

Dumfries and Galloway

Wildlife Festival



www.wildlifefestival.org.uk

2 April - 18 April 2010

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Welcome to the seventh Dumfries & Galloway Wildlife Festival. 2010 is International Year of Biodiversity and the festival offers a great opportunity to see some of Dumfries and Galloway's fantastic wildlife and the work that is going on to care for it. This is the biggest festival ever with over 60 events included in the programme. Look out for species such as geese, badgers, salmon and of course red kites! New additions to the 2010 programme are poetry events featuring award winning writers and top musicians, a photography workshop run by local wildlife photographer Keith Kirk and an art workshop at Cairnmore of Fleet NNR with the chance to try your hand at portraying the local wildlife in clay. Popular activities held again this year include the Stars and Stripes badger watches at WWT Caerlaverock, visits to RSPB Mershead reserve to see lots of wildfowl and waders and a whole range of family activities for Easter. So something for everyone to enjoy!

Peter Norman
Biodiversity Officer

Booking Information: Not all events require booking - simply turn up at the meeting place at the time indicated. Where 'booking recommended' is shown next to an event we cannot guarantee that you will be able to join the event without booking in advance, although this may be possible. It is essential that you book in advance for all events where this is 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 Visit Scotland Dumfries & Galloway on 01387 253862 or www.visitdumfriesandgalloway.co.uk 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.**



*Stars & Stripes Badger Watch

Nightly from Friday 2nd April to Sunday 11th April, 7.30pm, Caerlaverock

A unique opportunity to watch wild badgers feeding right outside our observatory windows.

Cost: Adults £7.50, Concessions £5, Children £2.50

Meet: 7.30pm, WWT Caerlaverock Wetlands Centre, NY051656

Further information & bookings

(essential): Due to the limited places available this event must be prepaid & tickets will be issued, telephone 01387 770200



*Cycling Treasure Hunt

Friday 2nd April, 1.00pm - 3.00pm, Ae Forest

Hire a bike or bring your own and head off on an easy going self-led Easter treasure hunt. The Ranger will explain all!

Meet: Ae Cafe and Bike Shop, Ae Forest, off the A701, NY985894

Further information: Forestry Commission Scotland, 01387 860247. For more information on bike hire telephone 01387 860541



*Family Fridays

Friday 2nd April, 11.00am - 4.00pm, Southwick

A day for all the family to enjoy! Come down to the reserve where we will have an action packed day of activities for you to get stuck into, from pond dipping to mini beast hunting to goose spotting.

Meet: RSPB Mersehead, Southwick, Dumfries, DG2 8AH, NX925561

Further information: Keeley Spate, 01387 780579

*Pond-dipping

Friday 2nd April, 2.00pm - 4.00pm, Lockerbie

Come along and try pond dipping at the old curling pond at the Eskrigg Nature Reserve run by the Lockerbie Wildlife Trust. Bring wellies.

Meet: Meet at the car park at the Dryfesdale Visitors Lodge on the A709 near Lockerbie

Further information & bookings

(essential): Jim Rae, Reserve Manager 01576 203314

*Wildlife Explorers Birds and Nesting Event

Saturday 3rd April, 11.00am - 2.00pm, Southwick



How do birds make their nests? How much can a blue tit chick eat in a day?

Come along to this drop in session and learn all about nesting and the exciting world of birds! Take a look at some real bird nests and even try to make your own!

Meet: RSPB Mersehead, Southwick, Dumfries, DG2 8AH, NX925561

Further information: Ella, 01387 780298

*Easter Treasure Hunt

Saturday 3rd April, 1.00pm - 3.00pm, Dalbeattie

A fun Easter treasure hunt for all the family.

Meet: Dalbeattie Town Wood car park, NX837601

Further information: Forestry Commission Scotland, 01387 860247

Fauna, Flora and Fossils

Saturday 3rd April, 1.00pm - 4.00pm, Grey Mare's Tail



A two mile walk into Dob's Linn, where a beautiful hidden waterfall and fossils are guaranteed (weather permitting!). Wildlife is more elusive, but could include peregrine falcons, the earlier returning migratory upland birds and whichever flowers are brave enough to emerge at this time of year!

