



**GLASGOW NATURAL
HISTORY SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER**

April 2018

Newsletter Editor
David Palmar

Next Newsletter Deadline
22 July 2018

newsletter@gnhs.org.uk

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www.gnhs.org.uk

**2018 Meetings - in the University of Glasgow Boyd Orr Building
unless stated**

April

Tuesday 10th

7.00pm Graham Kerr Building, Lecture Theatre 1

Lecture in two halves with tea break between:

Behind the Naturalist's Lens: the photographic work and contribution to Natural History of Charles Eric Palmar (supported by the BLB bequest); David Palmar and colleagues

May

Tuesday 8th Graham Kerr Building, Lecture Theatre 1

7.15pm Lecture 1: The aspen project; Peter Livingstone

Lecture 2: An eye for the unusual: the herbarium of Peter Macpherson; Keith Watson

June

Saturday 9th Graham Kerr Building, Lecture Theatre 1

Conference: The Amphibians and Reptiles of Scotland: Current Research, Future Challenges; see next page for details

Tuesday 19th Summer Social: see page 16 for details and booking form.

Members are welcome to join the speaker(s) and Council at pre-lecture meals, normally held in Cafe Andaluz. Please inform Mary Child by the Sunday before a Tuesday lecture if you would like to attend. The cost is £10 per head, subsidised by the BLB fund.

Winter Programme 2018-19

It is time to assemble next session's programme of evening talks- so please send any ideas you have for speakers/topics Roger Downie as soon as you can. A reminder of the timing and format of most meetings (except April 10th):

1. There will normally be only one talk each evening (occasionally two short talks).
2. There will be time between 7 for 7.15pm for members to show specimens, or photographs, or briefly report on interesting observations (anyone needing a microscope should let Roger Downie know in advance).

Amphibians and Reptiles of Scotland: Current research and future challenges

University of Glasgow, Graham Kerr Building,
Saturday 9th June 2018



Arrival time 09.00, start 09.45, and close 17.00.

Registration will be free through the Glasgow Science Festival

<http://www.glasgowsciencefestival.org.uk/> from April.

Speakers	Affiliation	Title	Time
Roger Downie	University of Glasgow GNHS	Opening and welcome	5 minutes
Emma Harper MSP	Scottish Parliament		
Silviu Petrovan	University of Cambridge Froglife	Using an evidence-based approach to improve the understanding and effectiveness of road mitigation schemes for amphibians and reptiles	30 minutes
Nigel Hand	Central Ecology	The vanishing viper - using radiotelemetry to unlock the secret life of the adder	20 minutes
Lynsey Harper	University of Hull	Enhancing understanding of great crested newt habitat and environmental influences in Scotland	10 minutes
David O'Brien	Highland Biological Recording Group	SuDS and amphibians - are constructed wetlands really benefitting nature and people?	15 minutes
Chloe Rossi Iain Hill	University of Glasgow	Under-road tunnel mitigation at Frankfield Loch, Glasgow	10 minutes
Matthew Witt	University of Exeter	Waifs and strays or seasonally resident? Marine turtles in the British Isles	20 minutes
Rick Hodges	Kent ARG	Long-term monitoring for adders	15 minutes
Pete Minting	Scottish ARC	Great crested newt detectives; citizen science, education and DNA technology	15 minutes
James Stead	Froglife	Scottish Dragon Finder	15 minutes
Chris Cathrine	Caledonian Conservation	A novel approach to reptile mitigation in peatland habitats for an underground power line development in Kintyre	15 minutes
Erik Paterson Ryan Bird	University of Glasgow CARG	Amphibians and water quality in East Kilbride and Renfrewshire	15 minutes
Chris McInerny	University of Glasgow GNHS CARG	The study and conservation of adders in Scotland	15 minutes
Kathleen McMillan	Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park	A study of the reptile populations at the Greenock Cut and management plan	10 minutes
Rob Raynor	Scottish Natural Heritage	An amphibian and reptile strategy for Scotland	20 minutes, + 40 minutes discussion
Andrew Cunningham	Institute of Zoology	Infectious disease threats to amphibian conservation	30 minutes

Summer Excursion Programme 2018 Alison Moss Additional Information

April

Sun 29th, 11am, Hessilhead - animal sanctuary/wildlife rescue centre. Meet 200m from entrance at NS378532. Centre located on a side road off B777 between Beith and Lugton. Spend 1 hour at Centre. Thereafter, walk round nearby disused quarry with alkaline rocks. Stout footwear, bring snack/lunch.

