



Falkirk Members' Centre

Newsletter – September 2009

www.swt.org.uk

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Articles or items of interest to our members for inclusion in the next edition of the Newsletter should be passed to the Editor either by post or e-mail by 18th January 2010

Indoor Meetings – January to April 2010

Due to financial constraints the usual card showing the programmes of the Callander, Falkirk and Stirling Members' Centres are NOT being produced this year and details of the Indoor Programmes will be published in the individual Members' Centre Newsletters.

Falkirk M.C. Meetings will be held in the Christian Centre, Glebe Street, Falkirk

Commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Tuesday, 19th January, P.C. Blair, Dunblane

“Wildlife Crime”.

Tuesday, 16th February, Janet Moxley, S.E.P.A

“River Systems and Climate”.

Tuesday, 16th March, Nick Chambers, R.S.P.B.

“River Forth Realignment Project Skinflats.

Tuesday, 20th April - A.G.M. and Angus Smith, Falkirk M.C.

“What Our Members get up to in Spring”

EDITORIAL On a visit to Wallacebank Wood Reserve during the fine warm spell in mid May the display of Bluebells was fantastic and there were over a hundred **Orangetip Butterflies** some of which were alighting on the Bluebells. A large influx of **Painted Lady Butterflies** was also in evidence during the warm spell and on 8th June, a **Hummingbird Hawkmoth** was in the editor's garden. This species has been putting in appearances during recent years and this is probably due to the Global Warming we have been hearing about. On 11th June, The editor visited **Kinneil Kerse**, and found a pair of **Shelduck with a family of eleven ducklings** at the mouth of the River Avon, there was, however, no sign of the Spoonbill seen during the week previously and reported in Ron's Diary in the last Newsletter. A visit to the editor's garden on 4th August by a **COMMA Butterfly** was a first for Bo'ness and possibly for Falkirk District. **Small Tortoiseshell Butterflies** are less numerous than a few years ago, but one or two are now appearing at the time of writing in August. Continued:-

The **Swifts** will be leaving soon, but on 4th. August there were well over sixty of these birds flying above Bo'ness Town Centre. Seemingly a good breeding year for that species.

Bo'mains Meadows Reserve is continuing to improve year by year and the various Orchids this year were particularly fine. The **Common Spotted Orchids** and **Northern Marsh Orchids** in the North Meadow are increasing greatly in numbers. During a visit to the Reserve on 4th. July the editor found what appears to be **Wild Basil** in the South Meadow. A professional Survey commissioned by the Trust was carried out on 24th July and a new plant, **Great Burnet** was found in the South Meadow, (the S.S.S.I.). This plant is uncommon in Scotland and apparently at the northern extremity of its range. The full survey result is awaited with interest, but both plants have been well photographed by the editor. **Meadow Brown Butterflies** have been scarce in the Reserve this summer, but there have been numerous **Ringlet Butterflies** and up to eight **Peacock Butterflies** on several occasions.

Reserves Management:-

Work requires to be carried out at **Bo'mains Meadows** and **Wallacebank Wood Reserves** during the late autumn and winter months and anyone who is interested in assisting and has not previously attended our Work Parties should contact the editor. The work is not strenuous and tools and working gloves will be provided. The work days are generally held on a Saturday, but week days could be considered if that would suit some individuals. Why not come along and do something positive for the environment.

RON'S DIARY – SEPTEMBER 2009 :-

As I write, in the first week of September, I have just returned from holiday at Viareggio on the Tuscan coast of Italy where the weather was lovely and warm, in contrast to what I have returned to. I have mentioned in previous diary notes, I regularly visit Tom Findlay's farm near Slamannan and have walked over the neighbouring Darnrig Moss. During two visits, in June and early July, I had excellent views of a Short-eared Owl quartering the ground on 16th June and on that same evening I also saw two Stonechats, a Snipe sitting on a post and a pair of Canada Geese with 4 young on a lochan. On the second visit I heard and saw a Redpoll and a Skylark. The highlight, however, was seeing a Barn Owl and I sat on top of a coal bin watching it flying back and forth with prey. What a sighting!

In my last diary note I reported seeing a Spoonbill at Kinneil Lagoon in the last week of May, but on a subsequent visit on 29th June I saw two of these large, white heron-like birds on the foreshore. On 8th July I had an excellent day "birding" in the Trossachs, stopping briefly in Callander where I saw three Swifts. At Drippen, at the foot of Glen

Finglass, I had good views of a male Redstart – a beautiful bird and at the edge of an oak wood and further up the glen two Tree Pipits. The next port of call was the delightful hamlet of Brig o' Turk, where I saw two Spotted Flycatchers, a female Redstart, three Swallows, three House Martins, two Goldfinches, a Great Spotted Woodpecker and heard, but only had a fleeting glimpse of, a Garden Warbler.

On the way home I took the back road between Callander and Doune, where I saw a Red Kite, with its forked tail clearly showing, and three Ravens. During an evening visit towards the end of July to Skinflats Pools I saw three Golden Plovers, two Greenshank, six Curlews, a flock of twenty Lapwings and numerous Shelduck. I also visited Kinneil twice in the first half of August – the second occasion being the weekly Wednesday evening walk. The highlight for me on both visits was seeing an adult Common Tern feeding a juvenile. During these visits I also saw two Greenshank, a flock of over ninety Lapwings, forty Dunlin and six Ringed Plovers on the Lagoon.

The last Swifts I saw this summer was on the evening of 4th August, when a group of about twelve were flying around central Falkirk. Have you seen any later than that?

' **The Nature of Scotland** ' is a quarterly publication which has been produced by Scottish Natural Heritage for a number of years and it is sent out **FREE to anyone on their Mailing List**. The Magazine has recently been reformatted and contains excellent articles well illustrated by very good photographs. To be added to their mailing list to obtain your copies simply either write to S.N.H. at **The Customer Relations Team, Scottish Natural Heritage, Great Glen House, FREEPOST RRBV-UACB-EGAY, Leachkin Road, Inverness, IN3 8NW**, giving your details, or if you prefer by sending details by e-mail to customerdetails@snh.gov.uk

The Scottish Nature Photography Fair :-

This event is hosted by S.N.H. and is held annually at their Battleby Centre, Redgorton, near Perth. Just off the first slipway of the dual carriageway of the A9 after you leave Perth. The event is held over two days, the same programme being repeated on the second day, either on a Saturday or Sunday. The cost is in the region of £20 per day, but it is well worth it. Soup and sandwiches can be provided at an extra charge, but you can take your own packed lunch if you so wish. Teas or coffees are free during the lunch break and at the frequent intervals between the excellent presentations on a variety of wildlife subjects. The fair is of interest to anyone interested in wildlife and not just to photographers and **next years fair will be on Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th, September**. Should you wish to attend the Fair simply **telephone S.N.H. on 01783 444 177 and ask to receive an application form** for next years Nature Photography Fair when they become available.