

# Dundee Naturalists' Society

Instituted 1874



**Bulletin No 27 2002**

# **DUNDEE NATURALISTS' SOCIETY**

## **ANNUAL BULLETIN No 27**

### **2002**

Hon President	To be filled
Hon Vice President	Dr Gordon Corbet
President	Mr Gordon Maxwell
Vice Presidents	Dr Alban Houghton Dr Brian Ballinger
Hon Secretary & Membership Secretary	Mrs Margaret McLaren, 12 Kerrington Cresc , Broughty Ferry, Dundee DD5 2TN (01382 779422)
Hon Treasurer	Miss Dorothy Fyffe, 33 Ireland Street, Carnoustie, Angus (01241 853053)
Excursion Secretary	Mrs Roma Miller, 6 Macduff Drive, Spinnaker Point, Tayport (01382 553057)
Bulletin Editor	Mrs Anne Reid, 2 East Navarre Street, Monifieth, Dundee DD5 4QS (01382 532486) email – acmc reid@virgin net

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The Bulletin cover illustration is by Leonore Goodliffe (née Fullerton) and shows a selection of our area's alpine plants, including the Society's emblem, the dwarf cornel. Other illustrations are by Anne Reid, Jim Cook, Bede Pounder, Mary Reid, Christine Reid and Artfile. Thanks also to Barbara Hogarth for help with a last minute picture panic!

### **EDITOR'S NOTE**

Thanks to all members who have submitted articles and reports, it makes Bulletin production much easier, though there is always space for contributions from new authors. Thanks to Mary and Christine Reid for typing and other computing help, and to Jim Cook, Colin Reid and the girls for proof reading and helpful comments.

Contributions for the next Bulletin, both articles and line drawings, are always welcome and may be submitted at any time during the year. I accept hand-written, typed or email contributions with equal enthusiasm.

Anne Reid

## SOCIETY REPORTS

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Firstly, in my inaugural year as president, I should like to report that, despite a number of sad bereavements, the membership has remained relatively stable at around 190. A small display on the history of the Society early in the year did not bring much response from the public. Despite being part of a larger display on the history of local organisations, the location, in the entrance of the Wellgate Library, was insufficiently publicised by the organisers with disappointing results for all concerned. Nevertheless, I thank those who set up and helped on the day. We did not have a large display at the Dundee Flower Show this year but will reconsider this for 2003.

The summer excursions were well received, but a few more members or friends would be welcome to help to defray the expense of the bus and to keep individual costs down. Our excursion secretary also urges the early return of the booking form as this greatly helps in the organisation. The Arran weekend appeared to be successful, despite the reported "moist" conditions. The Isle of May trip was also affected by adverse conditions and we were unable to land on the island due to the heavy swell. I hope to get the Council to discuss our approach to any future visit. As usual, the evening excursions proved popular, as did the social evening at the Monifieth Hotel and the barbecue at Barry Mill, courtesy of Peter Ellis.

Our Honorary Vice-President, Gordon Corbet, has also made a valued contribution with two lectures, and has joined us on a number of our walks where he was in demand for invertebrate identification. A Saturday morning visit to Glamis Castle, led by Pat Gaff, proved popular as it took in parts of the castle not normally seen by the general public.

It just remains for me to thank officials and outing leaders, plus the cake and biscuit producers at the AGM and Christmas meetings. We must also thank the members who stepped in at very short notice to replace an indisposed speaker on October 15th, namely Brian Allan (and Gordon Maxwell! Ed). We are fortunate that we have a number of members with slides and expertise who can be called on to give lectures, both planned and unplanned. Last, but not least, thanks to Jim Cook and his dedicated band of stalwarts hewing the unforgiving turf (stones?) at Carsegowniemuir.

Gordon Maxwell

Reports on most of the activities referred to in this report are to be found elsewhere in this Bulletin. Ed.

### MARGARET'S FIRST LETTER FROM NEW ZEALAND

It's hard to believe that I've been in New Zealand for 10 months now, especially hard, judging by the little natural history I have absorbed in that time. I haven't yet cultivated my garden so I can tell you that my patch, with a base of sticky **clay**, grows marvellous **ribwort plantain** (*Plantago lanceolata*), **creeping** and **bulbous buttercups** (*Ranunculus repens* & *R. bulbosus*), **dandelions** (*Taraxacum officinale*), **wandering jew** (*Tradescantia fluminensis*) and **scarlet pimpernel** (*Anagallis arvensis arvensis*). All, except the latter, are very difficult to extract from the heavy soil. A recent find nearby was the **broomrape**, *Orobanche minor*. Fortunately I have brought my Fitter, Fitter & Blamey "Wildflowers of Britain & Europe" to remind me of the names of these familiar weeds. I haven't found a really comprehensive tome to cover the weeds of NZ. I went to some trouble to get "An Illustrated Guide to Common Weeds of NZ" produced by the NZ Plant Protection Society but it omits a large number and leaves me frustrated. (Since writing this I have discovered that NZ has approximately 2,700 native plant species and over 20,000 have been introduced. I suppose it would be difficult to fit them all in one book.) I have been much happier with the guides to native trees and shrubs which I have been able to buy with the help of the money presented to me by my friends in Dundee Nats. There are many beautifully produced recent guides

which now bear proudly the DNS book plate My favourite is "Nature Guide to the NZ Forest" by John Dawson & Rob Lucas

A neighbourhood friend introduced me to the Auckland Natural History Society and I started joining their outings but these came to an abrupt halt for me when I badly sprained an ankle This means I have missed most of the spring outings I worry that I may find the summer outings too hot for me and it may be autumn before I start tramping again Six weeks after my fall my ankle is improving but still weak I've had the benefit of physiotherapy sessions to improve the functioning of damaged ligaments so hopefully it won't take the six months that gloomy friends have predicted The ANHS has fortnightly outings all year round but no lectures

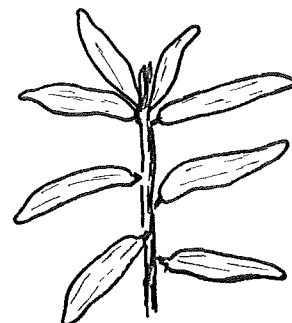
I have been attending the lectures arranged by the West Auckland branch of the NZ Forest & Bird Protection Society It is a very active group with several professional naturalists who do a lot of campaigning on behalf of native wildlife They own one local nature reserve called Matuku which is named after a bird of the same name, commonly known as the **fern bird** or **swamp sparrow** I have been to Matuku on a poisoning exercise designed to kill **possums, rats and stoats** It's a very precipitous site beside a swamp Our route required a lot of scrambling up hillsides with the aid of ropes replacing bait in containers at 100 metre intervals My companion revealed that she had broken her leg there last year and had to be helicoptered out I survived that trip only to sprain my ankle outside my front door!

The birds I have seen in Earthsong Eco-Village are **Indian mynas**, abundant **sparrows, goldfinches, blackbirds, thrushes, fantails, white eyes, grey warblers, tuis, chaffinches, NZ pigeon** and a **turtle dove** My neighbours have heard the **morepork** (NZ owl) and **shining cuckoo** The cuckoo migrates between Papua New Guinea and New Zealand where it lays its eggs in the nests of **grey warblers** The cuckoo weighs 25g and the warbler 6.5g! For comparison a **blackbird** weighs 90g Last weekend a **blackbird** nest was blown out of one of our trees There were two surviving chicks in the nest and two dead ones on the ground I helped a neighbour tie the nest back on its branch and the parents returned immediately to tend to the survivors All was well the next day

Today I saw my first **green stick insect** on one of my potted plants in the garden It was only 3in long More exciting was my first night outing to see **Auckland cave wetas** From the tip of their antennae to their back toes they can reach 355mm Seeing them in the confined space of 4 foot diameter tunnel by the light of a torch was quite an experience These **wetas** are a kind of large **cricket** (Orthoptera) My books tell me that there is a **mountain stone weta** which can survive freezing – the largest insect in the world known to be able to do this There is also a **giant scree weta** near the glaciers of Mt Cook at more than 3100m On the weta walk we also saw many **glow worms** and **tunnel spiders**

I am very much enjoying being back in NZ It has changed a lot in the 35 years I have been away but I find that quite stimulating There are sufficient things unchanged to make me feel I belong again but I am constantly being surprised Auckland itself is in a different climate zone to my home town of Feilding and I am discovering many exotic fruits and vegetables There is now a very large Asian population in the city so very many of their favourite foods are available Samoans also have a big influence locally, but almost every nationality is represented here I confess I am rather intimidated by the size of Auckland and the trials of traffic congestion However, it is possible to live at peace in our little village which is within walking distance of a library and railway halt It is quite close to the Waitakere Ranges which have regrowth native forest The magnificent **kauri** trees in this area were nearly all logged out with the help of two particular Scotsmen – Mr Henderson and Mr Swanson (One of them was born in Dundee and the other in Leith) There are lots of streets around me with Scottish names to make me feel at home and Swanson Road, where I live, has long lines of **birch** trees

I am pleasantly surprised to find it is policy on the part of local authorities and individuals to replant native trees and shrubs This is a big change from the days of my youth Many garden varieties of natives have been developed which have more colourful flowers and foliage to endear them to gardeners **Kauri** trees have been planted in large numbers in the streets They are restricted to the north of



Kauri pine  
*Agathis australis*

the country I was surprised to discover how different the native bush is in the north to what I grew up with further south

I am really enjoying my new house and also living in a community Having two meals a week together keeps us in touch in a more social setting than at our many business meetings We also have regular working bees There never seems enough time to get all our tasks done This is mainly because most of my neighbours are working in the city and get home late There are 17 households at present and we communicate largely by Email so I had to buy a computer to keep in touch. My address, by the way, is [margtduncan@clear.net.nz](mailto:margtduncan@clear.net.nz) if you would like to say hello

I have been following NZ cookery programmes on TV to try to find out how to cook all the exotic foods available We have picked **guavas**, **grapefruit** and **feijoas** (called in Australia, pineapple guava), from our own trees Lately I have been introduced to **cheramoyas** (**custard apples**), **chokos**, and **pak choy greens** I have started cooking chicken, etc, in **coconut milk** There are a lot of vegetarians in our neighbourhood so perhaps I will be persuaded to eat a healthier diet

We aim to develop permaculture on our site and avoid all toxic sprays However, we are regularly being sprayed by helicopters in an attempt to eradicate the **painted apple moth** which is a recent alien The spray is supposed to be harmless to humans but many humans don't agree Previously common **monarch butterflies** will temporarily disappear They will no doubt recolonise from elsewhere but the spray is likely to eradicate many native moths as well, which may be more sedentary It's not quite paradise here!

Those of you who managed to meet my cat will be interested to know that Tulchan is also happily settled in Ranui after a traumatic arrival I enjoy having his company

I look forward to news from Scotland and perhaps even visitors

Margaret Duncan

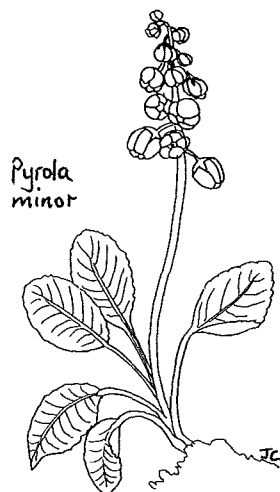
## CARSEGOWNIEMUIR REPORT

The continuous wet weather may seriously reduce our activities in many ways but proves a blessing for the quarry The trees have thrived The lack of any spell of dry weather has meant that no trees have died of drought this year!

All the usual activities have occurred, clearing **willowherb**, mulching the trees and a small amount of planting in the drier periods We haven't started measuring yet, but growth seems to have been good Some trees, though, have shot up

The most interesting event was the study group visit on June 18th (full report on page 15) We found a single specimen of a **blue-tailed damselfly** (*Ishnura elegans*) – a first and wonderful record – and a small clump of three spikes of **coralroot orchid** (*Corallorhiza trifida*), another first record Both of these are excellent finds and may make a difference to the conservation of the site We went back the next week but all the spikes of the orchid had disappeared, presumably eaten by **rabbits** Who knows how many times they've grown and been eaten before without us noticing them!

Jim Cook



## ACTIVITIES CONVENOR'S REPORT

We had a busy period early in the year, completing the report on the survey of the grounds of Dundee University, and the spring outings The weather, however, has put a considerable dampener on the proceedings Those hardy members who attended the early outings will particularly remember the wet and very windy first visit to Seaton Cliffs and the dripping wet evening in Kingennie Woods The Monifieth foreshore excursion produced an

interesting group of wasteland and verge-side species, but nothing special, on a bone-chilling evening. The heavens opened while a small group explored Elliott Links and soon drove us off.

The Carsegowriemuir visit was far more productive (see above, and page 15), while our last outing, the second visit to Seaton Cliffs, was also interesting. We found **lesser wintergreen** (*Pyrola minor*) under the **beech** at the top and, further down the den, Brian Ballinger (again!) picked out a good clump of **creeping lady's tresses** (*Goodyera repens*).

Jim Cook

## OBITUARIES

### DR JOHN BERRY

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death on 16th February 2002, of our Honorary President, Dr John Berry, aged 94. Dr Berry was an eminent biologist who, after taking a BA at Cambridge, added a PhD from St Andrews, an honorary DSc from the same University, and an LLD from the University of Dundee at which he served as a member of Court. Among the many positions he held with distinction were first director of the Nature Conservancy in Scotland, Vice President of the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, Director of the British Pavilion at Expo-71, and Deputy Lieutenant of Fife. We were gratified to have Dr Berry as our Honorary President for many years. He and Mrs Berry were occasional visitors to our meetings and were very hospitable hosts when the Society visited his estate at Tayfield.

Much of the biological work for which he was known locally was concerned with research on salmon ecology and ornithology. A legacy of his work on salmon conservation is the fish 'ladder' at Pitlochry. His ornithological interests started early when he worked with Baxter and Rintoul, and, while still a young man, he was able to give technical advice to Peter Scott, a fellow student at Cambridge. His favourite birds were undoubtedly wild geese, which were a prominent feature of the beautiful grounds at Tayfield where exotic plants provide ample evidence of his botanical interests, nurtured at an early age by Professor Geddes during visits from Dundee to Tayfield.

Perhaps the most outstanding legacies of John Berry's work in the interests of conservation are the nature reserves set up by the Nature Conservancy of Scotland during his period of stewardship. These include Ben Eighe, the Cairngorms, Caerlaverock, Rum and his beloved Tentsmuir. Despite the feverish activity with which he set about these aspects of his life's work, at a time when the need for nature conservation was not quite as well understood as now, he was at heart a gentle, kindly man, always ready to help and encourage anyone who shared his varied interests. He always maintained a lively interest in the activities of our Society and others such as the SOC and SWT, many members of which will have lasting memories of hospitality enjoyed during visits to Tayfield.

We send to Mrs Berry and her family our deepest sympathy and best wishes.

Bede Pounder

### BETTY MCCLURE

Sadly, in May 2002 we lost one of our most stalwart members, soon after she had celebrated her 90th birthday. Betty had been an active member for 40 years, joining the Society in the early 1960s and playing an active role for much of that time. She always nurtured a great love for the Scottish countryside, both for the coastline and hills of Angus and Perthshire and for her native west coast. In her younger days her walking ability was legendary, particularly so since she was famous for always wearing a skirt. In fact, the only time that I can recall seeing Betty in trousers some of us hardly recognised her. One of her greatest interests was in birdwatching and she had particular expertise in the recognition of the calls of many species. She willingly passed on this knowledge to numerous members.

Betty's greatest and most valuable contribution to the Society was an almost ten-year stint as Secretary. Her hard work and dedication to the task helped enormously in setting the Society back on its feet after the near collapse of the Council at the AGM of 1972. She took over from Vi Stott a couple of years after this meeting and ably supported Elizabeth Leitch in reviving the membership and interest in the Naturalists' affairs. Betty also played a significant role in the planning and organisation of many outings and other Society activities, particularly the weekend excursions, notably to her childhood area of Ayrshire.

We all cherished Betty as a wonderful personality, a keen hill walker, an enthusiastic bird watcher, a knowledgeable botanist and an ardent supporter of the Society. She will be very sadly missed.

Jim Cook

### **GEORGE URQUHART**

Dr George Urquhart died in April 2002, suddenly and after a brief but complicated illness. He was a member of the Nats for only a few years, and although he was a very private person he thoroughly enjoyed the affability, enthusiasm and easy companionship of his fellow Nats. George and his late wife, Anne, were always keen observers of nature in all its forms, and he often boasted that the main benefit of their long years of specialist medical training was in giving them the ability to learn – and remember! – the long words associated with natural history. After Anne's death, George found it difficult to maintain his association with the Nats and, indeed, other societies and groups which reminded him so directly of their shared interests. Nevertheless, he retained a special fondness for the Nats, whose members asked kindly after him, and welcomed him warmly on the occasions he was able to attend an outing or an evening meal.

Shelagh Gardiner

### **NORMAN REID**

Most of our long serving members will remember Norman as our Hon. Treasurer in the early 1980s. He was a dedicated, respected and committed member of Council who always kept the accounts in tip top order, with not a penny unaccounted for.

During the Second World War Norman served in the 51st Highland Division and the Royal Artillery. In his working life he was a teacher who latterly was headmaster firstly at Rosebank primary school and then at Eastern Primary, Broughty Ferry, where he worked until he retired in 1977. He was president of the Dundee Schools' Football Association and president of the School Sports Association.

It was after his retirement that he and his wife Mary joined the DNS. They both became involved in the Society and as well as attending most of the winter meetings they regularly came on the summer outings and weekend trips. It was on one of these outings that the following anecdote brings back to me fond memories of Norman and Mary. We were on a weekend trip, based at Bamburgh, when, on Inner Farne Island, Norman was dive-bombed by an irate tern which actually drew blood from his head. As Norman was shaking his fist and cursing at the offending tern Mary's voice could be heard above the swanking birds, not words of sympathy, but "language, Norman, language!"

Norman was also an elder of St Margaret's Church and while they were both fit and able they took numerous holidays in Europe.

Norman, who died on 30th July 2002 aged 89, is survived by Mary, their two children Isabel and John, and four grandchildren.

Brian Allan

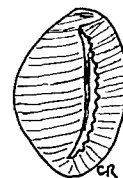
## WINTER MEETINGS 2002

### NEW YEAR BARBECUE 2002

2nd January

We set out on a chill but sunny morning for our annual winter barbecue. Despite the cold, well below zero, over thirty hardy Nats turned up to join in the festivities in Dorothy's garden in Carnoustie. The natural history started early, a **fieldfare** flew low over the garden while everyone was exchanging greetings and news. Most people then set out on a walk to enable them to complete the quiz compiled by Christine. The aim was to find a message in the answers to some very simple questions and to spot as much natural history as possible. While walking along the beach a variety of waders was seen including **ringed**, **grey** and **golden plovers**, **knot**, **dunlin** and **oystercatchers**. Most people walked as far as Westhaven before returning to the road and the barbecue. A few continued as far as the Craigmill Burn to find the burn frozen at the edges and the beach covered with large amounts of ice which acted like frozen snow and, unusually, made bits of the beach very slippery. These few continued up Craigmill Den where they saw, among other things, a **redwing**, a **yellowhammer** and **goldfinches**.

On our return to Dorothy's garden the sausages were put on to cook while Brian and Jenny passed round the traditional mulled wine and Dorothy appeared with mugs of homemade soup. As people began to think about leaving, the quiz was marked. The message was "Happy New Year", which most had found, but Mary was declared the winner with 31 species of bird seen and a **cowrie shell** found. Jim came a very close second with 30 birds, though the overall total for the day was nearer to forty when lists have been compared. Mince pies and Christmas cake were then handed round by several Nats and much enjoyed by all. The garden pond was much admired and some discussion was generated by the lumpiness of the ice at one end. We came to the conclusion that it was caused either by the plant underneath or by the wind, during freezing. Overall a splendid start to the new year and blessed by warm sun which, despite the below zero temperatures, made even the beach a pleasant place to wander. The secret was a complete absence of wind, to spite the forecast!



Mary Reid

## FLOWERS OF SOUTHERN SPAIN

Spring in Spain 2001

Les Tucker – 15th January

This was a celebration of spring flowers in Spain illustrated with a large number of slides taken on several recent trips. Most trips were based in southern Spain, having flown from Glasgow to Malaga, but we even got as far as the Pyrenees as Les followed the spring flowers north as the year advanced.