Meet: Grey Mare's Tail car park, 10 miles from Moffat on the A708, NT186145

Further information & bookings

(essential): NTS ranger, 0844 493 2249 or greymare'stail@nts.org.uk

*Galloway Kite Trail Feeding Station Open Day

Saturday 3rd April, 1.30pm - 4.00pm Laurieston



RSPB staff will be on hand to show you the kites, provide information and answer any questions.

Cost: Free entry in to the Red Kite feeding station at Laurieston -but donations welcome!

Meet: Ballymackhill Farm, Laurieston, Castle Douglas, DG7 2PJ, NX688652

Further information: Calum Murray, 01556 670464

Exploration for Otters

Saturday 3rd April, 3.00pm - 5.00pm, Drumlanrig

Join the Buccleuch Rangers as they search for the Otters of the Marr Burn.

Cost: Country park admission applies

Meet: Drumlanrig Visitor Centre, NX852992

Further information & bookings

(essential): Telephone 01848 331555 or rangerservice@buccleuch.com

*Galloway Falconry

Easter Sunday 4th April, 10.00am - 4.30pm, Kippford

Come and see the Spectacular birds of prey and take part in a hawk walk.

Cost: £15.00 per person or £40.00 per family of 4 for walk

Meet: Kippford Holiday Park, Dalbeattie, DG5 4LF, NX845562

Further information & bookings

(recommended): Park reception on 01556 620636 or info@kipfordholidaypark.co.uk

*Easter Egg Bonanza

Easter Sunday 4th April 10.30am -12.30pm, Logan Botanic Gardens

Come along for a fun day out on Easter Sunday. A range of activities for children including face painting, painting your own egg and the magical Easter Egg hunt!

Cost: Normal Garden admission charges apply: Adults £5/children £1

Meet: Logan Botanic Garden, Port Logan, Stranraer, DG9 9ND, NX096426

Further information: Telephone 01776 860231 or visit www.rbge.org.uk/logan

*Easter at Kirroughtree

Easter Sunday 4th April, 11.00am - 3.30pm, Kirroughtree



Trails, quizzes, goodie bags, games and lots of fun to be had at Kirroughtree visitor centre. Remember to bring your own decorated boiled egg for the egg rolling competition 3.15pm! Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times.

Cost: £3 per child

Meet: Kirroughtree visitor centre, NX451646

Further information: Forestry Commission Scotland, 01671 402420

***'Spring has Sprung' Discovery Day**

Monday 5th April, 11.00am - 4.00pm, Rockcliffe

Early April can have very changeable weather but things are starting to warm up and our local wildlife is getting busy. Join the National Trust for Scotland rangers at Rockcliffe to look for signs of spring.

Meet: Rockcliffe (follow the signs from the main car park at NX852535)

Further information: Ranger service on 01556 503702

***Easter in the Forest**

Monday 5th April, 12.00pm - 3.00pm, Mabie Forest

Bring the family for a fun seasonal afternoon. Including Easter Treasure Hunt, Egg Rolling Competition and the Best Nest Contest!

Meet: Mabie Forest car park, NX950709

Further information: Forestry Commission Scotland, 01387 860247

Mull of Galloway Guided Walk

Monday 5th April, 1.00pm - 2.00pm, Drummore

Join RSPB staff on a walk and discover the flora and fauna of the Mull of Galloway reserve. Not suitable for wheelchair or buggy access.

Meet: Mull of Galloway light house, Drummore, DG9 9HP, NX155304

Further information: Paul Tarling, 01776 840539

Gaggles of Geese

Monday 5th to Friday 9th April, anytime from 6.00pm until dusk, Wigtown

Goose Guides will be on hand every evening between 6 pm and dusk to help you identify the geese and swans of Wigtown Bay LNR which are passing through on their journey north to the Arctic. There will be binoculars, a telescope and identification books as well as the guide in the hide at Wigtown Harbour.

Meet: Wigtown Harbour hide, NX440548

Further information: Elizabeth Tindal (DGC Ranger) 01988 402401, wblnr@dumgal.gov.uk or Gus Keys (RSPB) 01671 404975

Terrific Tree Trail

Tuesday 6th April, 10.00am - 12.00noon, Auldgirth

Trees are terrific, you can eat them, drink them, climb them, make a painkiller from them, or use them to build anything from a spoon to a sports car. And that's before we even start on saving the planet and supporting the entire ecosystem. A walk through the recently planted woodland at Allanton Peace Sanctuary looking at the wildlife and folklore of the trees along with their culinary, medicinal and industrial uses.

