

**Welcome to the fifth Dumfries & Galloway Wildlife Festival.** The festival continues to grow, with lots of new activities being added. For the first time there will be a chance to dispense with the car and join a "Wings on Wheels" tour of top bird watching sites in the area, to spot wading birds and wildfowl. Book early to avoid disappointment! Another first is the opportunity to see Red Deer up close at the Galloway Red Deer range. There will be a few goats about as well. Also in 2008, we are repeating the popular open day at the Wildlife Hospital, visits to explore the seashore and a whole range of family activities for Easter. As always, the emphasis is on finding some of the region's special wildlife. So if you have never seen a Red Squirrel, Red Kite, Peregrine Falcon, Red Deer or Badger – now is your chance. Experienced wildlife watchers and beginners should both find something of interest in the festival.

**Booking Information:** Unless otherwise indicated, events do not require booking - simply turn up at the meeting place at the time indicated.

**Costs:** Unless otherwise indicated, all events are free to attend.

**Where to eat:** Unless otherwise stated, food and drink is not provided for any event, including full day events. Local catering facilities are often available close-by, but you may wish to bring a packed lunch or snack for some events.

**Accommodation:** Please contact VisitScotland Dumfries & Galloway Tourist Board on 01387 253862 or [dumfriestic@visitscotland.com](mailto:dumfriestic@visitscotland.com) for advice and assistance on where to stay, and for information about other attractions in Dumfries and Galloway.

\*Marked events are particularly suitable for younger children (aged 5-12) and their families.

[www.wildlife festival.org.uk](http://www.wildlife festival.org.uk)

## Bird of Prey Day

**Friday 21st March, 10am-4.30pm, Kippford**

A day with birds of prey with the opportunity to fly them, under the guidance of a falconer.



**Cost:** Individual Hawk Walks £15 per head or £45 for a group of four.

**Meet:** Kippford Holiday Park, NX844563.

**Further information** and booking (essential): Kippford Holiday Park 01556 620636.

## \*Easter Treasure Hunt

**Saturday 22nd March, 1pm - 3pm, Dalbeattie**

A fun family event for all ages and abilities, with tasty prizes!

**Meet:** Dalbeattie Forest Town Wood Car Park, NX837599.

**Further information:** Forestry Commission, Scotland 01387 860247.

## \*Easter

**Sunday 23rd March, 11am - 3.30pm, Kirroughtree**

Trails, quizzes, goodie bags, games and lots of fun, all to be had at Kirroughtree Visitor Centre.

**Cost:** £3 child

**Meet:** Kirroughtree Visitor Centre, NX451646.

**Further information:** Contact the Galloway Forest Park Office on 01671 402420.

## \*Wetland Wildlife

**Sunday 23rd March, 11am - 4pm, Castle Douglas**

An event for all the family to explore the wonderful variety of wildlife that inhabits the river and marshes at Threave.

**Meet:** Threave Castle car park, Kelton Mains Farm, Castle Douglas, NX746617.

**Further information:** National Trust for Scotland Ranger Service, Threave 01556 503702.

## \*Easter in the Forest

**Monday 24th March, 12noon-3pm, Mabie Forest.**

Join our tasty treasure hunt and bring along a painted egg for the egg rolling competition.

**Meet:** Mabie Forest Car Park, NX950710.

**Further information:** Forestry Commission, Scotland 01387 860247.



## Solway Waders

**Wednesday 24th March, 10am-12.30pm, Southernness**

Join Rangers Keith Kirk and Ian Brown as they search for waders and other birds on this part of the North Solway. Even though winter should be over we will try to find some Purple Sandpipers.

**Meet:** Southernness Lighthouse, NX977542. Bring wellies and binoculars. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Some uneven rocky terrain, otherwise not very strenuous.

**Further information** and booking (essential): Dumfries and Galloway Council Ranger Service 01556 505479 (answer phone) or [keith.kirk@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:keith.kirk@dumgal.gov.uk)

## Hatchery Open Day

**Wednesday 26th March, 10am-12noon, Auldgirith**

Come and see the Nith District Salmon Fishery Board's hatchery where Salmon fry can be seen

feeding and the whole hatchery process will be explained. You can then join us on a field visit to see and hear how some of our riverside habitat improvement work is helping improve biodiversity within our catchments and increase fish numbers.



