



A thousand years ago there were many more lochs and wetland areas in the Howe of Fife. After the last ice age, as the glaciers retreated they left behind a patchwork of small water bodies. Over the last few centuries people have drained these to create a more productive agricultural land.



Birnie & Gaddon lochs were excavated during the late 1980's and early 1990's as sand and gravel quarries.

Birnie Loch was worked by Hanson Aggregates, while RMC Russell Ltd. worked Gaddon loch.

Quarrying below the water table meant that the workings flooded as the pits deepened. The result was the two lochs you see today. Each site was sold to Fife Council for £1. The site quickly attracted wildlife and, in August 2000, Fife Council declared it a Local Nature Reserve (LNR).

About Fife Coast and Countryside Trust

We are a local charity committed to ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to experience Fife's great outdoors. We do this through careful management in a manner which respects the balance between people and nature.

We manage many sites and paths throughout the Kingdom including the Fife Coastal Path, Lochore Meadows Country Park and the Lomond Hills Regional Park. We also manage several Local Nature Reserves and many other sites used by local communities.

For more information visit our website
fifecoastandcountryside.co.uk

 @fcctrust

 [fifecoastandcountryside](https://www.facebook.com/fifecoastandcountryside)

Enjoy Scotland's outdoors responsibly

- take responsibility for your own actions
- respect the interests of other people
- care for the environment.



In the spirit of responsible access, please follow the **Scottish Outdoor Access Code**

Supported By



This project was managed by **Fife Coast & Countryside Trust** on behalf of Fife Council



Registered Scottish Charity SC031247, Company registered in Scotland 216254
The Harbourmaster's House, Hot Pot Wynd, Dysart, KY1 2TQ

Birnie & Gaddon Lochs



Creating a Natural Habitat



FIFE COAST & COUNTRYSIDE TRUST

experience • engage • enjoy
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Wildlife of a lowland Loch

Sand Martins have been nesting in sand and gravel quarries for years. Once quarry operations finish, suitable sites disappear. To provide them with new homes, special barrels have been installed to replicate their nest sites.

The plants around the edge of the loch are all native to Fife and they were collected from local ponds and lochs. A large variety of species were chosen to benefit different kinds of wildlife; their flowers attract insects, their seeds are food for birds and mammals and they also provide shelter for everything from tadpoles to ducklings.

There are a number of walks around Birnie and Gaddon Lochs.

The complete circuit around both is 1.5 miles. The path around Birnie Loch alone is 0.75 mile. Gaddon Loch path is 1 mile around.

Please keep to the paths so as not to disturb the wildlife. We really want you and your dog to enjoy your walk, but please keep your dog(s) on a short lead or under close control

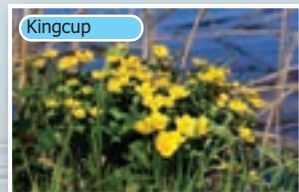
Emergent plants, which grow with their roots underwater, allow insects like Dragonflies to climb out of the loch as they become adults. Dragonflies and their relatives, Damselflies, spend up to two years as larvae in the water, before metamorphosing into the flying adult.

The waters of the loch are home to many animals. Fish, amphibians and insects spend all or part of their lives in the murky depths.

As well as obvious wildlife, there is a whole range of animals that visitors to the lochs never see. They only give their presence away by the signs they leave behind them.



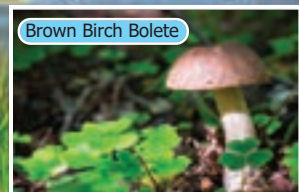
Sand Martin



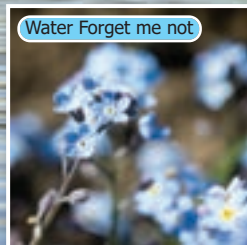
Kingcup



Water Mint



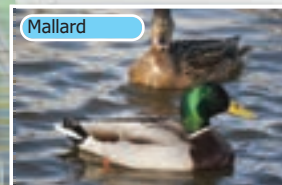
Brown Birch Bolete



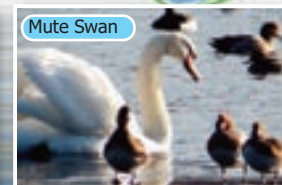
Water Forget me not



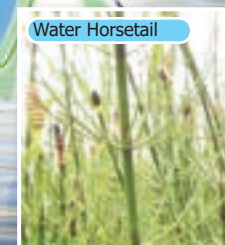
Greylag Goose



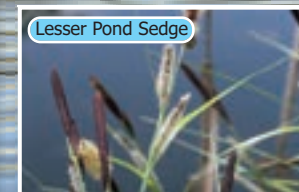
Mallard



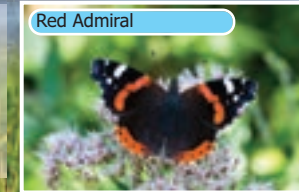
Mute Swan



Water Horsetail



Lesser Pond Sedge



Red Admiral

The trees around the lochs have been chosen to attract wildlife to their blossom and fruit. The woods are also important as a habitat for small birds, insects, flowers and fungi.

There are birds that spend their whole life on this site. Everything they need is here: food, safe roosts and nest sites. The contours of the lochs and the choice of vegetation are designed to be the ideal home for a range of birds species.

The wildflower meadows have been planted with a variety of special grassland species. These areas are of great benefit to the biodiversity of the site and are irresistible to butterflies.



You are here

Key
Footpath