Meet: Allanton Peace Sanctuary, Auldgirth NX912849

Further information & bookings (essential): Telephone 07702 250958



*Bird Box Building

**Tuesday 6th April 2.00pm to 3.30pm,
Logan Botanic Gardens**

Come along and make your own bird nesting box to take away with you. Why not get close to nature this Easter and do your bit to save the Planet!

Cost: Normal Garden admission charges apply:
Adults £5/children £1

Meet: Logan Botanic Garden, Port Logan,
Stranraer, DG9 9ND, NX096426

Further information and booking

(essential): Telephone 01776 860231 or visit
www.rbge.org.uk/logan



Up With the Lark?

Wednesday 7th April, 4.30am, Loch Doon

No....the Grouse! Join the RSPB and Forestry Commission Scotland for this special event at our newly created Black Grouse viewing platform along the Carrick Forest Drive. It's an early start but hopefully we will be rewarded with great sightings of this magnificent bird in beautiful surroundings. Please wrap up warm, wear sturdy footwear and bring binoculars if you have them. Please try not to wear anything too brightly coloured!

Meet: Loch Doon car park, Near Dalmellington,
NX475942

Further information & bookings

(essential): Forestry Commission Scotland on
01671 402420

Hatchery Open Day

**Wednesday 7th April, 10.00am -12.00noon,
Auldgirth**

Come and see the Nith Catchment Fishery Trust 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 increasing fish numbers. Bring outdoor clothes and wellies.

Meet: Auldgirth Inn car park, Auldgirth
NX913868

Further Information and bookings

(essential): Nith Catchment Fishery Trust,
01387 740043

NDSFB@salmonfishery.demon.co.uk

*Nest Building at Dumfries Museum

**Wednesday 7th April,
10.30am - 11.30am,
Dumfries**

Do you think you could build a nest as well as the birds can? Come along and find out how, why and where birds build their nests and then have a go at building your own, and protecting it from predators!

Meet: Dumfries Museum, The Observatory,
Dumfries, DG2 7SW, NX970757

Further information and booking

(essential): Telephone 01387 253374
Dumfries.museum@dumgal.gov.uk



* Explore the Seashore

**Wednesday 7th April,
10.30am - 12.30pm, Rockcliffe**

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

Meet: Rockcliffe main car park,
Rockcliffe: NX852535

Further information and booking

(essential): Ian Brown NSA Communities
Ranger 01387 260180
email Ian.Brown2@dumgal.gov.uk



Galloway Kite Trail Mossdale to Secret Cages Guided Walk

Thursday 8th April, 9.45am - 12.30pm, Mossdale
Join the RSPB Community Liaison Officer on a 5km walk from Mossdale to the Secret Cages, taking in views and wildlife along the old railway line and the Raiders Road, and returning via Mossdale Loch. This is not a suitable walk for wheelchair or buggy access. Sorry no dogs.

Meet: Galloway Kite Trail car park, Mossdale, Castle Douglas, NX662705

Further information: Calum Murray, 01556 670464 www.gallowaykitetrail.com

*Paper Making

Thursday 8th April, 11.00am - 12.30pm, Logan Botanic Gardens

Make your own paper, the essential ingredient of any artist's book. We will help you to make your own art paper not just out of wood pulp but, flowers, leaves, grass, fungi and other interesting stuff, so go on give it a go!

Cost: Normal Garden admission charges apply: Adults £5/children £1

Meet: Logan Botanic Garden, Port Logan, Stranraer, DG9 9ND, NX096426

Further information: Telephone 01776 860231 or visit www.rbge.org.uk/logan

*Wood is Good!

Thursday 8th April, 12.00noon - 2.00pm, Kirroughtree

Join Forestry Commission staff at Kirroughtree and make your very own wooden animal pencil holder and necklace to take home. Just turn up.

Cost: £2 per child

Meet: Kirroughtree visitor centre, NX451646

Further information: Forestry Commission Scotland, 01671 402420

*Bugs and Beasties

Thursday 8th April 2pm to 3.30pm, Logan Botanic Garden

A fun filled event for all the family. Join Dumfries and Galloway Council Ranger Elizabeth Tindal in a minibeast hunt and make a deluxe "Bug Hotel" for the garden's minibeasts to stay in.

