



# GLASGOW NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

August 2015

David Palmar  
(Newsletter Editor)

Next Newsletter Deadline  
22 October 2015

GNHS is a Registered  
Scottish Charity  
[www.gnhs.org.uk/](http://www.gnhs.org.uk/)

## Winter Meetings Programme 2015-16

Meetings in the **Boyd Orr Building**, Glasgow University, unless stated otherwise.

### 2015

#### September

**Thursday 3rd - Urban Citizen Science Conference** (not a GNHS meeting) but see article below.

#### **Tuesday 29th 7.30pm Zoology Museum, Graham Kerr Building.**

**Exhibition meeting:** Members' natural history exhibits. Wine and nibbles. Let Maggie Reilly know your table or board requirements (0141 330 4772; [maggie.reilly@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:maggie.reilly@glasgow.ac.uk))

#### October

**Tuesday 13th 6.30pm Tutorial:** Close-up photography of nature: from phone camera to microscope lens (Goodfellow Lecture); Steve Campbell.  
7.30pm **Lecture:** Orchids and their pollination; David Menzies.

#### November

**Tuesday 10th 7.00pm Graham Kerr Building** Lecture Theatre 1. Giving sparrows a sparkle: house sparrows, silver smithing and surveying. Katherine Jones, Ross MacLeod and Malcolm Appleby (jointly with RSPB Glasgow). See below for details.

**Wednesday 18th 5.00pm Graham Kerr Building** Lecture Theatre 1, **Blodwen Lloyd Binns Lecture** (title to come); Pat Monaghan.

**Thursday 26th 7.30pm Bower Building**, University of Glasgow **Lecture:** Scotland's remarkable mosses and liverworts – an internationally important flora; Gordon Rothero. Jointly with Friends of Glasgow Botanic Gardens.

#### December

**Tuesday 8th, Zoology Museum, Graham Kerr Building:** Christmas buffet dinner – details and booking form in November Newsletter; including **Lecture:** London Airport, Whitehall and the Palace (no, not what you think!), by David Palmar

## Science in the city: Urban citizen science

Hannah Grist (RSPB)

Rather than encouraging people to get out into the wilds of Britain, increasingly citizen science projects are being brought in to where the people are: our towns and cities. Working on citizen science in urban areas brings a new range of challenges, but there are also huge opportunities for mass participation in ecological science, including from people who never leave the comfort of their own home.

Held by British Ecological Society in partnership with RSPB Scotland and the University of Glasgow, this one day meeting on **3 September 2015** will bring together people interested in finding out more about the current projects that are running, the pitfalls and opportunities of citizen projects in urban areas, and some of the new technology that makes this possible.

The day will have three themed sessions:

- Technology for science in the city
- Citizen science as a tool for urban engagement and education
- Challenges overcome and future developments.

If you are a researcher and are interested in presenting your work at the meeting or would like to use the opportunity to run a short workshop, we have slots available. Please email a 300 word abstract of your talk or workshop to [Hannah Grist](mailto:hannah.grist@rspb.org.uk) as soon as possible.

See more at: [www.britishecologicalsociety.org/getting-involved/special-interest-groups/citizen-science/#sthash.cU4PvPSs.dpuf](http://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/getting-involved/special-interest-groups/citizen-science/#sthash.cU4PvPSs.dpuf)

BES Meetings are rarely held in Scotland, so it is an excellent opportunity at which to present in a friendly environment, and meet others involved in citizen science. We can also offer a discount for individuals or community groups wishing to attend to find out more, as we are hoping to get a mix of academics and citizen scientists involved.

[Registration is live now!](#) (ends 23rd August) for this event in the St Andrew's Building 11 Eldon Street G3 6NH University of Glasgow. There is a ticket fee for this meeting.