Directions - coming from Glasgow take M8 west, then A737 southwest. At Beith by-pass take B777 to Lugton. Go through Gateside, take 1st proper turning on right into the Centre (trees), but park in the large open space outside. Contact James Milner-White.

May

Sun 6th, 11am, Blairskaith Quarry. Carboniferous quarry representing 100,000 years of earth's history. Meet on the unmetalled road which runs east off Baldernock Linn Road at NS590757, where cars can be parked at the side of the road, making sure the road is not blocked. As well as abundant extinct fossils, the site has mixed habitats including pools. It is a Local Nature Conservation Site. Stout footwear essential, bring lunch. Contact Laura Allen.

Thu 17th, 7pm, Pollok Country Park. Mainly trees. Meet at Pollok House car park, NS547619. Contact Bob Gray.

Sat 19th, 10am, Glasgow Botanic Gardens. This is a mainly a botanical recording meeting to update records of the 1990s. Other wildlife is always of interest. Bring lunch. Meet at Kibble Palace. Contact Michael Philip (BSBI recorder for Lanarkshire)

Sat 26th, 11am, Brownside Braes and Glen Park. Mixed interest, with fields, dams and waterfalls.

Meet at car park up a farm track at NS488607. This is off the B774 between Barrhead and Paisley. Going in the Paisley direction, the turning is on the left. Paths are across the hillside, then into Glenpark, Glenburn. Stout footwear required and bring lunch. Contact James Milner-White.

June

Sun 3rd, 11am, Baron's Haugh and Dalzell Park. Meet at the RSPB car park NS755552. Mixed interest. This is a follow up from 2 years ago. We will try to include Dalzell Park, but also revisit the wild flower meadows and hides on the RSPB reserve. Directions - leave M74 at junction 6, take the road to Motherwell. Bear right at the next traffic lights signposted to Wishaw. Turn right at 3rd mini-roundabout and follow the road to the junction, turn right and then immediately left to enter the reserve. The car park is on the right. There are paths throughout, but stout footwear is best. Bring lunch. Contact Alison Moss.

Tue 12th, 7.15pm, Bargeny Hills grasslands close to Torrance and Balmore. NS 608740. Mixed wildlife interest with special emphasis on plant diversity and status as a special site, led by Jackie Gillespie, East Dunbartonshire Council. Park at NS 60797378, at entrance to Bardon Aggregates industrial area. Contact Alison Moss.

Sat 16th, any time between 11am and 5pm, Mary Child's garden. 32 Springfield Park Road, Burnside, G73 3RQ. Open garden. Tea, coffee and scones. Green roof with Scottish wild flowers. Advice on making garden more wildlife friendly welcomed. Charity donations to Grow73 and Scottish Detainee Visitors. Public transport - near Burnside station. For further directions contact Mary

Sun 17th, 11am, Ardeer. Mixed interest. Site owned by Hugh King and Co. NS293417. Take the A78 Kilwinning by-pass going from Irvine to Stevenston. At NS297420 take a single track turning to the left where a small white sign at the side of the A78 is marked 'Hugh King & Co, Garnock West'. Parking is possible at the end of this access road up to a locked gate. (Do not block vehicle access here).

The gate has to be climbed over. Site is on low lying land adjoining River Garnock. Stout footwear and bring lunch. For all details etc., contact James Milner-White,

Tue 19th, Summer Social, with tour of the Botanic Gardens fern and orchid houses – see end of newsletter for booking form.

Sat 23rd, c. 9.30am, Saltoun Hall, East Lothian. Tree day. Meet at entrance NT460684. Saltoun Hall (called Wester Saltoun Hall on Google Maps) is east of Pentcailand. It is important to contact Bob Gray in advance.