Cost: Normal Garden admission charges apply: Adults £5/children £1

Meet: Logan Botanic Garden, Port Logan, Stranraer, DG9 9ND, NX096426

Further information: Telephone 01776 860231 or visit www.rbge.org.uk/logan

*Going Nutty at Dumfries Museum

Friday 9th April, 10.30am - 11.30am



Scotland's native Red Squirrel has been in Dumfries for hundreds of years but is now being chased out by American Grey Squirrels. Find out why they can't live together and what you can do to help the Red Squirrel survive.

Meet: Dumfries Museum, The Observatory, Dumfries, DG2 7SW, NX970757

Further information and booking (essential): Telephone 01387 253374 dumfries.museum@dumgal.gov.uk



*Fish Up Close

Friday 9th April, 11.00am -12.30pm,
Wigtown



A guided tour of Galloway Fisheries Trust hatchery, giving a close up view of wild trout and salmon before they are released into their native river. Other species that may also be on show include Pike, Perch, Roach, lampreys and salmon smolts. 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, NX 399554

Further information and booking

(essential): Galloway Fisheries Trust,
01671 403011 mail@gallowayfisheriestrust.org
www.gallowayfisheriestrust.org

*Family Fridays

Friday 9th April, 11.00am - 4.00pm, Southwick
A day for all the family to enjoy! Come down to the reserve where we will have an action packed day of activities for you to get stuck in to, from pond dipping to mini beasting to goose spotting.

Meet: RSPB Mersehead, Southwick, Dumfries,
DG2 8AH, NX925561

Further information: Keeley Spate,
01387 780579

*Explore the Seashore

Friday 9th April, 2.00pm - 4.00pm, Southernness
Ever wondered what creatures lived in the shells that you find along the beach? All will become clear after a visit to Powillimount with the National Scenic Area Ranger. This is an easy walk, but bring wellies. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Meet: Powillimount beach car park, near Southernness. NX989564

Further information and booking

(essential): Ian Brown NSA Communities
Ranger 01387 260180
e-mail: ian.brown2@dumgal.gov.uk

Wood Pasture Walk at Barclye Farm

Saturday 10th April 10.00am - 12.00noon, near
Newton Stewart

Join the Sulwath Connections Wood Pasture Project Officer for an informal and enjoyable walk around the RSPB Barclye Farm to see their newly created wood pasture. Bring suitable outdoor clothing and wellie boots.

Meet: RSPB Car park at Barclye, NX382692

Further information and booking

(essential): Eykolina Benny on 01387 247543 or
woodpasture@solwayheritage.co.uk

Tales of the Riverbank

Saturday 10th April 10.00am -
1.00pm, St Ann's



Join the Annan District Salmon Fishery Board to explore the River Annan and discover its fish population. Bring suitable outdoor clothing and wellie boots.

Meet: Annan Fishery Board Office, St Ann's,
Lockerbie, DG11 1HQ, NY070934

Further information and booking

(essential): Annan Fishery Board, 01576 470600
or info@annanfisheryboard.co.uk

Tremendous Trees

Saturday 10th April, 2.30pm - 4.30pm,
Drumlanrig

An opportunity to marvel at the fantastic range of trees that are present in our woodlands.

Cost: Country park admission applies

Meet: Drumlanrig Visitor Centre, NX852992

Further information & bookings

(essential): 01848 331555 or
rangerservice@buckleuch.com

Tree

Saturday 10th April, 7.00pm, WWT Caerlaverock

New writing and musical responses to the tree, wood and the forest by award-winning writers Jackie Galley and Vivien Jones and musicians Michael Hendry, Rebecca Hendry and Richard Jones.

Cost: £5.00. Illustrated printed chapbook of the texts available at £3.00

Meet: 7.00pm, WWT Caerlaverock Wetlands Centre, NY051656

Further information: Telephone 01461 700396

*Cairnsmore of Fleet Art/Wildlife Workshop

Saturday 10th April & Sunday 11th April, 10.00am - 12.30pm or 1.00pm - 4.00pm each day, Gatehouse of Fleet

Half day workshops at the National Nature Reserve & visitors centre with an opportunity to recreate some of the flora and fauna in air-hardening clay. Participants can then take their creations home with them.