## Giving Sparrows a Sparkle: House Sparrows, silver-smithing and surveying

Everyone seems to love the humble house sparrow and the combination of a citizen science project and a silversmith's interest is creating a sparkle around the species in Glasgow. For the past 18 months a collaboration of RSPB Scotland and the University of Glasgow has been using a network of volunteers to survey Glasgow's house sparrow population. Following initial results RSPB Scotland is starting to put in place conservation measures for the species across the city. As well as inspiring this citizen science project, House Sparrows have turned artist's muse for Malcolm Appleby MBE, celebrated engraver and silversmith, who has created silver jewellery to raise money for the conservation of Glasgow's sparrows and this talk celebrates the collaboration.

After an introductory talk about the Glasgow House sparrow project from Katherine Jones of RSPB Scotland and Ross MacLeod of Glasgow University, Malcolm will speak about his work as a silversmith and engraver. Malcolm's work is exhibited in the Victoria & Albert Museum and the British Museum and his commissions are in both Downing Street and Bute House, official residence of the First Minister. He is considered to be one of the most original and highly skilled craftsmen working in Britain today. Malcolm works from his studio in Aberfeldy with the constant companionship of the house sparrows in his garden.

For more info see: [http://www.scottish-gallery.co.uk/artist/malcolm\\_appleby](http://www.scottish-gallery.co.uk/artist/malcolm_appleby)

## **Great British Beach Clean-Up**

**Roger Downie**

Beachwatch is the Marine Conservation Society's national beach cleaning and litter surveying programme - helping people all around the UK to care for their coastline with the Great British Beach Clean being the flagship event. Any members wishing to help with the Marine Conservation Society's beach clean ups on the weekend of 18-21st September should consult their website for information on local beaches.

<http://www.mcsuk.org/beachwatch/events/map>

According to this map there are events in the west of Scotland at Lunderston Bay (19th Sept) and on Arrochar Shore and Meigle Bay, Skelmorlie (20th Sept). You can sign up for an event at [www.mcsuk.org/beachwatch](http://www.mcsuk.org/beachwatch).

### **Edna Stewart – an Appreciation**

**Pam Murdoch**

We were sorry to hear of the death of Edna Stewart last weekend. She had not been well for some months.

When I first joined the Glasgow Natural History Society twenty years ago and met Edna, she was a long standing and active member of the Society, member of Council and soon Botany Convenor. Once she became a BSBI Recorder her commitments prevented her from participating so frequently in GNHS activities but she always looked forward to weekend excursions when her knowledge and identification skills proved invaluable.

Her loyalty to the GNHS was only part of her life however. In her younger days she was an experienced mountaineer and hill walker and a keen canoeist, visiting much of Scotland and acquiring a wide knowledge and love of the Highlands. She usually drove north at the weekends.

She was well travelled; we remember her presentations in recent years on Greenland, Kamchatka and Australia to name but a few. She was always well informed about the cultural scene, a regular concert and theatregoer, attending Arts Festivals round the country. Always a dedicated gardener, in these last few years she took a renewed interest in her garden which became her pride and joy.

With the breadth of her knowledge and enthusiasm in so many fields, she will be sadly missed.

## Summer-Autumn Excursion Programme 2015

(reprinted with some additions from April Newsletter)

### August

**Sun 16th Summerston to Balmore walk along River Kelvin** 11am, mixed interest. Walk lead by Allan Twigg of FORK to create awareness of this Green Belt along River Kelvin and to obtain wildlife information from GNHS expertise. Walk 2.5 – 3 hrs, easy to moderate walking. Meet at R-Biopharm Rhone Ltd, 45 Acre Road G20 0XA. By car Maryhill Road at Science Park roundabout take Todd Campus exit. At mini-roundabout take 1st exit (Acre Road). Drive to end of road and park opposite R-Biopharm Rhone. By bus – First bus 60 and 60A or City bus 16 or 17, Walk from Science Park as above. GNHS contact Alison Moss

**Sun 23rd Ravenswood Marsh (Cumbernauld)** 10am - mixed interest including ponds, newts, butterflies, moths, hoverflies and meadow plants.