What we would consider to be spring flowers start to appear as early as November, after the hot summer is finished and cooler, wetter conditions prevail. We were shown **sea daffodils** (*Pancratium* sp) and *Leucojum autumnale* in flower near Cape Trafalgar in the far south and a **Juno iris** on a limestone outcrop. The **paperwhite daffodils** (*Narcissus papyraceus*) flower right through until March or April. By January there were lots of **daffodils** in flower including *Narcissus bulbocodium*, *N. triandrus* and *N. nevadensis* which, as its name suggests is found on the Sierra Nevada. A park of **cork oaks** near Ronda had **beehives** made from cork and we were also shown **storks** on poles and pylons, and **griffon vultures**. In a damp area there was a plant of **western butterwort** (*Pinguicula lusitanica*) which is quite common on the west coast of Scotland! Our summer migrant birds, including the **swallows** we were shown, appear in southern Spain in January or February.



A trip further west yielded **orchids**, including a metre-tall *Dactylorhiza majalis* in a calcareous flush, **peonies**, *Tulipa australis* and an attractive round-leaved **dandelion**. By the end of February the **almond** blossom was fully out and *Ophrys fusca*, *O. lutea* and their hybrid were found. We were also shown *Ophrys atlanticus* whose main centre of distribution is in North Africa.

While staying at Reus, near Tarragona, a visit to the Val D'Aran near the Pyrenees in May extended the range of spring flowers with such plants as *Cephalanthera rubra*, **gentians** and *Narcissus moschatus*. There was a floriferous meadow with **orchids** and hybrids and including yet more magnificent specimens of *Dactylorhiza majalis*.

This was a fascinating talk, and an excellent flight of fancy for us in mid-winter. The forty, or so, members present very much enjoyed seeing so many spring and summer slides.

Anne Reid

## MEMBERS' NIGHT

29th January

About 40 members were present for this annual mystery tour which consisted of slides from nine people and some display material. Gordon Maxwell compered and kept everyone to a strict timetable, though we were not quite so rushed as last year. This was in part due to the restriction to 15 slides per person. The following members brought slides.

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Bob McCurley    | 'Local species' Including the first recorded breeding <b>mute swans</b> on Barry Buddon and <b>yellow bartsia</b> nearby. Also <b>dotterel</b> and <b>ptarmigan</b> on Glas Maol and some rare migrant birds in Angus.                |
| Brian Allan     | 'Crete' Searching for the five local species of <b>tulips</b> . Four were found in flower and the leaves of the fifth were seen. Wonderful slides of a wide variety of <b>orchids</b> from the island.                                |
| Peter Ellis     | 'Morocco' A second trip with the Tay Ringing Group to look for our local <b>ring ouzels</b> in their wintering areas in the High Atlas mountains, where they eat berries from the local <b>juniper</b> species. 35 birds were ringed. |
| Alban Houghton  | 'Things Scottish' A selection including a beautiful <b>silver birch</b> in the snow, a <b>cinnabar moth</b> at Dumbarnie Links, <b>clustered bellflower</b> at St Cyrus and a <b>golden-ringed dragonfly</b> at Glenshee.             |
| Brian Ballinger | 'Two woods and a pond' Garrick Wood near Tain, Brownie Wood at Gaudry and the pond between Tealing and Auchterhouse and some of the species found in each area. Also 40 <b>waxwings</b> in his garden in Dundee.                      |
| Marjory Tennant | 'North to south and back' From Bettyhill, looking for <i>Primula scotica</i> , to Cornwall in June including a visit to the Eden Project. Then to North Uist and Skye and back to Cornwall and Wales.                                 |
| Barbara Hogarth | 'Dolomites' Early enough (June) at altitude to find <b>soldanella</b> in flower through the snow. A wide range of other alpine flowers including <b>gentians</b> , <b>orchids</b> and <b>primulas</b> .                               |
| Gordon Maxwell  | A selection of local interest including <b>butterflies</b> near Kinshaldy, <b>rats</b> at Lunan Bay (near the farm) and some excellent slides of <b>seals</b> on the beach at Tentsmuir.  |
| Dorothy Fyffe   | An exhausted young <b>swift</b> successfully released, <b>sand martins</b> at Coupar Angus, <b>violets</b> at Gardenstown on the Moray Firth weekend and a metal sculpture of an <b>iguana</b> at Duff house on the same trip.        |
| Jim Cook        | 'Old Nats' A trip down memory lane.   |



In addition Peter Ellis brought an extensive collection of **mammal skulls** which were handled with a mixture of fascination and horror. Les Tucker showed the **baskets** which he

had woven from local **willow** to a variety of traditional patterns from Scotland and further afield Overall we had a very varied and enjoyable evening expertly compered by Gordon Bede Pounder gave the vote of thanks

Anne Reid

## THE NATURE OF FIFE

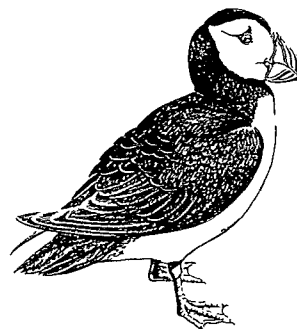
Dr Gordon Corbet – 12th February

For this lecture, we were honoured to hear a discourse from our Honorary Vice-President on the natural history of Fife, an area about which he has gained extensive knowledge both as a teenager and more recently since his retirement

His earliest interests were excited when, as a Dundee Nats member, he visited Tentsmuir with naturalists such as Len Fullerton and Alec Cross by whom he was introduced to ringing He mentioned the breeding colonies of **wildfowl** and **black-headed gulls** on Earls Hall in those days, and the disappearance of important colonies of **arctic, common, sandwich, little** and **roseate terns** from Tentsmuir

Turning to today's coastal habitats, he pointed out the enormous recent increase in **puffins** on the Isle of May, the numerous **seal** colonies at various sites and the importance of the Eden estuary, Scotland's 'Serengeti' He touched on other coastal habitats including the cliffs at St Andrews with their breeding **fulmars**, and the calcareous cliffs at Kinraig which hold a wide and interesting variety of flora He compared the calcareous links at Tentsmuir, and mentioned the SWT Reserve on unimproved **calcareous grassland** at Fleecefauld

Since retirement in 1992, Dr Corbet has been kept busy with the Dumbarnie Links Reserve and the Fife Nature Project now published as a book under his editorship. His description of the project brought out clearly the importance of the deep wooded 'dens', and especially those cut through **limestones**, which are havens for wildlife in an otherwise intensely farmed landscape His account of insects in these dens was particularly interesting, and well illustrated his deep appreciation of the total ecology of any area in which he has an interest



Bede Pounder

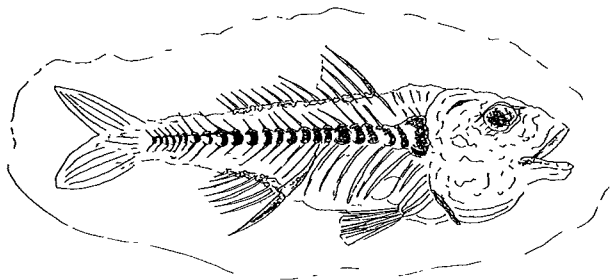
## FOSSIL FISH FROM THE OLD RED SANDSTONE

Dr Nigel Trewin – 26th February

Dr Trewin opened his talk by indicating the sequence of sites to be 'visited' These were Achanarran Quarry in Caithness, Aberlemno and Turin Hill in the Forfar area, and Dura Den in Fife

The fossils found in Achanarran Quarry are believed to have lived in a subsiding basin, called the Orcadian Lake (or Orcadian Basin), into which **sediments** were being deposited The rock faces in the quarry reveal cyclical sequences in the depositional environments These **lacustrine laminates** formed a repeating series of triplets consisting of **organic-rich layers, carbonate-rich layers** and **clastic** (eg **sand**) **layers** Among the earliest **fossils** found in this area were **lungfish** of which several fine, well-preserved samples were found, although Dr Trewin pointed out that many fossils were little more than dark 'smears' of organic material, most of which would pass unrecognised as fossils by lay people

The pattern of **laminations** is constant throughout the quarry allowing the sequences to be **matched over a wide area** Thus by **recording and plotting the positions of the fish** it can be shown that the different species are not evenly distributed throughout the **fish beds**



Evidence of mass mortality in particular species suggests a sudden (in geological terms) change in the environment, perhaps an increase in salinity or temperature, or reduction in oxygen content of the water, whereas a mass mortality of all species would suggest a catastrophic burial or total evaporation of the lake. Other evidence indicates that the Orcadian Lake did

sometimes dry up, so the question arises, 'how did any fish survive in the lake'? It is believed that all the fish were marine creatures which simply moved into the lake when conditions allowed, for example during marine incursions.

Dr Trewin then went on to compare the features of various fish and the information which can be derived from the fossils. For example, the absence of juvenile samples could be an indication that the fish did not breed in the area, but were merely seasonal visitors.

In the various exposures around Forfar it is found that the laminae can not be compared directly with Achanarran, indicating a different depositional environment, fossils existed in deep water conditions. Examples of **eurypterids** (giant **sea-scorpions**) up to one metre long, have been found in this area. In Dura Den, Fife, the fossils are found in fine-grained **sandstones**. Many of the carcasses are three-dimensional indicating gentle burial and no subsequent disturbance. The mass mortality evident can possibly be attributed to the fish being stranded in shallow pools which dried out, followed by sudden but gentle burial by, for example, advancing sand dunes. Evidence for similar conditions can be found today in Namibia which has helped in the interpretation of the fossil record.

Doug Palmer

## SOCIAL EVENING

22nd February

It was a bitterly cold night as about 35 or so members braved the weather to gather at the Monifieth Hotel for the social evening. There was, however, a warm welcome from Margaret McLaren who had placed pots of daffodils, together with four stems of greenery, on each table. Later we would be asked to name these and, thank goodness, I knew them all.

Owen and I did not do so well with the answers to Jim's quiz but, fortunately, he did not realise that we failed to identify the **dwarf cornel**, otherwise I might not be writing this piece for the bulletin. (As long as you recognise it now all will be well! – Ed.) I am sure everyone enjoyed the quiz, and there was much fun and backchat when it came to the answers.

A tasty buffet was served, with tea and coffee, though there was no dessert. However, Margaret came up trumps with boxes of After Eights (surely everyone's favourite) to finish off the meal. A most enjoyable evening with lots of friendly chat. Many thanks to those responsible for the organisation and entertainment.

Monica Edwards

## SATURDAY MORNING OUTING TO GLAMIS

2nd March

Thanks to the administrator, Mr Stewart Gill, twenty four Nats have seen Glamis Castle from a different angle. Fortified by coffee in the vaulted 16th century kitchen we tackled the spiral staircase. The 143 steps encircle the former central heating chimney with its decorative grilles. Now it houses the clock weights and some of us witnessed the laborious winding procedure, an excuse to pause for breath! Mr Gill describes the clock as the heart of the castle.

Although overcast, there were immense views from the roof. New layouts of the gardens and estate can be planned from this vantage point. (The numerous turrets and roof angles must be a maintenance nightmare.) Sharp eyes spotted an **owl** by a cottage chimney below, but it proved to be an odd shaped cow!

The Head Gardener led our stroll through the grounds where trees, deciduous and evergreen with many of North American origin, were the main interest. *Thuja plicata* specimens by the castle were planted by a succession of Royals and it forms the hedging of the Italian garden, designed in c 1870. There is an outstanding spreading **chestnut** tree, adored by children, dating back to 1746, a **noble fir** (*Abies procera*) from 1830 and a **Douglas fir** from 1827. Pauline Topham noticed the small needles of *Picea orientalis*.

**Birds** were calling, but unseen, and the only mammals were two **red squirrels**. A clump of early **cyclamen** (*C. coum*) was the only colour as we turned northwards by the Glamis Burn which runs clear and deep thanks to the lining of stone slabs. This 'improvement' was to facilitate punting in the leisured days, we were told. The Water of Dean runs east to west along the northern edge of the recently restored **pinetum**. This stream drains surrounding farmland and is muddy, but both burns attract **salmon**!

We crossed the Dean by the Earl Michael Bridge which, after restoration was re-opened by the Queen Mother in 1996. Attached to it is a small monitor noting visitor numbers. The four acre, brick walled, kitchen garden, the furthest part of our walk, lay ahead. Alas, it is grassed over, but worth visiting, to see an exhibition in the potting shed of records and photographs of old-fashioned, labour-intensive gardening. Nowadays there are only four of a staff.

We left by the mile long avenue flanked by **lime** and **oak** trees, somewhat behind schedule after a fascinating visit, for an excellent lunch at the Ogilvy Arms Hotel in Kirriemuir.

Jean Colquhoun

Sadly, it was only three weeks after our visit that the Queen Mother passed away, on 30th March 2002, aged 101. Ed



## SUMMER OUTINGS 2002

### ROYAL BOTANIC GARDEN – EDINBURGH

27th April

Once again we were blessed by fine weather for the first meeting of the summer outing season. An encouragingly large number of members headed to Edinburgh to view the continually changing Botanic Garden. There is always something new to see and this visit was no exception.

Most of us started by exploring a new area, at least for me: the native species walk near to the main entrance. Here we saw a number of wild plants including **cowslips**, **campion**, and **bluebells**. This led us nicely to the Alpine houses where, at this time of year, there is always a good show of Mediterranean bulbs including **cyclamen**, **fritillaries**, **tulips**, **narcissus** and **irises**. Just around the corner are the large glass houses with many tropical and sub-tropical sections with the orchid house of most interest to me. Here the varieties and species of *Cymbidium*, *Dendrobium*, *Vanda* and *Paphiopedilum* were at their showy best. However, the **cactus** section, which had recently been re-vamped, was also not to be missed, as a number of the specimens were in fine flower.

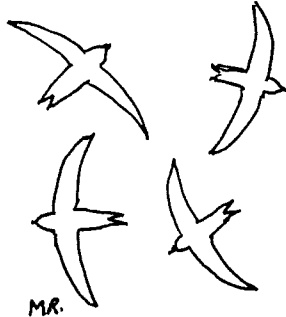
As the sun shone even brighter it was time to wander through the **rhododendron** groves and visit the enlarged rock garden with myriad of early flowering species making for a riot of colour and form. Just beyond the rock garden is the new Chinese garden with many rare and unusual plants on display which had been collected over many years by botanists from the RBG. The roaring waterfall feature and the occasional quiet seat make this a must for any visitor.

After a visit to the tearoom and, of course, the gift shop we all headed back to our coach for the trip home well pleased with our very successful trip to Edinburgh

Brian Allan

## BALGAVIES LOCH

14th May



A good turnout of Nats enjoyed a cloudy but dry evening touring some habitats of this important local SWT reserve Woods of **pine**, **willow**, **birch** and **oak** in the western part of the reserve sheltered us from a keen wind

**Sand martins** were feeding over the loch, **willow warblers** sang near the hide car park and, later, **sedge warblers** chattered away in the reeds In the pine wood we noted **pine cones** eaten by a **red squirrel**, a newly excavated **woodpecker** nest-hole and an occupied **tawny owl** nest box The reserve is particularly noted for its wetland plants and, sure enough, (Jim fixed it for me) there were the emerging leaves of **cowbane** and **tufted loosestrife** in the Fonah bog However, a very pretty show of **bogbean** flowers and **bog myrtle** were more eye-catching, while we caught the eyes of numerous **midges**!

Emerging from the **birch** thicket on the old railway line and into the wind, many of us saw our first **swifts** of the year The **Daubenton's bat** colony was sitting tight in its Lunan tunnel roost-site at the east end of the loch We spotted quite a few **St George's mushrooms** on the way back to the hide car park where **pipistrelle bats** were feeding as the light faded

Alban Houghton

## ARRAN WEEKEND

17th – 20th May

The weekend started well enough with a bright sunny drive down to Ardrossan, but that a weather change was nigh was obvious as soon as we stepped off the bus and were nearly blown off the quay by a fierce wind A rough crossing was promised, but, fortunately, the gale was astern so blew the ferry with much pitching, but thankfully no rolling, towards its destination, Arran - hidden somewhere ahead in a huge black cloud on an otherwise sparkling, foaming sea We had hoped for a good west coast sea-watch on the crossing, but were disappointed in seeing just a few **gulls** and **gannets**, some **eiders** being tossed up and down on the swell, a **fulmar** and a solitary **kestrel** obviously blown far from where it had intended to be going

About ten minutes after penetrating the black cloud, a dim and watery Arran gradually began to reveal its charms, and especially our first goal, Brodick Castle, where we were met with a riot of lush greens and enormous drifts of **bluebells** under the trees After an introductory talk on the island by one of the NTS rangers, we split into groups and went separate ways round the paths which cover the estate My party chose a route which took us high above the castle through mixed woodland, open areas, and enormous areas of **rhododendrons** which had been treated with herbicides in an effort to regain some control over their spread We logged a flora typical of this sort of terrain at this time of year, except that we saw no **greater stitchwort**, and only one species of **thistle** was in evidence This was **marsh thistle** which was found even on the tops of sharp ridges, an indication of what was soon to be obvious about Arran it enjoys a rather wet climate, although to be fair, rain only threatened this day, it didn't actually fall Perhaps the most interesting find of the day was a purse full of money! Fortunately, it also contained the identity of the owner with whom it was eventually reunited

Saturday's programme was billed to include a trip to Machrie Moor, but this exposed expanse is not recommended in the sort of weather forecast for the day, so we did the Glenashdale-King's Cross programme instead and left the moor for Sunday. Despite the drizzle, the wooded Glenashdale afforded plenty of shelter and gave us a lovely riverside walk with moss-caked tree trunks yielding a scene like a green cathedral nave resounding to the songs of **thrushes**, **chaffinches**, **wrens**, **chiffchaffs**, **wood warblers** and **blackbirds**. Several members were introduced to **salmonberry**, very common on Arran, **filmy ferns**, and **greater** and **common horsetail** growing together, and we were all impressed by drifts of **bluebells**, **ramsons** and **pink purslane** (all of which was white). It was here that we began to notice a great oddity about Arran - **cow parsley** doesn't grow there - except as an accidental. Arran appears to prefer the deadly poisonous **hemlock water dropwort** as its ubiquitous umbellifer which somehow manages not to affect the obvious longevity of many of the island's 'retired' inhabitants. Some members were content to walk to the waterfalls and return by the same route, others did the round trip along both sides of the glen, taking in an interesting **Iron-age fort** on the way and succeeding in not getting lost in the process. Some stalwarts tackled the very steep climb up to the 'Giant's Graves' - **Neolithic burial chambers** preserved in a clearing high above the river.

For the afternoon walk we took the path from the north end of Whiting Bay which led to King's Cross Point opposite Holy Island. Here we examined the interesting **Viking ship burial** site before climbing up to cottages through a small wood with delightful drifts of **bluebells**, **pignut** and **pink purslane** (all pink at this site), and as at Glenashdale, one or two specimens of **sanicle**. **Herring gulls**, some **shelduck** and a **buzzard** were seen near the point. Shortly after passing the first cottages along what looked like becoming a rather boring road, liberally covered with puddles into which a heavy drizzle was pouring, the party was surprised to be unexpectedly diverted to one cottage in particular at which one of our members had been dropped previously to meet up with friends. Welcome cups of tea were soon being poured and offered to the bedraggled and sodden party crammed into the kitchen. For an added bonus they saw, on leaving the cottage, that our bus driver, the redoubtable Riddler's Jim, of course, had squeezed his bus round sharp bends on the narrow lanes to save us from the prospect of another paddle through the puddles to get to the main road. A final and enjoyable surprise to round off a wet but happy day, was a concert, of mostly Geordie songs, by Elaine McLaren and other members in the hotel after dinner.

It was a good job that we had put off Machrie Moor until the Sunday, for apart from a light shower, it didn't rain. However, the ground was very wet and soggy and a fierce blast of wind assailed our faces for the first part of the walk round the farm roads. We were really too early for the bog flora to be easily identified, and all that most of us were certain about were **heath rush**, **soft rush**, **marsh thistle**, **marsh lousewort**, **cuckoo flower** and **bog cotton**. However, the archaeology was greatly impressive, and lifted spirits to such an extent that some of us gave vent to a hearty rendering of 'On Machrie Moor ba t'at'. This was probably the first performance of this work in such a setting!

During the afternoon, we walked along the edge of a forestry plantation which overlooked a splendid spectacle of Machrie Bay and a storm tossed sea over which **gannets** were quartering far below. At length, the shelter of the trees was left and we slithered one by one down a precipitous corkscrew path to the bottom of the cliffs where we felt the full



force of the wind. Somehow, through watering eyes, we managed to see **cuckoo flower**, **heath spotted orchid**, **bulbous buttercup**, **silverweed**, **butterwort**, **marsh lousewort** and **flag iris**, all in flower in grassy patches on the rocky and stony beach, and **navelwort** on the cliff faces. Fortunately I had managed to borrow a key which allowed access to the spectacular cave in which Robert the Bruce is said to have derived inspiration from a **spider**, so we were afforded some shelter and time to restore strengths before battling it out against the elements once again, either by retracing our outward steps, or by continuing along the coast direct to the hotel.

