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## Scotland's Bird Club Ayrshire Branch

We are always on the look-out for more articles, cartoons and photographs to include in the future editions of **Stonechat**. Please think about contributing and send any work for publication to me: Tony Scott / Editor, at 4 Hilltop Place, AYR KA7 3PB - or e-mail me at: [da.scott@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:da.scott@tiscali.co.uk)

**Sightings to:** Ayrshire Bird Recorder Fraser Simpson.  
E-mail: [recorder@ayrshire-birding.org.uk](mailto:recorder@ayrshire-birding.org.uk)

**For all local birding info:** please go to [www.ayrshire-birding.org.uk](http://www.ayrshire-birding.org.uk) Thanks go to Kevin Waite for his excellent work in keeping this superb website on the go.

September 2015

# The Stone chat



Photo: Angus Hogg

Baltimore oriole  
at Tawas Point,  
Michigan USA

## Hello and welcome to our new edition of Stonechat.

In this edition we have all the details of our new season's programme of evening meetings, all our field trips - jointly with RSPB Central Ayrshire Local Group as usual, and details of an Ayrshire Birders trip to the Orkney Islands from 27 May to 05 June 2016. We have a wide range of articles starting with an introduction and welcome from our chairman, David Rackham. There is an article entitled 'Visiting the Colonies' from Angus Hogg, who spent time on the trail of elusive warblers in North America. Jane Cleaver (SOC HQ Waterston House, Aberlady), has sent an article written by the SOC librarian, Karen Bidgood, about the collection of books and other facilities the library has to offer. A travelogue on the Birds of Orkney comes from Henry Martin; this was written in 1999, but is a good time to re-visit the article with a birding trip in the offing. It covers an extensive list of local Orkney bird names (from Eric Meek) which is fascinating. Henry sent in a few words about spotted flycatchers too, and this is accompanied by some photographs by Robin Turner. We hope you enjoy it all.

**Tony Scott** newsletter editor

# Notes from the Chair

**David Rackham**



I write this in mid-August and already the berries are on the rowan, some suspiciously brown leaves grace the lawn and the ardent sea watchers report ever-increasing passage of seabirds past our headlands. Every year we see what we view as signs of autumn in the height of summer and express concerns about the early onset of winter at what is really just evidence of the rotating wheel of the seasons. As birders I expect most of us relish this constantly changing of the seasons, though it does seem to be speeding up!

Being largely home-based this summer has given me a chance to appreciate both the variety and the drama of life in a suburban garden. Five minutes looking out into the back garden one mid-morning coincided with one of those periods of intense avian activity for which there seems no obvious explanation. At the feeder was the usual pair of bullfinches (update: now a family!), vying for the best positions with a family of blue tits, a great tit and a couple of coal tits. A very tatty robin joined in at times, together with a couple of chaffinches. The usual wood pigeons and a dunnoek cleared up below the feeder. On the back fence a wren was quartering the woodwork. A nuthatch worked its way down the trunk of the Scots pine, while a tree creeper was going up the silver birch - both had obviously read the field guides. And a chiffchaff hopped from stem to stem in the border shrubs – silently, at this time of year. That's the variety. The drama had come earlier in the summer. The male greater spotted woodpecker had at last decided that the brood of blue tits in our longstanding nestbox was ready, and that the nestbox itself was sufficiently ancient to merit some intense percussion. The reward was a juicy meal. And Helen drew open the bedroom curtains one morning to see a sparrowhawk tucking into a hearty breakfast of young blackbird. The savage wildness in the hawk's eyes seemed out of place in the garden setting; but it was somehow reassuring to see nature red in tooth and claw. I am sure the blackbird did not agree.

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There have been a couple of meetings of the SOC Council through the summer with a lot of essential but not very exciting committee stuff covered. One important issue has been the continuing development of BirdTrack and the extent of SOC's financial commitment to the project as its geographical scope expands. Council meetings also serve to bring to mind the valuable, "low key" work that goes on behind the scenes at SOC: the work of the various sub-committees for example, some of them permanent, others just short-life. As a case in point, the Archive Sub-Committee has just been disbanded after successfully rationalising and developing the Club's archive. Not, maybe, the most exciting aspect of the Club's work, but essential, as any one of us with a loft would testify.