Directions: M80 Jct 4a on to A8011, left at roundabout onto Seafar Road until Island Road on left is reached. Follow road until entrance to site at NS748738 <http://streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?X=274819&Y=673833&A=Y&Z=115>

Footwear : walking boots. Bring: Sandwiches

Leader: Carrick Crawford - Ravenswood Marsh Conservation Group

Contact: George Paterson

### Thu 27th Bioblitz RSPB Loch Lomond (Endrick Marshes)

This is not a public event, but those with specialist natural history skills and interested individuals are invited to assist with recording at this Bioblitz. Please get in touch with Paula Baker by 15th August at the latest to book a place phone the Loch Lomond Reserve office (01389 830670) if you wish to assist.

### September

**Sun 6th Milarrochy and Cashel woods, fungal foray**, 11am. Joint meeting with Clyde and Argyll Fungus Group (CAFG). Meet at Milarrochy car park NS 411921. Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park facilities - toilet and free car parking. Rough paths - walking boots, warm and waterproof clothing etc. Bring snack, packed lunch and fungus collecting gear.

Check out woods behind Milarrochy and across the road - uneven ground.

Return 1.00pm Lunch and those attending for half day session depart.

Afternoon - Cashel woods.

Meeting place NS 398940 - Cashel Forest millennium car park (voluntary car parking charge). Walk through old-established oakwoods on uneven ground , and / or newly created woods with established path system.

Requirements - walking boots, etc and lunch.

Getting there - there is NO public transport to these sites.

You can walk from Balmaha to Milarrochy - it will take approx 45 minutes.

GNHS Contact – Sandra Hutchinson.

**Sun 27th Glanderston Wood and Balgray Reservoir** 11am, mixed interest + fungi. Walking fairly easy. Meet in car park beside Glanderston Reservoir on Balgraystone Road, south of Barrhead – NS 506569. Bring packed lunch or go to 'Dancing Goat', Neilston. Contact James Milner-White.

## October

**Sat 31st Dawsholm Park**, fungi etc, 11am. The meeting-place is Dalsholm Rd, NS55696959. This is a joint meeting with CAFG. Leader contact details later by email; otherwise you can contact Gill Smart nearer the time for details of meeting place, leader and confirmation that the excursion will be taking place.

### **Wildlife photographer of the year exhibition now open**



The world's largest and most prestigious photographic competition championing images of nature and natural environments is now open at Scotland Street School Museum and will run until Sunday 29 November 2015. Entry is free. Glasgow is the only Scottish city to host Wildlife Photographer of the Year during its worldwide tour, on loan from the Natural History Museum in London. Glasgow Museums is taking this opportunity to showcase some of the city's wonderful Natural History collection beside the spectacular images.

Over the last 50 years the competition has invited professional and non-professional photographers from across the world to enter their finest images. Launching in 1965 and attracting 361 entries, today the competition receives almost 42,000 entries from 96 countries highlighting its enduring appeal. An international panel of judges chooses 100 images as the greatest for exhibition and publication in a corresponding book of the same title.

Scotland Street School Museum has programmed a series of activities, workshops, talks and events for adults and families, taking place across the summer to complement the exhibition. Within the exhibition youngsters can also come face to face with a wildebeest, spy on a fox and catch a glimpse of a kingfisher, while budding wildlife explorers can dress up as one of the animals in the exhibition, build animal habitats, get bird-watching, make puppets, masks and mobiles. For further information see [www.glasgowmuseums.com](http://www.glasgowmuseums.com)

Wildlife Photographer of the Year is co-owned by the Natural History Museum and BBC Worldwide. The call for entries runs each year from January to February. Find out more at [www.wildlifephotographeroftheyear.com](http://www.wildlifephotographeroftheyear.com)

Scotland Street School Museum is located at 225 Scotland Street, Glasgow G5 8QB  
T: 0141 287 0504. Open Tuesday to Thursday and Saturday 10am to 5pm, Friday and Sunday 11am to 5pm.