On the last day, Monday, the rain returned and the wind still blew, so a decision was easily made not to carry out the planned walk to Glen Sannox. Fortunately Brodick Castle attracted some members, and the Brodick Heritage Centre attracted others, so shelter was enjoyed during the morning before joining the ferry for the first part of the journey home. As on the outward journey, a strong gale blew as we crossed the water to Ardrossan, but this time it hit us side-on. The ship pitched and rolled, and as it rolled, eyes rolled, and as eyes rolled, faces turned green! That trip will be remembered for many a long day by many members!

In one way this was a typical Nats weekend: the weather could have been better but everyone enjoyed themselves! We just grinned and bore the conditions, and got home all the better for the experience.

Bede Pounder

## ISLE OF MAY

8th June

It was with more than a little apprehension that we boarded the May Princess at Anstruther harbour for a sail to the Isle of May. The weather had been stormy during the previous week and although the wind had abated, the sea still had quite a swell. However, as the boat was fully booked the owners were very keen that the trip should go ahead and the OK had been given by the coastguard.

Visibility was quite poor and once we had left the shelter of the harbour wall, we were enveloped in the mist and could only think of how our tummies were feeling with the swell.

As we neared the island we could see **puffins**, **guillemots** and **razorbills** in the water and magnificent flypasts of **gannets** from the nearby Bass Rock, unfortunately missed by some members, who were sitting with eyes closed, their minds on other things!

If we could have got ashore on the island I'm sure that would have compensated for all the discomfort but unfortunately, due to the easterly swell, it was impossible and after a number of attempts landing had to be abandoned. We were taken along the cliffs to see the thousands of nests on the ledges and then sailed back to Anstruther.

With feet again safely on dry land, which was not moving, everyone soon recovered and after lunch we had a very interesting walk along the shore to Crail where the bus met us.

For those whose first visit this was to be, I hope that this experience has not put you off. The Island is a magical and very interesting place with tremendous views and with fifty thousand pairs of **puffins** now nesting there it is quite an experience.

Dorothy Fyffe

## A FORAY IN THE QUARRY

Burnside Quarry, near Newtyle

11th June

After such a long spell of unsettled wet weather over the previous few weeks, we were very fortunate to have a lovely dry evening for our outing to Burnside Quarry. With only a few clouds, the blue sky gave good light for the visit, and as we tramped en masse into the quarry, three **roe deer** made a hasty retreat, showing off their white rumps as they leapt away onto higher ground.

The group fragmented into smaller units all looking round and savouring the atmosphere of this disused quarry with its vertical walls and high rim. Very soon eyes were downward cast, peering in true botanist fashion to identify the flora which had colonised this area since the mid 1960s, when work ceased there. Most of us made our way at varying pace up the track above the quarry floor, then through a small wood onto open moor and hills. There was a lot more to see en route including views of the surrounding countryside and distant hills. A **buzzard** soared lazily above, the good light revealing clearly its under-wing markings. There were more flowers to identify on higher ground. It was also a good vantage point from which to observe Richard Brinklow and Jim Cook who were on the quarry floor where they foraged enthusiastically for the whole evening. Judging by the 180 plant species recorded by the end of the outing, I don't think they missed anything!

The clement weather conditions helped make this a very enjoyable evening out, enhanced by the abundance of flora observed. Included in our impressive list were the **cut-leaved cranesbill** (*Geranium dissectum*), **ragged robin** (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*), **marsh cinquefoil** (*Potentilla palustris*), **greater twayblade** (*Listera ovata*), **northern marsh orchid** (*Dactylorhiza purpurella*), **fiddleneck** (*Amsinckia intermedia*) and **monkey flower** (*Mimulus guttatus*).

Joy Cammack

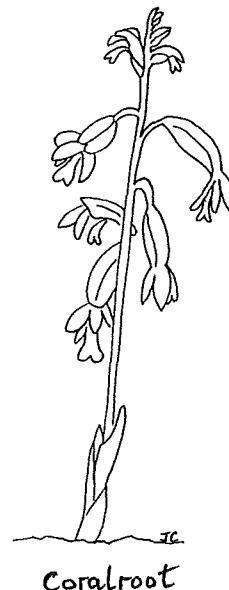
## WONDERFUL RECORDS FROM CARSEGOWNIEMUIR QUARRY

18th June

A small group gathered, on a dull and windy but dry evening, at the cottage for the planned wildlife recording outing to the quarry, the first this year. We'd only been over the stile a few minutes when Brian Ballinger called out that he had a **damselfly**. And sure enough, there on some willowherb was a **blue-tailed damselfly** (*Ishnura elegans*). Wonderful!! A first for the locality! I was delighted. We'd improved pond two in the early 90s in the hope of attracting **Odonata**, and here was one in the quarry. A single record doesn't prove that they are breeding in the quarry but it does demonstrate conclusively that they can reach the site and suggests that they could be breeding. We didn't see any more, which hints at the former rather than the latter possibility.

The group went on to record over a hundred species of vascular plants, more than 20 bird species and even a rodent. It was a **bank vole** which we were able to surprise under one of the sheets of corrugated iron among the pines at the cottage end of the quarry. The little creature sat frozen for a few seconds, giving us clear views, before it scurried off. We lift the sheets several times each year but only very rarely catch a glimpse of one of the occupants, although their runs are obvious. The survey group also came across a couple of rather old caps of **St George's mushroom** (*Tricholoma gambosum*) among the grass of tree-planting area C.

Marjory Tennant, Margaret McLaren and Brian (B) concentrated on counting the **northern marsh orchids** (*Dactylorhiza purpurella*) in the marshy patch by area C and came up with a total of 54 flowering spikes, a good year. However, although the whole group all got down on their hands and knees we could find only four leaves of the **adder's tongue fern** (*Ophioglossum vulgare*). None was fertile. The surveyors then moved on to pond three, to look for any signs of **deer**, and there Brian made his second great find of the evening. Right down by the water's edge, in the damp earth under a willow tree, there were three spikes of **coralroot orchid** (*Corallorhiza trifida*). A terrific find and another first for the site! They've probably been there for years but they're ephemeral and difficult to see. (In fact on a return visit less than a fortnight later we failed to re-find them and yet were back in exactly the same location. Perhaps a **rabbit** had nibbled them off at ground level!)



Coralroot



Back at the cottage, the evening was rounded off by three **pipistrelles** flitting about. The visit had significantly improved our records and had been a very pleasant experience. Just think, you could have been there and joined in the fun!

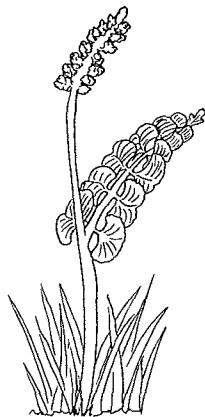
Jim Cook

## BEN VRACKIE

29th June

Our excursions, especially on the hills, are so dominated by the weather that forecasts occupy the mind for days before. And the prospects for the Saturday didn't look too bright. The bus dropped the booted and weather-proofed party off in Moulin village and we noted the specimen of **royal fern** (*Osmunda regalis*) that has occupied a cottage front garden for many years. A little further on a few Nats recorded **bulbous buttercup** (*Ranunculus bulbosus*) in the grassy roadside verge.

Once in the shelter of the woodlands, partly sheltered from the threatening clouds, we split up into several groups, some of us intent on the cliff and the summit, others more interested in the wildlife around us. There was a fine array of common flowering plants and ferns in the woods, enlivened by a few fungi and a variety of insects. One of the younger members was able to catch a fine specimen of a **peppered moth** (*Biston betularia*) and Ruth Arnold found a few **common wintergreens** (*Pyrola minor*). Surprisingly, nobody found any **chickweed wintergreen** (*Trientalis europaea*) at all, nor any **moschatel** (*Adoxa moschatelina*). A large party had an early lunch sheltering from heavy rain under dense conifers at the top of the wood and took the opportunity to admire a very early **blusher** (*Amanita rubescens*) and an equally early *Tricholoma saponaceum*.



Moonwort

From then on the weather slowly began to improve. In the well-known little marsh along the path were **northern marsh orchids** (*Dactylorhiza purpurella*), **yellow mountain saxifrage** (*Saxifraga aizoides*), **least clubmoss** (*Selaginella selaginoides*), **marsh arrowgrass** (*Triglochin palustris*) and, of course, the introduced **brown bog-rush** (*Schoenus ferrugineus*). A few **buzzards** circling the cliffs ahead impressed the party.

The real objects of the outing, though, were the floristically rich cliffs below the summit. Pat Gaff led off one group. Joy Cammack, Alban Houghton, Brian Ballinger and a number of others joined in. Although still windy, the sky was starting to clear, giving little blinks of sun to illuminate such species as **holly fern** (*Polystichum lonchitis*), **alpine cinquefoil** (*Potentilla crantzii*), trailing strands of **purple saxifrage** (*Saxifraga oppositifolia*), a number of **moonworts** (*Botrychium lunaria*), **mountain everlasting** (*Antennaria dioica*), a few flowers of **moss campion** (*Silene acaulis*), **alpine mouse-ear** (*Cerastium alpinum*), **alpine milk-vetch** (*Astragalus alpinus*) and the incomparable **purple oxytropis** (*Oxytropis halleri*). The blue of its flowers against the grey rock has to be seen to be believed. It had turned out to be an excellent day.

Jim Cook

## ROYAL DEESIDE RAILWAY PATH

AND

## OLD OAK WOOD OF DRUM

13th July

The coach left Albert Square with 40 naturalists searching for a little sunshine. We were not to be disappointed as, almost immediately, someone spotted an unusual object in the sky. It was finally agreed, on a majority vote, that it was the **sun**, and yes, it stayed with us the whole day (it was going to be one of the warmest days according to the weather forecast). We were off to a good start.

We had a brief stop on the way into Aberdeen at the Duthie Park, which was looking lovely, and a few of us decided on an ice cream as we were already feeling the heat. We then continued out Great Western Road to just before Cults and parked outside Wellwood for everyone to dismount and get across the busy North Deeside Road to the start of our walk. The old Royal Deeside Railway line is now a path which has been allowed to grow naturally and makes a pleasant walk and an excellent corridor for wildlife. Our walk proved very interesting particularly as the path-side plants were flourishing after the recent rains. **Silver birch** trees made a beautiful shady avenue. The **blue sow thistle**, an established garden escape, but nowhere common, looked comfortable on the old platform. **Sweet Cicely** was just starting to seed, **square-stalked St John's wort**, **common toadflax**, **bush vetch**, **yellow vetchling** and **climbing corydalis** were but a few of the plants we saw. The **ivy-leaved toadflax** on the walls looked lovely.

Most of us followed the path down to the "Shakkin' Briggie", which used to be a well used bridge over the River Dee, but is now in very poor condition. We were now walking along the old Deeside Road past Loirsbank Farm, to meet up, at the old iron footbridge, with the few members who had decided to keep on the flat railway path. But!! where had the bridge gone since the recce in April? (We eventually met up but it was quite a surprise to find that the bridge had gone.)

A few **butterflies** were in evidence such as **green-veined whites**, but the sun had failed to bring out many other species – perhaps they were still recovering from the recent poor weather. However, **bumblebees** were much in evidence, making up for lost time, and a number of garden birds were noted such as **robin**, **wren**, **chaffinch**, **greenfinch** and **song thrush**. When we stopped for lunch the pink **field bindweed** (*Convolvulus arvensis*) and white **hedge bindweed** (*Calystegia sepium*) were seen climbing everywhere, and members enjoyed looking at the verdant Deeside Golf Course. The view was much appreciated.



After our walk in the sun, many members opted for an ice cream and lay back on a convenient grass verge whilst awaiting the bus for the second stage of the outing.

On arriving at Drum Castle, some members toured the castle and its gardens, but most opted to walk through the old **oak wood** to see what natural wonders might lie in wait. A number of birds could be heard but, as usual this time of year, were difficult to spot due to the luxuriant vegetation. However, a number were identified, especially the commoner **warblers** and **tits**, a **buzzard**, a **great spotted woodpecker** and a pair of **bullfinches**. An attractive woodside pool turned up a good number of **damselflies**, mainly the **large red damselfly** (*Pyrrosoma nymphula*) which is fairly common in Scotland and enjoys a long flight period from late May to September. The wood obviously provides food and shelter for a rich variety of wildlife, including insects, snails, spiders and other invertebrates. The whole wood was fresh and very green containing **tufted hair-grass**, **false oat**, **wood millet**, **common hemp nettle**, **germander speedwell**, **wood soft grass** and **wood avens**. **Treecreeper** holes were found on the trunks of some trees, and **nymphal cases** on **bottle sedge**. **Ringlet butterflies** were seen and the pond was bright with yellow **flag iris**.

Eventually members trickled back to the bus in twos and threes and either rested on the grass in the sun after their walk, or paid a late visit to the castle. Thanks were given on the return journey to Margaret McLaren for showing everyone around her 'home patch' and to Bede Pounder who had also recce'd the walk.

Gordon Maxwell and Margaret McLaren

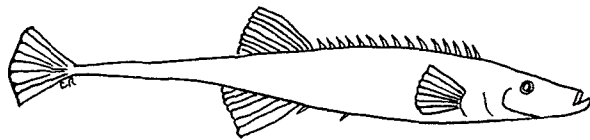
## WESTHAVEN ROCKPOOLS

23rd July

The day had been wet, but with the forecast of a probable improvement by the evening. We hoped that it was accurate as the prospect of rockpooling in the rain did not exactly appeal. An enthusiastic (and hardy) 19 Nats turned up at the shore, and, armed with borrowed nets and containers, headed for the pools, having taken heed of Jim's warning of slippery under-foot conditions.

Dorothy had arrived early enough, with her telescope, to inform us that the family of **shelduck** was still around. The adults were on the shore, but at least ten youngsters could be seen on the water. There had been 17 ducklings two weeks earlier, on my preliminary visit. This was the full extent of the birdwatching for the evening apart from incidental records of **terns** (undifferentiated) and a number of **herons**. Eyes were strictly focused on feet and rockpools.

Everywhere we looked there were large numbers of **hermit crabs** and Jim had listed about ten different **seaweeds** before he had taken as many paces. Bede had an early success with a **scorpion fish**, followed, in his next dip of the net, by two **15-spined sticklebacks**. There were **crabs** of various sizes at all levels on the shore, but the largest



ones, of both **green shore crab** and **edible crab**, were found by Mary. The keen-eyed found tiny **brittle-stars** beneath stones, several **chitons**, a **long-clawed porcelain crab** and a few **common starfish**. Christine kept turning stones over in the hope of finding a **butterfish**, but the only one caught was

credited to Alban. Christine was consoled by catching a **shanny**. Both the **shanny** and the **scorpion fish** showed a remarkable ability to change colour to match their surroundings. Both were dark-striped when first caught – to match their rock and weed hideouts – but changed to a very pale striping pattern when put in the white bucket we used to show everyone the catch. Everything we caught was released at the end of the evening into a suitable rockpool. Christine insisted on personally supervising this operation and ensured that the greatest care was taken not to damage any of our catch.

It did rain a couple of times, but it was reasonably warm and still, so we were not put off by it. It was the diminishing light which finally brought our searching to an end. Annoyingly, when we got home to Monifieth we found that there had been no rain there all evening. Thanks are due to Dundee Museum and Dundee College for lending us nets and other equipment – the list of all our finds has been sent to the museum and is available to any member if required.

Anne Reid

## KINGHORN AND WEMYSS

3rd August

Almost any Fife coast field excursion can guarantee success, such is the wide variety of habitats and the large numbers of species, both faunal and floral, available to exploit them. There is more than sufficient to satisfy most tastes, even before choice sites of historical or geological interest are included. Despite the gloomy weather, this excursion was no exception.

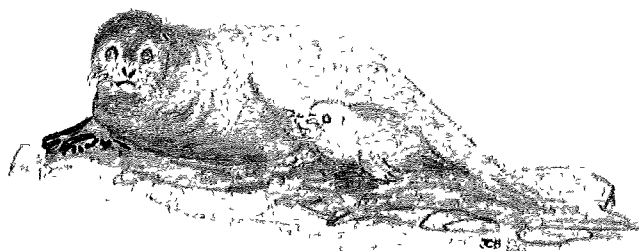
As most of the group of 34 set off via the picturesque Kinghorn seafront to the eastward section of the Fife Coastal Path, some enthusiasts decided to add a visit to Pettycur to see the **meadow clary** on the cliff opposite the harbour carpark. Unfortunately the clary was long past its best but it was soon clear that it was just one tiny part of a real floral spectacular that covered only a short length of cliff. Here were **ox-eye daisies** and **scentless mayweed**, **ragwort**, **rosebay willowherb**, **hedge** and **great bindweed**, **harebells**, **red** and **sea champions**, **meadow**, **bloody** and **dove's foot cranesbills**, **sticky groundsel**, **knapweed**, **mugwort**, **weld**, **agrimony**, **bird's foot trefoil**, and **spear**, **creeping** and **welted thistles**, all in flower, and with much more to delight the eye and give a stimulating introduction to what was in store along the main part of the walk. This took in a section of the coastal path which wanders up and down alongside the mainline railway which runs over **Carboniferous lavas**, **sandstones** and **limestones**.

After no more than a few hundred metres, the ground on both sides of the path revealed a floral tapestry which never failed to impress for more than a mile up to Seafeld Tower, beyond which lay a rather depressing section to Kirkcaldy over the site of the old Seafeld colliery. The tapestry was made up of large drifts of species such as **ox-eye daisy**, **rosebay willowherb**, **bittersweet**, **ragwort**, **dog rose** and **sea buckthorn** and smaller drifts

of **kidney** and **tufted vetch**, **yellow meadow vetchling**, **Himalayan balsam** and **hogweed**. Mixed in with these were small clumps or single specimens of species such as **agrimony**, **hemp agrimony**, **perforate St John's wort**, **wild carrot**, **burnet saxifrage**, **bur chervil**, **wood sage**, the **cranesbills**, **self heal**, **rock rose**, **salad burnet**, **rest harrow** and **meadowsweet**. As an interesting bonus, we found the only specimens of **thyme broomrape** on the eastern coasts of Great Britain, growing on the steeply sloping cliff top with, in addition to **wild thyme**, **harebells**, **lady's bedstraw** and **viper's bugloss**. One would expect such an association more on a dune habitat rather than on a cliff top. We were pleased to meet up with our Honorary Vice-President, Dr Gordon Corbet, on this section of the walk. He located a number of interesting insects, but his most interesting find was a **slug**, *Arion flagellus*, which has never before been recorded in Fife! You would think that the flora and fauna of a county such as Fife is very well known, but this record shows that it pays to keep your eyes open.

At the ruined Seafeld Tower was a very large area of **hemlock**, the aroma from which had been wafting in the gloomy oppressive atmosphere along the coast. This was a pity since it detracted from the animated scene close offshore of noisy flocks of **terns**, **sandwich** and **'comic'**, and **herring** and **greater black-backed gulls**. The very opposite of

animation was also in view, in the form of **cormorants** silhouetted with outstretched wings on the rock skerries, and **seals**, mostly **common** but at least one **grey** bull, draped in utter contentment over a large rock outcrop. Other **common seals** in their typical tail-up 'banana' pose could be watched at closer range. Moulting



**eiders** with **mallards** and flocks of **waders**, such as **bar-tailed godwits**, **ringed plovers** and **oystercatchers** were seen, as well as small numbers of **curlew**, **dunlin**, **sanderling**, **turnstone** and **lapwing**. A **peregrine** was also spotted, and small birds included **linnet**, **whitethroat**, **goldfinch**, **pied wagtail**, **starling** and **blue tit**. A lookout was kept for **lepidoptera** throughout the walk, but the conditions were not ideal for these. However, some **green-veined whites** were about, as well as **meadow browns**, **ringlets** and a **small tortoiseshell**. A **six-spot burnet moth** was seen and a nice **magpie moth** captured by hand. As we approached Kirkcaldy **Japanese knotweed** was noted spread along the path.

From Kirkcaldy, we were bussed to East Wemyss and walked via the famous caves and Macduff Castle, the second castle of the day, to Buckhaven, to which the bus had gone on ahead. A good clump of the uncommon **white melilot** was seen near the closed Court Cave, and **common spotted orchids** were still in flower beneath the castle. A visit was made to Johnathon's Cave to examine the **Pictish engravings** on the wall. The cave's entrance was flanked by **alexanders**, no longer in flower but a species which must be very near its northern limit hereabouts. Three other habitats were examined on the walk to Buckhaven: the tiny wood on the cliff top which contained **red** and **white campion**, **nipplewort** and **burdock**, the grassy sward just above the foreshore where we found **common centaury** and **ragged robin**, and the foreshore itself with **hastate orache** and **sandwort**.