The Annual Conference this year should be a goodie. I can vouch for the excellence of the venue: the Atholl Palace Hotel at Pitlochry. The focus is "Scotland's upland birds - the impact of land management", which will ensure a lively, interesting and highly topical debate. A spectrum of views will be represented, with speakers from Forestry Commission Scotland, the wind farm industry, the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust - as well as, of course, BTO, SOC and the RSPB.

At the Branch level, outings have continued through the summer with trips to Castle Kennedy and Loch Ken, and the three day trip at the end of May to Lancashire. We now look forward to the outings planned for the coming season (see details elsewhere). There are longer trips coming up too: the 10 day Crane Migration trip to North Germany at the beginning of October (fully booked), and another 10 day trip to the Orkney Isles in May/June 2016. (Tony is taking bookings now - see details elsewhere in this newsletter).

As promised at the AGM, the 2012 Ayrshire Bird Report was published and available from June. Copies are available from Anne Dick for £5.00. Of course, you can always pick up your copy of the Bird Report at the Branch's evening meetings, which start again in September. Full details are given elsewhere. Suffice to say the season gets off to an exciting start with Keith Morton talking on "Forest Ecology - the Missing Lynx". This is again a very topical subject, which kicks off another season of stimulating talks. I look forward to seeing you at the Pioneer Hall and Café in Monkton village at 7:00 for 7:30 on Tuesday 8 September!

***David Rackham, Branch Chairman***

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# The George Waterston Library at Waterston House, SOC Headquarters



The library is now in its tenth year at Waterston House. George Waterston, co-founder of the SOC, was instrumental in forming the collection by begging books from various sources. Many books in the club's collection were formally part of his and his wife's library, alongside donations made by others in the early 1930's.

With an outlook over Aberlady Bay, the library offers a calm and tranquil environment to sit and read. It is open to all researchers, birdwatchers of all levels, artists and historians, seven days a week during HQ's normal opening hours. There is also an area specifically tailored to young visitors with comfy seating, activity sheets and children's books on offer.

As the largest ornithology library in Scotland and one of the top collections of its kind in Britain, the facility contains over 5,000 books, around 130 different journals and houses a unique and distinctive archive. The library aims, as far as possible, to be a complete repository of all material on Scottish ornithology. As such, it has a collection not just of books but of some fascinating diaries, photographs and letters from eminent Scottish ornithologists.

This wonderful resource also contains a range of non-Scottish ornithology titles including standard works on avifauna of all parts of the world, handbooks on identification, and works on bird behaviour and methodology.

The library has complete runs of the key British journals, all the main international periodicals and all the bird reports from Scotland, neighbouring English counties, Wales and Ireland.

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The library receives many of the latest natural history books sent by publishers in exchange for a review in the club's journal. See below for the latest titles available to borrow. A large number of books are also donated to the library from people who wish to tidy up their book shelves and attics, or collections have been received as part of a legacy. To find out more about donating books to the club please e-mail [jane.cleaver@the-soc.org.uk](mailto:jane.cleaver@the-soc.org.uk). Any duplicates are offered for sale in our second-hand bookshop at Waterston House, to support the continuing charitable work of the club.

## **SOC members can borrow books!**

Club members can borrow up to two books at a time for a maximum of two months, subject to availability and borrowing terms and conditions (see <http://www.the-soc.org.uk/borrowing-books/>). Smaller books can be posted (p&p charges apply) or passed on to members via conference/meetings/event, so distance from Waterston House should not be a hurdle to borrowing. There is also the facility for headquarters to scan and e-mail, or photocopy and post pages to you (p&p charges apply), subject to copyright conditions.

For more information and to view an up-to-date library catalogue, please visit the club's website <http://www.the-soc.org.uk/our-headquarters/the-library> .

## **Karen Bidgood, Librarian at Waterston House**

Karen is a keen birdwatcher and walker with a particular interest in Iceland where she has spent many holidays with her family. Previously she worked in microbiology and taught science to younger children.

