



LANARK AREA MEMBER CENTRE BULLETIN  
ISSUE 39: JUNE 2011

WELCOME

Welcome to the June issue of the Lanark Area MC's bulletin 2011, which contains articles of general and local interest, updates on talks, events, etc. I hope you will all contribute news and events to future bulletin editions. Send any articles, photos and ideas to [postmaster@lanarkswt.org.uk](mailto:postmaster@lanarkswt.org.uk).

**Upcoming event**

***Greenhead Moss Ranger-led walk***

**Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> July**

**Time: 10 am**

**Free**

**Contact 01555 893804 to book**

Greenhead Moss Community nature Park in Wishaw has around 4 miles of accessible paths, a lowland raised bog, 25 hectares of wildflower meadows, as well as woodlands and ponds.



## **Other news**

### **SWT Falls of Clyde News**

Two peregrine chicks hatched at the Reserve, on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> April and Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> of May. The resident peregrines have now been breeding at the Falls of Clyde for 14 years. One egg has yet to hatch. Check out the “Peregrine Experience” in the Visitor Centre if you haven’t already seen it. Given the recent weather, a chance to do some indoor birdwatching is very welcome.

### **Member Centre News**

As part of the MC summer programme, Joe Davies led a butterfly field trip at the Falls of Clyde reserve. Although due to poor weather conditions we did not spot any butterflies, Joe had the foresight to set a moth trap the night before. In the two traps we found several moths and identified ten species of moth. Joe introduced us to some fascinating night creatures including the wonderfully named Hebrew Character (*Orthosia gothica*) and the Spectacle (*Abrostola tripartite*).

## **Other news**

### **Springwatch kicks off with beavers**

Springwatch, the BBC’s primetime wildlife show, will begin on the 30<sup>th</sup> of May with a visit to the Scottish Beaver Trial in the Knapdale forest, run by the SWT and the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland.

Simon Jones, the Scottish Beaver Trial Project Manager, said: “We can’t wait to show Springwatch viewers across Britain the wild, Knapdale beavers, the beautiful local environment and the story of the return from extinction in the UK of this fascinating, keystone species. Our trial is the first formal reintroduction of a native mammal back in to the UK, and the outcome of this trial could decide the future of beavers in Scotland.

“Now close to celebrating its second anniversary, the Trial and its beavers are doing well. We have four beaver families here and we hope to see new kits emerging from the lodges in June or July. Signs of beavers and the effects they can have on their local environment can be seen readily by visiting the area.”



<http://www.scottishbeavers.org.uk/>

### **Osprey News**

At the SWT's Loch of the Lowes Reserve, "Lady" has laid 2 eggs this year, bringing her lifetime total to 60. She is now estimated to be 26 years old – amazing given the average lifespan of an osprey is only 8 years. This year, the SWT hopes to raise enough money to make it possible to satellite tag and track the next osprey chicks. The resident pair at the RSPB's Loch Garten reserve in Abernethy have produced 3 eggs which are still incubating.

A new pair of ospreys have taken up residence at the Forestry Commission's Queen Elizabeth Forest Park: 3 eggs have been laid.

At the Wildfowl and wetlands trust's Caerlaverock Reserve, the regular pair are incubating 2 eggs.

The ospreys at the National trust for Scotland's Threave estate have been resident since 2009, and are currently incubating 3 eggs.



*SWT*

## **Pilot whale pod in danger of stranding**

The Scottish SPCA and the British Divers Marine life rescue are currently monitoring around sixty pilot whales thought to be in danger of becoming stranded off South Uist. Around a fifth of them appear to have head injuries. The strong social bonds of pilot whales often means that healthy whales within a pod will follow sick or injured whales onshore. The pod is in Loch Carnan, where 35 pilot whales appeared to be in danger of stranding in October – in the previous case the whales did return to sea but were later found dead on the Irish coast.

At the time of writing, two of the current pod had been found dead, though the rest of the pod had left the loch and appeared to be heading south. A post-mortem examination of the first find suggested that the whale died of an infection rather than being caused by its external injuries.



Steve Duffield, Western Isles Wildlife

## **Bumblebee nest box advice**

Nest boxes for bumblebees are a popular item sold at garden centres and wildlife-centred shops, but a team from the University of Stirling have discovered that they don't really work. They tried out 736 commercial boxes in different gardens and farms, using six commercially-available designs, and tested them over a four-year period, but none of them showed any signs of occupation. One nest box designed by the researchers did show limited success at attracting bumblebees (7% of the time) but better success at attracting mice, ants and wasps. The team suggest that a better design would incorporate fine material such as dry moss, cotton or felt, rather than straw, but a more feasible way to help bumblebees would to plant lavender or wildflowers.



*Bumblebee and roosting pocket/NERC*

### **Plastic contaminated scampi**

A recent study carried out off the Marine Biological Research Station on Great Cumbrae, has shown that 83% of *Nephrops norvegicus*, alternatively known as langoustine, scampi or Norwegian lobster have indigestible plastic fibres in their stomachs. More worrying is that fish that eat these crustaceans do not excrete the plastic strands, suggesting that the plastic can be passed on up the food chain. The guts of these animals are discarded and not directly eaten by humans, so the risk of human consumption is low, but the wider ecological implications of plastic consumption by marine animals is a serious question and a subject of ongoing research.

See <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0025326X11001755> for the original article.



*N. norvegicus*, FishSource

## Prevention of otter roadkill

Reflectors are to be installed at Lochluichart, Wester Ross, to help reduce the number of otter deaths occurring in the area. The reflectors were in installed in a similar scheme on Skye, where car headlights illuminated the reflectors [that](#) are fitted at otter-eye-level, thus deterring these animals from crossing the road. The Skye-based International Otter Survival Fund (IOSF) charity provided the reflectors, which were installed by Highland Council.