Weatherwise, this excursion was one of the gloomiest in recent years, but, in terms of natural history, it must rank high amongst the best.

Bede Pounder

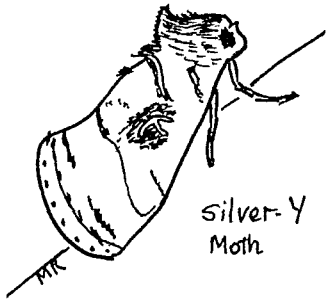
## CROMBIE BARBECUE

27th August

Over thirty members and friends turned out for our barbecue which was to be combined with a search for moths and other creatures of the night. It was a nice cloudy evening, essential to keep the temperature from dropping too fast, highly suitable for moths. As a preliminary the barbecues were lit, one easily, the other less willingly! Until these were

ready for cooking, Jim and a band of helpers distributed sugaring mixture liberally on rocks, tree trunks and wall tops, to attract moths and other wildlife. In the course of their travels they disturbed a **lesser yellow underwing moth** which was captured and passed around for examination.

The water has been drained from the reservoir since early spring, for inspection and maintenance, and the whole of the muddy bottom is now covered in vegetation. Jim's investigation of the colonising plants revealed a wide selection of interesting species including **celery-leaved crowfoot** (*Ranunculus sceleratus*), **rushes** (*Juncus* sp.), the dry-land version of **water crowfoot** (*Ranunculus aquatilis*) and **watercress** (*Rorippa microphylla*). He vowed to come back and investigate the botany in full daylight, as it was so interesting. The **scabious** on the top of the reservoir banking was in full flower and had attracted several **silver-Y moths**. These also fly by day and can commonly be seen hovering at flowers.



Meanwhile, the light trap had been set up to attract moths as the light faded. While we waited, large quantities of food and drink were consumed by all present. The variety of foods which can be barbecued never ceases to amaze! Some members had a sing-song in the slowly gathering gloom, but the cloud was too high to hasten the fall of darkness. A **flame carpet moth** was netted at the edge of the trees at this stage. Unfortunately the Park closed at 9pm, and as the rangers were keen to get home,

we had to make sure that any cars were outside the gates so that they would not be locked in. Many people elected to leave at this point, but a band of hardy enthusiasts (all the usual suspects!) moved cars and walked back in to the rapidly darkening Park.

Firstly we investigated the sugaring points. The first two only yielded a **leopard slug**, two species of **slater** and some **harvestmen**. The rock on the shoreline of the reservoir had slaters too, but also some **brown-spot pinion** and **mouse moths**. The latter are so called because of their tendency to scuttle away when disturbed, like their namesakes, though they fly away quite willingly too. By this time it had been fully dark for a while so, torches at the ready, we advanced on the light trap to empty it. The sum total of our catch was three **July highflyer moths**, another **silver-Y** and a large **ichneumon fly**. We were distracted from our task by the **caddis flies** and **crane flies** which flew around our heads and faces while we tried to see what was in the trap. It is easier to check a trap the following morning, in daylight, but much more exciting in the dark!

As we finally walked back to the cars we tried to find signs of **bat** activity by using the bat detector borrowed from Dundee Museum. We were disappointed that we saw nothing and only got one fleeting 'bleep' on the detector. At least some night-flying creatures had been recorded – the last time we tried this it was such a beautiful clear evening that it got too cold and we caught nothing!

Anne Reid

## BIRNAM GLEN FUNGUS FORAY

7th September

The above title for this walk required alteration due to forestry operations, eliminating the Birnam Glen part of the walk. Over 30 members and friends left Dundee on a promising morning weatherwise and although a few dark clouds showed up en route, on arrival at Dunkeld the sun broke through. A short hop on to Rumbling Bridge and the walk started with a short stretch of woodland (mainly oak) where a nice **chicken of the woods** (*Laetiporus sulphureus*) was spotted low down on an **oak** stump. Crossing the Crieff road soon after this we then started on the Glen Gaur part of the walk, and immediately stopped to admire some colourful **lichens** on the pathside dyke and the large patch of **betony** on the bank above. It was near this area that Brian Allen (no doubt, during his perennial quest for signs of orchids) discovered a **merveille du jour moth**, an oak associated species. Photographs were taken and we look forward to seeing the results on screen of this very attractive species.

We now headed east off the Glen Gaur right of way on an open stretch, past some **birch** and **beech**, where a few birds were seen such as **goldfinch**, **chaffinch**, **siskin**, **coal tit**

and **meadow pipit** The hoped for view from here of the Ben a' Ghlo range was unfortunately hidden by cloud

Onwards and upwards we went into the forestry, and a number of fungi were showing up *Paxillus atrotomentosus*, a large fungus, was very common on conifer stumps and some members were fortunate to acquire a few **chanterelles** for the pot We soon reached the small lochan at the apex of our walk, an attractive spot, run by Dunkeld and Birnam angling club This was the signal for the flasks and sandwiches to appear, and the calm conditions made it a very pleasant break Moving on to scan the area for fungi we found *Amanita muscaria*, *A. crocea*, *A. fulva*, *A. citrina*, *Boletus edulis*, *B. subtomentosus*, *B. badius*, and nearer the loch, *Russula paludosa*, *R. claroflava* and others (difficult!) An interesting one was the **earth ball**, *Scleroderma citrinum*, growing above ground level on an uprooted tree

A few **dragonflies** were observed (one on Doug Palmer's hat) - probably a **black darter** (*Sympetrum danae*) On return down to the Crieff road a short stop was made at a small reedy stank, which proved to be interesting A few large *Aeshna* species of dragonfly were on the move but never approached close enough for identification Another baffling group of objects were jelly-like blobs hanging from a **willow** above the loch side, spotted by Marjory Tennant No one came up with a convincing answer, but the clue was in the jelly where a number of larvae were seen under a lens A check in Collins Insects turned up the answer – **caddis flies** Most of their larvae live in water but some drop into the water from overhanging vegetation

After this interesting find we made our way down to the road, crossing over to Inver to complete the revised part of the walk via the Hermitage and down to the car park to display the results of the foray A fair selection taxed the brains of the knowledgeable, but before they finished their deliberations the heavens opened and everyone scuttled onto the bus It could not have been timed better

Gordon Maxwell

(The following day was atrocious, with torrential showers – weren't we lucky? GM )

## AUTUMN MEETINGS 2002

### DAISIES AND DASSIES

Alban Houghton – 1st October

The winter programme began with a good turn out to hear this lecture with the intriguing title We all knew what **daisies** were, we thought, but what are **dassies**? Alban didn't keep us in suspense for long

He started by describing South Africa as one of the six floristic kingdoms, derived from the break up of the ancient landmass of Gondwanaland more than 120 million years ago South Africa supports many thousands of species of flowering plants, many endemic, that is species found nowhere else The Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve, for instance, contains 2,600 species, more than the whole of the British flora Some of these are confined to a type of dry scrub, the **fynbos** (or 'fine bush', a type of **garigue**), with *Protea* species and their attendant **sugarbirds**, *Erica* spp and hosts of '**daisies**' These actually are *Mesembryanthemum* spp, not members of the **Compositae** (daisy family) at all

Near the Orange River in Namaqualand, in Western Cape Province, in places on the coast and in the highlands, are found colonies of small guinea-pig-like animals, called **rock hyraxes** – the eponymous **dassies** So that's what they are! Interestingly, they are not rodents but distant relatives of **elephants** **Rock kestrels** hovered over the rocky outcrops, which also abounded in '**blaukop**' (blue-headed) **lizards**



Alban treated us to a tour of the Province, first stopping off at Kirstenbosch Botanic Garden, to admire the pink-flowered *Oxalis purpurea*, several striking *Ericas*, and **arum lilies**, with the romantic-sounding Afrikaans name of **pig's ears**, sprouting from the ground. The tapping calls of **blacksmith plovers** resounded around the gardens. Further along the coast, near Simonstown, was a colony of **jackass penguins**, so named because of their calls, with numbers of **white-backed mousebirds**. **Right whales** are visible from close inshore near the Cape of Good Hope with colonies of **fur seals**. Numbers of **bontebok antelopes** and **Cape zebra** can be found in the reserve inland. Among the vegetation were hosts of fascinating plants including the *Mesembryanthemum* related **Cape daisies**, several *Euphorbia* spp, *Gladiolus* spp, a '**carriion flower**' *Ferraria crispa*, types of **reeds** of the **Restionaceae** family, one of the **proteas** (*Leucodendron* sp) and numerous **orchids**.

Alban showed wonderful views from the top of Table Mountain and pictures of *Romulea rosea*, a bulb with striking flowers. He then conducted us on to Namaqualand with its species of **pebble plants** (*Lithops* sp), a star-of-Bethlehem-like *Ornithogalum* sp, eight species of *Pelargonium* (which we know as '**geraniums**') and the **Namaqua daisy** (*Dimorphotheca* sp). Further to the north, at Springbok, were species of *Aloe* known as **quiver trees**, **elephants' ears** (*Whiteheadia bifolia*), superb *Gazania* daisies, tall and handsome *Bulbinella latifolia*, *Euphorbia mauritanica*, wonderful blue *Felicia* daisies and purple *Babiana* species.

Back on the coast, at Lambert's Bay, there were hosts of interesting birds – **Cape gannets**, **Cape weaver birds** and their intricate nests, **little grebes**, **red-knobbed coots**, **black-crowned night herons** and **cormorants**. **Pelicans** were seen on nearby sewage ponds and **greater flamingos** on the cape flats. Alban finished by showing photos of some plants of the area – wonderful **orchids** including *Satyrium corifolium*, the **pincushion protea**, *Leucospermum cordifolium*, and the exquisite purple *Moraea fugax*. The lecture had packed a wonderful range of species into only ninety minutes.

Jim Cook

## NATURE'S NASTIES and BALI

Gordon Maxwell and Brian Allan – 15th October

Unfortunately the lecturer we had arranged for this evening had become ill earlier in the day, so our emergency speakers only had four hours notice to prepare their talks. Gordon and Brian rose to the occasion and put on a very impressive performance.

Gordon showed a series of slides depicting 'Nature's Nasties', all those creatures and plants which some of us fear or dislike. He persuaded us that many of them had been maligned and that they are often beautiful and worthy of respect. After all, the activities of our own species have hardly been benign at times.

As always the quality of Gordon's photography was outstanding, reminding me that I, for one, am just an amateur snapper. His pictures of **adders** impressed us all, including one

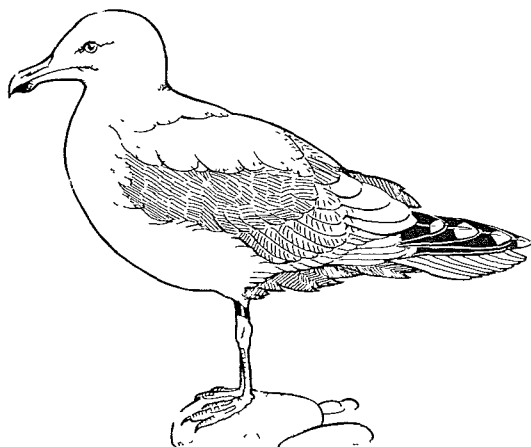


image of a snake being picked up by one of our members (NOT advised). Slides of **spiders**, **wasps**, **grey squirrels**, **herring gulls** and many other creatures followed. The **sundew** and the **dragonfly** are perhaps more unpopular with **insects** than with people, and the **foxglove** when used appropriately has been valuable in medicine. To finish with, Gordon gave a beautifully illustrated presentation of **fungi**, from the delicious to the deadly.

Our meeting took place just a few days after the tragic loss of life in Bali, and Brian gave a fascinating description of a visit to that island more than ten years ago.

Flowers were everywhere and there were **paddy fields**, **pineapple plantations** and **volcanic** areas. The Hindu culture of this part of Indonesia was very evident, and we saw pictures of colourful dances and ceremonies. The people were warm and welcoming and we hope they recover from this misfortune soon.

Brian Ballinger

## A WHALE OF A TIME

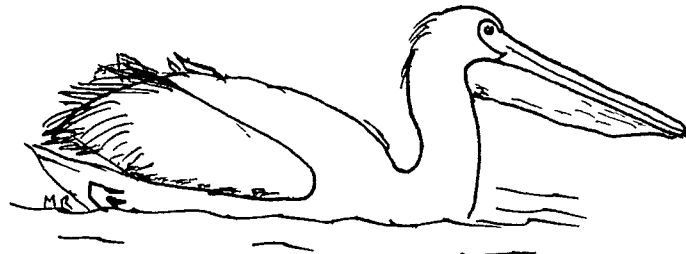
Cetaceans and Wild Flowers in Baja California

Prof. Dick Byrne – 29th October

We have had a number of lectures in the past from Dick Byrne, all of them excellent, so we were looking forward to the latest offering. He told us that it was more of a travelogue than an educational lecture, and covered a twelve day boat trip in late March round the peninsula of Baja California (which is wholly in Mexico). The journey was organised by the Oceanic Society of San Francisco, and started from the naval base at San Diego at the southern extremity of California.

The boat, the 'Spirit of Adventure' was skippered by Mike Keating who was an excellent naturalist and found **whales** and **dolphins** with ease while appearing to cause them no disturbance or upset. On the Pacific side of the peninsula we started with wonderful views of **common dolphins**, to set the scene. All present were somewhat amazed to hear that there were about 500 individuals in the school, though this did increase the ease of photographing them. Landing on an arid offshore island, there were **elephant seals** with young and 27 pairs of **ospreys**, strung along the shore at 100 metre intervals, a sign of very rich feeding. The vegetation included endemic **yuccas**, a **mallow** and **cacti** in flower. There were also **pelicans** in full breeding plumage with a bright red gape.

Further south the boat carefully entered the narrow entrance to the sheltered breeding lagoons of the **grey whales**. As both Mexico and the USA have good wildlife protection laws this species is well protected both when breeding and feeding and migrating in US waters. Grey whales feed by scooping mud from the sea bed and sifting out tasty morsels such as '**sand dollars**' (related to our **heart urchins**) and **lobsters**. The adults normally feed on one side only, resulting in **barnacles** on one side of the jaw and a very asymmetrical look. This group of whales is so used to people that the boat drifted close enough to let everyone see the hairs on the calf's head.



Near the tip of the peninsula there were **humpback whales** exhibiting their exuberant breaching behaviour. Their tail flukes have very variable markings, from black to white with everything between, which enables individuals to be identified with some ease. Here we were shown a **dolphin** riding the bow wave in front of a **humpback**.

Turning north into the Gulf of California the waters are generally calm so the **dolphins** have a particular liking for boats. This time the school was estimated to be an unbelievable 1000 strong! Here there were also **olive Ridley turtles** with **goose barnacles** attached and **hammerhead**, **blue** and **tiger sharks**. A speciality was the seldom seen **dwarf sperm whale** of which there are plenty in the Gulf of California.

Early one morning excellent views were had of a feeding **blue whale**. The big whales tend to feed at night when the **krill** are up near the surface, so this was a welcome bonus. There were **lampreys** attached to the relatively slow moving blue whale. A **fin whale** was seen feeding and **short-finned pilot whales** and a **sperm whale** were also seen.



Short landings were made on some of the islands in the Gulf. Most of these are reserves and are arid with a number of endemic **cacti**. Our farewell was from a **sperm whale** giving its characteristically asymmetric, left sided blow. It was generally agreed by the 40 members present that it had, in fact, been more of an educational lecture than a travelogue – contrary to Dick Byrne's rather modest claim at the beginning.

Anne Reid

## PLANTS OF THE PACIFIC NORTH WEST

Bob Mitchell – 12th November

We were again taken to the west coast of America this evening when Mr Bob Mitchell introduced us to the plants of the Pacific Northwest. We began our journey at San Francisco where we were told of a plant which had been newly discovered in the last 30 years, a bulb of the genus *Calocortus*. We then followed in the footsteps of the great plant hunters of the 18th and 19th centuries, including Archibald Menzies and David Douglas. We travelled to the Sierra Nevada Mountains, among the **sugar pines**, with their 15 inch cones, and the **giant redwoods** to see the associated flora and then on to Oregon, to the Columbia River at St George, where David Douglas had been based and where he collected specimens of **Douglas fir** and **spruce**.

Then to the Olympic Peninsula, Washington State and British Columbia, which Archibald Menzies had explored. On into the Cascade Mountains to see the flora under the **lodgepole pines** and to the Rockies and the Acabasca River at Jasper.

The talk covered seven trips Mr Mitchell had made to the area and made us realise what a wealth of plants these intrepid botanists brought back and introduced into Britain to enhance our gardens. In fact, many of the plants illustrated in the lecture seemed to have been named after the various explorers, such as *Lewisia*, *Douglasia* and *Menziesia*. A particularly appropriate slide was of the **Canadian dogwood**, *Cornus canadensis*, a close cousin of the British native *Cornus suecica* which is the Nats emblem and appears on our badge.

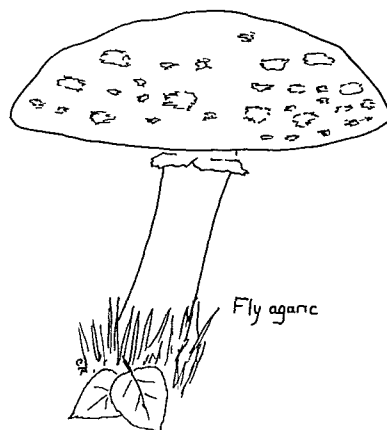
Jim Cook proposed our thanks to Mr Mitchell for such a fascinating illustration on the plants and plant hunters of NW America.

Dorothy Fyffe

## SATURDAY MORNING WALK – TENTSMUIR

16th November

One misty moist morning a goodly number of Nats set off from Tayport for a walk into Tentsmuir Forest. A few days before I had had a short meander through a small **beech** grove. The sun shone from a lovely blue sky through just enough leaves to dapple the red



coppery carpet of fallen leaves beneath. There were quite a lot of toadstools and mushrooms of many varieties to be found there and thereabouts. The weather, of course had changed, but nonetheless the experts identified the **buttercap** (*Collybia butyracea*), the **deceiver** (*Laccaria laccata*) and the pretty purple *Laccaria amethystea*. A variety of **milk cap**, *Lactarius glyciosmus*, was found, distinguished by its coconut smell. **Stag's-horn** and **horse-hair fungus** were also spotted as were **dead man's fingers** and varieties of *Mycena*. *Hygrophorus hypothermus*, a species which appears after the first frosts, was found, and also some late **fly agarics**.

The **lichen** hunters also had a field day. *Evernia*, *Parmelia*, *Cladonia* and *Hypogymnia physodes*, to name but a few, were all identified. **Goldcrests** were heard

twittering high in the trees, no doubt objecting to our clamour down beneath them. Nancy Middleton spotted a **green woodpecker** flying across a path, and various **tits** and a **buzzard** were also seen.

We were pleased to see our Honorary Vice-President, Gordon Corbet, accompany us, and he was called upon to try to identify some tiny (about 2mm) **scale-like insects** which were lying in profusion on the sandy paths under **Scots pine**. A number of them were collected for identification and were provisionally identified as **coccoid bugs** from the family **Orthezidae**. Otherwise our beetle hunter did not have much luck crawling about on hands and knees in wet and murky places. It had been so wet that the little insects had thought better of it and hid far inside their little abodes.

A very unusual sight was thoroughly enjoyed by those lucky enough to be on a different path. A gathering of **huskies** and their owners and drivers just about to start a race over some of the wider forest tracks. They are such beautiful animals, full of excitement, energy and eagerness to get going. Had there been a few inches of snow one could have mistaken the scene for the Canadian arctic.

After watching a **red-throated diver** popping up and down in Tayport Harbour, regardless of our interested presence, we ended our morning in the usual way – lunch out – this time in the Bell Rock Tavern in Tayport. A lovely meal with plenty of chat, fun and refreshment was enjoyed by all. Thank you all for coming and those who joined us just for the meal. A fitting end to 2002's outdoor meetings.

Roma Miller and Gordon Maxwell

## THE WILDLIFE OF TIREE

Alan Leitch – 3rd December

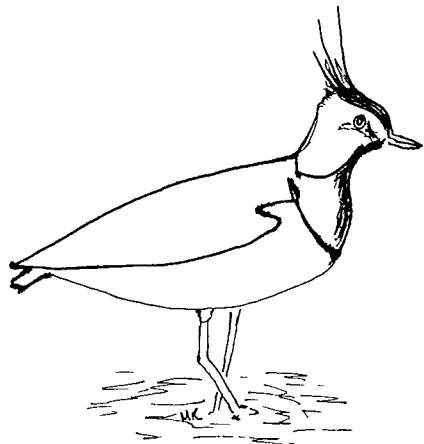
An excellent turn out of Nats members was given a very interesting lecture by our local RSPB Assistant Area Officer, Alan Leitch. The wonderful variety of bird life on the island was described and an outline was given of the RSPB's success story with the **corncrake** conservation programme. The island is basically flat (though not on a bike!) **machair**, with crofts scattered throughout, and measures about 11 miles by six miles. The highest hill is Ben Hinish at 141m and there are four lochans. The climate is sunny, temperate and windy.