**To contact Karen**, e-mail: [library@the-soc.org.uk](mailto:library@the-soc.org.uk)



## **Latest titles available to borrow from the library:**

- \* Tales of Remarkable Birds by Dominic Couzens
- \* A History of Birdwatching in 100 Objects by David Callaghan
- \* The Passenger Pigeon by Errol Fuller
- \* The Birds of the Iberian Peninsula by de Juana and Garcia
- \* The Faroese Bird Migration Atlas by Hammer et al.

*Borrowing subject to terms and conditions. Contact us to find out more.*

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Willow tit

Did you know that.....  
the young from the first brood of  
**spotted flycatchers** will remain  
with the parents and help feed  
their younger siblings.

Photos: Robin Turner  
RSPB Ken-Dee  
Marshes reserve



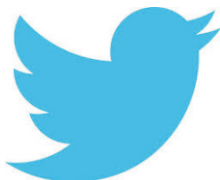
Great spotted woodpeckers

## Did you know that.....

Although **spotted flycatchers** are one of the last summer migrants to arrive, they still manage to rear two broods. In order to do this, they lay fewer eggs in the second clutch than in their first.

*An extract from the BTO Garden Birdwatch - April 2015. sent in by Henry Martin.*

Please keep in touch with  
**SOC events** by logging on to  
the SOC's Twitter and  
Facebook pages



[www.twitter.com/Scottishbirding](http://www.twitter.com/Scottishbirding)

[www.facebook.com/ScotlandsBirdClub](http://www.facebook.com/ScotlandsBirdClub)

# Visiting the Colonies

Angus Hogg



Rose-breasted grosbeak

Every now and then, one feels obliged to go and see how our cousins in the New World are doing – in the hope that they may now have found something a bit more edifying than popcorn and burgers. Sadly, I have to report that, this spring, I found the levels of addiction to such food remains popular among all age groups. However, they do have other things to offer (apart from slightly salty tea!).

My host for this fact-finding mission was Colin Campbell, known to many of you as a past chairman of the North Ayrshire RSPB. He now lives in Delaware and, conveniently, within 20 minutes of Philadelphia airport. Our plan this May was to head north to the shores of Lake Erie, to a place called Magee Marsh. Here we would hope to connect with many of the migrant warbler species which head for their Canadian breeding grounds at this time. Getting there was the first hurdle and, while the road systems may be good, distances are huge, and it took all day to drive from Claymont to Port Clinton in Ohio. Still, the birds we wanted to see had travelled all the way from Central and South America.

With the weather being reported as “cool” I wondered how it might compare with what I'd left behind in Scotland. Well, it actually **was** cool, although it still **felt** warmer than back home. The overcast skies occasionally allowed a few blinks of sunlight through to warm things up, and things slowly improved.

This period, from about the second or third week in May is a big birding event for the Americans, and many of the local hotels and diners in the area had signs out welcoming birders – can't quite see the “***Fife Ness Welcomes Scottish Birders***” banners anytime soon! At a conservative estimate, the car park at Magee Marsh had around 500 cars in it, and you could be forgiven for thinking that here was some kind of birder's hell – the place to which you're sent for daring to see something rare and not telling anyone about it!

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Blackburnian warbler



Kirtland's warbler

As it turned out, not only did the crowds “vanish” along the many paths and boardwalks, but everyone was really good-humoured and helpful. People were ready to help beginners with sorting out their magnolia warblers from their Canada warblers: their bay-breasteds from their Blackburnians. But, the **really** good thing about Magee was the ability to get close to these little gems – no longer a silhouetted dot flitting high through the canopy, but there – right in front of you, near ground level. Most of the American warblers I've seen have either been in autumn, when their plumage is a lot dowdier, or in other, more southern migrant spots in spring, when the viewing conditions have often not been the best. So, this was a real treat.

Perhaps the commonest warblers were species like Cape May, Blackburnian, magnolia and chestnut-sided, while Canada, prothonotary and blue-winged were fairly scarce. But then, there were other species to look at - grey-cheeked and Swainson's thrushes, red-eyed and warbling vireos, eastern wood pewee and least flycatcher. It all made our few days in this area quite outstanding.

