



TAYSIDE BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

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SWIFT INTEREST GROUP

Tuesday, 29th April 2008 (Living Field Study Centre, SCRI, Invergowrie)

NOTES OF THE MEETING

Present:

Catherine Lloyd (CL) (Chair)	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership
Clare Darlaston (CD)	Concern for Swifts Scotland
Stephanie Shaw (SS)	Student
Daniele Muir (DM)	Perth and Kinross Ranger Service
Craig Borland (CB)	Angus Ranger Service
Charlie McPherson (CM)	Scone & Perth Voluntary Survey Co-ordinator
Dave Ferguson (DF)	Dundee Ranger Service
Rachael Higgins (RH)	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership

Apologies:

Kate Baird	SEPA
Esther Rogers-Nicoll	Perth & Kinross Council (Planning)
Andrew Rodger	Architect/voluntary Swift Surveyor
Ron Youngman	Bird Recorder, Perth & Kinross

Copied to:

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

1.	WELCOME & APOLOGIES	ACTION
	CL - welcomed the group to the meeting and welcomed Stephanie Shaw - Stephanie will be helping TBP as a Swift Project Student as part of her Dundee University placement. She will be setting up the database and then inputting past survey data. She will also set up a Volunteer Surveyors' List so that a mailing can be sent to past surveyors encouraging them to continue helping.	
2.	BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE LAST MEETING 8TH OCTOBER 2007 & UPDATES	
	CL - New swift pin badges were circulated to members of the Interest Group - purchased from the RSPB, the badges will be part of the proposed Volunteer's Pack - if a completed survey form is returned a badge and newsletter will be sent as a thank you. It would be good to replicate the Dundee "thank you" swift card to add to the Pack if possible. CD - late June or July is a good time for swift spotting. CL - Ann Lolley of Broughty Ferry	CL/DF

