

# GLASGOW NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

April 2019

David Palmar  
(Newsletter Editor)

Next Newsletter Deadline  
22 July 2019

email:  
[newsletter@gnhs.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@gnhs.org.uk)

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Website: [www.gnhs.org.uk/](http://www.gnhs.org.uk/)

## 2019 Spring Meetings – temporarily in the Graham Kerr Building

### April

Tuesday 9th

7.00pm Graham Kerr Building Lecture Theatre 1

Lecture 1: **The Pantanal: the world's biggest wetland**; Tony Payne

Lecture 2: **Biodiversity monitoring on the University of Glasgow campuses**;

Lauren Blackman and Ivan Casas Gomez-Uribarri

### May

Tuesday 14th

7.00pm Graham Kerr Building Lecture Theatre 1 (jointly with Paisley and Hamilton Natural History Societies)

Lecture: **John Russell Malloch and Alexander Cuthbertson – two Glasgow naturalists who made a global impact on dipterology, the study of flies**;

Geoff Hancock.

### June

Tuesday 11th

Summer Social: see end of Newsletter for details and booking form

Members are welcome to join the speaker(s) and Council at pre-lecture meals, normally held in Cafe Andaluz. The cost is £10 per head, subsidised by the BLB fund.

### Winter Programme 2019-20

It is time to assemble next session's programme of evening talks- so please send any ideas you have for speakers/topics to [roger.downie@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:roger.downie@glasgow.ac.uk) as soon as you can.

A reminder of the timing and format of most meetings:

1. There will normally be only one talk each evening (occasionally two short talks).
2. There will be time between 7 and 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).

**April 2019**

Sat 27th, 11am, Uplawmoor. Mixed interest with focus on mosses and liverworts. Meet at Uplawmoor Hotel car park, NS 436552.

From Glasgow take the M77, then the A726 and the A736 through Barrhead. After Neilston, take one of the turnings to the left to Uplawmoor. Bring lunch or snack at Hotel. Contact James Milner-White.

**May**

Sun 12th, 11.45 for 12 noon, Cumbernauld Glen, SWT reserve, bluebell woods. Meet at car park at allotments, NS 7714375964, G67 3JG. Leave M80 at Junction 6, follow A8011 and turn off at Cumbernauld Theatre. Keep straight on to allotments. A Project Officer will lead us between 12 and 2pm. Members can extend the visit if wished. Plans will change if winds exceed 30mph. Paths, some sloping, stout shoes/boots best. Bring lunch or snack. Contact Alison Moss.

Thurs, 16th, 7pm, Newlands Park, Carlawerock Road entrance, north side. NS 570607. Mainly trees. Contact Bob Gray.

Sat 18th, shore walk (low tide at 6.15), White Bay Cumbrae. Meet at Nardini at the Moorings, (the one at the ferry – NS 201594), in Largs. Meet from 3.30 at the cafe and aim to catch the 4.15 ferry to Cumbrae. Destination is White Bay, NS 177591. Wellington boots best and some containers for collecting animals useful. Plans can be flexible so long as the leader knows. Last ferry back is at 8.30pm. Contact Mary Child.

**June**

Sun, 2nd, 11am, Cadder, woodlands and heaths, local nature conservation site. Mixed interest. Meet and park at road near Cadder Church, NS 616723, G64 3QA, by Forth and Clyde Canal. From Glasgow take A803 through Springburn and Bishopbriggs, turn left just before Strathkelvin Retail Park roundabout to Cadder Church and Cawder Golf Course. Paths and open ground, strong footwear best. Site lends itself to 2 halves. Bring lunch if staying all day. Contact James Milner-White.

Sun, 9th, 11am, Stevenston Dunes LNR and Ardeer beach. Mixed interest, birds, insects and plants. Meet at beach car park, S of Ardeer Primary School, Clark Crescent (off Shore Road), KA20 3LZ, NS 267408. Leave A78 at Stevenston, B738, take road signposted to Ardeer beach and dunes. Plan is to spend morning at Stevenston beach and dunes and then drive a few hundred yards to Ardeer Point for afternoon at Ardeer. Stout shoes or boots best and bring lunch. Contact Gill Smart.