From Magee, we headed North, to a town called Grayling in Michigan, where a somewhat special warbler resides. My last trip here was back in the 1980s when our target bird had all but vanished, and a desperate effort was underway to rescue it. Here, among the jack pines, the Kirtland's warbler was making its last stand – down to a breeding population of just under 400 pairs. Would it still be around, and what would its numbers be? It wasn't long before we heard our answer, with five singing birds heard as we started our guided tour. Before the day was out, we'd seen at least 20 singing males, and heard that the population had now climbed to an amazing 2000 pairs, with outlying pairs in Wisconsin and Ontario. A major success for a bird whose wintering grounds (Bermuda) were still largely unknown in the 1980s!

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Baltimore oriole



Ruby-throated hummingbird

From Grayling, we headed over to the shores of Lake Huron, to Tawas Point for more warbler migration. In fact, not only did it produce another terrific show of warblers, but we were now getting shorebirds, raptors and hummingbirds pushing on northwards. First impressions of Tawas were just as stunning as Magee – both brilliant Baltimore and orchard orioles, glistening ruby-throated hummers, magnificent rose-breasted grosbeaks, and gangs of raucous blue jays all thrusting north, pursued by the phantom menace of a merlin. This was migration at its best! Quite apart from anything else, you could be excused for not noticing the other birds which were all around in the marshes, woodlands and flooded fields – the American bitterns, great egrets, blue-winged teals, ospreys, least sandpipers, American woodcocks. A seemingly endless spectacle of birds, and all waiting to be seen at your leisure.

It's this last feature of American birding which I've always relished. The sheer diversity of birdlife, and the approachable nature of most of them make it a real treat to go birding there. It really doesn't seem to matter where you go in the USA – birds and humans just seem to fit together much better than in many other parts of the world. Perhaps they have so much more room in their country than most – many urban areas have so much woodland that people and wildlife have little chance of avoiding each other. They've had their conflicts in the past: the demise of species such as passenger pigeon and Eskimo curlew is not exactly up there with their finest achievements. However, by and large, as the nation has evolved, there appears to have been a realisation that these "resources" are finite, and that they're worth making an effort to hang on to. Observing the American birders' general appreciation of the wonder of spectacles such as migration, and the unstinting efforts made by government departments to save vulnerable species like Kirtland's warbler, I came away wondering if we'll ever aspire to these thoroughly admirable objectives. We **can** learn a few things from our colonial cousins.

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# Birds of Orkney

Henry L. Martin



I was privileged to visit Orkney for a week early in July of 1999. The prime focus of the trip was a study of the rich history and archaeology of the islands, though the flora and fauna could hardly be missed. There are some 40 islands and as many again of islets and skerries. Of the 17 inhabited, the study tour organised by Kindrogan Field Centre concentrated on five - Mainland, Birsay, Burray and South Ronaldsay, reached by causeway, and Rousay across Eynhallow Sound. This account of the birds seen on the trip uses local dialect names, which may be a challenge to readers. There are some clues in the text.

The islands provide ample scope for sea fowl along their rugged shorelines, often of sheer cliffs. Inland largely comprises undulating moors and farmland with many patches of wetland and lochs and lochans. Farms are usually family units, mainly for stock, consisting of modest fields of grazing enclosed by dykes. The limited use of pesticides results in many colourful areas of wild flowers, especially buttercup. There are few hedgerows and limited scrub or woodland, though low scrub is a feature of uncultivated lowland and must have comprised much of the natural environment of the past. Strong winds are common, no doubt often bearing horizontal rain or snow, but for us the sun shone for much of the time and we returned home well tanned. Frequent weather changes - four seasons in a day - are to be expected. And so to the birds:

Several **rain geese** were seen flying over Eynhallow Sound. One fished close by as we picnicked on the shore but the breeding lochan we visited was quiet. Curiously, we saw no **little footy arse** despite visiting several suitable inland waters.

**Mallimack** glided along the up currents by the shore and there were many breeding pairs in nooks and crannies. An occasional **solan goose** stooped for fish offshore - within the islands as a whole up to 10,000 are reported to breed, so we must have been far from the colony. **Hiblin** were not common but **skarf** were widespread, often seen with wings outstretched and we had close views of a nest with young on the cliffs of Birsay. The colourful **burrow duck** or **slygoose** was only seen once, again in Eynhallow Sound where the tide rips ferociously and the feeding must be good - the number of common seal here would reinforce this. On the other hand **stock duck** was found on both inland and coastal waters.