**Meet:** Auldgirith Inn Car Park, Auldgirith, NX913868. Bring outdoor clothes and wellies.

**Further Information** and bookings (essential): Nith District Salmon Fishery Board 01387 740043 [NDSFB@salmonfishery.demon.co.uk](mailto:NDSFB@salmonfishery.demon.co.uk).

## \*Kid's Bird Box Building

**Wednesday 26th March, 10am and 2pm, Caerlaverock**

Come and try your hand at building your own nest box with SNH staff.

**Meet:** Caerlaverock NNR Office, Hollands Farm Road, Caerlaverock, Dumfries, DG1 4RS, NY043659.

**Further information** and booking (essential): Scottish Natural Heritage 01387 770275 (please note that places will be limited for this event).

## Heritage Trees

**Wednesday 26th March, 2pm-5pm, Gatehouse of Fleet**

Trees are often some of the oldest features in the landscape, and have played an important role in history. Discover some of the ancient trees of the Fleet Valley National Scenic area, their contribution to local economies of the past and their current value for wildlife and scenery.



**Meet:** Tourist Information Centre, Gatehouse of Fleet, NX599562. The walk includes some steep climbs, boots or wellies recommended.

**Further information** and booking (essential): 01387 260180, mob 07824708110 or [ian.brown2@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:ian.brown2@dumgal.gov.uk)

## \*Craft Day

**Wednesday 26th March, 11am - 3pm, Kirroughtree**

Join staff at Kirroughtree Visitor Centre and make something unique to take home.

**Cost:** £1 per child

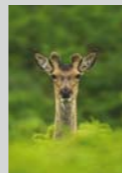
**Meet:** Kirroughtree Visitor Centre, NX451646.

**Further information:** contact the Galloway Forest Park Office on 01671 402420.

## Red Deer Range

**Thursday 27th March 2pm-3pm, Galloway Red Deer Range**

See Galloway Red Deer at close hand in their natural environment - Wild Galloway.



**Meet:** at the Red Deer Range car park located on the A712 between Newton Stewart and New Galloway, NX521732.

**Cost:** £5 adult, £3 conc, £2.50 child

**Further information:** contact the Galloway Forest Park Office on 01671 402420.

## Fish Up Close

**Friday 28th March, 11am-12.30pm, Wigtown**

Guided Tour of Galloway Fisheries Trust Hatchery, which will give a close up view of wild trout and salmon before they are released into their native river. There will also

be a look at a selection of salmon smolts that have been tagged, in order to help to estimate the number of salmon smolts leaving the Bladnoch to go to sea. Other species that may also be on show include Pike, Perch, lampreys and Roach. To finish there will be a tour of Torhouse Trout, a fully operational Rainbow Trout Farm that is situated within the same site.



**Meet:** Torhouse Trout Farm Car Park, NX438547.

**Further information** and booking (essential): Galloway Fisheries Trust 01671 403011 [mail@gallowayfisheriestrust.org](mailto:mail@gallowayfisheriestrust.org) [www.gallowayfisheriestrust.org](http://www.gallowayfisheriestrust.org).

## \*Wildlife in your Compost Bin!

**Friday 28th March, 10am-4pm, Dumfries**

Come and learn about home composting and the animals which help to turn your organic waste into a resource.

**Meet:** Garden Wise, Castle Douglas Road, Dumfries, NX952757.

**Further information:** contact Waste Prevention, Dumfries and Galloway Council on 01387 260139.

## What's that Duck?

**Saturday 29th March, 1pm - 4pm, Caerlaverock**

Join WWT experts to find and identify the ducks, geese and swans wintering at this world renowned wetland reserve.



**Meet:** WWT Wetlands Centre, Caerlaverock, NY051656. Sorry, no dogs

**Cost:** Normal admission charges apply, reduced rate for WWT members.

**Further information** and bookings (essential): Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust 01387 770200 Overnight accommodation available.

## \*Explore the Seashore

**Saturday 29th March, 11am-12noon, Gatehouse of Fleet**

Ever wondered what creatures lived in the shells that you find along the beach? All will become clear after a visit to Cardoness with the National Scenic Area Ranger. This walk is easy but bring wellies. Children must be accompanied by an adult.



