



TAYSIDE BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

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SWIFT INTEREST GROUP

Tuesday, 23rd September 2008 (Living Field Study Centre, SCRI, Invergowrie)

NOTES OF THE MEETING

Present:

Catherine Lloyd (CL)	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership
Clare Darlaston (CD)	Concern for Swifts Scotland
Daniele Muir (DM)	Perth and Kinross Ranger Service
Esther Rogers-Nicoll	Perth & Kinross Council (Planning)
Craig Borland (CB)	Angus Ranger Service
Charlie McPherson (CM)	Scone & Perth Voluntary Survey Co-ordinator
Britta Peters (BP)	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership

Apologies:

Stephanie Shaw (SS)	Student (Volunteer Database Assistant)
Ron Youngman	Bird Recorder, Perth & Kinross
Ann Lolley (AL)	Broughty Ferry Environmental Project

Copied to:

Ben Notley, National Trust for Scotland; Ian Ford, Broughty Ferry Environmental Project; Mark Simmons, Perth Museum; David Lampard, McManus Collections (Dundee); David Williamson, P&KC (Environment Services); Scottish Wildlife Trust (Loch of the Lowes).

1.	WELCOME & APOLOGIES	ACTION
	CL - welcomed the group to the meeting.	
2.	BRIEF OVERVIEW	
	<p>General Publicity</p> <p>CL showed the group the BFEP poetry booklet which features the swift poem used on the T-shirts (masterminded by AL). She confirmed that all the Perth Youth Theatre players had received a t-shirt by way of thank you for participating in the Scottish Biodiversity Week celebrations in May; all working Swift sub-group members are entitled to a t-shirt too, so if anyone has been omitted, please contact CL direct. She also confirmed that BFEP are keen to find funding to prepare and publish a Swift book along the same lines as the Sand Martin book.</p> <p>CD - suggested the Forfar Project (Angus Council) be included in the next Newsletter. CL confirmed it would be good to get funding for a 2nd Issue of the Newsletter for next season, i.e. prepared in the New Year and published for the beginning of May.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>AL</p> <p>CL</p>

	<p>CL reported that the Perth Youth Theatre undertook the Street Theatre on Swifts and Bees and had achieved a fantastic outcome. Their project was funded by the SITA Tayside Biodiversity Promotions Fund. PYT would like to repeat this next year if funding available. Suggestions to link in Swift Project to Tayside Biodiversity Festival week and (if run again) the Scottish Biodiversity Week. Everyone asked to suggest event ideas for 1st to 10th May 2009.</p> <p>Various suggestions made from group re further involvement from public - 'dots on maps' display, (who to set up?); make your own nest box and other 'hands on' projects.</p>	<p>CL</p> <p>BP - circulate list for suggestions</p>
3	<p>Survey and Ideas for 2009</p> <p>CM - provided extensive list of sightings and read results of survey to group. CL noted that some of these sightings need to be revised and updated. CD said that a publicity drive is needed to get SOC involved in this area - their Edinburgh survey has run for 10 years CL suggested to start publicising the new, more thorough, swift survey in Winter rather than leaving it until April. CD added that starting survey in May might not be best as there should be more swifts in June/July which would make the survey more interesting for children.</p> <p>CM talked to CL about Lynn Wiltshire who would like some information re swift boxes. CM to email details to CL, BP to forward details. CM also handing more swift surveys to CL, BP to send 'thank you' packs to participants.</p> <p>CL also suggested a large project to involve as many Guides as possible throughout Tayside (if feasible) - ERN to enquire. Perhaps something along the lines of "what can we see in the evening"? This would bring in owls and bats, as well as swifts. BP wondered if it would be appropriate to run this as a school holiday competition in July?</p> <p>CD suggested an evening meeting & inviting RSPB and volunteer sector. Aerodrome at Scone could accommodate up to 20 people from 6.30pm to 9-ish on 5th or 6th May 2009? ERN to find out cost of Hall etc for the evening venue for funding purposes - there is a possibility that PKC Council may fund? CD to maybe get Keith Morton of RSPB involved as they are also involved with swifts. DM to do a 'Introduction to Swifts' presentation (last given at the Community Gardens, Greenspace and Graveyards Workshop this March). All to aim to get public more involved. CL confirmed the event would be an ideal way to thank existing volunteers and to hopefully encourage new volunteers to come forward. "Spot the First Swift" might be an appropriate local newspaper article at the end of April/beginning of May which would help publicise the Volunteer Evening. This would tie in well with the Tayside Biodiversity Festival plans.</p>	<p>CD/CL</p> <p>BP - both actions done</p> <p>ERN</p> <p>ERN</p> <p>CD</p> <p>DM</p> <p>CL</p>
4	<p>New Swift nest boxes</p> <p>CD - said she would like to have wooden shoebox-style flat packs for new nest boxes built, preferably made of cedar or larch for longevity (there is a source of this wood in both Perth and Grangemouth). CL suggested prisons and local workshops for the disabled, materials to be paid through funding - CD to contact; CD to provide aluminium or plastic templates for the correct size for the box entrances (funding required). Templates have to show the correct sizes as well as info on 'where to assemble'. Boxes need to have a warning about not being removed once erected. CD also pointed out that schools should not be asked to make these boxes as they have to be of substantial build, to last about 50 years.</p> <p>CL requested a list of all items which require funding within the Interest Group so that a large general grant application can be considered (this would also contribute to CD's substantial input to Tayside projects); BP to look through 'funding' newsletter to see if anything can be found.</p>	<p>CD/CL</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>BP</p>
5	<p>Scottish Swifts Leaflet</p> <p>CD - informed group about speaking to Ian Thomson (RSPB) who agreed he would provide funding for printing costs (black & white only). CL suggested Perth & Kinross Council as alternative (who have previously printed material for TBP). CD to chase RSPB (Ian Thomson) to confirm 100% that printing would be funded.</p>	<p>CD</p>