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**Dunter** drakes were in various states of oddly coloured plumage and the ducks were bravely shepherding flotillas of young away from marauding **swarbie** (or **baakie**) and the like. We saw only a few pairs of the fish-chasing **harle**. Raptors were scarce. Our sightings, despite much searching, comprised two **moosie-haak** and four **cataface**, one close by on a fence post, the others casting across the ground on silent wings. Despite RSPB hype about their widespread presence, we saw no **catabelly**. The finger of suspicion points to the **bonxie** and **scootie allan**, both aggressive coastal species which seem to be moving inland and giving no quarter to ground nesting birds, even raptors. In one of the ancestral communal tombs which we explored, a large number of **erne** bones had been found, suggesting that the **erne** was once common and had been a tribal emblem. We saw none. **Muir-hen** were reported still to inhabit the moors: we neither saw nor heard any. The predominant sounds of moor and country generally were of **whaup** and **skolder**, lonely, haunting cries in both instances.

There were plenty of **teeick**, too, but we did not see many **watery pleeps**, with their scarlet legs, and only one **plivver**. A number of **sand-lark** were bravely nesting on rough ground beside some **scootie allan** - I don't know how they survived as one of our party was nearly scalped. By a lochside a lone **boondie** called plaintively and a **horse-gock** rose from the reeds and zig-zagged across the bed. Sea fowl, naturally, abound in the Orkney Islands - **cullya** generally such as the **white maa** and **baakie** cruised around and the crisply plumaged and vocal **galoo** flitted over sea and cliff. The **sheertail** were mostly of the Arctic species and we safely navigated past two significant breeding colonies. A wonderful experience was to lie on the edge of a sheer cliff at Marwick Head, looking down on thousands of **skout** on the ledges, interspersed with **coulter-neb**, and to watch a small group of **tammie-norie** parading on the top of a stack. They were rare here but more common on the island of Hoy as seen from the ferry from Stromness to the Scottish mainland. Scattered around the coastal waters were **tystie**, fishing quietly in ones and twos, their white wing bars clear even at a distance.

Bonxie



Tammie norie





**Doo**, feral and otherwise, inhabited the rocky outcrops. Land birds were unexpectedly limited in variety and number. Perhaps the open landscape and winds are a restriction on successful breeding. We did, however, hear **laverock** on high here and there and **teeting** and **shore teeting** were common enough. **Willie wagtail** was often around but I didn't see **robin redbreast** or **wirann**. **Blackie** was reasonably widespread where the terrain was appropriate. The only **mavis** seen was feeding young in our guest house garden, making the most of limited shrubbery sheltered by a low wall. Of the sinister breeds, **jackie** and **hoodie** were much in evidence and there was a colony of **corbie** in the only significant wood we passed - one wonders at the pioneer spirit of the first bird to locate this spot. Deep throated **ramna** were heard and seen on one occasion but up to a hundred reported to be around. **Scootie** flocked in and over the fields in large numbers. **Sprog** preferred the shelter of town and farm buildings. A small party of **heather lintie** were seen by some of the group on a cliff top and a lone **rose lintie** was spotted on a farm dyke. I can only remember one **stinkiebeul**, sitting perky on a moorland boulder though the terrain would seem very suitable.

Readers will gather that the list is short on finches, buntings and warblers, though a sedge warbler was seen at one wetland. Any tit showing up would be subject to a call to **birdline** and the arrival of Orkney twitchers. Yet just about anything might be seen in the migration season. The breeding list for the islands comprises 113 species and a further 246 have been recorded at some time, including the great auk, now extinct! So, readers should go and see for themselves - there is magic and mystery in these islands, inhabited for at least 6,000 years, with many traces of our ancestors to explore, and renowned cheese, oatcakes, beer and whisky with which to while away a rainy moment, and a warm welcome from the Orcadians.