**The Society for the History of Natural History has published the following Book Review:** **Maura C. Flannery**

***John Scouler (c.1804–1871), Scottish naturalist: a life, with two voyages.***  
**NELSON, E. Charles.**

Glasgow Natural History Society, Glasgow: 2014; pp 142; illustrated. Price £11.00 (paperback). ISBN 9780956529510.

Even in the estimation of this wonderful book's author Charles Nelson, its subject John Scouler is a relatively minor figure in 19th Century natural history. However, the book is worth reading for a variety of reasons, the first being that though Scouler published little, he collected plants and ethnographic specimens, as well as some zoological and geological material, most ending up in his native Glasgow. He also wrote an informative journal during his 1824–1826 voyage to the American Pacific Northwest during part of which he was accompanied by his friend, the botanist and plant collector David Douglas.

The impetus for the book came from Blodwen Lloyd Binns (1902–1991) who had taught botany at the Royal Technical College in Glasgow. She left funds to the Glasgow Natural History Society (GNHS) for several projects including a book on Scouler for which she herself had begun the research.

In an excerpt from her draft published as the Prologue to the biography, Binns explains how she became interested in Scouler in the 1950s when she unearthed his long-forgotten herbarium in neglected cupboards at the college. Nelson has done an admirable job of building on this foundation, and the GNHS has produced a handsome volume with many colour figures.

Scouler was educated at the University of Glasgow, took classes with William Hooker, the Regius Professor of Botany, and ultimately earned a doctorate in medicine, practicing for a short time. Hooker recommended Scouler, then aged 20, for the position of surgeon/naturalist on a Hudson's Bay Company ship headed for the Pacific Northwest. In July 1824 when he boarded the William and Ann, Scouler discovered that David Douglas was also a passenger, employed as a plant collector by the Horticultural Society of London. After rounding Cape Horn, the ship stopped at the Juan Fernandez archipelago and then the Galapagos Islands, where Scouler added considerably to his herbarium. He also collected zoological material, though some of this spoiled, but his ethnographic material survived.

When they reached the Columbia River, Douglas began his exploration of the area. Scouler continued on with the ship as it made its way north to Observatory Inlet. On the return voyage, the ship again went around Cape Horn and arrived back in England in April 1826. Nelson, an expert natural history writer, quotes liberally from Scouler's journal. One minor criticism is that the quotes are in a difficult to-read small font size, as are the rich footnotes. However the entire journal is included in an appendix, as is an article by Margaret Reilly and Richard Sutcliff on the fate of Glasgow's Andersonian Museum and its collection, including some Scouler specimens.

The records for Scouler's next few years after his return are sparse, though Nelson was able to document that he travelled to South Africa and on to India as a ship's

surgeon, but Scouler apparently left no journal and did little collecting on this trip. Settling back in Glasgow, he was appointed Professor of Mineralogy and Natural History at the Andersonian University in Glasgow in 1829. Five years later, he moved to Ireland and became Professor of Mineralogy at the Royal Dublin Society. He remained there for 20 years, which were apparently not very happy or productive ones for him. He married during this time, but within a couple of years, both his wife and child had died.

He returned to Glasgow in 1854, remaining there for the rest of his life. He published little, but played a significant role in the city's natural history circle. Nelson brings this community to life, making the book definitely worth reading not only by those interested in Scottish natural history, but by anyone fascinated by the natural world.

## **PhotoSCENE 2015-16 Natural History Photographic Competition**

**David Palmar**

### **Win your share of £800 worth of prizes!**

This competition is sponsored by Glasgow Natural History Society and the University of Glasgow Institute of Biodiversity, Animal Health and Comparative Medicine. Its aims are 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), linkage between the Institute and the Society, and providing pictures for publicity.

During the last four years, participation in the competition has increased, and last year there were 50 entries to the competition. Prizes to the tune of £800 per year have been awarded at the Society's photographic nights each February.

