

Lockerbie Wildlife Trust

(www.lockerbie-wildlife-trust.co.uk)



Scottish Charity No:
SC 005538

Eskrigg Reserve January 2025 News Bulletin

1. Eskrigg Pond at daybreak on the 3rd of January, covered with ice and snow



Daybreak on the 20th of January
with the ice melting

2. Reported wildlife sightings at the Reserve during January

a. Birds:

Blackbird, Blue Tit, Bullfinch, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Coal Tit, Crossbill, Dunnock, Goldcrest, Goldfinch, Great Egret, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Greenfinch, Greylag Goose, Jay, Kingfisher, Lesser Redpoll, Long-tailed Tit, Magpie, Mallard, Mistle Thrush, Moorhen, Nuthatch, Pheasant, Pinkfoot, Raven, Redwing, Reed Bunting, Robin, Rook, Siskin, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Starling, Stock Dove, Treecreeper, Tree Sparrow, Woodpigeon, Wren, Yellowhammer.



Kingfisher



Jay



Great Egret

b. Mammals:

Common Shrew, Mole, Otter, Red Squirrel, Roe Deer.

Pond Photographs by Jim Rae; Bird Photographs by David Holt

3. Maintenance Work

Mon. 06 Jim Rae raked up the leaves from some of the woodland walks.



Fri. 17 Gordon Reid, Sam Pattinson and Derek Campbell helped Jim fill up the pot-holes on the Eskrigg Farm Road.



Sat. 18 Jim Rae attached the Reserve signs to the side of the shelter at the north end of the Reserve



Sun. 19 Volunteer Maintenance Sunday

A great big thank you to the following volunteers who helped on the day, from 10.00am till 4.00pm, with a 30-minute lunch break.

Aim: To remove the bridge over the narrow stream south of the Reserve, and the ramp next to it, then culvert the stream.



LtoR: William Johnstone, Sarah McKie, Alan Carmichael, Paul Lavender, Callum McCreadie, Sam Pattinson, Jillian Polson, Christine Kirkpatrick, Zack Nicholson, Derek Campbell, Kenan Jack, Gordon Reid and Karen Miller.

Not in the picture: Iain Graham, Archie Little and Jim Rae (Reserve Manager) who took the picture.

**A great big thank you
to all volunteers.**

Procedure:

- 1: dismantle and remove the ramp next to the bridge
- 2: remove the top layer of the bridge, leaving the supporting timbers in place so as to provide a temporary means of crossing the stream
- 3: clear the bed of the stream of dead leaves, twigs and silt, lay the culvert pipe in place and check the water flow
- 4: lay large pieces of sandstone on either side of the pipe to hold it in place
- 5: add a layer of smaller pieces of sandstone to fill any gaps and cover the pipe
- 6: add a thin layer of gravel (type-1-sub-base) to fill any gaps and just cover the sandstone
- 7: add more layers of sandstone and gravel until there is a firm layer across the gap
- 8: remove the remaining timbers from the original bridge and ramp
- 9: adjust the levels of the path on either side of the gap to the required height
- 10: add sandstone and gravel in the gap until the level is the same as the path on either side
- 11: cut and lay terram membrane over the whole area being worked on
- 12: cover the terram membrane with a layer of coarse gravel

Mon. 20 Jim put a layer of fine gravel on the top of the new section of path.

Photographs by Jim Rae

19.01.25 Bridge & Ramp in place



19.01.25 Covering pipe with sandstone and gravel



19.01.25 Layer of coarse gravel on top



20.01.25 Final surface layer of fine gravel



20.01.25 Culvert inflow



20.01.25 Culvert outflow



Volunteer Hours

Sunday 19th January

11 volunteers worked from 10.00am to 4.00pm with a half-hour lunch break = 55.0 hrs

5 volunteers worked from 10.00am to 3.00pm with a half-hour lunch break = 22.5 hrs

Monday 20th January

Jim worked from 10.am till 2.00pm = 4.5 hrs

Total number of volunteer hours on Culvert Project = 82 hrs

Photographs by Jim Rae

3. Maintenance work continued:

Fri. 24 In the interests of safety, **Jim Rae (Reserve Manager)** closed the Reserve and Reserve Car Park during Storm Éowyn.

Sat. 25 The Reserve remained closed the day after the storm so that **Jim** could clear any trees and branches that had been blown down by the strong winds onto or over the Reserve path.



The storm brought down many Scots Pine trees across the Forest Road and in the woods on either side. These will be cleared by the Castlemilk Estate forestry staff when they get time.



The fallen trees just missed the Trust's Food Store and Road Trailer. However, one came down on top of the Storage Container. Luckily, a false roof had been built on top of the container to provide some insulation and this prevented serious damage to the container itself.

On the Saturday afternoon **Jim** cleared some of the branches from the Scots Pine trees that had fallen across the path between the Reserve and the Forest Road but the main trunks would have to be dealt with on another day.



One casualty of the storm was a moorhen. The strong winds had brought it down onto the ice on the pond and stunned it. When **Jim** found it on the Saturday morning it

had 'come to' and was paddling about in a small pool but could not fly off. He used a net to collect it from the pond and bring it out onto dry land. It did not seem to be seriously injured so **Jim** left it in a dry spot with some food while he got on with some clearing up. About an hour later the moorhen stood up and ran off into the reeds. A lovely moment!

Sun. 26 **Jim** spend the morning clearing the broken branches and debris from the forest road in front of the Food Store and Storage Container. The large tree trunks had to be left for Castlemilk Estate to deal with. In the afternoon the rain came on and work was brought to a halt.



Photographs by Jim Rae

Mon. 27 Heavy rain during the previous 20 hours caused the ditch in the field south of the path down from the Reserve Car Park to overflow and flood the path and fields on either side. Luckily, the water drained away quite quickly and the path was clear the next day.



Tue. 28 Jim cleared the path through from the Reserve to the Forest Road in order to be able to access the Bird Food Store and Storage container.

Wed. 29 Until Castlemilk staff get a chance to clear the large Scots Pine from the front of the Storage Container, the bags of bird food will have to be barrowed down from the Reserve Car Park.

Thu. 30 Jim found the quad bike trailer to be undamaged under a fallen pine tree. By clearing a path through the broken branches he was able to pull the trailer out onto the Forest Road.



Fri. 31 Derek Campbell and Jim cut down a branch that had broken and fallen across the feeder burn. They then cleared some of the self-seeded birches from an area near the shelter.

4. January Events



Wed. 01 During the evening the **Aurora borealis** was visible from the Reserve Car Park.



Tue. 21 A short visit by two **Applegarth Primary pupils, Deacon and Oliver**, accompanied by **Mr Ferguson (Head Teacher) & Miss Penney**. After learning a bit about the history of the Reserve the students had a go at pond dipping. They spotted microscopic *Cyclops* and *Daphnia*, Dipteran larvae, Mayfly nymphs, freshwater shrimps and pond snails. They also spotted some Water Starwort in the feeder burn.

Fri. 24 Storm Éowyn hit the area.

Photographs by Jim Rae

Total people count for January = 1,300, Average number per day = 42, Sun. 19th = 107, Fri. 24th = 1.

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