Sat 30th, 11am, Brucehill Raised Cliffs. Mixed interest with special botanical interest. Meet on Clydeshire Road near to the Clyde beside Levensgrove Park NS 39047470. Site is rich in insect, bird and plant life, with shore, red sandstone cliffs and wild flower meadows. From Glasgow take A82. Take A814 through Dumbarton. After crossing River Leven, take 1st left (West Bridgend) and then the next right into Clydeshire Road. Park adjacent to Levensgrove Park. Contact Pam Murdoch.

July

Sun 1st, all day Bioblitz, Robroyston Park. Event run by GCC Countryside Ranger Service. GNHS members are invited to participate. Robroyston Park, G33 1JQ. Details will be circulated nearer the time.

Thu 5th, 7pm, Ruchill Park. Mainly trees. Meet at northwest entrance on Bilsland Drive NS 578683. Contact Bob Gray

Sun 22nd, 11am, Croy Hill. Mixed interest. Meet at car park NS739771. (Note- not at canal, but higher up). A short track leads to the car park between the canal and the railway bridge on the Dullatur to Kilsyth Road. Coming from Dullatur it is next on the left after Wester Dullatur Farm. Paths on the hillside go past the Roman fort and also down to the canal side at Auchinstarry. Stout footwear and bring lunch. Contact James Milner-White

August

Sun 12th, 10am, Glasgow Botanic Gardens. Again, this is mainly a botanical recording excursion to update records. Again, other wild life is also of interest. Contact Michael Philips

Sun 26th, 11am, Cathkin Braes LNR. Mixed interest. The Cathkin Braes LNR is rich in all sorts of wildlife with many habitats represented. Paths are of mixed quality

and there are wet habitats. Bring lunch. Meet at large car park NS609 579. This is on Cathkin Road B 759, which can be accessed from A749 (East Kilbride Road) or Carmunnock. Contact Alison Moss

Joint meetings with Clyde and Argyll Fungus Group.

There will be at least 2 joint meetings with the CAFG. These have been most successful. CAFG keep a degree of flexibility in their programme to suit strange weather patterns, so we have found it best to select joint meetings nearer the time. Watch out for notifications and 'reminders' in September, October and November.

Any questions or enquiries about excursions contact Alison Moss.

GNHS Newsletter digital archive

Chris McInerny

A digital archive of the Glasgow Natural History Society Newsletter has been created and added to the Society website for members to read and enjoy:

<http://www.glasgownaturalhistory.org.uk/newsletter.html>

Over the years GNHS activities, events and outings have been recorded and described in the society Newsletter, along with many interesting notes and records about natural history, society members and projects. The Newsletters contain much fascinating information and are a historical record of the society's accomplishments.

Since 2004 David Palmar has edited the Newsletter, with about four issues produced a year. David retained electronic versions of these Newsletters and Council has decided that the content is so interesting that they merited being placed on the Society website for members to access, read and enjoy.

To create the archive personal details (phone numbers, email addresses and postal addresses) have been removed, and the Newsletters edited to a consistent style and presentation, to make them readable in an electronic form. They have been converted to pdf format and placed chronologically on the Society website.

It is planned to make a document listing the contents of all the Newsletters from 2004 to the present, which can be easily searched to find items. But until then we suggest that readers search each pdf document with relevant key words.

Creating the archive, and reading past Newsletters, reminded us of the excellent events that have been organised through the GNHS over the years. We hope that Society members will also enjoy reading the Newsletters again, and remember with pleasure the events and outings that they describe.

The archive can be searched using the search box on the website home page.

The Ann Christine Flum Trust Legacy Donation

Lyn Dunachie

'Christie' was born and raised in Kirkintilloch. As a young woman she moved to California and married, but always stayed connected to family, friends and the landscape back home. In her trust she made legacy donations to 14 organisations, some of which have an environmental focus, some health and wellness, and most are in Scotland. She liked hiking and gardening and appreciated those who are

protecting the land for future generations. We are very grateful for her donation to GNHS. The donation was £10,548 and it will be invested into the BLB Trust fund.

Membership Update

Richard Weddle

Since the last newsletter we have welcomed the following new members: Lizzy Cairns (Hyndland) and Ryan Carter (Balornock).

Happy Birthday Hogganfield

Cath Scott

20th March is the 20 year anniversary of the designation of Hogganfield Park as a Local Nature Reserve and to celebrate, the LNR boundary has been extended.