It is hoped that GNHS members, and the staff and students of the Institute will again support the competition.

Let's make it an even bigger entry for 2015! The deadline for submitting entries to this year's photographic competition is the end of October 2015. GNHS members and students and staff of the University of Glasgow Institute of Biodiversity, Animal Health and Comparative Medicine are eligible to enter.

Prizewinners will be announced at the GNHS photographic night on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2016. Full details are on the GNHS website at <http://www.gnhs.org.uk/news.html>.

## **Excursion Reports**

### **Lenzie Moss LNR, 9th May 2015**

Over 10 members attended the excursion to this fine example of a lowland raised bog. Although dry and sunny later on, the time of year and lowish temperatures meant that flying insects were scarce.

As we passed through some unimproved grassland towards the main area of bog we saw one of the many dams put in place by SNH in an attempt to keep the bog from drying out.

### **George Paterson**



Dam to keep water level high

There was also evidence of birch removal carried out by the Friends of Lenzie Moss and Mugdock Ranger volunteers for the same reason. Large red damselfly *Pyrrhosoma nymphula* were seen zipping in amongst the bog cotton *Eriophorum angustifolium* as we headed towards the centre of the bog via a raised bank separating many of the sections where peat had been extracted commercially in the past. This was done via a narrow gauge railway, remains of which are still present.



Dr Richard Tipping pointing out layers in the peat core

Dr Richard Tipping from Stirling University, with the help of his peat core borer and some burly GNHS members, extracted samples of peat from the past 2000 years or so. Light and dark bandings highlighting wet and dry periods in the bog's history. Richard also talked about the influence man may have had through farming practices. There was some discussion as to the extent of the effect the Romans may have had – Lenzie being close to the Antonine Wall.

Swifts and swallows flew overhead and meadow pipits and skylarks were also heard and seen. Pond dipping in some of the bog pools revealed a number of dragonfly (probably *Libellula quadrimaculata*) and damselfly larvae as well as pond skaters and diving beetles. On the path a drinker moth *Euthrix potatoria* was spotted and next to the wooden walkway a patch of the nationally rare bog-rosemary *Andromeda polifolia* could be seen within a fenced off area to protect it from trampling.



Bog Rosemary

Five Walrags have been placed around the site to monitor changes in the water table level. It is hoped in a few years time results will show the ongoing work maintaining the bog through birch removal and dam building has had a positive effect on the habitat.

The day ended, for some, with a coffee and cake at the award winning deli, Bellingtons, next to Lenzie railway station.



GNHS members examining a Walrag

Photos by David Palmar [www.photoscot.co.uk](http://www.photoscot.co.uk)  
 To see David's photos of some of the mosses of East Dunbartonshire, visit <http://www.photoscot.co.uk/Gallery/Search.aspx?storyId=184>



Insect species list supplied by Richard Weddle.

<b>Family</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Common Name</b>
Cantharidae	<i>Cantharis decipiens</i>	a soldier beetle
Cantharidae	<i>Cantharis nigricans</i>	a soldier beetle
Cerambycidae	<i>Grammoptera ruficornis</i>	a small longhorn beetle
Chrysomelidae	<i>Crepidodera fulvicornis</i>	a flea beetle
Chrysomelidae	<i>Hydrothassa marginella</i>	a leaf beetle
Chrysomelidae	<i>Phratora vulgatissima</i>	Blue Willow Beetle
Chrysomelidae	<i>Plateumaris sericea</i>	a leaf beetle
Coccinellidae	<i>Adalia bipunctata</i>	2-spot Ladybird
Coccinellidae	<i>Coccinella septempunctata</i>	7-spot Ladybird
Curculionidae	<i>Phyllobius</i>	a weevil
Kateretidae	<i>Brachypterus urticae</i>	Nettle Pollen Beetle
Oedemeridae	<i>Oedemera virescens</i>	a swollen-thigh beetle
Staphylinidae	<i>Tachyporus pallidus</i>	a small rove-beetle
Pieridae	<i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>	Orange-tip
Pieridae	<i>Pieris napi</i>	Green-veined White
Coenagrionidae	<i>Pyrrhosoma nymphula</i>	Large Red Damselfly
Apidae	<i>Bombus terrestris</i>	Buff-Tailed Bumble Bee
Choreutidae	<i>Anthophila fabriciana</i>	Common Nettle-tap
Geometridae	<i>Epirrita</i>	November Moth agg.
Geometridae	<i>Erannis defoliaria</i>	Mottled Umber
Glyphipterigidae	<i>Glyphipterix simpliciella</i>	Cocksfoot Moth
Micropterigidae	<i>Micropterix aureatella</i>	Yellow-barred Gold
Acanthosomatidae	<i>Elasmotethus interstinctus</i>	Birch Shieldbug
Bibionidae	<i>Biblio leucopterus</i>	White-winged Bibio
Palloppteridae	<i>Pallopptera trimacula</i>	a 'flutter-wing' fly
Syrphidae	<i>Cheilosia albitarsis</i>	a hoverfly