Tues 11, Summer Social, 7.00 for 7.30pm, Summer Social, Hilton Grosvenor Glasgow (meet there), preceded by nearby excursion, details later. Contact Mary Child. 3 courses plus tea and coffee, £26.50. Further details by email. For booking and payment contact Mary Child.

Fri 21st - Sun 23rd, Tree Weekend, Dunkeld. For booking and all arrangements, contact Bob Gray.

Sun 30th, 10.30, Strathleven House and River Leven. Mixed interest, plants, birds and insects. Meet at Strathleven House, NS 397781. Take A82 through Dumbarton. At Lomondgate roundabout take A813 for Jamestown. At 2nd roundabout take Vale of Leven Industrial Estate. After half a mile, turn right into drive of Strathleven House to car park round the back of house. Mostly on paths, but stout shoes or boots best, bring snack or lunch. Contact Pam Murdoch.

## **July**

Thurs 4th, 7.00pm, Knightswood Park. Mainly trees. Meet at NS 529694, Archerhill Road entrance, south side of the park at the west end of the duck pond. Contact Bob Gray.

Sun 7th, 11am, Kilmahew, Castle and Estate. Mixed interest.

From Glasgow take A814 through Dumbarton and Cardross. In Cardross, after pedestrian lights then shops, turn right into Muirend Road. At T junction turn right into Barrs Road. Go up Barrs Road until after it becomes unsurfaced G82 5NG. Very limited parking after bend on Barrs Road at NS 346783. Stout shoes or boots and bring lunch. Contact James Milner-White.

Sun 14th, 11am, Redmoss Meadows, Milton of Campsie. Plants and insects in site of considerable biodiversity. From B757, Birdston Road, turn into Redmoss Road, drive to end. Park at end of Redmoss Road where it joins Laburnum Drive, NS 646762, G66 8HS. Stout shoes or boots best. Bring snack or lunch. This is not a huge site, but any biological recording we can do will be useful for the future of this site. Contact Alison Moss.

## **August**

Sun 11th, 10.30, Whitelee Wind Farm Country Park. Mixed interest, plants, insects, birds etc. Meet at Visitor Centre, NS 529490, G76 0QQ. From M77 southbound, exit at junction 6, turn left on to A77 then right on to B764, following sign for Whitelee Wind farm. There are facilities at the Centre and we will be led by a Ranger. Options will depend on weather and preference of group, either specially diverse habitats accessed from centre and/ or Dickman's Glen. Stout footwear or boots and clothing for an exposed site. Bring lunch or snack. Contact Alison Moss.

Sat 17th, 9.30 onwards. Cashel Bioblitz, mixed interest and your own expertise. Cashel Forest car park is at NS 398940 (small charge for parking); post code of Centre G63 0AW. Meet at Cashel Native Forest Centre, NS 399940, time to be confirmed. Take B837 Drymen to Balmaha. Cashel is 2.5 miles north of Balmaha, on the road to Rowardennan. Strong footwear required, bring lunch. Organiser Michael Osborne.

Joint meetings with Clyde and Argyll Fungus Group (CAFG) will be notified in the autumn.

If transport is required or public transport is being used, please contact the GNHS leader/ contact for help or to arrange a pick-up point. Also feel free to attend any excursion for a half day or even for only a short time. Just let the leader know.

Most of our planned sites have reasonable mobile signal, so you can always find the group.

## **Kelvin at the Kibble Exhibition**

**Lyn Dunachie**

The Kelvin Biodiversity Network, which includes GNHS and other organisations interested in the natural history of the river, will mount a display in the Kibble Glasshouse corridor, Glasgow Botanic Gardens, between 14 May and 28 May 2019. This year the theme of the exhibition is Pollution and how it affects living organisms around the river.

Organisations taking part with GNHS and Glasgow Museums will be Friends of the River Kelvin, Trust for Conservation Volunteers and Citizen Science, RSPB, SWT, Friends of the Earth, SEPA, Friends of Glasgow Botanic Gardens, and Upstream Battle. Scottish Water will provide a display explaining the ongoing upgrade of the sewage system taking place along the Kelvin.