On 20th March in 1998, 50 ha of Hogganfield Park became a Local Nature Reserve and on 12th March 2018 this was extended by another 9 ha to include more of the park. Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are protected areas that are managed for people and nature. There are currently 12 LNRs across Glasgow.

Hogganfield Park is best known for the loch teeming with water birds, but there is a whole host of other extensive wildlife habitats to visit in the park.

Over the last few years Glasgow City Council has worked with a range of partner organisations on grant funded projects to improve Hogganfield Park for nature and the new boundary reflects these changes. New wildflower meadows have been sown, new woodland, hedgerows and an orchard have been planted, and new ponds, wetlands and wildlife gardens have been created and enhanced in partnership with organisations including Buglife, Froglife, Seven Lochs Wetland Park, Friends of Glasgow's Local Nature Reserves, Scottish Natural Heritage and local schools and community groups.

Hogganfield Park Local Nature Reserve is now being developed as one of the gateways to the Seven Lochs Wetland Park - destined to be the largest urban heritage and nature park in the UK.

You can visit Hogganfield Park Local Nature Reserve at any time of year and there is always something to see. Spring highlights include frogs returning to the ponds and Grey Herons starting to nest in the trees on the island. And if you visit soon you will be able to see the Whooper Swans before they set off on their journey to their breeding grounds in Iceland.

Related websites:

<http://www.sevenlochs.org/>

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=16588>

And don't forget to come along to the official birthday party celebrations in May!

'TEK' Equipment

Richard Weddle

As we are within sight of the next field-recording season, it seems a good time to remind everyone that the Society possesses a number of items of equipment for the use of members. Many of these were purchased with the aid of a recent generous bequest from Thomas E Kinsey.

The list indicates that some items are 'in use' but which may be available to others for a short time; those marked 'occasional use' will usually be available for temporary use by others. However, there are also some items that have been purchased for particular research projects, and will not be available until the end of those projects. Items such as nets and sorting trays are sometimes needed for GNHS field excursions and other such events. GNHS Council do stipulate that requests to use items for any significant length of time should be supported by an outline of the project for which they are required, and that the results should be submitted for publication in The Glasgow Naturalist.

I should also point out that though the bat-detector is quite easy to use, it requires some training and experience to interpret what it picks up, and the Longworth traps can only legally be used by a trained and licensed operator.

Description	Availability	In care of
6 compound microscopes	occasional use	Hunterian Museum - Geoff Hancock
10 Longworth mammal traps	occasional use	Countryside Ranger Service
Batbox Duet bat detector	occasional use, often available	Richard Weddle
2 Garmin eTrex GPS	1 in use	Richard Weddle
Skinner moth trap (mains operated)*	available	Richard Weddle
Heath moth trap (battery operated)*	occasional use	Richard Weddle
2 pond nets: large / small	occasional use	Richard Weddle
sweep nets: 1 large/1 small	occasional use	Richard Weddle
3 Butterfly nets	1 in frequent use	Richard Weddle
1 Beating-tray	occasional use	Richard Weddle
Emergence Traps (80) (for pupae etc)	most available	Richard Weddle
3 sorting trays	occasional use	Richard Weddle
4 remote video cameras	available	Richard Weddle
camera traps (3)	enquire [#]	Stewart White
Torch (1million CP)	often available	Richard Weddle
Hanna 98129	in use	James Milner-White
pH/Conductivity/ Temperature Tester		
Remote IR temperature sensor	enquire [#]	Malcolm Kennedy

* there are additional Skinner and Heath traps owned by Butterfly Conservation SW Scotland, which may be available for use by GNHS members.

available by arrangement

If you'd like to borrow any item, contact me or I can put you in touch with the current holder of the equipment.

The RSPB is organising a series of events under this heading during May and June. Each weekend of the festival will focus on a different area of Glasgow: East 12-13 May; West 19-20 May; South 26-27 May; North 2-3 June.

Here are some of the events which are planned already:

27-28 May Glasgow Science centre and Festival Park Bioblitz

13 May Hogganfield Park LNR Birthday

12 and 13 May Glasgow Barras wildflower festival.

