

January 2018

Welcome to the Birnie and Gaddon Loch Newsletter

Finally, it's beginning to feel a lot like winter! With both Lochs coming to life with more waterfowl looking for safe feeding areas during spells of bad weather. Alongside the paths there are many Robins competing for their winter territories. A number of small flocks of Bull Finches, Long-tailed Tits have been spotted around the site. Also it seems that the resident Mute Swan family on Birnie have finally re-establishing their home ground.

WeBs Counts December 2017

Birnie Loch. 4 x Mute Swans, 15 x Black-headed Gulls, 2 x Herring Gulls.

Gaddon Loch. 2 x Mute Swans, 100 x Greylag Geese, 100 x Mallard, 150 x Wigeon, 14 x Golden Eye, 26 x Coot, 12 Black-headed Gulls. 14 x Little Grebe, 7x Goosander, 15 x Tufted Ducks.

Mammals on Site

During the winter there are a number of mammals you might catch sight of on your visit. Most of the smaller creatures such as field voles and shrews will shut down

during cold weather but larger ones such as foxes and deer can be seen searching for food early in the mornings around Gaddon.



Bird of the Month – Pied Wagtail

This is a delightful small, long-tailed and rather sprightly black and white bird. When not standing and frantically wagging its tail up and down it can be seen dashing about over lawns or car parks in search of food. It frequently calls when in its undulating flight and often gathers at dusk to form large roosts in city centers. Pied Wagtails can be found across the UK, leaving some of the highland and northern areas of Scotland in winter. They are best looked for near water and can be found in most habitats, even town centers. They gather together in large roosts, sometimes in towns, often assembling on roofs beforehand. Their main food consists of flies, midges and caterpillars. Most food is taken on the ground, but they also catch flying insects in the

air. They can migrate long distances and 'White Wagtails' from Northern Europe regularly visit Britain in spring and autumn. The oldest recorded bird was 11 years old.



Stay Safe During Winter

Please remember as the temperatures drop, lochs tend to freeze over and even after a number of cold days this ice is still not safe to walk on. So please **DO NOT** walk on the ice or let your dog (if you have one with you) wander out onto it either. Doing so, not only puts your life at risk it could endanger others too. Also take care on the paths around the Lochs as they do become icy over the winter period.

Happy New Year

I hope you all had a great festive break and we wish you a fine and prosperous 2018.