6	<p>National Swifts Meeting - CD</p> <p>CD - reported she took part in a tele-conference recently - the RSPB will amber-list swifts and have started their own National Swift survey; Survey will be based on screeching parties & nest site addresses. Restricted access available to database re addresses but Planning departments would have legitimate access. RSPB - encourage members, big corporations and big organisations to get involved e.g. putting up nest boxes etc. Issue of maintenance brought up - housing associations are to be assured that these projects are maintenance-free.</p> <p>CD informed that the Irish Swift Association reported that swifts there are to be protected all year round; commented that there needs to be protection of <u>nest sites</u> not just particular <u>nests</u>. Also informed that survey info is beginning to tell - RSPB might go down the Irish way but CD wary of this as it may influence re-roofing and other building works.</p> <p>CD further asked for records of lost swift colonies to be added to future surveys (if known) to eventually make the right people aware of the problem. CD - time schedule of 2009 to be circulated (the one which excludes swifts) - CL to contact Ian Strachan (SNH Inverness) who is reviewing the Scottish List - email and make aware of RSPB species list. CD to email info to CL who will forward to IS.</p>	<p>BP to photocopy minutes of this to group</p> <p>CD/CL</p>
8	<p>Perth and Kinross</p> <p>DM - no update just yet; other Rangers have put sightings online; these are being noted by Stephanie. Swift walk in Dunning was done, lots of nest sites seen (as well as swallows and housemartins). Braco Walk not so successful due to weather but people took survey forms so possible updates later. Braco will be the first Biodiversity village in Tayside (because of a number of school, nursery, graveyard projects overseen by a number of local organisations). CL going to try to get a swift project going there as well (they are supposedly nesting in the old tower but this has yet to be verified). DM mentioned that there should be swifts in the village as there are lots of old buildings. DM reported that there are no swifts in the new nestboxes at Crieff yet; CD advised that this could take up to 5 years.</p> <p>DM is setting up a swift project with Burrelton PS - making nest boxes etc. This PS is a very active Eco-school; DM to visit school in December to start project by making three nestboxes.</p> <p>CL reported sightings in the centre of Perth (George Street) and confirmed that it may be possible to ask the Civic Trust to help undertake city survey next year - CL to contact Bill Wilson.</p> <p>It seems there are 5 pairs of swifts in converted stables at Ballintruim; these need to be confirmed in 2009.</p> <p>NTS project</p> <p>No response from Dunkeld; CD has tried to get in touch with Lindsay McKinley (National Trust Conservation Officer) but he has not replied yet. ERN to find out about the planning application so that CL can report to SNH on whether the NTS has put up their nestbox.</p>	<p>CL</p> <p>DM</p> <p>CL</p> <p>DM</p> <p>ERN</p>
9	<p>Angus - St Margaret's House</p> <p>CB reported on St Margaret's House - 72 nest boxes now on the Orchardbank Business Park site (Angus Council offices); the industrial site has been re-developed and improved for wildlife. Swifts have been spotted flying but no nesting? Staff at St Margaret's are looking for a camera to watch swifts - they have organised raffles etc. Three housemartins were spotted in new Angus Council building.</p> <p>Also reported that there are definitely at least a dozen swifts in Glen Prosen (upland swifts). CB informed that there is nesting in Strathardle and suggested that a swift watch should be done there next year; perhaps something the Swift Interest Group could do as an evening event? CD reported that swifts have also been spotted in Glen Clova. CL proposed that a specific Upland Swift Survey is undertaken next year to ascertain exactly where the swifts are in the Tayside glens.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p>