Keep a lookout for emails advising you of the activities and locations on offer.

Hamiltonhill Claypits LNR

Richard Weddle

A Mini-bioblitz is planned for June 2nd; it will be organised by Claire Martin (Scottish Waterways Trust) and Louise Smith (Froglife). The details are still to be finalised, but we hope to include moth-trapping and pond-dipping. The Claypits LNR can be accessed via Ellesmere Street (past the allotments at NS584676, approx. G22 5LZ), or Applecross Street (at the Scottish Canals offices, NS586671, G4 9SP).

Full details by email nearer the time, or contact info@gnhs.org.uk 0141 339 1343.

General Data Protection Regulations

Richard Weddle

New Data Protection regulations will take effect shortly; among other things, we are obliged to ask you to confirm that you wish to continue to receive mailings and/or emailings from GNHS. We will contact you separately about this very shortly.

Next Newsletter - copy to David Palmar by 22nd July 2018 please.

Thank you very much to all the contributors who have made the newsletters so interesting and worthwhile publishing. Please send contributions by email, preferably as .rtf, .doc or .docx (Word 2007) format.

If you have time, please italicise taxonomic names, and use Verdana font, size 12 points.

If sending photos, please submit only a few as separate jpg files (not as part of a Word document), and make them under 100Kb each for emailing).

PhotoSCENE Natural History Photographic Competition

David Palmar

After the Members' Photographic Night, the pictures entered into the seventh PhotoSCENE photographic competition were shown, taken both by GNHS members and by students and staff of the Institute of Biodiversity, Animal Health and Comparative Medicine.

This year there were 74 entries from 18 entrants, a healthy number, but we could always have more! In addition to Dan Haydon and me, we welcomed on to the judging panel Darren O'Brien, an experienced wildlife photographer.

The judges' main comment was that there were lots of nice photos, but more information was needed about the subject and its natural history context. Why do we take photos? - to tell a story!

It would be nice to have information about the research project, for example, or why a photo is eligible for the competition, which was not always clear.

On the technical side, rename the photo - don't just submit "photo 1" as the name. Say what it is and where it was taken. Some of the images were too small. We may want to print them, so less than 3 megapixels makes them less useful for that.

There were a few dark images; significant improvements can often be done with one click. It is within the rules to do some simple digital processing, not to falsify an image, but just to improve it slightly.

Here are the first prizewinners:



Green Hairstreak –
Chris McInerny



Leap of Faith –
Norman Still



Hoverfly –
Jaime Villacampa



Machair –
Laura Allen



Forest Away Day –
Michele De Noia



Divers –
David Bailey

Kelvin at the Kibble – 15 May until 27 May 2018
The Kelvin Biodiversity Network will present an exhibition

Lyn Dunachie

Following the 2015 Conference “The River Kelvin - its history and natural history”, the Kelvin Biodiversity Network invited organisations and individuals to display their work in the wonderful setting of the Kibble Glasshouse. 2018 is the third year of these exhibitions which include displays by GNHS, RSPB, FORK, and (new for this year) SWT.

Dippy Events

Ann Ainsworth

Dippy, the Natural History Museum's iconic Diplodocus cast, is going on a natural history adventure across the UK, and will visit Glasgow between 22nd January and 5th May 2019!

During this time, GNHS will be involved in some events:

- There are plans to have a dinosaur related lecture as part of the winter programme, jointly with the Geological Society of Glasgow.
- Ann Ainsworth will offer the Society another tour of the geology collections at GMRC.
- GNHS will host a stall at Kelvingrove.
- The Blodwen Lloyd Binns fund could be asked to help support educational activities at Kelvingrove. Botanical illustrations would be particularly relevant.
- GNHS will be involved with the closing event Bioblitz on 5th May 2019.

Sally Eaton

Congratulations to Sally, RBGE, who spoke to GNHS in April 2017 on her lichen research, on being awarded a PhD in February 2018 for her thesis: 'Achieving landscape-scale conservation for Scotland's rainforest epiphytes'.

Sheila Littlejohn – Centenary

Bob Gray

It is not everyone who achieves their centenary but Sheila is one of those to do so – on 11th May, 2018. We wish her many congratulations and a happy birthday.

