

April 2020

Welcome to the Birnie and Gaddon Lochs Newsletter

Breeding season is already underway, the Rooks being particularly...active, ahem. Please be careful if you are walking a dog from now onwards and consider using a short lead (less than 2m), there are a lot of birds starting to use the undergrowth, low bushes, and reed beds for nesting.

Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) Counts 07/02/2020

Birnie Loch (9:04)

10 x Tufted Duck, 8 x Greylag Goose, 7 x Goldeneye, 7 x Mallard, 5 x Black-headed Gull, 3 x Mute Swan, 1 x Reed Bunting, 1 x Coot, 1 x Moorhen, 1 x Common Gull

Gaddon Loch (9:31)

18 x Tufted Duck, 15 x Goldeneye, 6 x Mute Swan, 6 x Mallard, 4 x Greylag Goose, 2 x Coot, 2 x Oystercatcher, 2 x Black-headed Gull, 1 x Reed Bunting, 1 x little Grebe, 1 x (Barnacle x Greylag Goose)

Bird of the Month

Collared dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*)



The Collared dove is an understated and bonnie wee bird. Bigger than a Blackbird, but not as stocky as a Woodpigeon, their light grey feathers gleam in the sunlight making them stand out without the need for intricate patterning or a multitude of colours.

It is now a very common sight across the UK, especially in gardens where it can find a good supply of its favourite seeds. They also eat some field grains, fresh shoot tips, and the odd invertebrate.

It can be distinguished from Woodpigeon by song, if you can't see it; Collared doves use only 3-syllables (doo-doooo-do) whereas Woodpigeon add another two (...do-do) at the end.

NO FISHING

A quick note to answer a regular query. Birnie and Gaddon Lochs form a Local Nature Reserve, and as such the main function is to preserve and enhance provision for wildlife and maintain habitats. Therefore, no fishing, no swimming, and no boating. Please report incidents to ourselves and Police Scotland 101.

Wildlife Records

Please remember to note down what you see and contact us via the details given below or on

ask.us@fifecountryside.co.uk.

The Fife Nature Records Centre would also be happy to take details of any wildlife sightings you have from Birnie and Gaddon, contact them at nature.info@fife.gov.uk, or use the online recording form by searching for them online.

Feeding the Ducks

We have stopped filling the bird feed bin in line with our policy on outdoor facilities, and following government advice, to minimise risk of coronavirus spread. Please follow the latest government advice to stay safe if you visit the lochs.

Warmer weather is approaching, so supplementary feeding is not a necessity. You can of course still bring your own seed, oats, or peas and corn (defrosted if frozen) if you wish. **DO NOT** bring bread, as it pollutes the water and is bad for the birds' health. Thank you.

Accessing the Hides

Please be aware that the bird hides are temporarily closed