**Meet:** Cardoness Estate car park, NX 565537.

**Further information** and booking (essential): Tel 01387 260180, mob 07824708110 or [ian.brown2@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:ian.brown2@dumgal.gov.uk)

## Whale and Dolphin Watch

**Sunday 30th March, 11am-3pm, Rhins Coast**

Join members of the local cetacean group to look out for whales, dolphins and porpoises off the Rhins coast. Information on how to look for and identify the species found in the region will be available. No booking necessary, but please



note that the watch is weather dependent and may be cancelled in the event of very poor weather conditions. Contact organiser if in doubt.

**Meet:** Join watchers on the headland by Killantringan Lighthouse (Black Head). Parking at NW982567.

**Further information:** Mark Pollitt, DGERC, Solway Heritage. 01387 247543, or [info@dgerc.org.uk](mailto:info@dgerc.org.uk)

## Bogmania

**Sunday 30th March, every hour from 11am-4pm, Gatehouse of Fleet**

Come and see a movie written by and starring local children, filmed on location at this National Nature Reserve.

**Meet:** Cairnsmore of Fleet National Nature Reserve, NX554637.

**Further Information:** Reserve Office 01557 814435.

## Wildlife Challenge

**Sunday 30th March, 12.30pm - 3.30pm, Drumlanrig Castle**

Test your knowledge of wildlife in our challenge. During the allocated time you will need to find a variety of flora and fauna and photograph them on your digital camera.



**Meet:** Drumlanrig Castle Visitor Centre, Thornhill, NX852992.

**Cost:** Usual Country Park admission charges apply. Please bring binoculars and a digital camera.

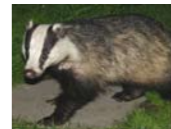
**Further Information** and booking (essential): Buccleuch Ranger Service 01848 331555 [www.drumlanrig.com](http://www.drumlanrig.com)

## \*Stars and Stripes

**Nightly from Monday 31st March to Sunday 13th April, 7.30pm Caerlaverock**

Watch wild Badgers feeding just outside our comfortable

observatory, Fair-trade tea and coffee available.



**Meet:** WWT Wetlands Centre, Caerlaverock, NY051656. Sorry, no dogs

**Cost:** Normal admission charges apply, reduced rate for WWT members

**Further information** and bookings (essential): Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust 01387 770200. Overnight accommodation available.

## Wings on Wheels

**Wednesday 2nd April, 10am - 4pm, Castle Douglas**

On board our Criffell Coaches minibus we will be visiting some of the top birdwatching sites in the area, especially noted for wading birds and wildfowl. Sites will include RSPB Mersehead, Southernness, Carsethorn and the River Nith.



**Meet:** Tourist Information Centre, Market Street Car Park, Castle Douglas, NX767627.

**Cost:** £10 per adult

**Further information** and bookings (essential): Tina Flinn, RSPB 01387 780579.

## \*Craft Day

**Wednesday 2nd April, 11am - 3pm, Kirroughtree**

Join staff at Kirroughtree Visitor Centre and make something unique to take home.

**Cost:** £1 per child

**Meet:** Kirroughtree Visitor Centre, NX451646.

**Further information:** contact the Galloway Forest Park Office on 01671 402420.

## \*Magical Meadows

**Wednesday 2nd April, 2pm -3.30pm, Rockcliffe**

Come along and help the National Scenic Areas Ranger hunt for the bugs and beasts that call the meadow their home. This walk is easy but bring wellies. Children must be accompanied by an adult.



**Meet:** Rockcliffe main car park, NX 852535.

**Further information** and booking (essential): 01387 260180, mob 07824708110 or [ian.brown2@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:ian.brown2@dumgal.gov.uk)

## Hatchery Open Day

**Wednesday 2nd April, 10am-12noon, Auldgirith**

Come and see the Nith District Salmon Fishery Board's hatchery where Salmon fry can be seen feeding and the whole hatchery process will be explained. You can then join us on a field visit to see and hear how some of our riverside habitat improvement work is helping improve biodiversity within our catchments and increase fish numbers.