Meet: Dromore Farm, Cairnsmore of Fleet NNR, off the B746, NX 554637

Further information and booking (essential): Spaces are limited to 6 per workshop session so book early to avoid disappointment: The Reserve Office, 01557 814435



*Mammals, Reptiles & Amphibians

Sunday 11th April, 9.00am - 11.00am, Beattock

Led by local wildlife enthusiast Andy Riches. He plans on taking a closer look at some of Earshaig's small mammals using mammal traps and keeping our eyes peeled for basking reptiles in the springtime sun! We will then round it off with a spot of pond dipping to examine the amphibians and water insects lurking in the depths of the Earshaig Lochans. Bring wellies and suitable outdoor clothing.

Meet: Earshaig Lochans car park, Beattock NY121960

Further information and booking

(essential): Please book by Friday 9th April, contact Andy Riches on 0779 214 2446



Meikle Richorn Riverside Ramble

Sunday 11th April 2.00pm - 4.00pm, Dalbeattie

Situated in the East Stewartry Coast National Scenic Area, join Ian Brown NSA Communities Ranger for a walk around Meikle Richorn and enjoy stunning views across the River Urr. This is an easy walk but requires stout footwear or wellies. Bring binoculars if you have them. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Meet: Meikle Richorn layby on the A710, 1.5 miles south of Dalbeattie, before the Kippford turn off, NX 837577

Further information and booking

(essential): Ian Brown NSA Communities Ranger 01387 260180
email: Ian.Brown2@dumgal.gov.uk

Landrover Tour

Sunday 11th April, 11.00am - 12.30pm and 2.00pm - 3.30pm, Drumlanrig

Join one of our Rangers on a Landrover Tour and discover the wide diversity of species and habitats to be found within the Queensberry Estate.

Cost: £10.00 per person

Meet: Drumlanrig Visitor Centre, NX852992

Further information & bookings

(essential): Telephone 01848 331555 or rangerservice@buccluech.com

Meander Along the Urr

Monday 12th April, 1.00pm - 4.00pm, Palnackie

Explore the banks of the River Urr from Palnackie towards Almorness Point with the NSA Ranger and find out about the local history and wildlife of this National Scenic Area. This walk requires stout footwear or wellies. Bring binoculars if you have them. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Meet: Palnackie Harbour car park NX 823569

Further information and booking

(essential): Ian Brown NSA Communities Ranger 01387 260180
email Ian.Brown2@dumgal.gov.uk



Nature Photography in the Digital Age

Monday 12th April, 1.30pm - 4.00pm, Dalbeattie

Bring your digital camera and learn how to record images of nature with local Dumfries and Galloway Council Ranger and photographer Keith Kirk.

You will take a walk through the Dalbeattie Town Wood looking for subjects big and small, learning how to get the best from your digital camera. Bring camera, tripod if you have one and any other equipment you wish to learn about. Be prepared to get at least your knees wet!

Meet: Dalbeattie Town Wood car park, on the edge of Dalbeattie, just off the A710, NX837601

Further information and booking

(essential): This event is weather dependant and limited to 12 places so book early to avoid disappointment on 01556 505479

Waders at the Wetland

Monday 12th to Friday 16th April, anytime from 6.00pm until dusk, Wigtown



Look out for some of the waders that migrate through Wigtown Bay at this time of year. Castle Field Wetland is a great place for waders to stop off and for you to see them using the Wigtown Harbour hide. There will be a guide in the hide along with binoculars, a telescope and identification books.

Meet: Wigtown Harbour hide, NX440548

Further information: Elizabeth Tindal (DGC Ranger) 01988 402401
wblnr@dumgal.gov.uk or Gus Keys (RSPB) 01671 404975

Wildlife Recording Day

Tuesday 13th April, 9.30am - 1.00pm, Newton Stewart

Join DGERC and Cree Valley Community Woodlands staff in a hunt to find and record the many different plants and animals found in and around the park.

Meet: Blairmount Park, Newton Stewart, NX402652

Further information and booking

(essential): Mark Pollitt, DGERC, Solway Heritage, 01387 249207

Airds Point to Kirkconnel Flow

Tuesday 13th April, 10.00am - 3.00pm, New Abbey

A full days walking taking in three habitats and the chance to see a multitude of wildlife. Starting from New Abbey we walk out to Airds Point

through mixed woodland with the chance to look for signs of otter. Then we head along the side of the Nith Estuary overlooking Kirkconnel merse, a great place to see deer before stopping for lunch at Kirkconnel Flow National Nature Reserve and then a walk back along quiet roads.