It is hoped that on Saturday 18 May an event will be organised to involve visitors to the Botanic Gardens with the issues highlighted in the exhibition. Volunteers from GNHS to help with this would be welcome. If you would like to be involved contact [Lyn.dunachie@uwclub.net](mailto:Lyn.dunachie@uwclub.net)

## **New Homes for Flora of Lanarkshire**

At Glasgow Natural History Society we were very proud when *The Flora of Lanarkshire* was published in 2016. *The Flora of Lanarkshire* by the late Peter Macpherson was the first comprehensive flora of this Scottish county.

Probably many members reading this will have bought their own copies of the Flora and will know what a valuable resource it is. Peter was the official plant recorder for Lanarkshire VC 77 for over 35 years. His Flora represented decades of meticulous research and field work and contained historical and current records of plants growing in wild situations across this very diverse county.

A number of copies of the Flora were designated for Peter's family and they very kindly donated these to the Society. And, at the beginning of this year we still had these books stored in the Graham Kerr Building. Not a very useful place to be. So we approached the Education Departments in the Councils in the areas covered by Peter's Flora to ask if they would be interested in having a copy of the book for each of their High Schools. I am happy to report that both Glasgow and South Lanarkshire took us up on our offer. I delivered 35 copies to Glasgow Council and 21 to South Lanarkshire Council.

It's good to know that the Floras will be in school libraries, and Peter's passion for Botany might just be passed on to young botanists.

## '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 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.

<b>Description</b>	<b>Availability</b>	<b>In care of</b>
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 op.)*	in use	Richard Weddle
Heath moth trap (battery op.)*	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 <sup>#</sup>	Stewart White
Torch (1million CP)	often available	Richard Weddle
Hanna 98129 pH/ Conductivity/ Temperature Tester	in use	Roger Downie
Remote IR temperature sensor	enquire <sup>#</sup>	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

Join Glasgow Museums, RSPB Scotland and many other partners on **Sunday 28th April, 11am-4pm at Kelvingrove** to discover and record the amazing local wildlife. There will be walks, talks and fun activities to take part in. We will look back at how the area has changed over time, as we race against the clock to record all the wildlife we can. This fun day will consist of:

### **Dippy:**

The Diplodocus cast is in the centre hall of Kelvingrove till the 6th May. There is a lot of interest in Dippy and his presence has significantly increased footfall in the museum especially during weekends and school holidays. This is the only Scottish location Dippy is visiting, and the visitor numbers have surpassed any other location on the tour so far. The Natural History Museum have requested that we use the dinosaur's tour to highlight local biodiversity and local wildlife organisations to increase people's connection to nature, so this event is part of the official programme for the tour.

### **Wildlife walks and activities:**

We will be looking to run lots of nature activities and walks for adults and families as part of the day but also to get as many biological records as we can. We are hoping that our wildlife partners will run activities with the public to search for wildlife. The activities confirmed so far are a fungal foray, a bird walk (RSPB), a dead wood invertebrate search (TCV), and some pond dipping (FSC).

### **Biological Recording:**

This day will be part of a global competition to be the city to collect the most biological records as possible so all finds will be recorded. We are also hoping to get the public involved in this through all the above activities. See the links for details.

<http://citynaturechallenge.org/>

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2019-glasgow>

### **Interactive Fungus Sculpture:**

Kew Gardens are supplying us with an exciting sculpture of a fungus that is 8m x 3m. This will be set up outside the museum for visitors to engage with. Kew Gardens will be using this to engage the public with their fungus project. The fungus will be set up under the trees outside the Kelvingrove restaurant.

### **Wildlife Stands:**

Wildlife charities and local organisations and groups who are interested in wildlife will be set-up in Gazebos outside Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum opposite the fungus sculpture near the car park. These stands will have information about the organisation and a small activity to engage with the public.

GNHS will have a table - we'll be looking for a rota of volunteers to 'man' it for an hour or two each during the day.

