-conference-the-necessary-beaver/.

Small Blue Butterfly and Kidney Vetch Survey

Following last year's survey and successful training day in July, it has been agreed to trial new Kidney Vetch plantings. With seed collected from the Angus Coast (with permission from the landowner and SNH), the seed has been professionally cleaned and dried by Scotia Seeds. Some of it will be broadcast on site this year and some of it will be grown on by Celtica Wildflower Nursery to plant out in the spring 2016.

The two linked surveys will continue this year and we urgently need more help with this. Some of the surveys will involve inland sites such as quarries; the coastal surveys will continue. If you can help or would like to be more involved in this project, please contact Barry Prater on 018907 52037 (barry@prater.myzen.co.uk).

East Scotland Butterfly Conservation

David Lampard david.lampard@leisureandculturedundee.com

During 2014 the focus on Angus was on three major activities; The Angus Small Blue Project, the moth Atlas and activities for members. The Small Blue Project has entered the final year of major surveying. On 1st June 25 people turned up at Arbroath for instruction and we followed up with a walk along the cliffs. We found a small blue resting on the grass along the cliff top walk, so everyone got a chance to see one.

The weather during June was much better than 2013 but it was obvious that the Kidney vetch population had crashed from the previous year. However, surveyors were able to survey sites along the coast including Usan and Boddin Point and while Small Blue was not found Kidney Vetch was. In addition a survey at Border Quarry south of Friockheim turned up sizable patches of Kidney Vetch. It is believed that this patch has developed since the quarry was capped and landscaped in 2006 and after the area became unsuitable for small blue. Other parts of this quarry site are still in use so access is restricted. There were two sightings of Small Blue, one at Balmashanner in Forfar and another in Dundee, both of these sightings have to be confirmed, however



Small Blue butterfly; July 2014 Survey Training; Kidney Vetch © C A G Lloyd

Balmashanner has Kidney vetch growing and is in an old quarry site, while the Dundee siting was on waste ground adjacent to a garden centre and a disused railway.

In Dundee friends of Riverside Nature Park are planning some planting to establish Kidney Vetch and grassland to attract Grayling. It is hoped that this can be further modified to improve its attractiveness to butterflies and moths.

Plans for 2015 include surveying some of the more difficult to access inland sites and extending the survey to quarries, we are also planning to scatter some kidney vetch seed on some sites where it has been lost and start growing some Kidney vetch plugs. Although too late for the coming year, we are hoping to have some walks that will cover the whole of the Angus coast as part of the 2016 Angus walking festival.

Last year we carried out more surveys of moths in Angus. A survey in Corrie Fee attracted 8 recorders and another trip is planned this year. Through enterprising work by Cathy and Barry Caudwell we have permits to access and survey on Forestry Commission sites. We have also had permission to carry out trapping around a couple of upland reservoirs by Scottish water.

We are working hard to provide more activities for members and this year there will be an event at the McManus Galleries collections unit, some more site visits and a butterfly identification workshop later in the year.

There have been some changes to our county recorders. Duncan Davidson has stepped down to concentrate on Fife. However a new butterfly recorder for Angus and Perthshire has been appointed: Glyn Edwards - Email: glynedwards19@yahoo.com, Phone: 01259 752094, Address: 2 Park Avenue, Tillicoultry, Clackmannanshire FK13 6BW

Tay Landscape Partnership

TayLP are currently in their second year and are going from strength to strength. With their many activities and projects, many are based around biodiversity and protection. Whether it's retaining existing nest sites, putting up new nest boxes, or planting a wildlife hedge the TayLP is committed to helping Nature in all its forms. This includes their work on bringing Historic Orchards back to life which have been grown on the Tay for over 800 years. These orchards also provide great habitat for insects and small mammals as well as tasting great!

Visit their website at www.taylp.org for more information or Contact Shirley Paterson at Shirley.Paterson@pkht.org.uk

The Tayside Amphibian and Reptile Group (TayARG)

In 2013, with the success of the Amphibians in Drains Projects, the Tayside Amphibian and Reptile Group (or TayARG) was set up. The aim of TayARG is to co-ordinate volunteers working on a variety of projects across Angus, Perth and Kinross. These include the Amphibians in Drains Surveys, identifying migration and road crossing hotspots (Amphibian Priority Zones), Toads on Roads, Toadsize Surveys and Pooling our Ponds Surveys.

Tayside Biodiversity Partnership

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Tel. 01738 475373 e-mail: caglloyd@pkc.gov.uk Website: www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk

Tayside Biodiversity Partnership Chairman - Andrew Barbour; Co-ordinator: Catherine Lloyd; Biodiversity Assistant: Andrew Law



The success of the Amphibians in Drains pilot in Blairgowrie in 2012/13 was such a success that Perth and Kinross Council agreed to fit wildlife kerbs where they are needed once they know where the Amphibian Priority Zones are. These sites, found by local surveyors and volunteers, are currently being compiled and mapped by the Tayside Biodiversity Partnership's Assistant, Andrew Law, who will be submitting his findings to Perth and Kinross Council.