Long since known as the stronghold of the Scottish **corncrake** population, Tiree holds 153 out of a total UK population of 622 known singing males (See below). This healthy picture has come about as a result of cooperation between the island's crofters, the RSPB and SNH, by such means as altering the pattern in which hay crops are harvested.

The Reef reserve has been established on land surrounding the island's airport and is aimed primarily at creating the right habitat to encourage the successful breeding of **wader** species. It is marshy land with water levels controlled by means of sluices and is not publicised as access is difficult. The reserve is managed by grazing cattle on it and has succeeded in attracting around 250 pairs of **lapwing** and 50 pairs of **redshank** among others.

**Greylag geese** have become a problem on the island over recent years. One pair bred on Tiree in the 1930s but this has increased to the present total of around 4000 pairs. This has resulted in measures having to be taken to keep the numbers under control. Six geese graze as much as one **sheep** so the increase has affected crofters' livelihoods.

To whet the appetites of the naturalists present, Alan described the abundance of **orchid** species on the island and mentioned the presence of the rare **rush**, *Juncus balticus*. The wealth of insect life including **butterflies**, **moths** and **bumblebees** was also described. **Moths** had been recorded by trapping and surveys had revealed the presence of a rare **bumblebee**, *Bombus distinguendus*.



Tiree is accessible by sea and air and is an island full of potential for the visiting naturalist and birdwatcher alike. It is well worthy of a visit, so perhaps the Nats can try it sometime!

**A Comparison of Singing Male Corncrakes on Scottish Islands in 2000** From 'British Birds' Vol 95, No 11, Nov 2002

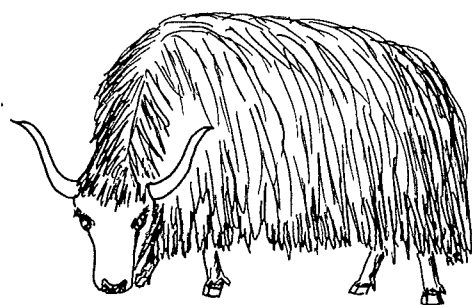
Coll - 53 males, Tiree - 153, Colonsay and Oronsay - 21, Mull - 0, Iona - 9, Skye - 23, Muck - 3, Lewis - 55, Harris - 3, Berneray - 1, North Uist - 66, Benbecula - 31, South Uist - 98, Barra and Vatersay - 56, Orkney - 11, Shetland - 2

Bob McCurley

## FROM YAKS TO YAMS IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Gordon Corbet – 4th December

Gordon Corbet, our Honorary Vice-President, gave a fascinating talk on the wildlife of south-east Asia, as part of the Wednesday afternoon lecture series. He had made a particular study of the mammals of the region during several visits, but his interests have ranged widely to include other wildlife, forestry, landscape and people. After a brief history of wildlife studies in the area, he described the animal geographical zone, known as the Indo-Malayan region. As Curator of Mammals, he had worked on a mammal checklist on behalf of the Natural History Museum.



Gordon took us on a tour of the region, starting at an altitude of 16,000ft in the Himalayas, below even higher mountains. Here there is **juniper** and **cotoneaster scrub** and **yaks** are used for transport. Lower down are **coniferous forests** and **rhododendrons** and, where the land allows, the cultivation of **potatoes** and **buckwheat** (a *Polygonum* species). A **monsoon climate** prevails with wet summers and dry winters, although the melting snow helps during dry periods. Below this there is **broadleaved forest** where familiar plants such as **daphne**, **magnolia** and **berberis** can be seen. Trekking has expanded in recent years and this has

increased the pressure on woodland because of the need for fuel. Almost all travel is on foot as there are very few roads in Nepal.

Further south we were shown pictures of Hindu and Buddhist ceremonies in Kathmandu, and then progressed to the Royal Chitwan National Park, where the rare **Indian rhino** can be seen lurking in the long grass. Gordon then described the remaining areas of **monsoon forest** of south India, where the **chital** is the commonest **deer** species. The Indians tend to value wildlife and many bird species may be seen. Indeed, birdwatching has even been recommended as a recipe for long life.

The Chinese have a different attitude, having had campaigns aimed at killing **sparrows** and **flies**. Fewer birds are to be seen, although some wild forest remains in some regions of China such as Yunnan.

Peninsular Malaysia only has limited areas of true **rainforest** and **mountain forest** left, and much has been replaced by **rubber plantations** and **oil palm**. In Singapore the statue of Sir Stamford Raffles and the hotel named after him still stand.

Much of Borneo was originally rainforest and a moderate amount survives. On the coasts of Sarawak there are areas of **mangrove** where **fiddler crabs** and **proboscis monkeys** may be observed. **Pitcher plants** and a multitude of **orchid** species, many of them epiphytic, abound in some areas together with a memorable profusion of **leeches**. The huge red *Rafflesia* flower grows in Borneo and the **edible yam** of the talk's title also grows in this region.

Brian Ballinger

## ARE NATS NUTS?

Jim Cook – 17th December

This was a highly suitable and very amusing way to 'wind down' before Christmas. Jim presented his evidence in the form of a legal argument and produced, in support of his case, numerous slides of members engaged in a wide range of activities. Some slides had been borrowed from other members and some must have been dug out from the backs of cupboards since they seemed to be 'ancient history'. Most produced a reaction of mirth or astonishment, but the least said about them the better! Jim's verdict was that Nats were indeed Nuts, but no more nutty than golfers or fishermen!

The usual Christmas festivities followed with a wide range of home baking, from the usual suspects. Everyone enjoyed the opportunity for a good blether and copious amounts of tea and coffee were drunk to wash down all the goodies.

Anne Reid

## MEMBERS' ARTICLES

### INTERESTING RECORDS 2002

Any member is most welcome to submit individual records of natural history interest for this compilation. Unusual or interesting sightings are welcome at any time of year – write it down and send it in! Telephone or email messages are equally acceptable (01382 532486 or [acmc.reid@virgin.net](mailto:acmc.reid@virgin.net)). Please include the date, time of day (if possible) and locality for any record.

Other members like to know what is about. Keep your eyes open, you never know what you will see! We all have different ideas of what is 'notable' – some record rarities, while others delight in unusual antics of common species or 'favourites' such as long tailed tits – all are welcome.

Each entry is followed by the initials of the recorder.

Brian Allan	BA	Bob McCurley	BM
Brian Ballinger	BB	Elaine McLaren	EM
Joy Cammack	JoyC	Daphne Macfarlane Smith	DMS
Jim Cook	JC	Anne Reid	AR
K Douglas	KD	Christine Reid	ChR
Monica Edwards	ME	Colin Reid	CR
Peter Ellis	PE	Mary Reid	MR
Andrew Ferguson	AF	Chris Stamp	CS
Gordon Maxwell	GM		

**1st January** An **ivory gull** at Montrose Basin. The second record (ever) for Angus. BM

**4th January** Twelve **fieldfares** on a neighbour's **cotoneaster** tree, Broughty Ferry. DMS

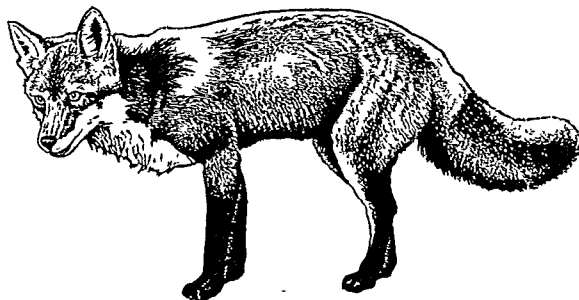
**8th January** **Red fox** at Rosemill Road, Bridgefoot. JoyC

**16th January** It was 6pm on a rather chill and very damp evening. At Dundee College, Kingsway, a male **blackbird** was singing lustily from the top of one of the greenhouses. Was it responding to the mild weather or had its testosterone levels just got the better of it? JC

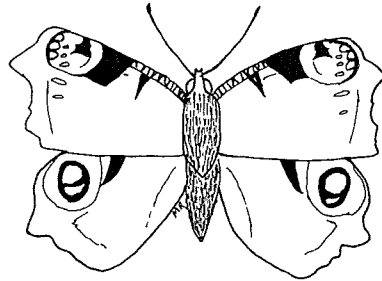
**17th January** Two **red squirrels** and one **grey** together in the garden, backing on to Templeton Woods. JoyC

**18th January** First **snowdrop** of the year out in flower this morning – and on the colder north side of my Broughty Ferry house, too, and in exactly the same place as the early one last year. Must be an early-flowering variety. JC

- 19th January** Seven **brent geese**, of the pale bellied race, spotted grazing on the playing field of Monifieth High School beside flocks of **oystercatchers**, mixed **gulls** and **starlings**. Apparently this small group has been seen around Broughty Ferry Esplanade and Balmossie in the last few weeks. AF
- 27th January** On the field opposite Reekie Linn, three **foxes** were seen running up towards conifers at the top of the field. Snow on the ground. GM
- 1st February** The electricity wires beside Craigmill Den laden with **goldfinches** and **linnets**. Too many to count, but 1000 a rough estimate! DMS
- 4th February** A red head **smew** and a **kingfisher** seen at Forfar Loch. BM
- 9th February** Around ten **crossbills** at Dunsinane Hill. A **brambling** with **chaffinches** at Auchtertyre in the Sidlaws. Big flocks of **finches** and **sparrows** gather in this area in winter, and **fieldfares** and **redwings** are also around. CS
- 11th February** Two **blackcaps** in the garden, Broughty Ferry. DMS
- 21st February** Woke early to hear the dawn chorus in full flow. Seems a little early in the season, but very welcome nevertheless. To me, in pre-dawn darkness, it's one of the definitive signs of spring and the bright, warm days to come. A **blackbird** was singing lustily close by, **dunnocks** were contributing, a **robin**, I think, and in the distance what sounded like a **thrush**. I rolled back into a satisfied sleep but they had almost finished when I woke as the sun came up. JC
- 25th February** In previous years the **frogs** have usually arrived in my garden pond in early March. This year the first three arrived today. Is this an effect of global warming? BB
- 1st March** **Skylarks** singing at Craigowl. It must be spring! ME
- 5th March** A **kestrel** seen from the bus, late afternoon, over gardens near Hare Craig, Broughty Ferry. MR
- 10th March** Snow on the ground. Recorded first **pied wagtail** in our Broughty Ferry garden in 18 years. DMS
- 10th March** One **snow bunting** seen on dunes and strand line at Broughty Ferry Esplanade. Also small flock of **linnets** and two **ringed plovers** on the football pitch. AF
- 11th March** At Loch Kennard, near Aberfeldy, at a height of 1300ft above sea level, found four partially frozen clumps of **frog spawn**. GM
- 12th March** Two **honey bees** on **crocus** in garden, Invergowrie. ME
- 12th March** From the bus, at 8.10am, a **fox** seen in the garden of the retirement home at the foot of Claypotts Road, opposite the pub. BA
- 14th March** A **sparrowhawk** seen from my office window in Dundee city centre. CS
- 17th March** A pair of **long tailed tits** visiting the garden in Invergowrie. Also a **great spotted woodpecker** seen from the road to SCRI. ME
- 17th March** A pair of **golden eagles** on cliffs near Bachnagairn. Watched for approx 20 minutes before they took off in the direction of Jock's Road. Also saw about 70 **red deer** and many clumps of **frog spawn**. GM
- 19th March** A pair of **siskins** in the garden. ME
- 21st March** A **red kite** spotted at Bridge of Earn (by Sid Clark), with a **buzzard** nearby for comparison. BA
- 23rd March** I awoke (briefly) at 4am to hear a **thrush** singing very lustily somewhere nearby. There had been some sightings of thrushes in the garden (Monifieth) in the previous two weeks, but they are rather shy and retiring and can be difficult to spot. AR
- 23rd March** Three **sand martins** at Monikie over the Island Pond. My first of the year. BM
- 24th March** I came home (Broughty Ferry) late to see a dark shape sitting on the back lawn. I switched on the back light to see the first **hedgehog** of the year. Surely rather early and this one was a fairly small individual, perhaps the one I saw late last autumn? If so, it was good to see that it had survived the winter, although perhaps its small size and hunger had forced it to move earlier than usual. JC



- 26th March** A full-grown **blackbird** chick was harassing one parent, begging for food  
Unusually early for the first brood to be out and about already, yet another sign of the early spring JC
- 28th March** Arrived at Barry Mill to see a **peacock butterfly** beside the buildings Also saw two **small tortoiseshells** further up the mill lade A lovely sunny day, which tempted them all out of hibernation AR
- 28th March** The first **bumblebee** of the season – a **buff-tailed** (*Bombus terrestris*) – flitting about the blossom on *Prunus subhirtella autumnalis* in garden, Broughty Ferry DMS
- 28th March** One **small tortoiseshell** and one **peacock butterfly** near the pathside by area of felled forestry in Tullybaccart/Hill of Keillor area GM
- 29th March** First **small tortoiseshell** in my garden, Monifieth AR
- 30th March** An **osprey** seen over the Auchterhouse area, flying west GM
- 31st March** Watched **ospreys** mating at Loch of the Lowes Also a flock of about 40 **crossbills** in **pin**es behind the osprey nest GM
- 4th/5th April** Three **avocets** in Invergowrie Bay, and seen from our garden Sadly they were gone by the next day ME
- 7th April** A cross-country trip to Aberdeen, and back, yielded some interesting sightings A **red squirrel** ran across the road at the wood just north of Newbigging, near Monikie At the top of the Cairn o' Mount a short walk added lots of **red grouse**, a **short-eared owl** and two **mountain hares**, still in winter white MR and CR
- 7th April** On the Dowally and Loch Ordie walk, saw **orange underwing moths** among **birch**, two **common lizards** and a **green tiger beetle** at damp area near water pipe, and, early for this altitude, a **green hairstreak butterfly** near Loch Ordie Also watched an **osprey** above the loch for about ten minutes GM
- 7th April** Surprised to come across an obvious **osprey** nest, while on a mountain bike trip in Perthshire Ospreys seemed happy to fly quite close to us Watched one of them trying to snap twigs off a dead larch tree for its nest Ospreys seemed to be following us around all day – must be a couple of pairs in the area CS
- 8th April** A small flock of **crossbills** seen near the car park at Kinshaldy They were in the same **willow** tree where the Nats saw **redpolls** at the New Year Barbecue in 2000, near the toilets! AR
- 9th April** Loading the mountain bikes onto my car after an evening excursion to Blackcraig Forest (Bridge of Cally), when a **pine marten** ran across the track Interestingly, a 'big cat' had supposedly been seen there From the description given it sounds like someone had seen a pine marten and overestimated the size CS
- 11th April** A **house mouse** was seen feeding on peanuts in a bird feeder, two feet from a window KD
- 13th April** Lots of breeding birds in Little Glenshee including **ring ouzel**, **snipe**, **lapwing** and **grey wagtail** Dead **rabbits** everywhere, and a recently dead **buzzard** CS
- 14th April** On a mild and slightly damp evening saw a large brown **moth** flitting about part of the garden in Broughty Ferry I didn't have a net and couldn't catch the moth to see what it was but it seemed rather early to be flying freely JC (There are early flying species, but not often seen, or caught, as dependent on warm days Ed )
- 24th April** On a cool day with sunny spells at Craig a'Barns, Dunkeld, saw three **lizards**, two adult and one young, on a south facing slope Also three **peacock**, two **small tortoiseshell** and a few **green-veined white butterflies** in the same area GM
- 4th May** **Peacock butterfly** seen at Falkland House DMS
- 5th May** Nine **peacock butterflies** at Pitmedden Forest together indicate another good year ahead for this expanding species Also **green hairstreaks** CS
- 6th May** Three **peacock butterflies** at Balkello Community Woodland, the first I have seen there Also three **cuckoos** heard and one seen and many **emperor moths** in flight Sunny with a cool east wind GM
- 9th May** A **wryneck** was seen and then ringed in the garden at Barry Mill, much to the envy of other members of the ringing group! PE



**12th May** At Stanley Linn saw four **peacock butterflies**, 12 **orange tips** (all males) and four **bee flies** (*Bombylius major*) **Small tortoiseshell** and **green-veined white butterflies** also seen GM

**12th May** **Green hairstreaks** in Glen Cally CS

**16th May** First **swifts** of the season at Arbroath and Monifieth, screaming overhead Possibly passing through since none seen for several days after (to 20th) Also my first **swallow** over the garden They are not so plentiful in Monifieth this year AR

**17th May** A **wood warbler** heard singing in Backmuir Wood This species is rare in Angus BM

**19th May** A male **orange tip butterfly** seen by Glassarts Burn, Pitmedden Forest KD

**20th May** Male **blackbird** feeding two fledglings just outside main entrance to the Wellgate Centre at 8 30am It's amazing where birds can survive and breed, even in the city centre MR

**22nd May** A large **hedgehog** was patrolling the grass at the back of the house, finding **slugs** I hope, in the late evening JC

**22nd May** Female **great spotted woodpecker** observed feeding on peanuts in a bird feeder KD

**26th May** **Green hairstreaks** at Tentsmuir near the icehouse Start behind the icehouse (NO500269) and walk north through the highland cows' field to the gate at the other end (NO500274), staying about ten yards from the forest edge Also **small copper**, **orange tip** and **green-veined white butterflies** and **adder's tongue fern** (near the gate). CS

**31st May** **Meadow saxifrage** (*Saxifraga granulata*) was found, covering several square yards, in rough pasture half way up Abernethy Glen KD

**11th June** A **garden warbler's** nest with young seen at Barry Mill PE

**12th June** An early **painted lady butterfly** on **Bowles' mauve wallflower** in the garden DMS

**16th June** Dozens of **small coppers** on a track in Tentsmuir (NO495234) Also a large **fox** hunting in the verge It didn't notice me cycling up behind it, so I stopped and watched from about 20ft away CS

**16th June** An **osprey** with a **fish** in its talons seen flying over the Abernethy road in late afternoon BA

**16th June** Two **little egrets** at Montrose Basin Still there in October BM

**18th June** Saw a **red squirrel** in a garden in NE Auchterhouse. DMS

**25th June** An unwelcome visitor to our peanut feeder was spotted while we were eating our evening meal The **grey squirrel** refused to run away, even when chased – it just retreated up the large tree. Since this is only the second time one has been seen here, I decided to encourage it to move on by removing the peanut feeders, at least overnight Immediately after I took them away, the squirrel came back down the tree to where it had found food before It was very cross when it found the nuts were no longer there, and flicked its tail and searched around, unsuccessfully! It has not been seen since AR (A second one visited on 16th August, briefly)

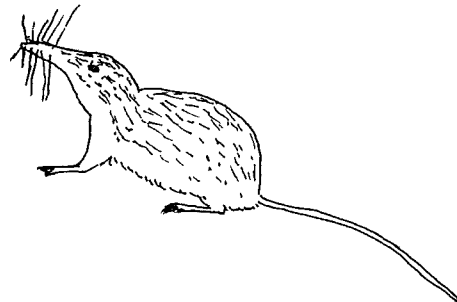
**25th June** On an evening mountain bike trip to Glenalmond with some friends we saw two **black grouse** on the way up the glen Caught in heavy rain on the way back at about 10pm, we found ourselves sharing the glen with herds of **red deer**, running around us in all directions and splashing through the river A **fawn** managed to get itself stuck between us and the gate we wanted to be through It had a beautiful reddish coat with spots and ran off after its parent with a bit of coaxing CS

**29th June** Over 50 **common spotted orchids** and one **northern marsh orchid** on ground in the Industrial Estate behind the B&Q warehouse, near Clepington Road The site's occupier said that there was no threat to the orchids as the ground was not used BA