**Meet:** Auldgirith Inn Car Park, Auldgirith, NX913868. Bring outdoor clothes and wellies.

**Further Information** and bookings (essential): Nith District Salmon Fishery Board 01387 740043 [NDSFB@salmonfishery.demon.co.uk](mailto:NDSFB@salmonfishery.demon.co.uk)

## Bats

**Thursday 3rd April, 8pm, Glentroot**

Bats are fantastic! Join local bat group for an informative slide show and then search for bats



hunting in the night sky. Please bring warm/waterproof clothing, midge repellent, hat and torch.

**Cost:** £5 adult, £3 conc, £2.50 child

**Meet:** Glentroot Visitor Centre, NX372786.

**Further information** and booking (essential): contact the Galloway Forest Park Office on 01671 402420.

## \*Nature Trail/Quiz

**Thursday 3rd April, Anytime between 10am-2pm, Caerlaverock**

Follow a trail through Caerlaverock National Nature Reserve to reveal the answers to the quiz.

**Meet:** Caerlaverock NNR Office, Hollands Farm Road, Caerlaverock, Dumfries, DG1 4RS, NY043659

**Further information:** Scottish Natural Heritage, Reserve Office 01387 770275.

**Thursday 3rd April, 1pm-2pm, Carsethorn**

Ever wondered what creatures lived in the shells that you find along the beach? All will become clear after a visit to Powillimont with the National Scenic Area Ranger. This walk is easy but bring wellies. Children must be accompanied by an adult.



**Meet:** Powillimont beach car park, NX989564.

**Further information** and booking (essential): 01387 260180, mob 07824708110 or [ian.brown2@dumgal.gov.uk](mailto:ian.brown2@dumgal.gov.uk)

## \*Wildlife Explorers Bugs & Birds

Friday 4th April, 11am – 1pm, Mersehead

Are you an intrepid explorer? Join our Field Teachers as they take a walk around the award winning reserve to find out about our very special birds and beasts!



**Meet:** Mersehead Visitor Centre, NX925561. Bus 372 from Dumfries stops at Southwick (Caulkerbush) 1.5 km / 1 mile from the visitor centre. Please bring suitable outdoor clothing and footwear.

**Cost:** £2 per child. RSPB & Wildlife Explorer members free.

**Further information** and bookings (essential): Ella McLellan, RSPB 01387 780579.

## \*Wildlife in your Compost Bin!

Friday 4th April, 10am - 4pm, Dumfries

Come and learn about home composting and the animals which help to turn your organic waste into a resource.



**Meet:** Garden Wise, Castle Douglas Road, Dumfries, NX952757.

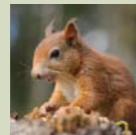
**Further information:** contact Waste Prevention, Dumfries and Galloway Council on 01387 260139.

## Discover Mabie Nature Reserve

Saturday 5th April, 12noon – 3pm, Mabie Forest

Join Forestry Commission staff and wildlife experts as we explore one of the region's richest wildlife sites. Mabie Nature Reserve is special

for many kinds of plant and animal. This early spring visit will give an opportunity to see



what's around at this time of year, and to find out what will appear as the year progresses.

**Meet:** Mabie Forest Car Park, NX950710.

**Further information** and bookings (essential): Forestry Commission, Scotland 01387 860247.

## Red Kite Feeding Station Open Day

Saturday 5th April, anytime between 1.30pm and 4pm, Laurieston

Free entry to the Red Kite feeding station, Laurieston. The Red Kite team will be on hand to show you these magnificent birds and answer any questions.



**Meet:** Bellymack Hill Farm, Laurieston, NX688652. Bring outdoor footwear and clothing.

**Cost:** Free but donations welcome.

**Further information:** Calum Murray, RSPB 01556 670464 DumfriesandGalloway@rspb.org.uk www.gallowaykitetrail.com

## Feathered Friends

Sunday 6th April 12noon-2pm, Drumlanrig Castle

Come along and join in the workshop, making feeders and boxes to help them get ready for the season.

**Meet:** Drumlanrig Castle Visitor Centre, Thornhill, NX852992.

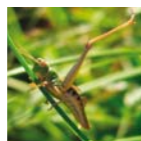
**Cost:** Usual Country Park admission charges apply.