Last year, the first trials of Amphibian Ladders – small ladders which allow amphibians and other creatures to escape from drains – were successfully trialled in Angus, following on from success in the Netherlands where the studies have taken their inspiration from; this is the first time they are being used in the UK. Angus Council agreed that the Friends of Angus Herpetofauna could trial two areas: one north of Dundee, which included 37 custom-built ladders, and the other in Carnoustie which included 25 ladders. UHI student Claire McInroy was part of the study last year, as was Karis and Jared from Dundee University, and Andrew Law who has been making the ladders for TayARG and, specifically, Perth & Kinross Council where a second tranche of ladders are being trialled near Blairgowrie through 2015 in the next Amphibians in Drains project.

TayARG runs amphibian and reptile identification training days and survey training. Membership is free and open to anyone though there may be restrictions for under-16s for safety reasons. If you are interested in helping with survey work or just being part of the group, please contact either Daniele Muir –

Taysideamphibians@yahoo.co.uk or Catherine Lloyd – caglloyd@pkc.gov.uk.

MarineLife Angus

Explore Angus's coastal wildlife sites and report your whale and dolphin sightings at to the Angus Cetacean Awareness Project (ACAP), an Angus based project recording cetaceans in Angus waters.

www.marinelifeangus.co.uk, the website hosting ACAP,

promotes a wealth of information on local coastal sites great for land based viewing. The site also aims to publicise other local recording schemes recording local butterflies, maritime plants and marine non-native species. Sightings are reported to BARS and the Tayside Local Biodiversity Action Plan and there is now a twitter account to follow [@marinelifeangus](https://twitter.com/marinelifeangus)

Since the project began there have been regular sightings at more than seven locations on the Angus coast of species including bottlenose dolphins, minke whale, porpoise and common dolphin and even humpbacks at Montrose Bay. A particular hotspot is Scurdierness lighthouse at Ferryden, Montrose. The number of sightings reported rose in 2014 and more than 100 bottlenose dolphins were recorded.

We are always looking for more sightings and would like to encourage those regularly out on the coast or on inshore waters to regularly report what they see and encourage others to do so too. Promotional materials for distribution can be send out for distribution, if you would like to receive some please email info@marinelifeangus.co.uk



Tayside Biodiversity Partnership

At long last 2015 will see the 2nd Edition of the Tayside Biodiversity Action Plan published. It will have a 10 year life, coinciding part-way with the 2020 Challenge reporting from the Scottish Government. This will enable us to report back nationally in 2020, but also review the 2nd Edition to ensure we meet new targets before 2025. Unlike the 1st Edition (published in 2002), the new Action Plan will be taking into consideration the wider ecosystems in Tayside and working towards specific targets within the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy's 2020 Challenge. We will, however, still focus - in part - on priority habitats and species. Some sections of the new Action Plan will be out to public consultation soon – check: www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk or the Facebook pages for information. We would greatly appreciate your input to this consultation.

The Partnership's Working Groups have not only been revising the Action Plan, but also reviewing the existing projects taking place across Tayside - and adding new ones. All projects are included in the UK Biodiversity



Action Recording Scheme (www.ukbars.defra.gov.uk). The Groups meet regularly and new members are very welcome. If you would like more information, or would like to be added as a member ('consultee' members are welcome too, if you are unable to attend meetings), please contact the Working Group Leader direct for further information:

Working Groups:	Leader:	Contact:
Coast and Estuaries	Kelly Ann Dempsey	DempseyK@angus.gov.uk
Farmland and Upland (including Barn Owl Interest Group)	Carol Littlewood	carol@littlewoodlandcare.co.uk
Urban and Built Environment	Craig Borland and David Williamson (Ether Rogers-Nicoll until end March)	forfarloch@angus.gov.uk ; dwilliamson@pkc.gov.uk (EMRogersNicoll@pkc.gov.uk)
Woodland	Mike Strachan	Mike.strachan@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
Water and Wetland	Kate Baird	kate.baird@sepa.org.uk
People & Communications	Polly Pullar	pollypullar@yahoo.co.uk
Species Interest Groups:	Leader:	Contact:
Tayside Swifts	Daniele Muir and Craig Borland	DMuir@taysideswifts.co.uk or forfarloch@angus.gov.uk Facebook page - Tayside Swifts
Sand Martin	Ian Ford	ianford0705@btinternet.com
Small Blue Butterfly	Barry Prater	barry@prater.myzen.co.uk
Tayside Amphibian & Reptile Group (TayARG)	Daniele Muir and Catherine Lloyd	taysideamphibians@yahoo.co.uk or caglloyd@pkc.gov.uk Facebook page - Tayside Amphibians and Reptiles

ZoomIn2 Project

Choose a space which is special to you - anything that is natural goes: from a tree in your local park or a school pond, to a view along the glen or your favourite beach. It doesn't have to be in the countryside – it could be a street tree or a river near where you live – something that will show the changing seasons. It could be in your back garden, at work, in a community orchard, a corner of an allotment or a school wildlife garden. Then return every month for 12 months (or more if you wish) and take a photograph from exactly the same spot. Make sure you load up your monthly photograph to www.zoomin2.co.uk so that you gradually accumulate a series of photographs which mean something to you. Don't worry if you miss one or two months. See you on the website!