**Editor: Why not experience Orkney yourself and join the Ayrshire Birders trip being organised for 2016. The dates are from Friday 27 May to Sunday 05 June. Details are to be seen elsewhere in this issue of [Stonechat](#).**

## It's Norse what you think

Reference: Island of Birds - A Guide to Orkney Birds

**Orkney bird names by Eric Meek.** First published by RSPB

Rain goose - red-throated diver  
Mallimack - fulmar  
Hiblin - cormorant  
Burrow duck - shelduck  
Dunter - eider  
Baakie - great black-backed gull (1)  
Moosie-haak - kestrel  
Catabelly - hen harrier  
Scootie allan - Arctic skua  
Muir-hen - red grouse  
Skolder - oystercatcher  
Watery pleeps - redshank  
Sand-lark - ringed plover  
Boondie - common sandpiper  
Cullya - general term for any gull  
Gaaloo - kittiwake  
Skout - common guillemot  
Tammie norie - puffin  
Doo - rock dove/feral pigeon  
Teeting - meadow pipit  
Willie wagtail - pied wagtail  
Wirann - wren  
Mavis - song thrush  
Hoodie - hooded crow  
Ramna - raven  
Sprog - house sparrow  
Rose lintie - linnet

Little footy arse - little grebe  
Solam goose - gannet  
Skarf - shag  
Stock duck - mallard  
Swarbie - Great black-backed gull (2)  
Harle - merganser  
Cataface - short-eared owl  
Bonxie - great skua  
Erne - white-tailed eagle  
Whaup - curlew  
Teeick - lapwing  
Plivver - golden plover  
Horse-gock - common snipe  
White maa - herring gull  
Sheertail - Arctic tern  
Coulter-neb - razorbill  
Tystie - black guillemot  
Laverock - skylark  
Shore teeting - rock pipit  
Robin redbreast - robin  
Blackie - blackbird  
Jackie - jackdaw  
Corbie - rook  
Scootie - starling  
Heather lintie - twite  
Stinkiebeul - wheatear



Sheertail



Catabelly





# Birds, history and landscapes of the Orkney Islands

**Leader: Jim Thomson**  
**Organisers: Tony & Gerda Scott**

**Friday 27 May to**  
**Sunday 05 June 2016**

**Join us for seven nights on the Orkney Islands, plus one night in Inverness on the outward journey, and one night in Carrbridge on our homeward journey.** Orkney comprises 75 islands, 17 of them inhabited. It's attractions for the visiting birder are the vast numbers of breeding seabirds, the moorland specialities and passage migrants. The time we are travelling is one of the very best for both migrants and breeding birds.

We hope to book a comfortable three to four star hotel on Orkney Mainland - and similar hotels on the outward and home legs. Positioning ourselves on central Mainland will enable us to visit the major birding sites - as well as the many historic, archaeological and scenic treasures of these islands. We will be travelling by comfortable small coach from Ayr and crossing on Northlink Ferries from Scrabster to Stromness. Hotel stays will be based on dinner, bed and breakfast and all ferry costs will be included.

**We would appreciate early booking if possible, as hotels can be booked up quite early for this time of year. We expect the cost to be in the region of £970.00 to £1075.00 for the ten days/nine nights dbb/coach/ferries.**



The cost of the trip will be around £970.00 to about £1075.00 depending on the number of participants.

It will include all coach and ferry costs and accommodation in en-suite rooms in a three or four star hotel.



If you would like to join this tour, please request an itinerary from Tony & Gerda Scott, 4 Hilltop Place, Ayr KA7 3PB or f please telephone us on 01292 281 085 or e-mail Tony Scott on: [da.scott@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:da.scott@tiscali.co.uk)