**Further information** and booking (essential): Buccleuch Ranger Service 01848 331555 www.drumlanrig.com

## Farm Wetland Walk

Sunday 6th April, 11am, Lochmaben

A walk around a dairy farm looking at farmland habitats, particularly ponds and wetlands which are rich in wildlife.



**Meet:** Smallrigg Farm, Lochmaben, NY075809.

**Further Information** and booking (essential): Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, 01387 760576.

## Fish Up Close

Monday 7th April, 11am-12.30pm, Wigtown.

Guided Tour of Galloway Fisheries Trust Hatchery, which will give a close up view of wild trout and salmon before they are released into their native river. There will also be a look at a selection of salmon smolts that have been tagged, in

order to help to estimate the number of salmon smolts leaving the



Bladnoch to go to sea. Other species that may also be on show include Pike, Perch, lampreys and Roach. To finish there will be a tour of Torhouse Trout, a fully operational Rainbow Trout Farm that is situated within the same site.

**Meet:** Torhouse Trout Farm Car Park, NX438547.

**Further information** and booking (essential): Galloway Fisheries Trust 01671 403011 mail@gallowayfisheriestrust.org www.gallowayfisheriestrust.org

## Kirkconnell Flow National Nature Reserve

Wednesday 9th April, 2pm-4pm, New Abbey

Meet the reserve warden for a gentle walk around the raised bog and through surrounding pine forest to learn more about the sites' wildlife, history and management.



**Meet:** Kirkconnell Flow car park, NX963701. Access from the A710 Dumfries to New Abbey road. The 372 bus from Dumfries will set passengers down at the road entrance.

**Further information:** Beth Wilson, Scottish Natural Heritage 01387 247010, beth.wilson@snh.gov.uk

## Wings on Wheels

Wednesday 9th April, 10am – 4pm, Dumfries

On board our Criffell Coaches minibus we will be visiting some of the top birdwatching sites in the area, especially noted for wading birds and wildfowl. Sites will include RSPB Mersehead, Southernness, Carsethorn and the River Nith.

**Meet:** Brooms Road Car Park, Dumfries, NX975759.

**Cost:** £10 per adult

**Further information** and bookings (essential): Tina Flinn, RSPB 01387 780579

## Reptile Ramble

Thursday 10th April, 10am - 1pm, Mossdale

Join Dumfries and Galloway Environmental Resources Centre (DGERC) staff at Mossdale on a walk looking for some of the region's elusive reptiles. Find out how to look for and identify the three species of native Scottish reptiles, all of which are found in the surrounding area.



**Meet:** Car park by Stroan Loch on the Raiders Road, NX647700.

**Cost:** optional donation

**Further information** and booking (essential): Mark Pollitt, DGERC, Solway Heritage. 01387 247543. info@dgerc.org.uk www.dgerc.org.uk

## \*South of Scotland Wildlife Hospital Open Day

Friday 11th April, 10am – 12noon, Mersehead

A morning walk around Mersehead Reserve to see displaying lapwings and other wildlife. A great chance to learn about the wonderful wetland birds that are found around our region. This event coincides with the launch of the Dumfries and Galloway lapwing recording postcard.



**Meet:** Mersehead Visitor Centre, NX925561. Bus 372 from Dumfries stops at Southwick (Caulkerbush) 1.5 km / 1 mile from the visitor centre.

**Cost:** Free but donations welcome

**Further information:** South of Scotland Wildlife Hospital 01387 860 461 soswh@barony.ac.uk www.soswh.org.uk

**Cost:** Free but donations welcome

**Further information** and booking (essential): Tina Flinn, RSPB 01387 780579

## \*Seashore Shells on the Seashore

Friday 11th April, 2pm-3pm, Brighthouse Bay

Don't get tongue-tied with the names of different kinds of shell found on the shore. Visit the beach with retired marine biologist Jim Logan and learn about the lives of the fascinating creatures that live between the tides.

**Meet:** Main reception, Brighthouse Bay Holiday Park, NX632457. Please bring suitable outdoor clothing and footwear.

**Further Information:** Scottish Wildlife Trust (Stewartry) 01556 620617.

## Carstramon Wood

Saturday 12th April, 10am-12noon, Gatehouse of Fleet

Enjoy a walk through this Scottish Wildlife Trust Reserve in the company of local naturalist Brian Smith.