Wildlife in the Rough - Enhancing Golf Course

Biodiversity

A Sharing Good Practice event was held on 5th November 2014 at SNH Conference Centre at Battleby, Perth and was chaired by the new Chairman of Tayside Biodiversity Partnership, Andrew Barbour.

Building on the legacy of the Ryder Cup, this Sharing Good Practice event, led jointly by Scottish Natural Heritage and Tayside Biodiversity Partnership, endorsed by golf's governing body, The R&A and with valuable input from Scottish Golf Environment

Group showed golf and biodiversity can easily be natural partners through their commitment to protect and





enhance biodiversity on golf courses. The event allowed golf course managers, green keepers, golf club members, local authority staff, tourism operators and NGOs a chance to gain valuable networking opportunities across this diverse group of stakeholders.

Those who attended the SGP event had a chance to share ideas and learn from good examples of small-scale biodiversity enhancing projects. They met with wildlife experts and organisations that could support the golf clubs projects and they heard from individuals with expertise in habitat and species management. These experts showed that rough and out of bounds areas can be managed to be more beneficial for wildlife, but without becoming untidy or looking neglected and may even save money for the golf club. Participants heard inspirational presentations about existing golf course projects and then they had the chance to plan their own biodiversity project with support from experienced practitioners.

If you missed the SGP event or know of a golf club that would be interested in enhancing or creating a wildlife area please contact Lynn Jopling, Environmental Advisor, Scottish Golf Environment Group on 01334 466477/01620 810901, Mobile 07824 873822 or email lynn.jopling@sgeg.org.uk or check out the website www.sgeg.org.uk or get more information from the Tayside Biodiversity Partnership website and link, www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk/Information_Guides_Incorporating_Biodiversity_Local_Services.html

Partnership Surveys

Training opportunities are listed on both the home page of www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk and the Partnership's Facebook page. If your organisation would like details of local events or specific training opportunities publicised, please forward information to caglloyd@pkc.gov.uk.

BioBlitz at Loch Leven NNR

Loch Leven, near Kinross, is Scotland's largest lowland loch and one of the most important sites for waterfowl in Britain. Its unique environment attracts not only the largest concentration of breeding ducks anywhere in the UK, but also many thousands of migratory ducks, geese and swans every autumn and winter, as well as boasting an interesting variety of wildlife, plants and trees.

Loch Leven NNR celebrated their 50th Anniversary in 2014 and one of their best attended events was a 24 hour 'BioBlitz' over the weekend of 5th-6th July. This was a great, outdoor, family event where expert naturalists and members of the public worked together to do a fast and intensive survey of all forms of life in a natural space and was a first for the Reserve.

We had a wealth of wildlife experts on hand to help participants get to grips with recording species - or just finding out more about what species can be found at the nature reserve. We had guided walks, displays, demonstrations and activities, including identifying bats, birds, insects and fish, tracking mammals and amphibians, and spotting alien species. Everything people see or find is written down to make a list of species records which then feeds into national databases that monitor our wildlife. One of the most popular events of the weekend was when Reserve staff and volunteers carried out bird ringing on Sunday morning! This was not even on the Bioblitz programme but as a scheduled monthly event it just happened to coincide with everyone being around.



Photograph of Bioblitz Hub ©Anne Youngman, Bat Conservation Trust



BioBlitz Activities © C A G Lloyd

Swift Survey and new Kirriemuir Project

A day-long workshop "Swifts and Bats in the Kirriemuir Conservation Area" officially launched the latest Swift Conservation Project. This project is focussing on providing external and internal nestboxes for swifts during the HLF Kirriemuir Conservation Area Restoration Scheme, funded by Historic Scotland and Angus Council.



This is the first time a local Swift group is working with different partners to safeguard existing swift nest sites in town centre properties, as well as proactively providing advice and new nestboxes during the building restoration work. We hope the project will be acknowledged as a Best Practice study to encourage similar partnership projects across Scotland (and the UK).

For more information contact: Fergus Cook – fcook@taysideswifts.co.uk and
Daniele Muir – dmuir@taysideswifts.co.uk.

Useful websites:

- www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk - includes details about the Biodiversity Duty for Public Bodies (Nature Conservation Scotland Act 2004) and the Scottish Biodiversity List
- www.cbd.int/2011-2020 - United Nations Decade on Biodiversity
- www.brisc.org.uk - Biological Recording in Scotland
- www.scottishgeology.com - Scottish Geology Forum

With thanks to:

Tayside Geodiversity
Butterfly Conservation (Scotland)
MarineLife Angus
Perth & Kinross, Angus and Dundee Museums
Scottish Natural Heritage
Scottish Wild Beaver Group
Swift-Conservation and Tayside Swifts
TayARG
Tayside Biodiversity Partnership
Tay Landscape Partnership



The 2015 Bulletin compiled and edited by Andrew Law,
Tayside Biodiversity Partnership Assistant – for the Tayside Recorders' Forum: February 2015
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Facebook pages: Tayside Wildlife Recorders / Tayside Biodiversity / Tayside Swifts / Tayside Amphibians & Reptiles