**3rd July** Two **short-eared owls** at Glen Lethnot Now scarce in Angus BM

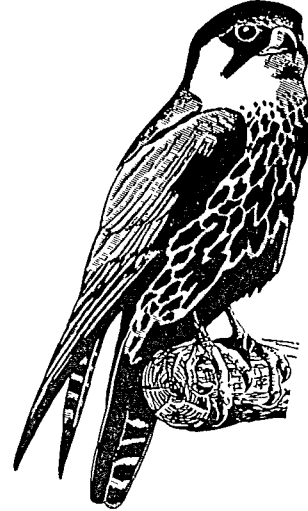


- 4th July** A very unexpected visitor to the bird table in our Invergowrie garden, a **turtle dove**, spent about half an hour feeding before moving on. Later on we were visited by a small flock of **long tailed tits**. ME
- 4th July** At Loch of Kinnordy an immature **great spotted woodpecker** flew into the Swamp Hide while I was in there alone, observing **ducks**. After bumping around against a few closed windows I managed to steer it out of the side window, where it had entered, apparently none the worse for its encounter! GM
- 5th July** A **common blue butterfly** was seen on a forest track at the edge of Pitmedden Forest, Fife. KD
- 10th July** A **heron** seen (from Clepington Road) standing on the island at the Swannie Ponds (Stobsmuir Ponds) at 8.15am. BA. (I was pleased to get this record, as I previously only had unreliable reports of herons here. Ed.)
- 14th July** A **water rail** nest seen on Barry Buddon. PE
- 16th July** A single **kingfisher** visited the Barry Mill dam. PE
- 26th July** On an evening mountain bike trip to Glen Fearnach near Kindrogan Field Centre. At about 9pm we reached Glen Loch, about ten miles up Glen Fearnach, where we watched, from a distance, about 500 **red deer** of all shapes and sizes making all kinds of noises. CS
- 27th July** **Peacock, small tortoiseshell** and **red admiral butterflies** as well as several undifferentiated '**whites**' in the garden at Invergowrie. ME
- 1st August** I paused from clearing up hedge clippings to see a small bird fly onto a nearby tree trunk. Assuming it to be a **tit**, I nevertheless froze and watched, only to be delighted by a **treecreeper** working its way upwards. The last one seen in the garden, in Monifieth, was about five years ago. AR
- 4th August** Four fresh **dark green fritillaries** at Tentsmuir. Plenty of other species around too, including **common blue, grayling** and **cinnabar moth** (hurray for ragwort!) CS
- 6th August** Five **dotterel** and two **ptarmigan** seen on Glas Maol. BM
- 8th August** Juvenile **spotted flycatcher** at Barry Mill. PE
- 20th August** **Hedgehog** seen running across the back grass. Very few seen or heard this year for some reason. JC
- 25th August** While gardening, I paused to identify some avian squeaks and found that four or five **long-tailed tits** were foraging in the large **rowan** nearby. They seemed undisturbed by my presence, getting very close to me, and eventually moved on through the trees to shrubs and another rowan and the **buddleia** elsewhere in the garden. An hour or so later they reappeared above me in the rowan, to the delight of Colin and Mary who were now helping. Instead of their usually fleeting (and infrequent) presence the tits seemed to be giving the garden a thorough going over. Two **willow warblers** also seemed to be keeping them company, especially favouring the buddleia. AR
- 25th August** **Crossbills** and **ravens** at Moredun Top, Moncrieffe Hill. CS
- 27th August** A **painted lady** was seen on **Siberian scabious**, where it remained all day, at Colzie, Glassarts Glen, Pitmedden. KD
- 31st August** A happy discovery at the 'hut' at Lunan Bay. Four plants of **maiden pink** (*Dianthus deltoides*) have appeared on the uncut dune in front of the hut. Everyone else creates a 'lawn' by mowing but this untouched patch also has *Thalictrum minus*, *Saxifraga granulata*, *Geranium molle* and the tiny *Vicia lathyroides*. The usual, annual, strimming has been deferred until the pink has set seed. BA
- 2nd September** Maximum number of **butterflies** in the garden, Broughty Ferry, this year – six **red admirals**, four **peacocks**, a **small tortoiseshell** and a **small white**. DMS
- 3rd September** An **elephant hawk moth caterpillar** making its way across the grass to the railway embankment, Invergowrie, presumably to pupate. ME
- 4th September** A dead **shrew** on the grass in the garden. Possibly dropped by a predator. ME. (Shrews are said to be rejected because of their unpleasant taste. Ed.)





- 7th September** **Elephant hawk moth** caterpillar crossing the road at Knapp in the Sidlaws CS
- 8th September** Early evening, Broughty Ferry A **hedgehog** snuffling around for food in the dense bushes at the side of the house JC
- 10th September** An **icterine warbler** and a **barred warbler** at Auchmithie BM
- 13th September** A **red admiral** and a **peacock butterfly** seen near the Ben Lawers visitor centre DMS
- 14th September** A **peregrine** circling over the trees at Crombie Reservoir, briefly mobbed by two **swallows** CS
- 16th September** The first skein of **geese** of the autumn, over 70 birds, heading SW over Monifieth CR
- 17th September** On a sunny weekday morning I came across a charm of over 20 **goldfinches** on the approach to the seven arches path in Monifieth While on the actual viaduct, two **kestrels** flew under the arch below me, showing the lovely orange-brown of their backs very clearly Seeing them from above gives one a whole new perspective on them AR
- 20th September** An **otter** seen out on the Eden estuary where it caught a large **flatfish** It spent the next 15 minutes consuming it on a convenient mud bank beside a pile of rocks. GM
- 21st September** An **osprey** seen from our living room in west Dundee Circling to gain height near the landfill site before heading south over the Tay We are used to seeing **buzzards** over the garden, but this is a first! CS
- 22nd September** A pair of **common cranes** at Montrose Basin ME
- 22nd September** At 4pm near the mouth of the Dighty at Balmossie, an **otter** was observed going in and out of the gaps between the boulders of the rock armour sea defences, despite some children playing on the beach nearby It then swam away up the Dighty out of sight EM
- 26th September** On a walk at Crombie Country park I found a small flock of **bullfinches** near the western boundary While most flew off, two juveniles remained in a **rowan** tree and continued their meal They carefully removed the outer covering of each fruit and just consumed the seed inside Fascinating to watch such normally shy birds at reasonably close quarters – usually all you see is the white rump! AR
- 1st October** **Painted lady** and **peacock butterflies** in the garden, Invergowrie, all day A party of **long-tailed tits** also passed through ME
- 1st October** A **peacock butterfly** in the garden, Monifieth The recent dry and sunny weather has been good for butterflies this year BA
- 3rd October** I kept a **buddleia** in our garden, West Dundee, back from flowering this year – letting it flower in mid September when the migrant butterflies peak but most buddleias have finished Rewarded with over twenty **red admirals** and six **painted ladies** all together The **peacocks** seem to have gone into hibernation already though – they were most numerous in late August CS
- 4th October** A **goldcrest** feeding in the **crab apple tree** The first seen in our Broughty Ferry garden this year DMS
- 6th October** On a quiet side-street near home, Monifieth, I came across a rather small **hedgehog** wandering fairly purposefully down the middle of the road I waited nearby to ensure its wanderings took it to the safety of a nearby garden AR
- 9th October** The first **brambling** of the autumn seen at Barry Mill PE
- 10th October** While searching for a piece of wood at the back of the garage, I found a hibernating **small tortoiseshell butterfly** on the underside of a large plank leaning on the wall I carefully replaced the plank and used another one! AR
- 12th October** A **red-breasted flycatcher** and a **firecrest** at West Seaton Farm, Arbroath BM
- 13th October** After three days of easterly gales I spotted a bird standing on the shore at Douglas Terrace, Broughty Ferry which turned out to be a **guillemot** Thankfully it was not in the dazed 'washed up' state that off-track birds often show, but was actively preening itself and looking alert and healthy AR



- 16th October** A selection of birds on migration seen at Carnoustie golf course included a **common sandpiper**, a **reed warbler** and three **chiffchaffs**. A **green sandpiper** flew over and a **water rail** was heard also. PE
- 13th – 18th October** A **tree sparrow** coming to feed in the garden, Invergowrie. Hopefully it will stay for the winter. **Long-tailed tits** visiting regularly at the moment. ME
- 18th October** Six **house martins** flying around the trees at the Perth end of the North Inch. ME
- 20th October** At Milnathort golf course, after the first two white **frosts** of autumn, we watched the strange sight of **green leaves** cascading off a small **ash** tree, though there was no wind or other disturbance. DMS
- 15th October** Three **roe deer** were seen grazing in a field opposite to the main gate to Monikie Country Park, at 11.30am. While in the park a **red squirrel** was spotted up a tree. Mum saw a small flock of **bullfinches** and **goldfinches** in the **willows** beside the North Pond. ChR
- 27th October** A beautiful male **goldeneye** among the other **ducks** in sheltered water, in the evening, at Stannergate. JC
- 29th October** On the Templeton Fungus Foray an uncommon mushroom, *Phaeolepiota aurea*, was found near the cemetery gates. It has previously been seen at other Templeton locations. GM
- 31st October** On a very bright sunny morning a **red admiral butterfly** appeared on the flowers at my front door. The last flying butterfly in my garden was a whole month ago, perhaps this one had had its hibernation disturbed. AR
- 2nd November** A mixed flock of 15 **blue tits**, two **great tits** and two **long-tailed tits** passed through the garden. DMS
- 5th November** Even at this time of year the **dippers** on the lower Dighty appear to be territorial. Two were first heard and then seen, in close formation, following the curves of the river, until the pursuit stopped at the bridge, which appeared to be the boundary. AR
- 7th November** A swift, mid-morning, visit to Craigmill Den gave me excellent views of common birds in the low sun. The most striking being the male **yellowhammers** – the brown on their backs is a wonderful rich colour and the yellow of the head highlights it beautifully. The added bonus was a glimpse of a single **waxwing**, possibly newly arrived, and a couple of **redwings** on the heavily berried **hawthorn** bushes. AR
- 9th November** The **water rail** heard again near Carnoustie golf course. PE
- 17th November** **Grey seal** pups on the beach at Tentsmuir NNR, attracting quite a crowd and posing for photos. CS
- 23rd November** A male **blackcap** at the bird table – only the second time I had seen one. Also, late at night, a **robin** 'ticking' its warning call in the garden. JC
- 4th December** On opening the curtains at 8am I noticed a large **spider** in the middle of its web, dealing with a very small **fly** which had obviously been attracted by the light. I don't remember seeing an active spider outdoors this late in the year before, though the autumn so far has been unseasonably mild. AR
- 17th December** A school of about six **dolphins** seen off Carlingheugh Bay, Arbroath. Also, in the stubble above the bay there was a single **snow bunting**. GM
- 19th December** Woke up early to hear a **robin** singing lustily in the garden. JC
- 20th December** A **buzzard** in the mature parkland at Ninewells hospital. It was flying low over the ground near to where I had passed a frozen dead **crow**, underneath a tree where large numbers of **crows** and **jackdaws** roost. I wouldn't be surprised if the **sparrowhawks**, **bats** and **tawny owls** which visit our garden also have their homes in this relatively undisturbed area of mature trees. I hope it survives – a lot of the land around the hospital is being built on at the moment. CS
- 29th December** Over 30 **whooper swans** at Loch of Kinnordy, which could be heard as soon as we got out of the car. There were also **long-tailed tits** using the feeders and several pairs of **gadwall** on the loch in addition to all the other commonly seen birds. A brief visit to Loch of Lintrathen gave Colin a good view of a **fox** in the woods. We



also, slightly unexpectedly, saw three **greater black-backed gulls** on the loch as it began to rain (again) AR

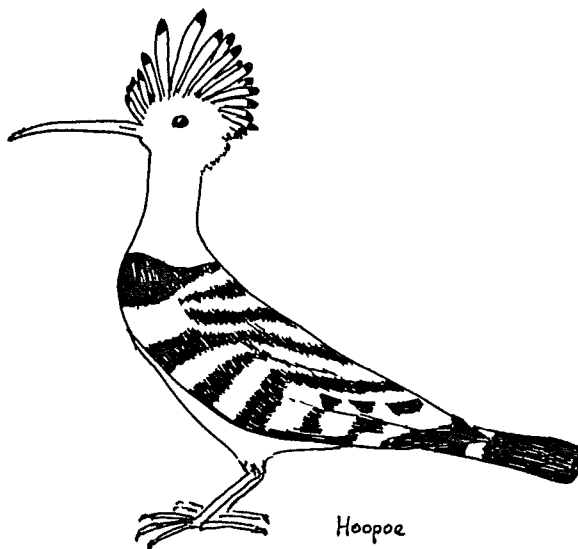
**31st December** On an early afternoon walk up the lower Dighty we repeatedly saw and heard **dippers** flying low over the water. These were widely enough separated to be individual birds holding different territories. We also disturbed the **heron** on one of the more secluded stretches of the burn. AR

## INDIA AND NEPAL

India has long been a place I have wanted to visit, so when I heard that a tour had been arranged with The Bird Observers' Club of Australia and that we could go along, Doris and I booked our places on the tour.

Flying to Delhi in mid-February, we met with the five members and Chris our leader. Next morning we had an early morning flight from Delhi to Khajuraho then a difficult eight-hour drive to our destination at Bandhavgarh National Park. The drivers required a break during this journey so we stopped at a beautiful spot by a river where we clocked up over fifty different species of birds. What a start! **Common hoopoe, white-throated kingfisher, red-wattled lapwing, long-billed vulture, rufous treepie, black redstart, sulphur-bellied warbler and tawny-bellied babblers** were among the species seen.

We finally arrived at Bandhavgarh National Park at about 11 o'clock at night. But after a good night's sleep in very comfortable accommodation we were all ready to go. The Reserve was established to protect the **tiger**, 48 of which are thought to live there. However, during our stay they kept well out of sight and none of our party saw any, although some others visiting the park were lucky to get a glimpse of one. But the Reserve was full of stunning birds and from the jeeps we were able to get wonderful views of **barred buttonquail, painted spurfowl, red junglefowl, white-naped woodpecker, Indian grey and Malabar pied hornbills, crested treeswift, brown fish-owl** at its daytime roost, **emerald dove, yellow-footed green-pigeon, pintail snipe, white-eyed buzzard, changeable hawk-eagle, blue-winged leafbird, greater racket-tailed drongo, Tickell's thrush, Asian brown and Tickell's blue flycatchers and pale-billed flowerpecker**. The mammals in the park included **woolly horseshoe bat, Indian pipistrelle, rhesus macaque, hanuman langur, Bengal fox, wild boar, chital, sambar, northern palm squirrel and Indian hare**. A wonderful start to our holiday! In fact on one day in the park we had 122 species of bird.



We then took an overnight train to Agra and visited the Taj Mahal, which was simply stunning - even more beautiful than I had imagined. The monument is built at the side of the Yamuna River and we were able to view the birds on the water from the terrace.

Our next stop was at Bharatpur National Park, originally prepared as a hunting ground for the maharajahs it is now one of the greatest bird sanctuaries in the world. Our time was all too short but in our day and a half there we had again an impressive tally of birds. Some highlights were - **sarus cranes, glossy ibis, woolly-necked storks, black-crowned night-herons**, and two **Siberian cranes**, one of the most endangered birds in the world. Of course with the enormous bird population there are many raptors and we saw **black-shouldered and black kites, Egyptian and red-headed vultures, Eurasian marsh-harrier, shikra, besra, Eurasian sparrowhawk, Oriental honey-buzzard, lesser spotted, greater spotted, steppe and imperial eagles and peregrine falcon**. The rickshaw boys found for us two **large-tailed nighthawks** under a bush and at dusk we got great views of **golden jackal** and

at a temple close by, were able to watch a rarely seen **common palm civet** which was regularly fed by a monk

We then drove to Phalodi, in the Rajasthan Desert, close to the border with Pakistan, stopping first at Lake Kala-Kho, near Dousa where the Australians were thrilled to see many northern wetland birds such as **Eurasian wigeon, northern pintail, tufted duck** and **common pochard** along with **Eurasian curlew, Temminck's stint, little ringed** and **Kentish plover**. With them were **yellow-wattled lapwing, great thick-knees** and **greater flamingo, dunlin** and a **pied avocet**. We also saw a pair of **chestnut-bellied sandgrouse** drinking at the edge of the lake. At the Palace Lake on the outskirts of Jaipur we had **common snipe, black-tailed godwit, marsh, green, wood** and **common sandpiper, common redshank, greenshank, little stint, and ruff**, along with **whiskered terns**. Our second stop at Sambhar Lake, a Ramsar site, was disappointing, as the water level was low. However we did see **desert** and **variable wheatears, red-necked falcon, bay-backed shrikes** and **lesser flamingos** and a very rare bird for India, **ringed plover**.

Our visit to Phalodi was to see the huge flocks of **demoiselle cranes** in the Thar Desert. The villagers put food out for these beautiful birds daily during the winter and we witnessed thousands of birds covering the sand dunes waiting their turn to go to feed on the grain provided.

We then drove to Jodhpur where we took the overnight train to Delhi, from where we took the short flight to Kathmandu, Nepal. Afternoon was spent sightseeing in the old parts of the city, but we did see **booted eagle** flying with **black kites** and large numbers of **Eurasian tree sparrows** that inhabit the city's buildings.

Next morning we took a flight to Biratnagar on the Terai, the fertile plain below the Himalayas, to stay at Koshi Tapu Wildlife Reserve. This reserve was established to protect the wild **water buffaloes** in Nepal. The accommodation was under canvas, but we were extremely well looked after and everything was provided. The birds were again fabulous. Some of the highlights were **green-billed malkoha, sirkeer malkoha, chestnut-headed bee-eater, ruddy-breasted crake, grey-headed lapwing, slender-billed gull, common hawk-cuckoo, swamp francolin, crested goshawk, collard falconet, spot-billed pelican, maroon oriole, black-headed cuckoo-shrike, black-naped monarch, white-rumped sharma, chestnut-tailed starling, hill myna, spotted bush-warbler, striated grassbird, smoky warbler, striated babbler, sand lark, rosy pipit, black-headed and black-faced buntings**.

We also had a family of **jungle cats** living on the camp and had a superb view of Mum and two kittens. We also encountered the **black giant squirrel** and one of the most endangered mammals in the world, the **Ganges dolphin**. Our second day on the Reserve produced a grand total of 131 species of birds!

Returning to Kathmandu, we had a day walking in the **montane rainforest** on Pulchowki Danda, the highest peak on the mountains circling the city. The outstanding sightings included **Himalayan griffon, ultramarine flycatcher, western-crowned warbler, white-throated** and **grey-sided laughing-thrushes, fire-tailed sunbirds** and a pair of **spotted forktails** by a stream.

Next day was spent in the Nagarjung Forest, on the other side of the valley, where we saw for the only time on the tour, **scaly thrush, golden bush-robin, velvet-fronted nuthatch, grey-sided bush-warbler, rusty-cheeked** and **white-browed scimitar-babblers, Nepal fulvetta** and **white-bellied yuhina**. We also had great views of **Kalij pheasant, black eagle, red-billed blue magpie** and **grey treepie**.

We then took a day to drive to Pokhara, making several stops along the way. Our guide, Tika, succeeded in locating a pair of **ibisbills** along the river and we also saw the beautiful **white-capped water redstart** in a small stream.

We spent the night in Pokhara before driving up to the foothills of the Annapurnas to begin the trek. Unfortunately this was when I became ill and the Doctor advised me to return to Kathmandu and stay out of the sun, which I did. Doris however, along with the Australians went on to enjoy a nine-day trek in the **rhododendron forest**.

It was a wonderful holiday despite my illness. After a few days rest in Kathmandu I was able to do a little sightseeing and although I missed seeing the birds on the trek I did have an interesting time. I saw a total of 173 new birds during the tour and the group total seen was 450 species!

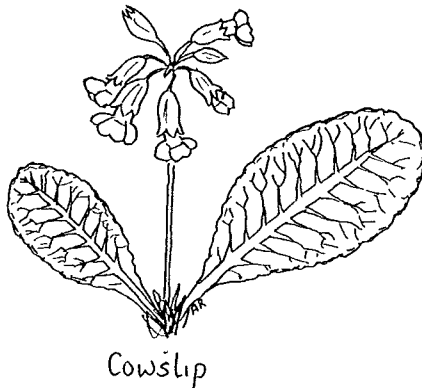
Dorothy Fyffe

## SPRING IS SPRUNG

2nd May

I keep meaning to go for walks in the morning after the girls have gone to school, but either lethargy sets in or there is something more urgent to attend to. I looked out of the window at 8am and thought what a lovely sunny morning it was and promised myself that, perhaps today, I might get myself out. Then the summary forecast on the radio suggested that there would be rain later in the day and suggested not putting off outdoor activities until the afternoon. For once, this was all I needed. As soon as Christine was out of the door I put on my wellies, gave her a five minute start (to avoid her being too embarrassed by her mad mother), and set off around the paths on the lower Dighty.

Everything out there knew it was spring and was showing it. The **goldfinches** flew over with their metallic twitter but then settled and gave a very lusty performance of their full song. There were **blackbirds** rustling the leaves under every **bramble** bush, and scolding loudly if their neighbours came too close, and a **thrush** was in full voice nearby. At intervals I heard both **chiffchaffs** and **willow warblers** and the **dipper** was standing on one of his accustomed stones in the middle of the Dighty. **Chaffinch**, **wren** and **dunnock** songs were so frequent that I was almost ignoring them, and **wood pigeons** made their usual loud clattering as they flew ahead of my approach.