### **Fungus models and ID lab:**

In the Education Suites we will have an array of fabulous fungus sculptures where you can meet the experts and learn more about fungi. We will also have a microscopes and experts on invertebrates - and other groups - where you can take your finds for a closer look under the microscope.

Organisations confirmed at the moment are:

RSPB Scotland

Glasgow Museums

The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)

Clyde & Argyll Fungus Group

South East Scotland Fungus Group

Grow wild

Kew Gardens fungus volunteers

Glasgow Natural History Society

Glasgow Raingarden - Central Scotland Green Network Trust

Field Studies Council (FSC)

Still to confirm but showing interest:

Hunterian Museum

Froglife

Clyde Amphibian and Reptile group

Biological Recording in Scotland (BRISC)

National Museums of Scotland

Glasgow Botanic Gardens

Butterfly Conservation SW Scotland group

## 2019 Subscriptions

**Richard Weddle**

Subscriptions fell due on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2019 (except for those who have joined since the start of the winter session). A subscription renewal form is enclosed for those who haven't yet paid; email recipients have received a separate reminder by email. We would be grateful if you could pay your subscription as soon as possible, to save us having to send further reminders.

## Scottish Tropical Ecology and Biology Student Meeting 2019



The Scottish Tropical Ecology and Biology Student Meeting 2019 took place at the University of Glasgow, Graham Kerr Building on 16 March. The day started off with Dr Luke Powell's plenary on birds, bats and chocolate trees. Dr Powell spoke about his research into attaining sustainable agriculture through DNA metabarcoding in African cacao agroforestry systems.

The day proceeded with a series of 16 talks from students, who came from across Scotland, including the University of Glasgow, the University of Edinburgh, the University of Stirling and the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh. The meeting was also attended by individuals from the various organizations, and we saw a total of 65 meeting attendees on the day.



We saw individuals across all levels of academia, including undergraduate, masters and PhD students, and postdoctoral researchers established in their field. Topics covered on the day ranged from research on bats and their associated implications for human health and disease, anthropogenic impacts on frog and bird populations, as well as a series of presentations on plant genetics.

We also saw a deviation from the more traditional ecological and biological research, with a presentation on political and social ecology and its implications for fire management in savannahs. The research presented took place in countries including Belize, Borneo, Cameroon, Ecuador, Egypt, Guyana, Hong Kong, Trinidad, Peru, Yemen and more, and of course in laboratories across Scotland.



The day included an interactive midday quiz on tropical ecology and biology, which was a well-received break amongst a long day of talks. STEB 2019 provided attendees and presenters with the opportunity to share their research findings, both in the formal presentations given, as well as in a more informal capacity during the coffee and lunch breaks on the day which the GNHS kindly paid for.

The day ended with a plenary talk from Dr Daniel Streicker, on his important work towards science-based solutions to bat disease transmission. The diversity of fields covered at STEB, in terms of research questions, approaches and geographical locations was truly impressive and inspiring for all the attendees. It would not have been possible without the funding from IBAHCM and the Glasgow Natural History Society (The Blodwen Lloyd Binns Bequest), and we extend our deepest gratitude to both these entities for their support.

**Next Newsletter - copy to David Palmar by 22nd July 2019 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).





**4–9th March, 2019**  
**Scottish Centre for Ecology and the**  
**Natural Environment, Glasgow, Scotland.**



***Delegates and keynote speakers on the bank of Loch Lomond***

*NoWPaS*, the International (formerly **Nordic**) **W**orkshop for **PhD** and post-doctoral fellows working on **anadromous Salmonids**, is an annual workshop which consists almost entirely of early career researchers (ECRs) with a focus on PhD students. The workshop, which is organised by a committee of PhD students, allows a small group ECRs to present their research programme and ideas, along with any results that they might have already collected. The workshop is mobile in that each year it is hosted in a new country. In the past, it has been held in Norway, Finland, Canada and the United Kingdom. The *NoWPaS 2019* meeting was held in the scenic Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park, Scotland, at the Scottish Centre for Ecology and the Natural Environment (SCENE), the University of Glasgow's operating field research station. Twenty-nine Masters and PhD students, and Post-doctoral fellows attended *NoWPaS 2019*, along with four keynote speakers and four invited speakers, from 14 countries.