10	<p>Dundee</p> <p>CD - informed group about previous Dundee Project meeting minutes (her own) - to provide BP with hand written copies to be circulated to rest of group. Rob Pedersen was to give CDN advice - CD to try and get hold of CDN regulations. CL explained that Rob Pedersen is keen to implement wildlife actions. Helen McQuillan (sustainability & energy conservation) had suggested that she would get a list of all renovation projects and pass to CD and CL but this has not yet been received.</p> <p>CD - would like to get a Menzieshill Survey started in Dundee; should school get involved? CL to contact Morag Cooney of the Education sub-group (DCC) to find out who to contact at the school - possibility of Eco-school getting involved? Perhaps the school could help with a specific swift mapping of the area?</p> <p>CD pointed out that there are no swift projects running in Broughty Ferry i.e. surveys etc; CL to contact BFEP and ask if it would be possible to organize more projects. This may tie in with the proposed new Swift booklet.</p> <p>Hillcrest Housing Association has invited CD to take a Swift information stand at its Green Day event in Bonar Hall, Dundee on 21st October. CL will already be taking part in the event.</p>	<p>CD/CL</p> <p>CL</p> <p>CL</p> <p>CD</p>
11	<p>Church Swift Project</p> <p>CL informed that nothing appears to be happening on the new Scottish Church Swift project. CD would like to bring up to English Swift projects standards (see minutes of 29/4/08). There, ninety churches are being renovated with swifts in mind.</p> <p>It was agreed to ask Andrew Roger (Glen Devon) if he would be willing to check the Auchterarder churches for nest sites in 2009.</p>	<p>CD</p> <p>CL</p>
12	<p>Swift Survey - volunteer update</p> <p>CL reported on volunteer acknowledgement being sent out this year (Swift 'thank you' letter). BP to attach copy of this to minutes for info. CL thanked Stephanie and Britta for all their help with this.</p> <p>CL confirmed that Stephanie Shaw's work had been excellent and that SS would like to continue with this if her university work would allow.</p> <p>CD advised that RSPB definitely want Microsoft Access for main central swift reports - this info should be in Access to enable conversion to GIS. Further suggested that a separate post code column should be added to list; Grid Ref is fairly much at the front of the sheet, this is really only necessary for GIS but not for general info. Do we need a postcode? Important to add "building type" as this information is requested in the Tayside forms.</p> <p>CL said that she had checked how other Biodiversity Partnerships had been recording their swift surveys. All said that the information was input into Excel so that it could be lifted into other programmes and shared amongst museums, National Biodiversity Network, etc. SS had doubled up on her work by ensuring that all records had been put into both Access and Excel and it was decided to continue this so that the information could be made available to anyone and everyone.</p>	<p>BP</p> <p>SS</p> <p>SS</p> <p>SS</p>
13	<p>Date and Place for next Meetings</p> <p>The Scottish Swift Gathering did not take place this year, but CD proposed that she approach the BTO office in Stirling to ask if they could host such a meeting on either 20 or 22 January 2009. This meeting would be open to any Swift Worker in Scotland.</p> <p>The next meeting of the Tayside Swift Interest Group will be held at Perth & Kinross Council at the end of April 2009; date to be confirmed. ERN to organise Room for 10 + lunch.</p>	<p>CD</p> <p>ERN</p>

	CL thanked BP for taking the minutes and also recorded the Interest Group's thanks for the continuing help from SCRI in the use of the meeting room.	
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SOC RECORDERS CONTACT LIST

(if any of these contacts are out of date, please let CL know)

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