

Scottish Stuff



14th-23rd July 2017

Introduction

I headed to Scotland for three species and the hope of others, the main target was the Fossorial water voles discovered a few years ago in Eastern Glasgow. Other targets were alpine speedwell and azure hawker.

Temperatures were quite pleasant high teens to mid 20's with plenty of rain often heavy and persistent hampered things somewhat. So I lost considerable amounts of time to the weather.

Despite the conditions I still did OK and will return again next year.

The photos are hyperlinked to larger versions.

Diary

14th July 2017

I arrived in East Glasgow at 6am and met my contact Cath from Glasgow council and we headed off to a small park. Here we staked out some long grass home to a colony of **Fossorial water voles**. A bit of apple lured them out for some photographs but they were a little shy. We spent the rest of the morning visiting several sites where Fossorial water voles are found and I learnt a lot about them. After a quick cup of tea we headed to a small patch of waste ground covered in litter in a very urban setting, here a colony of **Fossorial water voles** was present and the slightly elevated viewing position allowed for good views and I spent some time watching them and answering questions of some of the locals wondering what on earth I was upto. Late afternoon I headed out of Glasgow and after something potato based to eat ended up at Loch of the Lowes. The young **osprey** had almost fledged and was flying about a little with the parents. Apart from that it was quiet except when a **grey heron** approached the osprey nest then it all kicked off. A little later two **beavers** appeared from the far side of the loch and came out on the bank near the hide and showed really well, a couple of **fallow deer** near the car were less confiding.

15th July 2017

I was up early and headed up Glenshee a couple of young **ring ouzels** and some **red grouse** were encountered on the drive up and a mountain hare dashed across the road. I had planned to go up on to the high part of the mountain to look for Alpine Speedwell, but visibility was poor and heavy rain started so I decided on some touristy options for a large part of the day. I ended up at Murcar golf course, I eventually located the very distant white winged scoter



Red Grouse



Fossorial Water Vole



Fossorial Water Vole



Fossorial Water Vole



Fossorial Water Vole



16th July 2017

I started in Aberdeen looking for dolphins in the harbour, but they were not present after a while I headed back to Glenshee where conditions were much better than the previous day. On the high part of the mountains I easily found lots of **Mountain hares** and a couple of **ptarmigan**, but my main target was Alpine speedwell. I spent 3 hours looking finding plenty of other mountain plants, including **alpine bistort**, **mountain pansy**, **starry saxifrage**, and was about to leave when I spotted something, a couple of **Alpine speedwells** but they had already flowered and were in seed, so I will have to return next year and try again. A little disappointed I headed into the Cairngorms, Loch Garten the first stop, no crested tits at the feeders but plenty of **bank** and **field voles** and a **wood mouse**. I found a couple of **creeping ladies tresses** in the car park as I left. I headed to [Fochabers Fish Bar](#) to visit the 2017 chip shop of the year and it was excellent - haggis and chips 10/10.



True Lovers Knot



Reindeer



Ptarmigan

17th July 2017

I was up and out and heading up Cairngorm, I encountered the now free roaming herd of **reindeer** just near the car park, I took a walk and found a few flowers **alpine saw wort** of note amongst the common species. I headed back to Loch Garten but still no crested tits but a couple of **red squirrels** and some strange **tooth fungus** were seen. At the visitor centre they were opening a moth trap so I had a look and got a few new species **Pine carpet**, **welsh wave**, **narrow winged pug**, **dotted carpet** and **true lovers knot**. I found a **Northern damselfly** on the pools before heading to Uath Lochans in search of larger dragonflies I found **common hawker**, **golden ringed** and **common emerald** but a couple of **crested tits** showed nicely during my walk. I searched for ladybirds but only found **striped larva** and headed into Aviemore for food before heading to the Rothimurcus pine marten hide. The party were quite noisy and no pine martens visited during our stay, but several **badgers**, **tawny owl** and both **roe and red deer** put in an appearance along with **wood mice and bank voles** helping themselves to the free food.