Meet: Sweetheart Abbey car park, New Abbey, NX965662

Further information and booking

(essential): Dumfries and Galloway Ranger Service 07702 250958

The Arrival of Spring

Tuesday 13th April 10.30am -12.00noon, Logan Botanic Garden

Come along and enjoy a tour around the garden to discover the flush of emerging foliage and floral displays from plants such as Magnolia, Camellia, and Rhododendrons to name but a few.

Cost: Normal Garden admission charges apply: Adults £5/children £1

Meet: Logan Botanic Garden, Port Logan, Stranraer, DG9 9ND, NX096426

Further information: Telephone 01776 860231 or visit www.rbge.org.uk/logan

*Bird Box Building SNH

Tuesday 13th April 11.00am - 3.00pm, Caerlaverock



With spring in the air, garden birds will be turning their attentions to nesting, so come along and make a free nest box to take home. A camera installed in a nest box at the reserve office and linked to the visitor room will hopefully provide close up views of its inhabitants in the process of nesting.

Meet: Caerlaverock NNR Reserve Office, Hollands Farm Road, Caerlaverock, Dumfries, DG1 4RT, NY043659

Further information and bookings

(essential): Reserve staff on 01387 770275

Hatchery Open Day

Wednesday 14th April, 10.00am - 12.00noon, Auldgirth



Come and see the Nith Catchment Fishery Trust 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 increasing fish numbers. Bring outdoor clothes and wellies.

Meet: Auldgirth Inn car park, Auldgirth, NX913868

Further Information and bookings

(essential): Nith Catchment Fishery Trust, 01387 740043
NDSFB@salmonfishery.demon.co.uk

*'Wetland Wander'

Wednesday 14th April, 10.00am - 3.00pm, Castle Douglas



Join an NTS Ranger for a longer walk to look at the wildlife around Threave wetlands and Carlingwark loch. Please bring warm, waterproof clothing, walking boots, packed lunch and binoculars if you have them.

Cost: £5 adults/£3 children

Meet: Mains of Kelton Farm, Threave Castle, Castle Douglas, NX746617

Further information and booking

(essential): please contact the ranger service on 01556 503702

*Fun with Botanical Art

Thursday 15th April 11.00am to 12.30pm, Logan Botanic Garden

Have a go at environmental art; combine textures and colours from the garden to make your own piece of art, possibly something to take away or to leave for others to enjoy.

Cost: Normal Garden admission charges apply: Adults £5/children £1

Meet: Logan Botanic Garden, Port Logan, Stranraer, DG9 9ND, NX096426

Further information: Telephone 01776 860231 or visit www.rbge.org.uk/logan

Wildfowl and Wader walk

Thursday 15th April, 11.00am - 1.00pm, Southwick



This is a wonderful time to see lapwing performing their acrobatic tumbling display on the reserve. During the walk we hope to see other waders such as redshank and oystercatcher, as well as some over wintering wildfowl.

Meet: RSPB Mersehead Reserve, Southwick, Dumfries, DG2 8AH, NX925561

Further information and booking

(essential): Keeley Spate, 01387 780579

*Caerlaverock NNR Nature Trail

Thursday 15th April 11.00am - 3.00pm, Caerlaverock

If you fancy trying your hand at being a nature detective come along to Scotland's largest wetland National Nature Reserve and join the Scottish Natural Heritage staff to explore the flooders nature trail. A keen pair of eyes will be needed to find all the clues on this 1.5 mile circular trail. Wellies and waterproof clothing advisable.

Meet: Hollands Farm car park, NY042659

Further information: Scottish Natural Heritage reserve staff on 01387 770275

*Bugs and Beasties

Thursday 15th April 2.00pm to
3.30pm, Logan Botanic Gardens



A fun filled event for all the family.

Join Dumfries and Galloway Council Ranger Elizabeth Tindal in a minibeast hunt and make a deluxe "Bug Hotel" for the garden's minibeasts to stay in.

Cost: Normal Garden admission charges apply:
Adults £5/children £1

Meet: Logan Botanic Garden, Port Logan,
Stranraer, DG9 9ND, NX096426

Further information: Telephone
01776 860231 or visit www.rbge.org.uk/logan

Reptile Ramble

Friday 16th April, 10am - 1.00pm, New Abbey

Join DGERC and SNH staff for a walk around the National Nature Reserve looking for some of Dumfries and Galloway's most shy and elusive animals

Meet: Kirkconnell Flow car park NX963701.
Access to the reserve is from the A710 Dumfries to New Abbey road. The 372 bus runs from Dumfries.