Presentations were separated into three broad categories – Ecology and Ecosystems, Conservation and Management, and Salmonics and Physiology (sponsored by the Fisheries Society of the British Isles). We were honoured to be joined by four prolific keynote speakers who could talk on one of each category. Professor Neil Metcalfe from the University of

Glasgow discussed recent research from his group on the ecological impacts of individual variation in metabolic rates in juvenile Atlantic salmon. Dr Lisa Crozier from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Northwest Fisheries Science Center, presented work about monitoring the vulnerability of salmon to climate change, focusing on rivers in the north-western United States of America. Dr Holly Shiels from the University of Manchester talked about the effects that elevated temperature and toxicants have on trout hearts and cardiac rhythms. The final keynote talk was delivered by Dr Phil McGinnity from University College Cork, and covered a wide range of applications for molecular methods in studying salmonids, including investigating introgression between wild fish and hatchery escapees.

In addition to our four keynotes, we were also honoured to have four invited speakers attend and present at the workshop. Professor Felicity Huntingford gave a riveting presentation on how smart fish are, and how that matters to both researchers and recreational anglers. Professor Colin Bean from the University of Glasgow and the Senior Science and Policy Advisor for Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) discussed the ups and downs of salmonid management in Scotland. Professor Jon Grey of the Wild Trout Trust (WTT), a major sponsor of this year's *NoWPaS* workshop, presented work carried out by the Trust in restoring river connectivity, and highlighted the ability to do so on a budget. Our final invited speaker was Professor Colin Adams from the University of Glasgow and director of SCENE, who delivered a talk on the adaptive radiation seen in the Arctic charr, considered to be one of the most morphologically plastic vertebrates in the world. The three categories were further filled by the excellent presentations of our ECR delegates. These presentations predominantly related to Atlantic salmon, but also covered brown/sea trout and Arctic charr. The topics ranged from population and individual scale genetics to gut-microbiome and physiology, and from movement and behaviour ecology to long-term trends in salmonid population fluctuations from historical datasets.

Further to enabling ECRs to meet and exchange information, a key aspect of the *NoWPaS* ethos is to allow delegates to experience and learn about the salmonid research carried out in the host country, and to immerse themselves into the culture. Prior to the start of *NoWPaS 2019*, delegates were taken to the town of Pitlochry, home to the Marine Scotland Science Freshwater Fisheries Laboratory, as well as the Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) hydropower dam, complete with a pool-and-orifice fishway installed in 1951. During our visit, SSE biologist Alastair Stephen delivered a talk on the history of the dam and fishway, and detailed the current practices being used in Scotland for monitoring salmonids in rivers. While in Pitlochry, delegates were also treated to a tour of the local Blair Athol whisky distillery. Whisky distilleries are a fundamental part of Scotland's culture and are often associated with salmon-producing rivers. Further activities involved a hill-walking history tour of southern Loch Lomond, fly fishing tutorials and trials in Loch Lomond, and an evening of traditional Scottish dancing known as a Ceillidh. After the conclusion of very successful workshop, the committee for *NoWPaS 2020* was formed by volunteers from the 2019 delegates. The new committee is already hard at work to deliver an expectedly great *NoWPaS 2020*, which we are excited to announce will be held in Laugarvatn, Iceland (dates TBA).

If you are a PhD student or an early career post-doc and are interested in attending *NoWPaS 2020*, please follow us on Twitter (@NoWPaS), Instagram (@nowpas), or request to join our Facebook group (NoWPaS-Salmonid Network). We will be posting updates about how to register later in the year. The gripping enthusiasm for keeping the *NoWPaS* momentum going at the end of the meeting guarantees that this workshop continues to be a favourite among salmonid biologists! One of the main principles of this workshop is that it is free to attend for all participants (keynote speakers included). Transport costs are covered for the invited scientists, along with accommodation and food for all participants. To our knowledge, no early stage researcher has ever been unable to attend a NoWPaS workshop due to financial constraints. This is something we are extremely proud of and this principle would not be possible without the generous support of all our sponsors, shown below.