	Environment Project has had t-shirts made prepared with a swift poem (for her own project) but has offered to increase the number she buys - they are available at £6 each. Sponsorship is still needed for them - the top volunteer surveyors could perhaps get these. DM - suggested a friendly developer may help with such a sponsorship i.e. Stephens Builders. DF - maybe Swift Van Rentals (insurance) could help? All group to look into this for lump sum.	ALL
	CD - Noted there has been no time put into fundraising. CL - suggested that a Project Officer on a National level for Scotland is required. CD - has looked at lots of application forms etc. The post would need to be hosted somewhere unless it could be home-based. Funding is a major issue. CD - would be happy to meet up with 2 or 3 people to work through funding applications. DF - we should try to get swifts onto the endangered list. CD - agreed. We need to keep trying for this. An RSPB survey was published recently and described there being only a 20% national decline, whereas in Scotland there has been a severe decline of 62%. Unfortunately RSPB only considers Scotland as an area. DF - noted that reed beds are also not acknowledged in Scotland (according to RSPB). CD - there is now a National Swift Survey being run by the RSPB. CL - In the UKBAP Review swifts were again not eligible which results in us not being able to directly claim for swift projects from the SITA TBAF funding; any projects will need to highlight urban habitats instead.	CD/CL
3.	2008 PLANS FOR TAYSIDE	
	Survey co-ordination, volunteer packs, data input (CL) CD - received an email from PKC Planning suggesting it is important to keep swift data consistent. CL - will follow up PKC regarding data input. If a survey is done this would be great but it would need to tie in with their plans. CL to liaise with DM and PKC. CD - will contact SOC. She had a 5 minute slot at a conference about where you might find swifts i.e. council house estates.	CL/CD/DM
	Perth & Kinross (DM & CM) CM - he was disappointed in the feedback after the SWT newsletter asked for volunteers. He will contact the Courier and Perth Advertiser and arrange a feature. However he has got new surveyors for Errol, Abernethy, Inchtute, WWF Dunkeld & Birnam, Kinrossie, Scone and Balbeggie (only 2 from SWT). DM - will do Crieff and Comrie herself as well as Auchterarder, Dunning and Bridge of Earn. She will ask for more reps from PKC Rangers. Has nominated Jeannie to undertake Aberfeldy and Pitlochry, Mandy for Blairgowrie and Alyth, Iain and Fergus for Perth and Invergowrie. She is looking at a map for new places where there is not much happening. CL - offered to undertake the Abernethy and Glenfarg surveys. DM - will ask Niall his possibilities for helping. CL - there are still gaps within Perth and Kinross. David Williamson may be able to help with specific areas (Pitlochry, Moulin, etc.). CM - unfortunately has lost a volunteer for Dunkeld but Jules Weston (WWF) has offered to do this. CL - suggested we ask Jules Weston's colleagues to help. Suggested a joint press release of thanks and a call for volunteers for specific areas. CM - we also need volunteers for Newtyle, Glenfarg, Glencarse, Meigle and Kenmore. Residents of specific villages could get involved in surveying. DM - will enquire with the Ranger at Glen Atholl Estate regarding checking not only in Blair Atholl, but also Glen Tilt. CD - will contact Ben Notley of NTS and Lindsay - to add to contact list.	DM/DF/CL CM DM CD
	NTS Projects - Dunkeld (VH) Vicky Hilton has now left the NTS, so Ben Notley will be taking over until a new Perthshire Ranger can be appointed. CL said it was important to keep in touch with the NTS and to encourage the swift surveys in Dunkeld and Birnam.	
	Angus Projects (CB) CB - unfortunately the recruitment of new volunteers has been poor, there has been lots of press releases thanks to all the rangers' work. We need to pin point nest sites, especially in coastal towns. However, there has been a good response to letters sent in to local papers. Feeding areas in some towns have been located. More nest boxes to go up (36 in total) at the Angus Council offices at Orchardbank, Forfar. A new feeding corridor near the edge of a Forfar Business park near the loch is looking very good - there has been some publicising on the website on this too. CD - requested a short write-up on this with a photo with information on the client / architect / contractor from CB.	CB

