

Welcome to the Birnie & Gaddon Lochs Newsletter

Another month has passed and the seasonal changes are becoming ever more noticeable around the lochs.

Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) Counts 2018 15/10/

Birnie Loch (15:30)

2 x Mute Swan, 6 x Common Gull, 8 x Mallard, 9 x Greylag Geese, 10 x Black-headed Gull

Gaddon Loch (15:50)

1 x Grey Heron, 2 x Mute Swan, 4 x Mallard, 6 x Common Gull, 8 x Black-headed Gull, 11 x Wigeon

Tree of the Month

Aspen (*Populus tremula*)



One of the great joys of autumn is the colourful display of deciduous trees as they prepare to shed their leaves and Aspen does this better than most. The bright yellows and reds in the canopy are brought about by changes to the chemical composition within each leaf, as their nutrients are reabsorbed by

the tree for use over winter. Unfortunately, the discarding of these leaves also postpones the phenomenon from which the tree's name is derived; 'tremula' describes the tremble of the leaves, which when caught by the breeze, create a wonderful rustling sound and shimmer.

Pitcairn Volunteers

Our regular volunteer group were out as usual on the third Saturday of the month. Anyone passing through might have seen us cutting back vegetation, moving hay bales and picking apples.



It was also the morning of the Icelandic-breeding Goose Census (IGC); the number of geese just after sunrise was small, with only twelve Greylags on the lochs. At some time between the WeBS and IGC surveys, another of Birnie & Gaddon's regular winter visitors arrived: 6 x Goosander were on the water throughout the day.

If you spot any migratory birds coming in to Birnie and Gaddon for the winter, please let us know. There are notebooks in the bird hides for your records, you can also contact us via the details given 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

Please, if you are going to feed the ducks at Birnie & Gaddon, do bring a small bag of bird seed, oats, or peas and corn (defrosted if frozen). DO NOT bring bread, as it pollutes the water and is bad for the birds' health. Thank you.

Accessing the Hides

For further information and to obtain the new access codes please call 01592 656080.