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Science and Technology for Scotland

## PhotoSCENE 2018 - Natural History Photographic Competition D Palmar

The PhotoSCENE competition, sponsored by GNHS and Glasgow University Institute of Biodiversity, Animal Health and Comparative Medicine, aims to promote interest in Natural History and the work of SCENE (Scottish Centre for Ecology and the Natural Environment, the University's field station at Rowardennan), promote linkage between the Institute and the Society and provide pictures for publicity. All entrants are thanked for making the effort to enter the competition. Prizes totalling £800 per year have been awarded at the Society's photographic nights. Since the first competition in 2011, and together with talks from members, the competition has provided us with an interesting photographic evening each February. This year there were 155 entries from 37 people. Here are the first prizewinners:



Fungi by Helen Costin



Southern double-collared sunbird by Chiara Crestani



Arctic terns by Freya Coursey



Electrofishing by Isabel Moore



Purple Saxifrage by Jaime Villacampa



Mute swan by Yasmin Parr

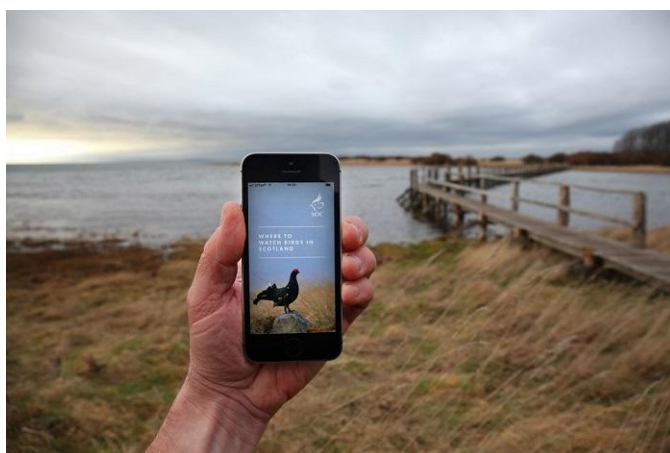
## **Where to Watch Birds in Scotland; a free mobile app developed by SOC for Android & Apple devices** **Jane Allison**

Glasgow Natural History Society (GNHS) members may be aware that the society's BLB Funding Committee awarded a grant of £1,000 towards the publication of the second edition of the popular and now out of print *A Guide to Bird Watching in the Clyde Area*, published by Marion Osler and Cliff Baister.

For a number of reasons, the publication proved difficult to progress and latterly, on hearing of the Scottish Ornithologists' Club's (SOC) plan to produce a free mobile app covering where to go bird watching across Scotland, Marion and the Clyde Branch of the SOC felt the funds might be better invested into this project. The branch wrote to GNHS to see if this change of use of the grant might be acceptable to them, which happily it was. Out of the blue, I received an email from Liz Parsons, Clyde Branch Treasurer, making me aware of the GNHS' kind donation to the app development project which we were delighted to receive.

A year on, and nearly three years in the making overall, I'm thrilled to announce the forthcoming launch of the app which is called *Where to Watch Birds in Scotland*.

This free and unique guide, available for both Apple and Android devices, will mean that for the first time ever, enthusiasts about the country's bird life will be able to download an app to discover the best places to see and enjoy birds around the country.



We're on target to launch with details of more than 300 of Scotland's top bird watching spots, but new sites will continue to be added and existing ones updated as required.

For each location featured, users can find out information such as: directions to the site; the best season to visit; how to navigate the site; what birds to look out for; recent sightings in the area as uploaded to BirdTrack; rare/unusual bird species previously recorded at the site; how to submit bird sightings to the Local Bird Recorder and/or to BirdTrack and other notable wildlife spectacles to look out for. What's more, users can access information on each of approx. 550 bird species (extracted from the Club's landmark publication, the *Birds of Scotland*) and can use the app's search facility to discover the locations where these species are likely to be seen.