	<p>CB - Rangers have had events and raffles etc. to raise money for the camera - staff are keen at Social Work Department to get involved with this too. CD - can she get more info from CB on this so she can do a write-up on this for the North Lanarkshire school project? CB - agreed it would be good to get schools involved. Also swifts were seen in Glenprosen (an unlikely place!) CL - noted it was good news to hear of Upland Swifts in Glenprosen - this could become Tayside-wide Swifts, as opposed to Urban Swifts as swifts have already been discovered in Glen Devon.</p> <p>CL - could more swift / bat walks be organised? CB - agreed they are planning this for Forfar and Arbroath and getting planners involved. There are swift feeding sites nearby.</p>	
	<p>Dundee & Broughty Ferry (DF & AL) DF - apologies for lack of input - things have not gone so smoothly since Dave Shepherd left. Also because swifts are not on the endangered list, they have unfortunately not been a priority. He will be picking it up again soon. CD asked DF to pass her Dave Shepherd's records of Menziesshill (info between 2001-2006 - 6 nest sites).</p> <p>DF - showed us the surveyor 'thank you' cards being sent out which everyone thought were lovely. CD - thought these could be recording / thank you cards postcard style. CD to send CL RSPB survey. DF - intends to email everyone on his contact list in one go. Will get a press release drafted up in conjunction with Ann Lolley of Broughty Ferry Environmental Project (who can help check before going to press). Unfortunately some previous records have been lost.</p> <p>CD - suggested targeting SNH for Dundee work. Suggested contacts - Mike Groves, Broughty Ferry, Dan Carmichael, SOC Recorder, James Whitelaw, Jeff Burn, and Joan Lamb. DF - would like to pick up again on Dochart Terrace work. Part of the re-launch of the project will be involving a swift walk on 26th July at 9pm. CL - suggested making it a swift & bat walk - people may be more interested in a combination. DF - also hoping for a swift display through the summer; swift boxes are being put up in Blackness Primary School (working with the local ringing group); and the webcam with Radio 4 with the children unfortunately didn't go through so the swift box will be going to Ann Lolley of BFEP.</p>	<p>CD/DF</p> <p>CD DF</p> <p>DF/CD</p>
	<p>General Roundup CD - suggested we need a spreadsheet for sorting of recorders - perhaps SS could begin work on this? CD could then copy and add to this list with new volunteers when necessary.</p>	<p>CD/SS/CL</p>
	<p>DF - press release from the whole group perhaps for the whole of Tayside? CL - proposed publicising specific needs in individual areas first and then half way through the season target from a bigger perspective. CM - will circulate a rough draft of a press release he will be using. DM - she will have to go through a few hoops for publishing any press release, may take a few days.</p>	<p>CM/CL/DM</p>
	<p>Tayside Swift Nest Box Trials (CL) Nest Box Trials - this straightforward project has encountered numerous difficulties which is embarrassing because of the £500 investment from SNH. Nothing has been happening in Broughty Ferry or Dundee. The Guide Dogs for the Blind school in Forfar has been more successful, as well as the hospital and PKC office in Crieff. Planning permission is needed for the nestbox in Dunkeld - there is lack of NTS staff at the moment which is causing a major delay. CB to report to CL and CD on Guide Dogs for the Blind school, Lilybank and Orchardbank. CL - to follow up on the Erigmore Holiday Park - the swift turret, although this is not officially part of the Nestbox trials. CL will be including an interim update on the project in her Annual Report to SNH, but hopes that the project can be turned round in the coming year to make it a success.</p>	<p>CB/CL CL</p>
	<p>Potential Church Swift Project (Green Graveyard Initiative) (CL) Churches Project CD - would be useful to have an overall Swift Forum. Bill Morrows (English and Scottish Churches Project - Ely: 01353 662762) is doing well. A church in Callendar has swift boxes put up and has been quite successful. Possibilities in Dalry, Edinburgh. London swifts - a website could be built to include Bill Morrows' information and 90 other churches. CD - to contact BM and write a short slot. CL/ CB - could easily link in with the Tayside Green Graveyard Initiative and there may be Eco-congregation links right across Scotland. CL - to send CD contacts.</p> <p>It was noted that a church in Crieff is going to be converted into flats. CL to contact ER-N to check planning conditions include swifts.</p>	<p>CD/CB/CL</p> <p>CL/ER-N/ DM</p>