Her earliest recollection of the world of natural history is that her father, a golfing enthusiast and Presbyterian minister, made a putter from a local Jamaican wood called fustic (*Maclura tinctoria*). Sheila in fact was born in Jamaica where her father had charge of a parish, Savanna la Mar. She remembers the way in which rice was husked, by means of a long pole used to beat the rice before throwing it in the air to allow the wind to blow away the chaff. Local fellows used to hollow out tree trunks in order to make canoes used for fishing. At the tender age of six or seven she was really the only person in her family whom a wild horse of theirs would allow to put a halter around its neck. She also remembers the grinding of sugar cane and the smell produced by its fermentation in the rum producing process. She remembers well the diet they enjoyed then and, even today, she hosts a Jamaican meal on Christmas Eve, consisting of, amongst other things, salted cod and ackee

(*Blighia sapida*), the fleshy edible aril that covers the black seed and red pod, which are toxic.

At the age of 14, with her parents and younger sister in Jamaica and her older brother at university, she was sent to what is now the Mary Erskine School in Edinburgh. She spent her holidays in the early 30's on a dairy farm owned by an uncle near Southend at the foot of the Kintyre peninsula where she learned the whole process of cheese making from milking to the finished product. She helped in the harvesting of oats which involved putting them into stooks and drying before threshing in the farm granary prior to it being ground into oatmeal in the local mill. So she was well versed in applied biology at an early age. She remembers with great affection a cousin, John, who taught her to appreciate the countryside. On holiday in Glenbreckerie where her aunt Frances was a teacher, she became interested in wild flowers which her aunt helped her to identify.

In 1937 she attended Moray House College of Education. Her most memorable experience during her time there occurred on teaching practice and involved her being asked by the supervisor to repeat a particularly well-taught lesson before a group of teaching students. The subject was snowdrops, particularly interesting as they possess honey guide lines to attract pollinating insects but flower in this country during the winter when insects are conspicuously absent. Snowdrops to this day remain a particular favourite of hers.

From 1940 to 1969 her life was spent in the West Indies and South America, firstly in Jamaica where her father died and she married Leslie Littlejohn with whom she had two children, David and Katherine, and thereafter in Venezuela, Brazil and Trinidad depending on her husband's work. After she lost Leslie in 1969 she returned to Edinburgh to a house in Meggetland Terrace where, by coincidence, she met a neighbour who had been in her class at school. Her home in Edinburgh was located close to the Union Canal, along the banks of which she found much of interest. To help her get over homesickness for Jamaica she used to visit the hothouses of the botanic gardens that contained many flowers she had grown in her garden abroad. Through archaeology classes she took at Edinburgh University she became part of a walking group that introduced her to the beauty of Scotland and its history. She helped to excavate a prehistoric site on Shetland and some of the findings were put on display in the local museum. Through a friend she made on this dig she paid a visit to Australia which introduced her to new habitats - deserts and gorges including the area around Alice Springs and Ayers Rock. Having joined Edinburgh Natural History Society Sheila acted as minutes secretary for about seven years and made the acquaintance of Elizabeth Farquharson, who is now 102 years old and a considerable authority on Fungi. As a teacher in Edinburgh Sheila enjoyed taking pupils on field trips that introduced them to natural history.

She moved to Glasgow in 1995 in order to be near her children. She soon joined GNHS and became an active participant in many field trips over the years from Blair Atholl in 1997 to Galloway in 2015. These trips held memories of midge nets in Glen Affric and more fond recollections of the Black Wood of Rannoch and the old apple tree on the southern shore of Loch Rannoch. In 2005 for the first time her daughter, Kathy, accompanied Sheila to Kenmore when it became apparent to other society members that she had attained the great age of 87. Her fitness was never in doubt. Falling in with a less fit, younger member at the back of the group on one

occasion she announced to her companion that she'd have to move on in order to catch up with the rest.

In June 2008 she came on a trip to Soll in the Tyrol in Austria, along with a number of other GNHS members to study Mountain Flowers - Nearly 90 then!
Our visit to the area around Bruce's stone in 2015 reminded her of time she had spent in Glen Trool as a schoolgirl.

