



TAYSIDE BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

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TAYSIDE SAND MARTIN INTEREST GROUP

Introduction

The Tayside Biodiversity Partnership has 7 sub-groups which report to the Steering Group. This includes the "Urban and Built Environment" sub-group to which the Swift Interest Group already report. It is proposed a new Sand Martin Interest Group is also set up within this sub-group to specifically focus local action on this important Tayside species.

The Urban sub-group meets quarterly. Its membership includes: Angus Council (Planning Dept and Ranger Service); Perth & Kinross Council (Planning); SEPA; SNH; Angus College; the Broughty Ferry Environmental Project; and the Dundee Ranger Service. Ian Ford attends the sub-group and will report back from the Interest Group.

Proposed Remit

The setting up of a new Interest Group is included as an action within the Partnership's Business Plan 2007-10. Targets for Sand Martin conservation, agreed at the Interest Group, will be included in the UK Biodiversity Action Recording Scheme (BARS) for regular reporting on a national scale.

It is proposed the Interest Group:

- surveys and records sightings of Sand martins, passing on records to the appropriate local Record Centres, local planning departments (for their GIS) and the National Biodiversity Network.
- shares good practice about Sand martin wall construction and natural habitat conservation by article-writing, prepares a new Partnership website section (on www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk) and makes working links with the Sand Martin Trust.
- disseminates knowledge of Sand martin nest conservation/creation to architects, planners and developers, and works with the Tayside Police Wildlife Liaison Officer to publicise legislation affecting the species.
- encourages community involvement in appropriate projects to raise awareness about the species.
- encourages new nesting sites where appropriate.

The principal focus will be to find out what artificial Sand Martin nest sites have been built in Tayside and monitor their success. Although lots of similar projects have been carried out in the UK in the last decade, there is a lack of information about how successful they have been or what factors may have played a part in success or failure.

In Tayside, we want there to be a forum so that we can share information and advice and help boost our population of Sand Martins by monitoring and preventing problems as well as saving people from reinventing the wheel. There is a steady flow of people contacting the Partnership for information about bank construction. We would hope to contact other projects elsewhere in the UK and share information. Via the Tayside Biodiversity Co-ordinator, it will be possible to share such information

with the LBAP Officers' Network which covers all local authority areas in Scotland, as well as with biodiversity practitioners throughout the UK.

Related to this is the need to find out where else Sand Martins are breeding and monitor their success - co-ordinating annual surveys and speaking to quarrymasters and other landowners.

Ringling recoveries provide great insight into the life-styles of Sand Martins and it is hoped the Tay Ringing Group would wish to be involved in the Interest Group. Other potential members currently include:

- Broughty Ferry Environmental Project (Mike Groves and Ann Lolley),
- Murton Wildlife Trust (Al Borland),
- Angus Ranger Service (Tom McGrath, Monikie; Craig Borland, Forfar Loch; Ben Herschell, Crombie Country Park),
- Scottish Wildlife Trust (Neil Mitchell),
- RSPB Vane Farm (Colin Shaw),
- Catherine Lloyd (Tayside LBAP Co-ordinator).
- Clackmannanshire contact: Guy Harewood (Clacks LBAP Co-ordinator);
- Fife contact: Tony Wilson (Fife Ranger Service, Birnie Loch).

As well as having links with the Planning Departments across Tayside, we want to raise public awareness and be quick to respond to any illegal or proposed disturbance/ destruction of breeding colonies.

This Interest Group will be mainly through e-mail contact, following an initial meeting, and details will be included on the Tayside Biodiversity website (www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk), but an annual site visit to a breeding colony or sites of good practice would be an obvious venture.

Ian Ford

CONTACT DETAILS (please advise Ian Ford if there are additional names to add to this list)

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