Though the leaves on many of the large trees were only starting to emerge, the **elms** were fully clothed in the bright green of their unripe fruits, and the young trees of the millennium forest were mostly showing the start of healthy new shoots. I noticed **wild garlic** in several places and smelt it in others – I don't remember it in other years but this may be because I don't often go this way in May. Further evidence of this are the carpets of **cowslips** in full bloom in several places, a result of one of the seed mixtures used a few years ago but very impressive and delightful nonetheless. (We saw the seed-heads of a few cowslips on a Nats walk here in June 2000.)

Despite the relatively early hour, between 9am and 10am, there were a number of **small tortoiseshell butterflies** on the wing and sunning themselves at various points on the walk. I spotted a **small white** flitting about in a sheltered spot near the Dighty and, to crown it all, as I was nearing the end of the walk, a **peacock butterfly** appeared briefly and flirted with a **small tortoiseshell** before flying off. Nearby the **sand martins** were swooping to within inches of the grass over the playing field. The light was just right to see their chinstraps and to see clearly that their backs are in fact brown, almost impossible to confirm when they are flying higher.

I was so enthusiastic when I got home that I sat down straight away and wrote this article. I don't have to see anything rare or special on my walks, I just enjoy everything that I see and give thanks that it is on my doorstep. I must get out more often on weekdays when it is quiet. Get out there and do the same!

Anne Reid

## A SURPRISE IN THE QUARRY

6th June

We'd just crossed over the stile into Carsegowniemuir quarry, at about half-past six in the evening, when we began to hear the alarm call of a **moorhen**. It seemed to be coming from the first pond, about 50m away. Was it distressed because we'd arrived on the scene? Unlikely, since we weren't making much of a noise, only talking quietly, and the birds had never protested at our arrival before.

Ever curious, we moved quietly over to try and see what all the fuss was about. Peering into the dense vegetation on the other side of the pond we were rewarded almost

immediately by a loud flapping and crashing from down by the water's edge only a few metres away. We could make out a large grey bird which took three attempts to reach the top of the steep slope that led down to the pond. But what was it? An **owl** perhaps? Just then it gave another loud flap or two and landed on a fence post in clear view. It was a **buzzard** and almost at the same moment a movement caught our eyes below. There on the water was a **moorhen** chick. The parent meanwhile was calling vigorously and the chick swam towards her. The buzzard shook itself and seemed to glare over at us, annoyed because we'd disturbed its chances of a light snack. The **raptor** had obviously been after the chick and the parent was trying to warn it and distract the predator. But all this took place in dense vegetation, right at the water's edge. Has anyone else ever come across a **buzzard** hunting on foot in such circumstances?

Jim Cook

## BUS BOTANY

In late June Jean Pollard and I visited Thurso, this being the furthest we could go from Dundee on a cheap rail ticket! Our journey was really just to see half-remembered places and enjoy the scenery but, being Nats, the odd plant or bird came within our ken.

From the bus going to John O'Groats Jean spied a plant in the corner of a very wet field. There were lots of **iris** leaves but this flower was white. However, it was hidden from our view by a hedge, and was passed quickly. On the return journey we sat upstairs, noses pressed to the window, and got a good sight of our plant. No shy retiring **daisy** but big, blousy, jolly-looking **Magellan ragwort** – *Senecio smithii*. It put a smile on our faces!



Marjory Tennant

**Note** This plant is also known as **Falkland Islands daisy** and is commonly naturalised on Orkney and Shetland. It is also found in the area north of Aberdeen and in one site (that I know of) in Angus, near Montrose. It originates from temperate South America. Ed

## BARRY BUDDON JOINT OUTING

29th June

As we met at the car park at the Monifieth end of the range the weather was dull but dry. About 40 keen members of the local natural history groups assembled.

We then split into the usual bird and plant groups with Bob leading the birders, who were aiming to beat the previous June record of 58 species for the day, and Jim leading the botanists. First everyone, led by Pat Gaff who had originally found it, went down to look at **yellow vetch** (*Vicia lutea*) which was on the edge of the playing field just outside the range. The botanists then returned to their cars and drove onto the range while the birders walked on.

Firstly we looked at the beach and the small pond formed where the burn flows onto the beach. On the beach we saw lots of **gulls**, a **ringed plover**, **bar tailed godwits** and by the pond large numbers of **pied wagtails**, both adults and juveniles. Two of the people who were walking slightly ahead of the rest of the group saw a **roe deer** cross the burn. We then walked through the scrubby area to complete a circuit and return to our cars. In the scrubby areas quite a few **warblers** and other small birds were heard and seen. These included **whitethroats**, **skylark** and **sedge warbler** which were all heard and **chaffinch**, **willow warbler** and **linnet** which were all seen. We then returned to our cars having made a good start to the list.

Our next destination was the area near the firing range where there are a large number of **sea buckthorn** bushes. While we were driving there I had a magnificent view of a male **stonechat** sitting on the fence which divides the range from the golf course, which only one other person saw. Just after we had left our cars it began to rain which, even though it had been forecast, was a bit disappointing. The bird species in most abundance here was the **reed bunting** and very few other species were seen. We did however see three **small blue butterflies** on some **kidney vetch**, which is the foodplant of their caterpillars. These butterflies are fairly uncommon but have several populations locally including on the Seaton Cliffs. Also seen here were a freshly emerged **cinnabar moth** and a **7-spot ladybird**.

We then moved on and had a brief stop near the main camp. Again we only saw rather few birds but we did see a **buzzard**, a **wheatear** and some **swallows** swooping very low over the ground looking for insects. By now we were all beginning to be hungry so were pleased to hear that we would be having lunch at the next stop.

Our lunch stop was beside the Barry Lochs which meant we could add some water birds including **mute swan** and **coot** to our list. Here the bird and plant groups met up. As it was now raining quite heavily we ate our lunch in our cars. After we had had our lunch we ventured out into the rain and managed to see a **moorhen** on a nest, several **frogs**, a **toad** and three different species of **damselflies** all of which added interest to the day.

We stopped briefly to look for sea birds at the east end but unfortunately only saw two species, **gannet** and **sandwich tern**, as the visibility was poor. This was disappointing as on a good day many different species should be spotted. Almost everyone gave up on looking for seabirds quite quickly as they were getting wet and were not seeing anything much.

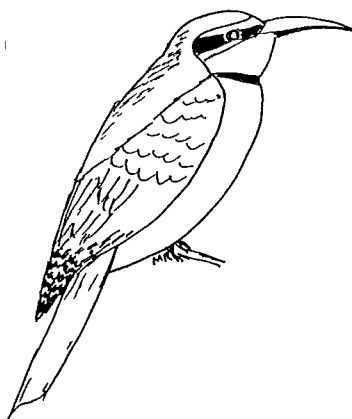
Our final stop of the day was to Happy Valley. While the rest of the group was looking at the relatively rare **coral root orchid** and **adder's tongue fern** my mum and I walked up the side of the ditch. The grass was long and very wet so before long my trousers were completely soaked. We were however rewarded for our discomfort with a brilliant view of a **roe deer**. This was especially nice as it is unusual to get a good view of such an elusive creature. After reaching the end of the ditch we walked back down the other side. Here we saw several small birds in an area of small **Scots pine** trees. These included **coal** and **great tits** including juveniles which we both saw and a **treecreeper** which only I saw. No-one else in the group had seen a treecreeper all day so I was quite pleased.

Overall it was an excellent outing despite the rain. If it had not been raining though we might have seen more butterflies and other insects. I saw a total of 44 species of bird and the group total was 65 which beat the previous June record by seven. As well as birds I also saw quite a few other interesting things which made the outing much more enjoyable.

Mary Reid

## RARE BREEDERS IN BRITAIN – SUMMER 2002

Shortly before we headed down to Oxfordshire in August, an article appeared in *The Courier* about **bee-eaters** nesting near Durham – the first time in almost fifty years. (The last record of bee-eaters breeding in the UK was in 1955 when 2 pairs raised 7 young in a sandpit in Sussex.)



Since we were stopping overnight in Durham and the viewing point was not many miles away at Bishop Middleham (just off the A1(M)), it was too good an opportunity to miss! I was eager to be off early on August 17th (Bill and Alexander were not quite so keen!) but even my spirits were dampened when we woke to find fog had developed overnight. However we still went to the farm where the owner was kindly allowing visitors to park in a field (for a £2 fee!) and we could see, at the far side, that there was a tent and a line of people beside telescopes but not using them (bad sign!). In the tent a video link had been set up showing the entrance to the bee-eaters' burrow in the limestone quarry but there was no sign of life. However the volunteer on duty was very enthusiastic about what had been achieved since a naturalist (doing a butterfly survey) had noticed the unusual birds and reported the sighting.

(It is thought the bee-eaters had arrived in County Durham following southerly winds at the start of June ) A round-the-clock watch had been set up by the RSPB and Wildlife Trust volunteers – even so they'd had trouble with some people deliberately ignoring notices and a known egg-collector had been seen amongst the visitors! All concerned with the birds' welfare were delighted when the adults started taking food in for the young chicks. This occurred more and more frequently as the days passed with the bee-eaters taking advantage of the bee-hive put in the quarry for their benefit!

This was all very interesting but what chance of seeing the birds? No problem, there they were, sitting together on a wire halfway across the next field! The reason for the lack of apparent enthusiasm amongst the 'scope brigade was because the bee-eaters had been sitting like that for quite a while – obviously not thrilled by the damp murky conditions and who can blame them?! In fact, the volunteer we spoke to was becoming a wee bit concerned at their lack of activity, because the chicks had received no food since the night before. It was thought they should soon be emerging from their burrow but, if they didn't get fed, they could possibly die. We were pleased to have seen the parent birds, and bought postcards of them, but we couldn't linger until the sun emerged to encourage them to fly so we continued our journey south to warmer climes!

Daphne Macfarlane Smith

Postscript According to information on the web, two of the young flew from the nest burrow on August 24th and it was hoped a third would leave soon. A fourth one had died near the nest hole, possibly due to wet weather.

## PELAGIC TRIP

Arbroath to Bell Rock

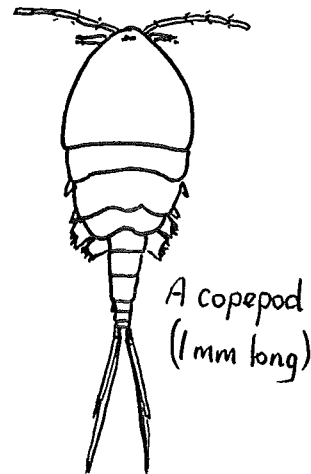
17th August

This trip was organised by Nick Mutch of the Fife SOC group with invited guests from the Dundee side of the Tay. Thus, 13 intrepid folk set sail from Arbroath harbour at 14.30hrs on the Girl Catherine. Our destination was the Bell Rock, a round trip of 24 miles, and our objective was to enjoy the three hour trip and in the process see oceanic life at close quarters. The journey out was rather slow, with a strong headwind and a six foot swell, but worth it.

There is always a great air of expectancy on pelagic trips - 'What will we see next?', 'Will it be on the port or starboard side?', 'Will we see anything?' – we always do!

With Captain Jim Cook on board with his plankton net sampler we were guaranteed some very interesting specimens. These included **sea gooseberries** (*Pleurobranchia pileus*), a small *Tomopteris* worm, large numbers of tiny unidentified **copepods** and **colonial hydroids** and a small unidentified free-swimming **isopod** (woodlouse relative). **Gutweed** (*Enteromorpha intestinalis*), **bladder wrack** (*Fucus vesiculosus*), **thongweed** (*Himanthalia elongata*) and **oarweed** (*Laminaria digitata*) were also produced from Jim's magic plankton net dips. Needless to say these were all 'lifers' for me (and for most of the others present)! (All the seaweeds are commonly found on the shore – come rockpooling with us next time! Ed.)

For the birders on board the trip provided very worthwhile, with excellent sightings of **sooty shearwater**, **Manx shearwater**, **great skua**, **little gull**, **razorbill**, **puffin**, **guillemot** and **kittiwakes**, all at very close range. Perhaps the most exciting sighting for everyone on board was a very close encounter with a five to seven metre long **minke whale** at a range of only 30 metres. This was definitely the highlight of the trip for all on board.





We arrived safely back on terra firma at Arbroath harbour, thanked our skipper for his excellent seamanship and headed home with everyone agreeing that we must do it again next year – all aboard!

Bob McCurley

(Note There is a pelagic trip planned for the Nats for summer 2003 Check your syllabus for the date Ed )

## GEOLOGY ON EIGG

Have you ever looked over to the Isle of Eigg from Moidart or Morar, and marvelled at the extraordinary shape of its little mountain, the Sgurr? Its appearance has often made us wonder about what events and forces conspire to create it So, when we noticed that a geology course for beginners was being run at the Field Study Centre on the island this summer, Lydia and I enrolled We weren't disappointed, the week was both fascinating and delightful

The course was led by Professor John Hudson of Leicester University, assisted by Dr Ann Allwright There were a dozen participants, some with previous knowledge, and a few, like ourselves, with none We lived in the Glebe Barn, an old stone building beautifully restored by an island couple, Simon and Karen Halliwell, whose initiative it was to set up the course, which has been held in August for the past three years Karen's cooking and Simon's cheerful attention to our every need contributed greatly to our enjoyment

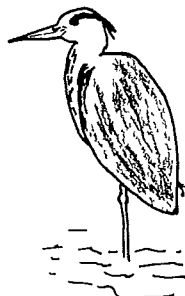
Eigg, it appears, is a good place to start learning about geology, because its formation and structure are relatively uncomplicated Out in the field, under Prof Hudson's tutelage, we could see how successive **basalt lava flows** had come to overlies the much older **sedimentary rock**, and how the landscape took its shape accordingly, under the influence of **glaciation, erosion and rise and fall of the land** We were able to examine samples under a hand lens, and discover what features made the 'singing sands' sing, when the sand of neighbouring Laig Bay does not. We split open the soft **shale** rock from the **Jurassic bed** below the tide line at Camas Mor on Muck, and saw the close-packed **oyster fossils** which make this bay famous among geologists But best of all, we found specimens of **fossil wood** under the base of the mass of the Sgurr, which gave the early geologists, Hugh Miller among them, the clue that this mountain is not a **volcanic plug**, but the remains of a **lava-filled valley**, whose sides have long since been eroded away, leaving the more durable **pitchstone** to tower above its floor

All this, and more, was revealed to us We now look upon the many Scottish landscapes with no less wonder, but much more understanding As a bonus to us 'omnivorous' naturalists, we enjoyed fine sightings of both **golden and sea eagles**, and the **minke whales** which visit the Inner Hebridean seas each summer

Morrison Dorward

## DRAMA AT GUARDBRIDGE

The Fife Council hide at Guardbridge had, on many occasions, provided good days for me - the **osprey** diving to take fish in front of the hide, the **kingfisher** at the same ploy, but on a smaller scale, the dive of the **peregrine** as it harried the many **waders** on the estuary Friday 20th September 2002 was to provide a drama to at least equal these three examples



I was sitting beside local man Tom Grieve We were watching waders, he concentrating on **herons** near the hide while I scanned further out over the estuary Tommy said, in a surprised voice, "There's a heron just gone under the water and it hasn't come up again" Now, I had never seen a submarine heron before and looked at him askance, thinking he might be having me on There was certainly no sign of a heron on the water, but all was about to be revealed A shiny blackish head broke the surface, a large **seal**

(probably a **grey**), with the remains of the heron still in its mouth. After it once more submerged for about 20 seconds it reappeared, minus one heron. No remains floated on the surface and those present in the hide, four of us, came to the obvious conclusion. The seal had scooped the lot, beak, body, legs and feathers. George Evans, the local bird expert in the hide, said that he had heard of the occasional bird being taken, but never a heron. So who needs great white sharks when we have our own "jaws" on our doorstep?

Footnote Continuing the theme, on 10th November a **dabchick** had been seen, from the hide, having some problems with swimming and diving. A **great black-backed gull** was not slow to spot this and was observed swallowing the dabchick, whole, with just the feet protruding from its beak after the first gulp.

Gordon Maxwell

## REDCASTLE HIDE, LUNAN BAY

Grid Reference – NO 692509

The hide, which was officially opened on 15th August 2002, overlooks the **gull** and **tern** roost and Lunan Bay, and will provide all year round viewing interest of **sea ducks**, **divers** and **grebes** as well as passage migrant seabirds.

The hide is situated on the south side of Lunan Water, below the Redcastle ruins. No car access or parking is permitted down the single lane private track leading to the hide. Please park at the hump-back bridge which crosses the Lunan water at Grid Ref NO 687516. There is room for at least five cars here, but if more vehicles are involved please use the main car park at Lunan Bay, at Grid Ref NO 691516, marked 'P' on the map.

Members of the Angus and Dundee Bird Club (ADBC) were promised the setting up of the first seawatching hide on the Angus coast in 1999, and the committee is proud to have achieved this in such a relatively short time. Funding for the hide was gained from the National Lottery New Opportunities Fund, Glaxo Smith Kline and Angus Council, with a substantial amount from the ADBC's own funds. The total cost was £5764. The ADBC committee decided not to lock the hide, thereby making it available for use by anyone interested in natural history and to all other local conservation groups.

The club was formed in 1997 and current membership stands at 160. The ADBC conducts the national monthly WEBS count of Lunan Bay as well as the annual beached birds survey for the RSPB. The club recently forged a twinning charter with the Denver Field Ornithologists, Colorado, USA, which marks another positive step in the club's development.

Bob McCurley

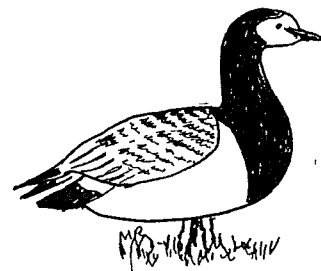
## ANGUS AUTUMN BIRDS

Tuesday 8th October 2002 heralded the start of autumn in Angus. After an extremely late summer during glorious September, the wind was a brisk south-easterly. Bob had invited us on an excursion up the coast to look for any migrants and we were not to be disappointed!

Our first stop was Craigmill Den, always a favourite haunt because of the shelter and berries it provides for the birds when they have crossed the North Sea. At first we saw many male **blackbirds** and a large number of **song thrushes** but further up the Den, where we were sheltered from the wind, we found a flock of **goldcrests** feeding off the **aphids** on the **sycamore** leaves. We also saw the resident **buzzard**, **sparrowhawk** and **kestrel** and **coal**, **great** and **blue tits**.

A short stop at another favourite landing for migrants was Ethie Mains Farm where we came across a flock of **redwing** and more **goldcrest**.

We then went on to the new hide at the mouth of Lunan Water, which has been provided by the Angus and Dundee Bird Club (see above - an evening visit is being arranged for DNS members next year). We arrived just as 25 **barnacle geese** flew in, tired from their journey from



Spitzbergen They landed on the shore and settled to have a rest Unfortunately for them a **pomarine skua** had also landed and it proceeded to harry the **kittiwakes** for food, upsetting the **geese** This was also one of the highest tides of the year and there was very little sand on which they could rest However, by the time we were leaving the **skua** had been fed, the tide had turned and hopefully the **geese** would be able to have a rest before continuing their journey south, perhaps to Caerlaverock or Islay Altogether a most enjoyable outing

Dorothy Fyffe and Doris Malcolm

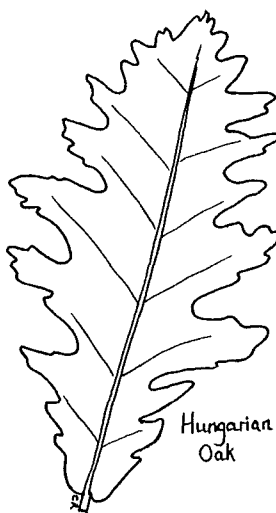
## TURKEY – EIGHTEEN OAKS AND TEN BILLION ACORNS!