## **Shore Walk at White Bay, Cumbrae, May 16th 2015**

**Mary Child**

On Saturday 16th May the weather was squally with sharp showers blowing in over White Bay on Cumbrae. Ten of us were heading for low water and despite the wind the spring tide went out a good way. The tide uncovered a classic succession of rocky shore brown seaweeds with *Pelvetia canaliculi*, channel wrack, on the upper shore, *Fucus vesiculosus*, bladder wrack in the middle and *Fucus serratus*, serrated wrack, on the lower shore. A belt of *Laminaria* was exposed at the lowest reach of the shore. The indefatigable Alison found a first for this site on Cumbrae, a red alga called *Polyides rotunda*.

As ever, on Cumbrae, there was a multitude of animals to see. Immediately, we found butterfish, *Pholis gunnellus* and a pipefish, *Nerophis ophidion* sheltering under rocks. Molluscs were there in abundance and included dog whelks, netted whelks, periwinkles and topshells. Even though smallish in size, edible, shore and broad clawed porcelain crabs tried to menace us. We unravelled long ribbon worms, *Lineus longissimus* and spotted thousands of whelk eggs attached to all available

hard surfaces. Starfish and urchins featured strongly. There were many brittle stars mainly *Ophiothrix fragilis*, *Ophiopholis aculeate* and *Amphipholis squamata* and also a few black brittle stars, *Ophiocomina nigra*. The green sea urchin *Psammechinus miliaris* was cute as usual and one edible sea urchin, *Echinus eschilentus*, was found (they don't look very tasty to me). Morag also found some sea potatoes, *Echinocardium cordatum* in the sand to the west of the rocky area. I had fun squirting solitary ascidians and others found colonial ascidians. Strange green blobby eggs were identified as belonging to *Eulalia viridis*, a bright green polychaete worm.

Eventually the cold and rain got to us and the tide started coming back in. Even though we had had great fun exploring the shore and identifying some of the flora and fauna there were many animals and seaweeds that remained unidentified as we retreated to the Palmars' house in Millport for warming and welcome cups of tea.

### **Kelvingrove Park Visit, 21st May 2015**

**Bob Gray**

Seven of us met at the north, Eldon Street gate to Kelvingrove Park, one of Glasgow's five City Parks and last visited by the Society in 2006. We restricted our visit to that part of the 35 ha (85 acre) park lying to the east of the River Kelvin. The first thing we found, tucked away in shrubbery near the entrance, was a specimen of Perny's holly (*Ilex pernyi*).

The park is dominated by Park Terrace located on top of a drumlin, one of Glasgow's drumlin swarm, with a tadpole shape that protrudes into the park running from WNW to ESE and steep to the west and south. The soil parent material on the steep slope and on the flat ground to the north, west and south of the hill consists of Devensian (dating from the last Ice Age) deposits of glacial till.