Alpine Saw Wort



Alpine Speedwell

18th July 2017

I arrived at Channonry point at 6am and headed to the point, **bottle nosed dolphins** were present but they were just passing through close in and not feeding. They headed further out towards the sea and did not return during my stay, I headed west to Loch Maree, stopping to use a toilet which was clearly a lit 24 hour facility as the gents was full of moths, I took some photos of ones I had not seen before which included **common** and **satin lutestrings**. I was about to leave when I thought what about the ladies, no one else was present so I entered and there were even more moths here including a lovely **green arches** and several **welsh waves**. I arrived at Loch Maree to beautiful weather if not too hot really for my task. Here I was searching for Azure hawkers, but no sign only large numbers of **common hawkers**. I spent plenty of time looking without any luck but I had a nice selection of butterflies along with **northern white tailed** and **cryptic bumblebees**.

I headed to the Ben Eithe visitor centre for a look there but the same story just loads of **common hawkers**. Last stop was Bridge of Grudie but no dragons here at all, but I did bump into another dragonfly watcher who had seen azure hawker the previous day and northern emerald. We tried the **northern emerald** site and one was flying about but it never settled for a photo, and then tried for azure hawkers once more but only **common hawkers** and **golden ringed dragonfly** during another session and I called it a day.

19th July 2017

The weather was very poor so I headed to St Andrews in search of **barberry broomrape**, it was quickly located at least 20 spikes found with little searching. The rain returned so I did touristy things for the rest of the day.



Barberry Broomrape



Bottle Nosed Dolphin



Green Arches



Common Hawker



Golden Ringed
Dragonfly



Northern White Tailed
Bumblebee



Banded Red



Fossorial Water Vole

20th July 2017

I returned to Glasgow for another session with the **fossorial water voles** and got some additional photographs, some heavy rain forced me into some non nature stuff but as the weather improved I tried some woodland for ladybirds, here I had **20 larch** and a **cream streaked ladybird**. I then headed to Dunbar for a look at the **kittiwake** colony and then something to eat but the weather turned once more so I called it a day.



Larch Ladybird

21st July 2017

I was in Dumfries and Galloway first thing, **red deer** and **feral goats** in the rain before visiting the Bellymack Hill kite feeding site, plenty of **red kites** (60ish) as you would expect despite the poor weather. I headed along the coast, the weather turned even worse and I ended up at the Mull of Galloway RSPB in heavy rain. It was a little disappointing as the birds were quite far from the viewpoints. I ended up in Portpatrick for **Black guillemots** that nest in the harbour and they were showing well once the rain stopped and I departed as the rain fell once more.



Red Kite



Black Guillemot

22nd July 2017

The weather was terrible - torrential rain so it was a return to touristy stuff for most of the day before heading into Northern England and in search of helleborines. First stop was for **Tyne helleborine** which were just starting to go over but some were still in reasonable condition. The next stop was Newcastle where **Youngs helleborine** was located and then finally to Lindesfarne where **Marsh** and **Lindesfarne helleborine** were easily found before calling it a night.

23rd July 2017

I headed back to Lindesfarne first thing just as the water receded from the causeway to catch the waders feeding nearby and there was a nice selection of birds, **little egrets, dunlin, curlew, grey heron** and some **eider**. After a quick bite to eat I headed to Chillingham to see the **wild cattle**, I was the only visitor so had a good look round and got nice and close to the cattle for photographs, a few **fallow deer** were not quite as confiding. I headed to Seal sands to see the **common seals**, but the hide was closed for some flood defence work. I parked in the roadworks as no one was working and viewed from the bridge. No seals were hauled out but one was swimming upstream and I could see another further away and over time a steady stream of seals came and hauled out nearby. I popped in at Bishops Middleton Quarry but the visit was rain affected but a few **dark red helleborines** were still looking good and it was time to head home after a rather mixed and weather affected trip.