The app is a wonderful demonstration of what (largely) volunteers working together can achieve. The project is the result of a collaboration between the steering group alongside a network of local co-ordinators and contributors around the country who prepared the site accounts. A list of contributors will be shared on the SOC's website after launch [www.the-soc.org.uk/app](http://www.the-soc.org.uk/app)

In addition to the donation received from GNHS, the project has been financed thanks to the generous assistance of the SOC's Birds of Scotland Fund – supporting

ornithological publications and special projects in Scotland – with additional funding from legacies left to the Club by members.

To find out more about the project and to sign up to a mailing list to be notified when the app launches and for future updates, please visit [www.the-soc.org.uk/app](http://www.the-soc.org.uk/app)  
We would like to thank GNHS once again for their very valued support and hope that members will greatly enjoy using this new resource.

Jane Allison  
SOC Development Officer  
[development@the-soc.org.uk](mailto:development@the-soc.org.uk)

### **John Mitchell (1934-2019)**

From David Clugston:

West of Scotland Naturalists and friends will be saddened to learn of John's death on the 16th March following a short illness. His life encompassed two main interests, firstly as a musician and secondly as a nature conservationist. He arrived in Glasgow from his native Peterborough in the early 1960's and quickly established himself as a lecturer and summer tutor for Glasgow University's Further Education Department. He specialised in wildlife, particularly botany and ornithology and also became an authority on the local history of Loch Lomondside. He undertook annual monitoring of the breeding success of Peregrines, Ravens and Rooks over several decades and always ensured the results were published in a variety of journals.

For over 27 years he was Senior Reserve Warden at the Loch Lomond N.N.R. and subsequently as an Area Officer for S.N.H. and was involved with the setting up of Scotland's first National Park.

John was a gifted writer who had the ability to engage the reader by making his chosen subject really interesting and not too technical. His long- term friendship with the late Derek Ratcliffe of the Nature Conservancy resulted in him being asked to write *Loch Lomondside* (NN88.2001) in the much- celebrated *New Naturalist* series.

He was awarded an Honorary MA by the University of Stirling (1991) and the Fellowship of the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (1994). As a very long- standing member of the Glasgow Natural History Society he was recently awarded Honorary Membership for his outstanding contribution in writing over fifty papers/notes for *The Glasgow Naturalist*.

John was a thoroughly nice guy and very good company. Although tending to shun the limelight he was always happy to pass on the wealth of both his natural history knowledge and increasingly on the history of the Drymen area where he lived with his wife Sandra.

**From Margaret Stead:**

GNHS has lost such an important contributor now that he is no longer there. His intelligent enquiring mind never seemed to age and conversations with him never failed to be packed with interesting information.

**From Norman Tait:**

His many slides and prints which passed through my computer illustrated his prodigious output on local history and natural history topics in *The Glasgow Naturalist*, *Forth Naturalist* and publications produced by the Drymen Historical Society. He also took us on local botanical field trips around Loch Lomondside and introduced us to many new and interesting plants. I



Flowering Rushes near Balmaha, by Norman Tait

think that the most memorable was a site near Balmaha to see some spectacular Flowering Rushes. He will be greatly missed by all.



An amusing picture of John Mitchell under a butterfly net, taken by Norman Tait. The midges were terrible that day on a dragonfly outing at Rowardennan some years ago.

A full obituary will appear in *The Glasgow Naturalist*.

**Summer Social 2019**

This year’s summer social will take place on Tuesday 11th June. We will be meeting for a local walking tour first – to be confirmed by email or on the website.

Thereafter we shall repair to the Hilton Grosvenor Hotel for a meal, at 7 for 7.30pm 3 courses plus tea and coffee, £26.50.

For booking and payment contact Mary Child.

Please complete the form below and return it to Mary Child before May 31st

.....

I/We wish to attend the Summer Social on Tuesday 11th June 2019

NAME/S .....

.....

ADDRESS .....

.....

PHONE NO ..... EMAIL ADDRESS .....

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

Walking touring first? .....yes / no.....

Please complete this form and send, along with a cheque (£26.50 per person) to Mary Child.