The park was arguably the first purposefully designed public park in Scotland and the architect, Sir Joseph Paxton, who famously designed the Crystal Palace, also designed Glasgow's Botanic Gardens, Alexandra Park and Queen's Park. The park was laid out between 1852 and 1867 though whether trees planted at that time still exist is debatable. The biggest tree in girth in the park is one of a pair of narrow-leaved ash trees (*Fraxinus angustifolia*) (1).



Narrow-leaved ash (*Fraxinus angustifolia*)

They were likely to have been planted at the same time and their average girth (according to Mitchell's 1" per year rule) suggests an age of about 157 years (2012 measurements), which indicates c.1855.

The magnificent oak-leaved hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus* 'Incisa') to the east of the Stewart Fountain is about 96 year old. The red maple (*Acer rubrum*) southwest of the pond works out at c.88 years old, the silver

pendent lime (*Tilia tomentosa* 'Petiolaris') just west of the Stewart Fountain c.92 years old and the big hornbeam (*C. betulus*) near the northeast boundary by St Andrew's Building of the University c.83 years old. So most of the sizeable trees in the park were planted in the years following the First World War.



Other sizeable trees we encountered included a big sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) beside the northeast boundary and a large manna ash (*Fraxinus ornus*) beside the path not far south of the Park Terrace entrance gate half way down the steep slope referred to above. At the top of the slope,

Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*)

grows a wonderfully contorted and old willow-leaved pear tree (*Pyrus salicifolia*) which the author was fortunate enough to see in full flower a couple of weeks before our visit.

above and southeast of the manna ash and northwest of the Park Gardens staircase,



*Prunus* 'Shirofugen'

Spring is the best time of year to view the park's many different flowering cherries, tree flowers and leaf flushing colours. Examples of cherry flowers include Japanese cherries such as the double pink *Prunus* 'Kanzan' and *Prunus* 'Shirofugen' the last to flower, with double white flowers under maroon fresh leaves; hybrid flowering cherries

such as *Prunus* 'Spire' and *Prunus* 'Accolade' and the wild cherries *Prunus avium*, both single and double flowered.



Amongst other distinctive tree flowers found throughout the park are the bright lime green flowers of Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*) and, occasionally, the impressive crimson or purple and yellow flowers of purple Norway maples such as *A. platanoides* 'Goldsworth Purple' (8) or 'Crimson King'. These and other purple leaved Norway maples are not easy to distinguish from each other. Also conspicuous were the bright yellow young leaves of the red oak (*Quercus rubra*) near the oak-leaved hornbeam and of the flushing variegated sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus* f. *variegatum*) (9) near the east end of the perennial border. We came across a fair amount of natural regeneration during our walk, particularly in the

Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*)

uncultivated areas along the steep slope and also along the banks of the River Kelvin. Norway maple was

particularly noticeable and many sycamore and ash and occasional beech seedlings were found with occasional elm coppicing from the stumps of trees felled owing to Dutch elm disease.

On the riverside, as well as the above, several horse chestnut saplings occur. It was interesting to find some lime seedlings (10) in the vicinity of the big, flowering silver pendent lime. However a broad-leaved lime (*Tilia platyphyllos*) nearby was also flowering and it is more likely that this was the parent tree. These seedlings are very palatable to small mammals such as voles and so a seedling is being grown on in order to ascertain its parentage. Another example of vegetative reproduction was found amongst the boundary plantings just north of the bowling greens - the distinctive suckers of the Cappadocian maple (*Acer cappadocicum*).



Lime seedlings (*Tilia*) regeneration

Finally reference needs to be made to the two mature single-leaved ash trees (*F. excelsior* f. *diversifolia*) (11) growing near the east side of the Prince of Wales bridge. One produced an offspring that grew from near the base of the grade A listed bridge. This had to be felled recently. It had 35 annual rings.