Chillingham Cattle



Young's Helleborine



Tyne Helleborine



Common Seal



Fallow Deer



Dark Red Helleborine

Checklists

Birds – 98

Black Throated Diver	Little Grebe	Great Crested Grebe
Fulmar	Gannet	Cormorant
Shag	Grey Heron	Little Egret
Mute Swan	Greylag Goose	Shelduck
Mallard	Tufted Duck	Teal
Eider	Common Scoter	Velvet Scoter
White Winged Scoter	Goldeneye	Red Breasted Merganser
Osprey	Red Kite	Buzzard
Sparrowhawk	Kestrel	Red grouse
Ptarmigan	Red Legged Partridge	Pheasant
Moorhen	Coot	Oystercatcher
Ringed Plover	Lapwing	Dunlin
Common Sandpiper	Curlew	Black Headed Gull
Common Gull	Herring Gull	Lesser Black Backed Gull
Greater Black Backed Gull	Kittiwake	Arctic Tern
Common Tern	Guillemot	Razorbill
Black Guillemot	Rock Dove	Woodpigeon
Collared Dove	Tawny Owl	Swift
Kingfisher	Great Spotted Woodpecker	Skylark
Sand Martin	House Martin	Swallow
Meadow Pipit	Pied Wagtail	Wren
Dunnock	Robin	Wheatear
Stonechat	Song Thrush	Mistle Thrush
Blackbird	Ring Ouzel	Whitethroat
Chiff Chaff	Willow Warbler	Goldcrest
Great Tit	Blue Tit	Crested Tit
Long Tailed Tit	Nuthatch	Treecreeper
Magpie	Jay	Jackdaw
Rook	Hooded Crow	Carrion Crow
Raven	Starling	House Sparrow
Chaffinch	Linnet	Goldfinch
Greenfinch	Siskin	Bullfinch
Reed Bunting	Yellowhammer	

Selected Plants



Cross Leaved Heath

Water Avens	Starry Saxifrage	Yellow Saxifrage
Mountain Pansy	Alpine Bistort	Alpine Lady's Mantle
Alpine Saw Wort	Alpine Speedwell	Mountain Sorrel
Monkey Flower	Marsh Lousewort	Heath Speedwell
Goldenrod	Common Rockrose	Creeping Ladies tresses
Cross Leaved Heath	Northern Marsh Orchid	Common Spotted Orchid
Bedstraw Broomrape	Marsh Marigold	Crowberry
Common Milkwort	Wild Carrot	Sneezewort
Tyne Helleborine	Marsh Helleborine	Lindesfarne Helleborine
Youngs Helleborine	Downy Willow	Eared Willow
Creeping Willow	Cold Eyebright	Common Valerian
Dark Red Helleborine	Alskie Clover	White Melliot
Sheep's Bit		



Creeping Ladies Tresses

Yellow Saxifrage

Starry Saxifrage

Common Spotted Orchid

Selected Others



Mountain Hare

Mountain Hare	Rabbit	Bottle Nosed Dolphin
Grey Seal	Pipistrelle sp	Common Seal
Badger	Wood Mouse	Common Shrew
Field Vole	Bank Vole	Fossorial Water Vole
Red Deer	Roe Deer	Fallow Deer
Beaver	Wild Cattle	Common Frog
Large Red Damselfly	Common Hawker	Northern Emerald
Golden Ringed Dragonfly	Common Darter	Common Emerald
Northern Damselfly	Freyer's Pug	Pine Carpet
Welsh Wave	Green Arches	Dotted Carpet
Barred Red	Mountain Pearl	Satin Beauty
Specked Wood	Large White	Red Admiral
Meadow Brown	Gatekeeper	Common Blue
Cryptic Bumblebee	Northern White Tailed Bumblebee	True lovers knot

flicker