



**Scottish
Wildlife
Trust**

Lothian Talk

Scottish Wildlife Trust: Lothians Group Newsletter

Dates for your Diary

Online Talk: **Scotland: a rewinding journey**

- Thurs 17 Nov; 7.30pm-9pm
- Peter Cairns, Scotland the Big Picture

In-person Talk: **Bring back beavers**

- Thurs 15 Dec; 7.30pm-9pm
- Sarah Robinson, SWT's director of conservation
- The Cornerstone Centre, Edinburgh, EH2 4BJ

To book onto a walk or talk go to:

scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/our-events/

Talk Topics

Our talks programme runs throughout autumn and winter each year. If you or anyone you know would like to present a nature-based talk, please contact Allan Mathieson on chair@swtlothians.org.uk

Catch-up online

Watch recordings of any talks that you missed - scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/things-to-do/watch-wildlife-online/online-talks

Full details of the talks and events programme can be found online at swtlothians.org.uk/events



Common pipistrelle bat in flight by Barracuda1983

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Blackford bat walk

In mid-September, following a delay due to inclement weather, a small group of our members met Natalie Todman of the Lothians Bat Group at Blackford Pond for an evening of bat watching (or more accurately, bat listening). The weather was fair, the insects were out and the bats did not disappoint.

Natalie started by giving us a talk about the bats we were likely to encounter that evening: Common and Soprano Pipistrelle, and Daubenton's. We learned about where they roost, the pitch of their sonar clicks and even spied a few coming out of their roosts as dusk intensified. We were all amazed at how tiny the Pipistrelles are when Natalie produced a dead (sadly found previously) Pipistrelle in a matchbox.

Then, armed with special hand held sensors which translated the bats' ultrasonic clicks into human-audible sound, we set off around the pond. Initially, not much was detected but as the dark intensified, so did the 'clicking' as more and more bats came out for dinner. By the time it

Volunteers wanted



Photograph by Dave King

We are always looking at recruiting new volunteers. Currently, we are looking for can collectors willing to occasionally help out for 2-hours at a local supermarket.

The money that comes from these collections is an important source of income for the SWT Lothians Group, as it is used to help fund our activities, such as the Trust's work on its nature reserves.

Please contact Barbara Knowles on 0131 539 6643 or email volunteer@swtlothians.org.uk

Further opportunities to volunteer with SWT are always available. To find out more visit scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/how-to-help/volunteer/

by Barbara Knowles

New Editor Wanted!

Our Lothians Group subcommittee is still looking for a new volunteer editor for this newsletter. If you think you might be interested in doing this, or perhaps job-sharing the role, please contact Kate Walters to find out more about it. Email me at editor@swtlothians.org.uk

If you have anything you would like to contribute, please get in touch via editor@swtlothians.org.uk

was almost pitch black under the trees, the bats (clicks) were all around us – incredible to think these tiny creatures were flying at speed almost directly above one's head while catching insects and avoiding crashing into tree branches and each other.

Many thanks to Natalie and Calum for a wonderful evening, and for helping us hear some of our local wildlife.

by Allan Mathieson

Find out more about Scotland's 'rewilding journey' ahead of Peter Cairns' November talk by visiting:

www.scotlandbigpicture.com

Holyrood Park Wildlife: June 2022



Orchid by Denis Mollison



Tree bumblebee by Denis Mollison

Planning Matters, October 2022

Midlothian: In the last Planning Matters there was mention of a planned treatment plant to deal with mine water currently flowing into the River South Esk at Dalkeith, Midlothian. The plans submitted by the Coal Authority in February have now been passed by the Council. The scheme was not subject to full scrutiny by the Council but passed under legislation that allows for works that are necessary for the maintenance and safety of a disused mine site. This is going to be a significant building and construction site on the banks of the Esk but it is required, and arguably overdue, to deal with mine water affecting the Esk downstream of location of the mine water out flow.

City of Edinburgh: City of Edinburgh members may be interested to hear the latest on the possible community buyout at the Astley Ainslie NHS Greenspace site. A feasibility study by architects has been completed, funded by public and local fundraising, recognising very much the urban greenspace value of the site, and it seems it may be at least another three years before the NHS moves to start selling it. Interestingly, the land is not NHS but Government owned and they are the ones who may allocate public funds to help with the buyout.

East Lothian: We are pleased to report that the East Lothian Council (ELC) Biodiversity Officer, Catherine Cummings, has accepted the SWT Lothians Group offer of some funding to help survey and re-assess Local Biodiversity Sites (LBS) in East Lothian. This will be done via our Service Level Agreement (SLA) with The Wildlife Information Centre. Your Lothians Local Group has raised and committed extra funds to encourage ELC to re-join efforts to assess LBS' in time for local environmental designation protection in their next Local Development Plan (this is more than we usually do annually for the other three councils in the Lothians, who have always continued low level survey work year on year to keep up to date). The protection of LBS' is also a Local Authority's 'should do' requirement in the soon-to-be-statutory National Planning Framework 4. We will be meeting with Catherine's planning colleagues soon to see what other resources can be brought to bear to make this happen. This is very good news for all the important nature conservation / Nature Network wildlife sites in East Lothian.

Contacts For Planning Matters

Midlothian: Susan Manson - mansons@castlesteads.net

East Lothian: Ian Whittaker - ianw0@yahoo.co.uk

West Lothian & City of Edinburgh Council: Carmina Cazan - carminacazan@outlook.com (note change of email address)

Dr Tim Duffy, SWT Lothians Planning Secretary: timrduffy1@gmail.com

Waders at Musselburgh Lagoon Scrapes: September 2022