The park contains a few younger specimens of tree species unusual for Glasgow such as Indian bean (*Catalpa bignonioides*), varnish tree (*Rhus verniciflua*), False acacia (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) 'Bessoniana' -

spineless - and Chinese persimmon (*Diospyros kaki*). The climate at this latitude is a bit harsh for these trees but they have survived thus far for quite a few years. They add biodiversity to the array of different tree species already growing here. In fact Kelvingrove park contains probably a greater number of different deciduous tree species than any other park in Glasgow other than the Botanic Gardens.

Amongst species that have been "lost" since 2006 are tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) and a group of blue Colorado spruce (*Picea pungens* f. *glauca*).

An updated map and tree list is available on request.

### **Cathkin Marsh and Cathkin Braes, 18th July 2015**

**Alison Moss**

Eight of us enjoyed surprisingly good weather at Cathkin Marsh SWT reserve and the Meadows of Cathkin Country Park. The only rain coincided with a lunch break where excellent hospitality was offered by Marie Watt whose house was located conveniently between the 2 sites.

The Marsh is largely a mixture of fen, swamp and marshy grassland and includes a large pond with an island. Access is on paths and a wooden walkway, but those with wellies could take a closer look. A bird hide allowed us to watch reed buntings foraging and moorhens on the island. Other species were keeping a low profile as were most insects. Ringlets were the only butterflies observed. However, Richard Weddle and his net were busy and compiled a very respectable list including some unusual species - See Richard's list below.

Of the 107 plant species on record for the site, we probably observed about 80% of these. Marsh and water horsetail, meadow sweet and tufted hair grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*) dominated large areas, but celery leaved buttercup (*Ranunculus sceleratus*) was a bit of a surprise and orchids were represented by Northern marsh orchid (*Dactylorhiza purpurella*) and common spotted orchids (*D. fuchsii*). I do have full species lists for all animals and plants kindly emailed by Sven Rasmussen of SWT if anyone wishes more information.

The Cathkin Braes meadows close to the main car park were a joy to behold. The yellow rattle grew and flowered quite early this year and its abundance suppressed the lush grass growth in many areas allowing a huge variety and abundance of wild flowers. There was a mix of lush areas with vetches, clovers and orchids (*D. fuchsii* and Greater butterfly (*Platanthera chlorantha*) and more moorland type vegetation with Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*) and wild violas and bird's foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) to name but a few. This made a really interesting species rich patchwork. Meadow browns (at Cathkin Meadows) and Ringlets were the only butterflies seen that day. However, this was simply a weather problem and I would strongly recommend a visit to these meadows.

**Beetles:**

*Crepidodera aurea* (a flea beetle)

*Oedemera virescens*

*Rhagonycha fulva* (Red Soldier-beetle)

*Rhagonycha testacea*

*Nicrophorus vespilloides* (burying-beetle, found by James, I think)

**Butterflies/Moths:**

Ringlet

Meadow Brown

Common Wave

*Pammene aurana* (James again)

**True Flies:**

*Sepsis cynipsea*

Scatophagidae (dung-flies)

*Cheilosia illustrata* (hoverfly)

**Bees etc:**

Buff-tailed Bumblebee

Common Carder Bee

Pteromalidae (a very small *Chalcid* wasp - probably parasitic)

**Other:**

*Taphrina alni* (fungus causing alder catkin gall - spotted by Myles)

Molehills

At 'Tickle Trout' I also recorded:

Ringlet

*Syrphus ribesii* (hoverfly)

*Chlorops* sp. (a fruit fly)

*Pteromalid* wasp (a different one from above)

and the Kestrel hovering in the adjacent field

**General Correspondence to the General Secretary:** Mary Child

**Next Newsletter - copy to David Palmar by 22nd October 2015 please. email:**

Contributions by members – long or short - are particularly welcomed.

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**.

Photos are welcome – Please send any to David for the Newsletter, especially if it illustrates an aspect of the work of GNHS, e.g. if it was taken on one of our excursions. If sending photos, please send separate jpgs under 100Kb each (**not** embedded in a Word file please).