Further information and booking (essential): Mark Pollitt, DGERC, Solway Heritage, 01387 249207

*Fish Up Close

Friday 16th April, 11.00am
- 12.30pm, Wigtown



A guided tour of Galloway Fisheries Trust hatchery, giving a close up view of wild trout and salmon before they are released into their native river. Other species that may also be on show include Pike, Perch, Roach, lampreys and salmon smolts. 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, NX 399554

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

'Springtime Sprouting' at Wamphray Glen

Friday 16 April, 2.00pm - 4.00pm, Moffat

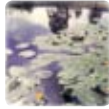
A walk up the ancient semi-natural woodland of Wamphray Glen which is owned by The Crown Estate, examining the signs that show us that spring is finally on its way. Bring boots and binoculars.

Meet: Wamphray Glen car park (parking limited), NY121960

Further information and booking (essential): DGC Ranger Service, Ross Gemmell,
07834 567 893

***Pond-dipping**

**Friday 16th April, 2.00pm - 4.00pm,
Lockerbie**



Come along and try pond dipping at the old curling pond at the Eskrigg Nature Reserve run by the Lockerbie Wildlife Trust. Bring wellies.

Meet: Meet at the car park at the Dryfesdale Visitors Lodge on the A709 near Lockerbie

Further information & bookings (essential): Jim Rae, Reserve Manager
01576 203314

Spring in the Stewartry

**Saturday 17th April, 10.00am - 12.30pm,
Mossdale**

Join naturalists from the Scottish Wildlife Trust along the old railway line at Mossdale in search of spring migrants, early butterflies and adders.

Meet: Mossdale Kite Trail Car Park, NX660704

Further Information: Graham Smith on
01644 420881

Wigtown Bay Open Day

**Saturday 17th April, 10.00am -
4.00pm, Wigtown**



Wigtown Bay is a great place to look for geese, ducks, waders and raptors. RSPB staff and other local wildfowl experts will be on hand in the bird hide to show you the wealth of wetland wildlife. Wigtown Bay local nature reserve is managed by D&G Council Ranger service.

Meet: Wigtown Bay harbour bird hide,
NX440548

Further information: Gus Keys,
01988 402130





Ospreys are back in Galloway

Saturday 17th April, anytime from 10.00am - 4.00pm, Wigtown

This is your chance to welcome Ospreys back to Galloway. We will be looking at footage from the successful 2008 season and preparing for the new year. Will our ospreys have returned to "Ospreys are back in Galloway" nest? Will there be 3 chicks on our nest again? Will there be other ospreys breeding in Dumfries and Galloway this year?

Meet: Wigtown Bay Visitor Centre, County Buildings, Wigtown DG8 9JH, NX434554

Further information: Elizabeth Tindal (DGC Ranger) 01988 402401

Goosechase and Soundscapes

Saturday 17th April, 3.00pm, Thornhill

A reading of poetry in response to the wildlife and landscape of Dumfries and Galloway by four award-winning poets - Jean Atkin, Jackie Galley, Vivien Jones and Fiona Russell.

Cost: Free. Two printed chapbooks, Goosechase and Soundscapes, containing all the texts will be available at £3.00 each.

Meet: Thomas Tosh Art Gallery, Bookshop and Cafe. Thornhill, NX879955

Further information: Telephone 01461 700396

Woodland Wildlife

Sunday 18th April, 3.00pm - 5.00pm, Drumlanrig

Enjoy a stroll through a variety of different woodland types to discover what wildlife calls our woodlands home.