The membership is delighted to have helped Sheila to follow her lifelong interest in natural history and is grateful to her for her input over the years.

Glasgow Pollinator Plan

Carol MacLean

A Glasgow Pollinator Plan has been produced which supports the national 'Pollinator Strategy for Scotland' by detailing local action to help halt pollinator declines and reverse the losses. The aim is to have a robust, healthy and diverse population of pollinating invertebrates in the city.

The Pollinator Plan also supports the new Glasgow Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) and provides more detailed information about the city's pollinators, the threats and opportunities and what is required to prevent their destruction or loss. Apart from the economic value of pollinators, they play a vital role in the ecology of our grasslands, woodlands and other habitats.

Pesticides can damage non-target pollinator species. Neonicotinoid insecticides are of particular concern. The current GCC position on neonicotinoids is that the Council follows UK and Scottish Government rules – there are currently 3 neonicotinoids banned in the EU and these are not used on GCC owned sites.

The Council has also greatly reduced the number of bedding plants produced over the last few years (which were hybrids and therefore not useful to pollinators), and increased the areas of pictorial wildflower meadows and areas of relaxed mowing regimes on grass areas which both benefit native pollinators. Generally, pesticide usage across Council sites has declined due to changes in how we manage the habitats in the parks and open spaces.

There are already many excellent projects under way to help our pollinators. Hogganfield Park Local Nature Reserve has been chosen as a pollinator demonstration site for its range of wildflower meadows, orchard, bee bank and wildlife-friendly gardens. Bee banks have also been created at Alexandra Park, Springburn Park and Cardowan Moss. Glasgow has over 65 hectares of wildflower meadows managed for biodiversity and over 80 hectares of farmland are also managed for meadows, hedgerows, trees and wildlife-friendly ponds. Work at the Glasgow Flower Power nursery in Pollok Country Park with the Countryside Rangers includes the collection of thousands of native wildflower seeds, growing of wildflower seed by volunteers and the distribution of the grown, local provenance plants to community projects.

The Glasgow Pollinator Plan and Glasgow Local Biodiversity Action Plan can be accessed on the GCC website at:

www.glasgow.gov.uk/biodiversity

Eight of us took part on this overcast evening visit to Overtoun Park, which was one of Glasgow's district parks between 1976 and 1996. It had been gifted to Rutherglen in 1908 by Lord Overtoun of White's chemical company which had previously polluted the land. It contains two B-listed monuments, both made by Walter Macfarlane & Co. at their Saracen foundry – a cast iron bandstand presented to Rutherglen in 1914 by Sir James Knight of Woodburn and a fountain originally erected in 1897 in Rutherglen Main Street to celebrate Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee and moved to the park in 1911 (the Queen's bust was removed in 1992).



Lawson's (left) and Sawara Cypress (right)

The park contains an eclectic mix of trees, both coniferous and deciduous, one or two varieties of species and some interesting natural regeneration. We followed a convoluted route around the park starting with the avenue of lime trees that contains common lime (*Tilia x europaea*) mainly but also occasional broad-leaved lime (*Tilia platyphyllos*). The opportunity was taken to observe the differences in the trunks (many epicormic shoots in the former and virtually none in the latter), as well as leaf texture and shape. An unusually large number of Sawara cypresses (*Chamaecyparis pisifera*) occur in the park, as well as many of the more common Lawson cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*) [the former possesses juvenile or semi-juvenile foliage] (1) and including the occasional glaucous Lawson, aff. 'Triomf von Boskoop'.

Bug hotels have been set up within a wildflower garden which has yet to become established. Soil fertility may be an inhibitory factor. A fine Tibetan cherry here displayed its attractive glossy, bronze bark, in contrast to a row of older Tibetan cherries in which this feature is lost. We had a debate about the i/d of a pair of hawthorns that possessed only occasional long thorns and simple, entire leaves without lobes. The relative lack of thorns indicated that these trees are more likely to be hybrid cockspur thorns (*Crataegus x lavalleyi* 'Carrierei') rather than the rare cockspur thorn (*Crataegus crus-galli*).