**Meet:** Carstramon Wood, Gatehouse of Fleet, NX589602. Bring outdoor footwear and clothing. Sorry, no dogs.

**Further Information:** Scottish Wildlife Trust (Stewartry) 01556 620617.

## \*Wildlife Explorers: Remarkable Raptors

Saturday 12th April, 11am-1pm, Laurieston

Fascinating facts about some of the birds of prey living here in Galloway, from the fastest and largest to the smallest! Find out how they hunt and find prey. We may even get to see one or two at Ken Dee on the day.

**Meet:** Ken Dee Marshes Reserve car park, NX699684.

**Cost:** Free but donations welcome

**Further information:** Calum Murray, RSPB 01556 670464.

## Upland Wildlife at the Grey Mare's Tail

Sunday 13th April, 1pm-4pm, Moffat

After the winter, the numbers of birds, insects and flowers will be rising in the hills. Come along to see the changes, hopefully to include good views of



peregrine falcons nesting. The walk will take place on steep ground, but on a good path.

**Meet:** Grey Mare's Tail car park, 10 miles NE of Moffat on the A708, NT156187.

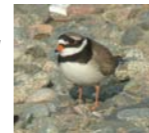
**Cost:** Free, but donations are welcome!

**Further information** and booking: Dan Watson on 0844 493 2249 or dwatson@nts.org.uk

## Wigtown Harbour Wetland Birdwatch

Sunday 13th April, anytime between 10am and 4.30pm, Wigtown

Experts will be on hand to show you an array of wetland birds, including pink-footed geese on their way back to Iceland.



**Meet:** Wigtown Harbour car park, NX440549.

**Further information:** Paul Collin, RSPB 01671 402861.

## Land Rover Tour

Sunday 13th April, 10am-12noon and 1pm-3pm, Drumlanrig Castle

Sit back and enjoy the sights of the Queensberry Estate from the comfort of our landrover with one of our experienced rangers as your guide.

**Meet:** Drumlanrig Castle Visitor Centre, Thornhill, NX852992.

**Cost:** £15.00 per person. Maximum 6 people per trip.

**Further Information** and booking (essential): Buccleuch Ranger Service 01848 331555 www.drumlanrig.com

## Find out more...

For more information on wildlife in Dumfries & Galloway, check out the following publications, which are available from Tourist Information Centres as well as the addresses below:

### Welcome to Wildlife

Available free from: Scottish Natural Heritage, Carmont House, The Crichton, Bankend Road, Dumfries, DG1 4ZF. Tel 01387 247010.

### Birdwatching in Dumfries and Galloway

#### Countryside Events 2008

Both available free from: Ranger Service, Dumfries & Galloway Council, Planning & Environment, Militia House, Dumfries, DG1 2HR. Tel 01387 260129, tom.henry@dumgal.gov.uk

### The Dumfries and Galloway Local Biodiversity Action Plan

describes all the important habitats and species found in the region, and outlines the actions needed to safeguard and enhance them. For more information check out www.dumgal.gov.uk/biodiversity.

### Coming up....

**"Wood Festival at Kirroughtree Forest"** Friday 24th August 08 - Join the Forestry Commission Rangers to celebrate all things wood. An action packed programme of events throughout the day - something for everyone!

**"Ae Magic Day"** Friday 25th July - A family fun day in the Forest of Ae with lots of exciting activities.

### Dumfries Film Festival

A range of films and activities on an environmental theme. Check www.rbcft.co.uk for dates and details.

Front cover by Andy Hay rspb-images.com, other photographs: Ben Hall rspb-images.com, Tom Marshall rspb-images.com, Mark Pollitt, Rebecca Johnson, Laurie Campbell, Peter Norman, Clive Davies, Paul McLaughlin, Neil Philips, Chris Sargeant rspb-images.com, Tom Marshall rspb-images.com and Solway Heritage.

Financial assistance for this project has been received from



## Have you seen nesting Lapwings?



Please tell us where you have seen nesting Lapwings. Contact RSPB for a survey postcard. Tel: 01556 670478

## Dumfries and Galloway

# Wildlife Festival



21 March - 13 April 2008