Cost: Country park admission applies

Meet: Drumlanrig Visitor Centre, NX852992

Further information & bookings

(essential): Telephone 01848 331555 or rangerservice@buccleuch.com

*Explore the Seashore

Sunday 18th April, 10.30am - 12.30pm, Gatehouse of Fleet



Join the NSA Ranger to find out what creatures can be found along the seashore and how they are adapted to survive life at the beach. This is an easy walk, but please bring wellies. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Meet: Cardoness Estate car park, Gatehouse of Fleet, NX565537

Further information and booking

(essential): Ian Brown NSA Communities Ranger 01387 260180
email Ian.Brown2@dumgal.gov.uk

*South of Scotland Wildlife Hospital Open Day

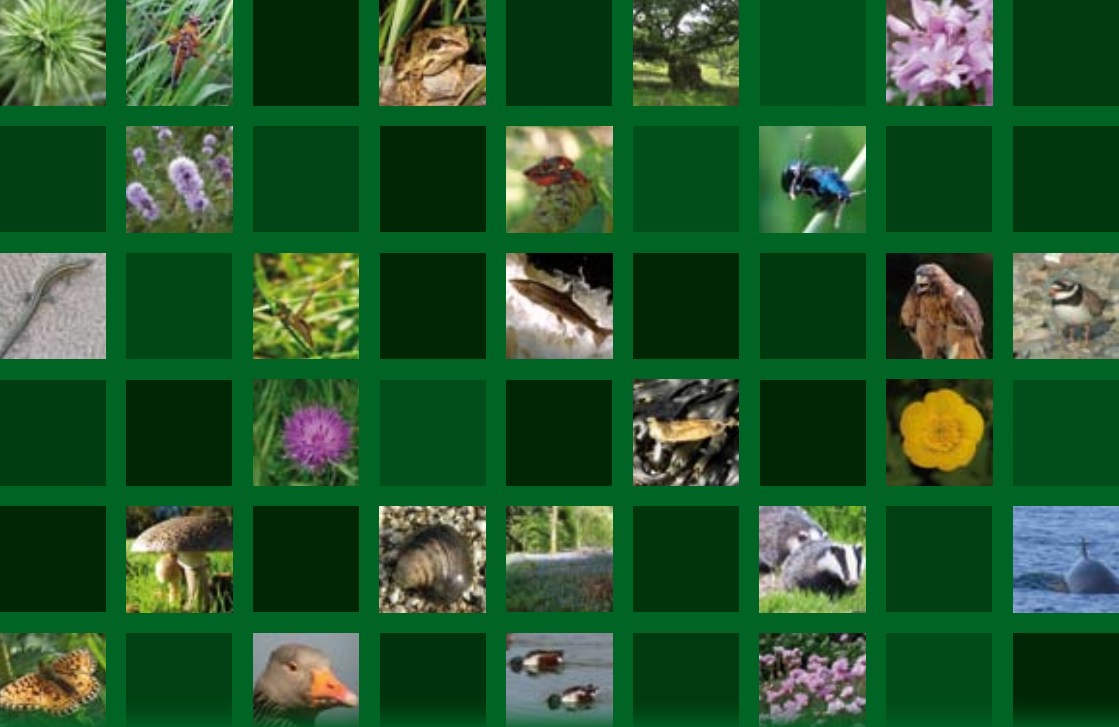
Sunday 18th April, anytime from 11.00am - 4.00pm, Parkgate

Come along and visit your local wildlife hospital. You will have the opportunity to find out what exactly we do, look round our facilities and observe fantastic CCTV footage of patients past and present!

Cost: Free but donations appreciated

Meet: Wildlife Hospital car park, Barony College, NY023871

Further information: South of Scotland Wildlife Hospital, 01387 860461, psmith@barony.ac.uk www.soswh.org.uk



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 (Free) Available from: Scottish Natural Heritage, Carmont House, The Crichton, Bankend Road, Dumfries, DG1 4ZF. Telephone 01387 247010.

Birdwatching in Dumfries and Galloway (£2) and

Countryside Events 2010 (Free) - Both available from: Ranger Service, Dumfries & Galloway Council, Planning & Environment, Militia House, Dumfries, DG1 2HR. Telephone 01387 260129, ross.gemmell@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.

Look out for.....

Throughout March 2010 "Wild Goose Chase across Dumfries & Galloway" – a celebration of geese from Caerlaverock in the east to Loch Ryan in the west. There will be 50,000 geese to see and free goose walks, goose talks, goose guides, goose stories, plus... meet the swans. For more information contact Elaine McClymont on 07827 848785 or email elaine.mcclymont@dumgal.gov.uk

Photographs: Mark Pollitt, Paul McLaughlin, Keith Kirk, Derek Carmichael, Ian S Byrne, SNH, Solway Heritage, Rebecca Johnson

Dates for next year's Wildlife Festival: 2nd - 25th April 2011