There is something called the "International Oak Society" and in a fit of madness I joined it When I discovered that it was running a trip to Turkey in October 2002, yet further lunacy led me to join it Of the 17 members of the group I was the only one who did not have an arboretum, a nursery or a private forest, as I explained, my garden holds two **plum** trees and a **rhubarb** patch and my interest in **oaks** had nothing possessive about it

The trip had two aspects TEMA is the Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion, for Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats It organised the tour and we saw a number of projects involving **oaks** Then the itinerary took a wide sweep through western Turkey and we saw 15 of the 18 species either in the wild or in Karaca Arboretum

We started off on the outskirts of Istanbul, where a Turkish millionaire was transforming 125 acres of derelict ground, surrounded by motorway, into a park as a memorial to his wife Young trees were greening the dry clay and the centre had lawns and a small lake where the waterfowl ran up to the said millionaire to be fed TEMA provides the expertise and it adds 17% to Istanbul's woodlands and will be an educational facility The *Quercus* collection was at the seedling stage but will be very extensive The Royal Botanic Garden at Edinburgh will also provide support

We also saw less urban TEMA projects The coach would stop at a remote crossroads to be greeted by a couple of men in tidy business suits, and the coach would climb up even more remote side roads to some hill slope where the over-grazed scrub had been fenced, and seedlings planted on small terraces scratched out so that they could be watered Often the Forestry Department acted as agents, as well as **oaks** they planted **cedar of Lebanon** and *Pinus nigra* higher up Nihat Gokyigit, a wealthy businessman, who had seen the risks of desertification and helped to found TEMA, was with us and scrambled up the steep slopes to explain The vision and dedication of a handful of like-minded industrialists has launched an organisation attracting support both in Turkey and internationally



Hungarian  
Oak

We also saw about 15 of their 18 oak species, mostly in the wild It meant early starts and long days, driving across the Anatolian steppe, so we could take in the bare, overgrazed hillsides, the dusty plains and the erosion **Holm oak** is scarce, found only in a few sheltered spots on the Black Sea coast It hung over a cliff in the grounds of a police station A Black Sea speciality, graced with the name *Quercus hartwissiana*, could be found in a field below that day's lunchtime restaurant Bolu University is modern and built on a hill surrounded by woods of small oak trees and, here, we added three more species to the list **Hungarian oak** and **Turkey oak** grew together in pastures not far away Then it was down to the south to the Turkish lake district Krasnak forest at Egridir had magnificent woods of a large endemic oak, *Q vulcanica*, growing with **cedar of Lebanon** and the romantically named *Q trojana* with enormous **acorn cups** Finally, close to the Aegean, grew another endemic, *Q aucheri*, a small neat tree, a **holm oak** relative with large non-

bitter acorns The **Kermes** or **holly oak** was everywhere in the south, all that the **goats** were unable to chew and all that grew on miles of rocky slopes

Which takes us back to the need for TEMA And what about the ten billion **acorns**? Well, TEMA is nothing if not participative Anyone who wants can donate a few dollars via a

credit card, and ten US dollars plants 100 acorns. If a Turkish holiday or a wish to defeat the Anatolian goat inspires a desire to join in, the TEMA web site is [www.biyotematur.com](http://www.biyotematur.com) and the e-mail address is [biyotematur@biyotematur.com](mailto:biyotematur@biyotematur.com)

Pauline Topham

(This article follows up a previous trip to Turkey to look for oaks, described in Bulletin No 26, 2001, page 29 Ed.)

## EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL ENCOUNTERS

**Meteors**, those faint streaks of light that dash in eerie silence across the night sky, are tiny fragments of inter-planetary material in the process of being vapourised by air friction when falling towards the earth's surface at enormous speeds. Occasionally a particle might survive the journey through the atmosphere and arrive as an uninvited visitor on the surface of the earth. Such an object is then called by us a **meteorite**. Most meteors occur at random instants and come from random directions, but some of the particles move along well established tracks in space, along which their parent **cometary bodies** move, and from which the particles were ejected by **solar radiation** during close encounters of the parent comets with the sun. Some of these dust-laden tracks are passed through once per year by the earth as it orbits the sun and give rise to the annual so-called "**meteor shower**" displays. In these displays, the meteor tracks appear to diverge from a fixed point in space, just as the sides of a straight road or railway tracks appear to diverge from a fixed point on the horizon when we walk across them.

The **Leonid meteors** produce an annual "shower". They occur on or about November 19th and appear to radiate from a point within the constellation Leo. Astronomers predicted a much better than average Leonid display in the early hours of November 19th, and enticed a party of seven Dundee NUTS, as Jim Cook referred to some Nats in his Christmas lecture, to seize the rare opportunity to venture out in the wee small hours to witness this wonder of nature. In the event they probably wondered why they had bothered, for the night, although memorable, will be remembered more for **gastronomical** reasons than **astronomical** ones.

Late on November 18th, the party assembled at Jim's where fortification against the elements had been prepared in the form of cinnamon-laced fruit loaf, a tasty pizza into which pieces of meat had been added in order to call the concoction a "**meateor**" pizza, hot coffee and glasses of Croft Original. Following the repast and a good blether to allow the food to settle and the earth to nudge itself a little further into the meteor stream, the party, each

member carrying a folded chair, ventured forth and shuffled across the frosty expanse of Dawson Park to a point from which it was hoped to have a good view of the night sky unobstructed by street lamp glare. There they made themselves as comfortable as possible while their bottoms slowly began to freeze and legs stiffen, sitting with heads turned back for all the world like a group of patients sitting in a blacked-out dentist's surgery. Unfortunately, there was a **full moon**



and a layer of thin high **cloud** through which only the planet **Jupiter** and some of the brighter stars managed to shine. For a while, nothing stirred: no **geese** squawked through the air, no **bats** flitted past the park changing-room building, and no **cats** wailed from its roof. It was much too cold for living creatures, except of course for those NUTS (see page 27! Ed.) and a passing late-night dog walker who must have thought he was about to witness some acts of black magic as he surveyed the huddle of skyward staring dark shapes pretending not to have noticed his presence. Even his **dog**, a fierce looking tyke, looked rather bemused, and was fortunately too afraid to give vent to his feelings.

However, despite the bright moon and high cloud, a shout eventually went up: "There's one! Where? Over there!" And heads turned to stare into the direction of the wrong 'there'. Even had it been the right 'there', they would of course have been too late to see anything, for meteors take little notice of stiff necks. But soon everyone got a sighting, and one or two were good enough to leave trails that persisted for about a quarter of a second or so. I suppose about 40 different meteors were seen in an hour, that is, one every few minutes per person. Not all that good for such a well publicised "shower" which must have fallen many orders short of that put on two weeks earlier on Guy Fawkes night. So, at 3am, when the party realised that body temperatures were beginning to fall and that exposure was beginning to manifest itself, the stalwart seven rose, picked up their chairs, and, with snapping knee joints, began the slow shuffle back to their starting point. Jim's kitchen, where warm soup soon had its restoring effect on morale.

So, was it worth it? Well, I suppose that as an astronomical experience, it had been a failure. However, it certainly was worthwhile. The company was excellent, and so was the food, and we were able to retire to warm beds filled with the satisfaction of having done something never done before. We had sat on cold bums in a draughty Dawson Park for an hour in the middle of a frosty winter night. Such a feat has surely never been carried out before and, what is more, is likely never to be attempted in the future!

Bede Pounder

## SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION IN THE DUNDEE AREA

In 1992 the European Community adopted the Habitats Directive, an important piece of supranational wildlife legislation intended to protect biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.

The Directive specifies a range of measures, including conservation of features in the landscape that are important for wildlife, protection measures for certain species, the surveillance of natural habitats and species, and the prevention of damaging introductions of non-native species. The most stringent obligations relate to the selection, designation and protection of a network of sites – **Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)**. These are a European network of sites that will make a significant contribution to conserving habitat types and species considered to be most in need of conservation at a European level.

SAC designation requires Member States to establish conservation measures which support the ecological requirements of the habitats and species for which the site is designated, and to take appropriate steps to avoid deterioration of the natural habitats and habitats of species, as well as significant disturbance of species. Protection, especially for habitats, is thus more stringent than that provided by national legislation alone.

By 1999, the UK had proposed a list of 340 candidate SACs, but this was judged by the European Commission to provide insufficient representation of a relatively large number of features. In response, the UK started a thorough review of the list of sites, including the identification of new sites. Over the past three years, many new sites have been proposed, and many existing SACs have been extended – the national list now stands at over 570, with more sites in the pipeline.

In the Dundee area, **Barry Links** was one of the first SACs to be submitted in 1995, for the importance of its suite of dune habitats. **Caenlochan** soon followed, representing a wide range of upland habitats. Recent additions include the **Firth of Tay & Eden Estuary** (including the Tay estuary and Tentsmuir NNR) representing estuarine interests and common

seals, the **River Tay** itself (the UK's longest SAC) for salmon, lampreys and otter, and the **River South Esk** for salmon and freshwater pearl mussel. A list of all SACs in Tayside and Fife is given in the following table, many of them will be familiar to DNS members from summer excursions. Full details of all the sites and their interests are available on the Joint Nature Conservation Committee's website at [www.jncc.gov.uk/SACselection](http://www.jncc.gov.uk/SACselection)

Colin McLeod

SAC name	Local authority	Interest types that are primary reason for selection
Barry Links	Angus	Sand dune habitats
Beinn a'Ghlo	Perth and Kinross	Upland habitats
Ben Heasgarnich	Perth and Kinross, Stirling	Upland habitats
Ben Lawers	Perth and Kinross	Upland habitats
Black Wood of Rannoch	Perth and Kinross	Caledonian forest
Caenlochan	Aberdeenshire, Angus, Perth and Kinross	Upland habitats
Craighall Gorge	Perth and Kinross	Woodland
Crieff Woods	Perth and Kinross	Oak woodland
Drumochter Hills	Highland, Perth and Kinross	Upland habitats
Dun Moss and Forest of Alyth Mires	Perth and Kinross	Raised bog
Dunkeld–Blairgowrie Lochs	Perth and Kinross	Freshwater habitats and species
Firth of Tay & Eden Estuary	Angus, City of Dundee, Fife, Perth & Kinross	Estuarine interests, common seals
Glenartney Juniper Wood	Perth and Kinross	Juniper scrub
Isle of May	Fife	Grey seals
Keltneyburn	Perth and Kinross	Woodland
Methven Moss	Perth and Kinross	Raised bog
Pitkeathly Mires	Perth and Kinross	Slender green feather-moss <i>Drepanocladus vernicosus</i>
Rannoch Moor	Argyll and Bute, Highland, Perth and Kinross	Bogs, heaths, freshwater features
River South Esk	Angus	Freshwater features
River Spey	Highland, Moray, Perthshire	Freshwater features
River Tay	Angus, Argyll and Bute, Perth & Kinross, Stirling	Freshwater features
Shelforkie	Perth and Kinross	Raised bogs
Shingle Islands	Perth and Kinross	Alder woodland
Tulach Hill and Glen Fender Meadows	Perth and Kinross	Alkaline fens, whorl-snails <i>Vertigo</i> spp
Turflundie Wood	Fife, Perth and Kinross	Great crested newt

## JUNGLE JAM-SESSION

We set off in the skiff to experience the Peruvian Amazon jungle by night, having travelled down river for half a day from Iquitos. Rain merely pattered down now, earlier it had poured at monsoon strength. Distant **sheet** and occasional **forked lightning** flickered over the forest as we chugged down a flooded side channel. All around **fireflies** flashed on and off like fairy lights.

The love songs of the many species of **frogs** filled the night, with a background chirring of **insects**. As we tuned in to the loud, insistent mating calls of croaks, dings and burps, the huge band of amphibians definitely had a rhythm and even repeated snatches of a theme. This jungle jam-session was enthralling to us and to hungry predators, no doubt. So, when 'a frog he would a wooing go', he must take care!

The red eyes of a **caiman** showed in the torchlight. Neil, our wildlife guide, caught a few frogs, both big and small, to show us. Then we returned to the bar of the MV Rio Amazonas.

Alban Houghton

## MOUNTAIN POEMS

These two poems were written by Joy to celebrate European Year of the Mountain

### A LINEAR LOOK FOR EYES

Another year a few contours, wild places I've spent a while in  
O'er hummocks, hags, quartzite shards, tussocks with frosty filings  
I've stepped the boulders in the burn and leapt across the mire,  
and scaled the heights and gazed afar at views to awe inspire  
And always deer upon the rim, that linear look for eyes,  
of mountain fit stravaigars brave, above the misty rise

### ASYMMETRIC SHUNTED FOLDS

Day turned to night as we spilled into the gloomy forest and traipsed with all our might  
Skirters of the deepest lochs, we edged along the track  
Tacitly assenting – we will be back!  
Up heather slopes and boulder fields we intrepidly footslogged  
Often preceded by a ubiquitous fog.  
A pause for breath perchance to view, with map we congregated,  
a study of the path ahead, truncated.  
Of mountain man, there's none so bold  
Assiduous 'baggers' of asymmetric shunted folds

Joy Cammack

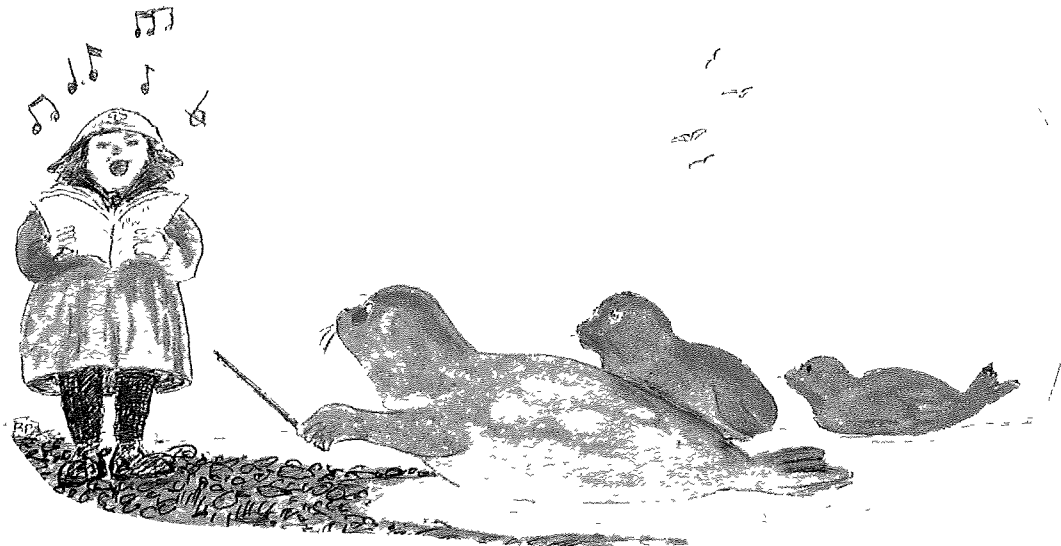
## I SANG TO THE SEALS

My first thrill of singing to the seals was off Whiting Bay, on the Isle of Arran, when I was there for the recce for the weekend. I was sitting on the rocks and heard them barking to each other, a sort of dog howl, and I shouted, or sort of sang "Yooo-hooo". I was surprised when they seemed to "Yoo-hoo" back – it was quite thrilling. Then I noticed that one was swimming towards me and I sang "Hello, hello" again and again, and sure enough, he raised his head and called back. This went on for a good ten minutes, as he swam closer and closer towards me.

The next time I called to the seals was at Catterline on the way to Fowlsheugh. The same thing happened and there is something so wonderful and mystical when they answer back.

A few nights later I was in bed and woke around 3am. It was a perfect still night and the moon and stars were out. As I lay in bed I heard the seals from over the Tay at Tentsmuir – again like dogs gently howling – it was indeed both uplifting and pleasurable. I had heard the sound many times before but could not believe it was the seals, until after experiencing it close at hand on the two occasions. I will always remember with a warm heart the days I sang with the seals.

Margaret McLaren



## BUTTERFLY RECORDING

I am Recorder for the East of Scotland branch of Butterfly Conservation and would like to request any butterfly records that Nats members have made for 2002 or previous years. It is obvious from the Bulletins that some members are very familiar with all of the species to be found in the area, and have made some very interesting sightings. I can supply recording forms on request, but I would be grateful to receive records in any form so long as they have names, dates and grid refs (at least 4 figs). Anyone who doesn't have the relevant Ordnance Survey maps but has internet access can usually get references using [www.multimap.co.uk](http://www.multimap.co.uk). Hopefully most members have seen the very impressive Millennium Atlas of Butterflies in Britain and Ireland, based on records collected from 1995-1999. This recording effort is ongoing and provides extremely valuable information for the conservation of butterflies and their habitats.



I can also provide information on where to see any of our butterflies for people who would like to see species that they haven't seen. A few examples of excellent sites include Dalgety Bay coastal path for **orange tip**, Tentsmuir for **dark green fritillary**, **grayling** and **small copper**, Seaton Cliffs for **small blue** and **grayling** and Balkello Hill for **green hairstreak**, **northern brown argus**, **small pearl bordered fritillary** and **dark green fritillary**. Timing is important for butterflies of course – you usually have around 4 or 5 weeks to see the adults of a particular species flying. Please feel free to contact me for more information.

Butterfly Conservation has been a fairly low-key organisation in this area up until now, despite having around 170 branch members for the East of Scotland, but thanks to some SNH funding we have taken on 3 more full time staff for Scotland. We now have plans to increase our conservation activities. In particular we are looking to set up some monitoring programmes to gather information on butterfly populations on specific sites from year to year. Anyone who has an interest in butterflies and could visit a site holding some of the less-common species regularly for a few weeks each year, and has flexibility to be able to visit when the sun shines, I would very much like to hear from you.

We are also starting a Garden Butterflies survey which is proving immensely popular. We have a recording pack specific to Scotland, which is available on request. **Comma** butterflies are expanding their breeding range rapidly north at the moment and have reached the Borders and Edinburgh in the last couple of years, so I'm eagerly awaiting the first sighting in someone's garden from north of the Forth.

Chris Stamp  
01382 669288 [chrisstamp@enclave4.freerve.co.uk](mailto:chrisstamp@enclave4.freerve.co.uk)

Volunteers please! Ed

# DUNDEE NATURALISTS' SOCIETY ACCOUNTS TO 31 January 2002

Income			Expenditure		
<u>Cash in Bank</u>			Bulletin	264 00	
Current A/c	16 58		Syllabus	127 02	
Deposit A/c	<u>833 78</u>	850 36	Photocopies	<u>5 00</u>	396 02
<u>Subscriptions</u>			<u>Office-bearers' Expenses</u>		
2001-2002	<u>1072 00</u>	1072 00	Secretary	60 00	
<u>Interest</u>			Treasurer	<u>21 09</u>	81 09
War Bonds	1 74		Insurance	<u>315 00</u>	315 00
Current A/c	0 29		<u>Rent</u>		
Deposit A/c	<u>9 58</u>	11 61	T9 to March 2002	300 00	
<u>Summer Outings</u>			Chaplaincy 2001 AGM	<u>35 25</u>	335 25
Closing Balance	<u>139 64</u>	139 64	<u>Misc Expenses</u>		
<u>Equipment Fund</u>			Flowers	6 00	
Christmas Social	25 45		Balkello	<u>20 82</u>	26 82
AGM	36 37		Lecturers' Fees & Exp	<u>52 00</u>	52 00
Donations	106 00		<u>Subscriptions</u>		
Inchcolm profit	3 75		SWT	36 00	
Afternoon Lecture	<u>61 00</u>	232 57	FWAG	23 50	
Badges sold	<u>10 50</u>	10 50	Scotwavs	50 00	
			Green Diary	<u>10 00</u>	119 50
			<u>Summer Outings 2001</u>		
			Opening Balance	<u>123 14</u>	123 14
			Monifieth Hotel (Social) *	<u>55 00</u>	55 00
			<u>Cash in Bank</u>		
			Deposit A/c	804 02	
			Current A/c	<u>8 84</u>	<u>812 86</u>
		<u>£2316 68</u>			<u>£2316 68</u>
		=====			=====

\*Monifieth Social Account

2000 A/c Income 107 50

Expenditure 50 00

B/F 57 10

2001 Income 95 50

152 60

Hotel A/c 155 50

Deficit £2 90

Additionally, for the SWT Countryside in Crisis Appeal £19 was collected and paid to SWT on 14 7 01

Mrs M Duncan's departure gift of £132 was collected and presented at the Christmas Social

Examined and found correct and sufficiently vouched

\_\_\_\_\_  
Auditor Date

### WEEKEND ACCOUNT

#### Macduff Weekend

Balance at 15 02 01	776 97	<u>Expenditure</u>	3979 30
Balances received	3742 70	Balance C/F	540 67
Interest	0 30		
	-----		-----
	<u>£4519 97</u>		<u>£4519 97</u>

#### Isle of Arrian Weekend

Cash in bank	540 67	Balance at 31 01 02	1041 36
Interest	0 69		
25 Deposits Paid	500 00		
	-----		-----
	<u>£1041 36</u>		<u>£1041 36</u>

### SUMMER OUTINGS ACCOUNT

Balance at 15 02 2001	123 14	Expenditure	1257 00
Income	1273 50	Balance at 31 01 02	139 64
	-----		-----
	<u>£1396 64</u>		<u>£1396 64</u>

### CARSEGOWNIEMUIR ACCOUNT

Balance at 15 02 2001	550 25	Expenditure	28 98
Interest	5 47	Balance at 31 01 02	526 74
	-----		-----
	<u>£555 72</u>		<u>£555 72</u>