	<p>Proposed Dundee Buildings Project (CD) Dundee Buildings Project - CD - Rob Pederson, DCC, is willing to host a meeting for this. CD will visit the Thurso project in mid May as there may be good practice to report on at the Dundee meeting. CD has someone keen to get involved with the Pentland Housing Association project - 20 new swift boxes have been installed on a site of new flats built after the brewery was demolished. CDs were played and keen to keep playing these; if this works it would be a classic case of demolished natural nest sites resulting in successful man-made nests boxes. DF to make contact with regards the Menzieshill renovation project (dealing with Hillcrest, architects and planners) There are opportunities for management at Burnside and Lawside Mills. CL - to email Lisa Beardsmore's (Hillcrest) report to CD. CD to contact Rob Pederson to confirm a date. RH and DF to make contacts within DCC - specifically Housing Department. DF - would like to get primary schools involved with the Radio 4 and Africa link.</p>	DF/CL/RH
4.	SWIFT ISSUES IN SCOTLAND	
	<p>Prototype Swift Bricks CD - mentioned IBSTOCK - she is trying to get them to publicise the swift bricks on the website - they are currently difficult to find. Their products have been used by architects in Edinburgh. They design boxes with hand cut holes - however cutting them down to 25mm would be better than the current 30mm. The bricks are made from recycled rubble and are impervious (may be better to have clay). These are good to use by all, especially architects. DM - to enquire with her brother and get information on these, as he has installed some of these bricks. CL - to contact AR regarding an update on proto-bricks. DF - perhaps the Errol Brick company are still operating? CL - would be good to get a production line going, but we need to see if they work properly.</p>	DM CL/AR
	<p>Brief Updates on other Swift Projects (CD) CD - currently working with Glasgow Housing Associations - suggests making a link via the residents' newsletter. How about incorporating swift information into the Menzieshill resident's newsletter? Residents ARE keen to be involved. CD - Lovell is the contractor for many Housing Associations - they are very good and keen to get involved. CD has worked on a job in Shettleston where a triangular nest box was installed and has worked well. RSPB officers are keen to help in Glasgow and happy to host a meeting soon for another Glasgow project in North Lanarkshire where there is a school nest box project happening.</p>	CD/DF CD
5.	SCOTTISH BIODIVERSITY WEEK (19-25 MAY) - SWIFT WALKS	
	<p>CL - reminded all that the leaflet for Scottish Biodiversity Week is now available and all the events taking place throughout Scotland are on the website. The Perth Street Theatre will be taking place on 17th and 24th May (11am and 2pm both days). There will be bird and bee costumes, dancing and poetic and arty activities. DM - has swift walks planned for 23rd May in Comrie and Crieff to coincide with Scottish Biodiversity Week. DF has walks planned in July for Dundee and Broughty Ferry.</p>	
6.	TAYSIDE BIODIVERSITY FESTIVAL (1-10 MAY 2009) UPDATE & AWARENESS RAISING OPPORTUNITIES	
	<p>CL - reminded all of the Tayside Biodiversity Festival 2009(1st - 10th May) where there is big potential for swift walks. We could get lots of press releases and walks then. No dates are available as to when Scottish Biodiversity Week will be in 2009 but hopefully will be later in May to coincide, as usual, with International Biodiversity Day (22nd May). CL asked everyone to start planning now on which events will be suitable for the Tayside Festival. Visit Scotland is keen to get involved.</p>	ALL
7.	TAYSIDE SWIFT SPECIES ACTION PLAN	
	<p>The Swift Action Plan needs to go on the website soon. CD and CL to check the original draft next month.</p> <p>CD - mentioned the Nature Conservation Act / Wildlife and Countryside Act provisions leaflet - a simple flier could be used to interpret this in simple terms aimed at contractors. RSPB may be helping with this. CL - checked with everyone that the Swift survey form is still required in large amounts. It is unlikely PKC would be able to print these this year, so the Swift budget will be</p>	CD/CL CD/CL

	used to print them in bulk.	
8.	AOCB	
	CD - unfortunately the Scottish Swift Gathering fell by the wayside to concentrate on actual projects. We need to get back on track with the existing projects for all of Tayside. The Edinburgh Swift Network is working well (with only one person) - John Wilson, where swifts are being acknowledged as part of planning conditions.	
	CL - Edward Mayer of London Swifts - a keen swift enthusiast - is keen to come up to Scotland to give technical presentations - he could go to a range of LBAP areas, but a workshop in either Dundee or Perth would be welcome. The issue would be how to fund Edward's travel expenses.	CL
	CL - has been completely updating the Planning Manual where information on planning conditions is mentioned, including general information on swifts. It is planned that part 2 of the manual will include case studies as well as advice notes; these will be published this autumn.	CL
	DF - to get information from Rob Pederson re: Dochart Terrace case study.	DF
9.	DATE / VENUE OF NEXT MEETING	
	DM - suggested the group met at 8:30 or 9pm on 23rd May for a swift walk. Consensus was to have meeting later in the season. Next meeting to be held on 16th September (10.30am) at SCRI, Invergowrie. RH to book room. CL thanked SCRI for hosting the meeting room and RH for taking the minutes.	RH

SOC RECORDERS CONTACT LIST

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