## Evening meetings at Monkton Community Church Hall and Pioneer Café **Tuesday 19.00 for 19.30hrs.**

**08 September 2015 - Keith MORTON** - Forest ecology - the missing lynx

**13 October 2015 - Yvonne BOLES** - RSPB's work in the Trossachs and Loch Lomond

**10 November 2015 - Chris WALTHO** - Forty years with the common eider

**08 December 2015 - Chris ROSE** - Wildlife artist

**12 January 2016 - Jim COYLE** - Birds of Greater Glasgow

**09 February 2016 - Neil GRUBB** - Videographer - Outlands of the Lothians

**08 March 2016- Chas. MOONIE** - New images since the pallid harrier

**12 April 2016 - AGM followed by - Russell NISBET** - Migration and the Isle of May



## MUSSELBURGH LAGOONS, WATERSTON HOUSE AND ABERLADY BAY

**Saturday 21 November 2015 by COACH**  
**Leader: Jim Thomson Tickets £25.00.**

A joint SOC Ayrshire and RSPB Central Ayrshire Local Group day trip. **Leaving Dodds coach depot, East Road, AYR at 07.45.** We will be driving via Glasgow with the first comfort stop at Heart of Scotland Services on the M8 (09.15 - 09.45). On around Edinburgh ring road to Newcraighall and MUSSELBURGH LAGOONS (C.10.30 to 11.45). On to SOC headquarters at Waterston House, where we will have time for lunch (please bring a packed one) from around 12.10 to 13.45 - with time to take in whatever art exhibition is running at that time - and maybe use the library and peruse the sale items in the shop. Then to nearby ABERLADY BAY from 13.50 to 16.00 or until dusk. We return via Loanhead and the A702 to BIGGAR where we will organise dinner from about 17.30 to 19.30. Finally to the M74 (Abington) and the A70 via Douglas and Muirkirk to AYR for c. 21.30 hrs.

Tickets will be available from September onwards or register by e-mailing Tony Scott on : [da.scott@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:da.scott@tiscali.co.uk) or telephone 01292 281 085.

## **Field Trips and tours** jointly with RSPB Central Ayrshire Local Group

### **Field Trips 2015**

#### **Saturday 19 September** [RSPB KEN-DEE MARSHES AND THREAVE GARDENS](#)

Meet at New Galloway High Street (toilets) at 10.30 hrs. On to Ken-Dee reserve for around 11.00 and at 13.30 on to Threave until c.16.00 hrs. Full day trip - please bring a picnic lunch.

#### **Saturday 24 October** [RSPB MERSEHEAD RESERVE](#)

Meet at 11.00 hrs at the reserve car park. Whole day trip until 15.30.  
Shop & café on site, so we can lunch here or bring our own.

#### **Saturday 21 November** **by COACH**

#### [MUSSELBURGH LAGOONS, SOC WATERSTONE HOUSE & ABERLADY BAY](#)

Meet 07.30 at Dodd's bus depot. Whole day trip returning around 21.30.  
Dinner will be arranged. Coach tickets: £25.00.

#### **Saturday 12 December** [FULLARTON WOODS & BARASSIE](#)

Meet at 10.00 hrs at Fullarton Woods car park (toilets). On to Barassie / Troon Harbour.  
Please bring picnic lunch. Finish c.15.30.

### **Field trips 2016**

#### **Saturday 23 January** [MAIDENS & NTS CULZEAN](#)

Meet 10.30 hrs at Maidens Harbour car park (toilets). On to Culzean later.  
Please bring a picnic lunch. Finish around 15.30 hrs.

#### **Saturday 20 February** [GREENAN SHORE AND DOONFOOT.](#)

Meet at 10.00hrs Greenan Castle car park. Trip lasts until 12.00 hrs.

#### **Saturday 19 March** [GLEN AFTON & SWT KNOCKSHINNOCH LAGOONS](#)

Meet 10.30 at Glen Afton. On to the lagoons at New Cumnock. Whole day trip.  
Please bring picnic lunch. Finish c.15.30.

#### **Saturday 16 April** [RSPB WOOD OF CREE & NEW RESERVE](#)

Meet 11.00 hrs at reserve car park. Whole day trip. On to the new extension woodlands later.  
Please bring picnic lunch. Finish c.16.00.

#### **Saturday 21 May** [LOCH DOON & NESS GLEN](#)

Meet at the Roundhouse car park. Lunch can be purchased at the Roundhouse or bring your own. Whole day trip to finish about 16.00 hrs.

#### **Friday 27 May - Sunday 05 June** **A ten-day coach holiday**

[BIRDS, LANDSCAPES & HISTORY OF THE ORKNEY ISLANDS](#) Coach travel from Ayr. Staying at three or four-star hotels on a DBB basis. One night Inverness; seven nights on Orkney; one night Carrbridge. Ferry from Scrabster to Stromness. Full details available in September. Cost between £970.00 £1075.00 depending on hotels chosen and numbers participating. The cost includes all coach travel, car ferries and accommodation in en-suite rooms with dinner, bed and breakfast each day.

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