Tibetan cherry bark



Douglas fir cones

The park contains single examples of conifers such as European larch (*Larix decidua*), Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) and deodar cedar (*Cedrus deodara*). Just outside the northeast gate grows a cherry-crab apple (*Malus x robusta*), a hybrid of Siberian and plum-leaved crabs, the fruit of which remains on the tree until next spring (and helped to identify this specimen).



Cherry crab apple

Also towards this corner of the park are located a few field maples (*Acer campestre*), the only maple native to Britain, as far north as Northumberland in northeast England. Near the west gate is a young memorial tree, a red maple (*Acer rubrum*), the maple leaf of Canada, which is quite rare in Glasgow. In addition, near here, grows a fairly unusual cultivar of Sawara cypress with many thread-like hanging shoots, *C. pisifera* 'Filifera'. (5)



Sawara cypress 'Filifera'

Within the park grow a few rows and some single examples of purple-leaved trees, such as rows of purple Norway maples (*Acer platanoides* aff. 'Crimson King'), purple sycamores (*Acer pseudoplatanus* f. *purpureum*) and individual purple Myrobalan plums (*Prunus cerasifera* 'Nigra') as well as some very fine individual copper beeches (*Fagus sylvatica* f. *purpurea*). One fine example near the children's play area is worth a measure.

Their lower levels of chlorophyll mean that they tend to grow more slowly than green

beeches and so tend to be smaller.

Some more recent plantings of red oaks (*Quercus rubra*) and a single dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*), however, are struggling and need to be properly supported. We took the opportunity to observe the differences between the very white, betulin soaked bark of the white West Himalayan birch (*Betula utilis* var. *jacquemontii*) from high in the northwest Himalayas where the climate is dry, cold and the daylight is strong and the more familiar white of native silver birches (*Betula pendula*) nearby.



Himalayan birch 'Jacquemontii'

Near the children's play area also grows a red horse chestnut (*Aesculus x carnea*) displaying its canker prone bark, caused possibly by an RNA viral infection. Genetically this tree is interesting as an example of an allopolyploid. Its two parents, the European horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) and the East American buckeye (*Aesculus pavia*), produced sterile offspring whose chromosomes then doubled thus producing this fertile tetraploid hybrid.

Finally we moved over to the central Overtoun Drive entrance (north side of the park) near where can be found a small group of obviously naturally regenerated broad-leaved limes (*Tilia platyphyllos*), a good find as the seedlings of this tree are pretty uncommon on the southside of Glasgow for some as yet unclearly defined reason.

We were generously entertained by Jean Miller, who lives nearby, to a post-visit tea for which we are most grateful. Thanks are also owed to Stephen Docherty and Angus Mackay for their helpful contributions to the evening.

Changes in GNHS Council and Office-Bearers

At the March 2018 AGM, the following changes were agreed:

Election of Council Members

- Chris McInerny was elected as president
- Roger Downie was elected as vice-president
- Barbara Mable was elected as vice-president, University liaison and BLB chair
- Sandra Hutchinson and Lauren Lochrie stood down, and Bob Gray and Erik Paterson were elected as councillor members
- Avril Walkinshaw was elected as social convenor
- Iain Wilkie was elected as Editor of TGN, with Ruth Maclachlan as Assistant Editor

General Correspondence to the General Secretary: Mary Child

Summer Social 2018

This year's summer social will take place on Tuesday 19th June. We will be meeting at Oran Mor, top of Byres Road, G12 8QX at 6.30 for 7. We have booked the lovely private room which we used last year and overlooks the Kibble Palace. There will be a varied three course menu which looks delicious.

There will be an opportunity before the meal to visit the fern and orchid houses at the Botanic Gardens and talk to the experts who grow these plants. If you would like to join us for the ferns and orchids please meet at the main gate of the Botanic Gardens at 5.00pm and also indicate on the form below as we need numbers for the visit to the glasshouses.

The cost is £25 per person. Please complete the form below and return it to Mary Child before 31st May

.....

I/We wish to attend the Summer Social on Tuesday 19th June 2018

NAME/S

.....

ADDRESS

.....

PHONE NO EMAIL ADDRESS

Amount enclosed £..... (Cheques made out to Glasgow Natural History Society)

Visiting the ferns and orchids at 5pm?.....

Please complete this form and send, along with a cheque (£25 per person) to Mary Child