

October 2018

## Welcome to the Birnie & Gaddon Lochs Newsletter

Over the last month the woodlands have become quieter, and the lochs less busy. This lull occurs every year, with many summer visitors having gone, and this year's youngsters still finding their voice. But with winter approaching, we can expect the activity to increase again.

## Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) Counts 10/09/2018

### Birnie Loch (10:47pm)

5 x mallard, 1 x herring gull, 1 x common gull

### Gaddon Loch (11:20pm)

32 x lapwing, 4 x mallard, 2 x mute swan (4 cygnets), 1 x moorhen

## Fungus of the Month

Shaggy inkcap (*Coprinus comatus*)

Autumn is always a great time to start spotting fungi; one of many species that became apparent after cutting the grassland at Gaddon is the shaggy inkcap. This is a very common species, found growing in groups in grassy areas. The distinctive fruiting body is tall, and cylindrical, and the



name describes the straggly, scaly appearance quite well. It is also an edible species, but will only look appetising for a short while after being picked. This is because all inkcaps "deliquesce" after spreading their spores. This process turns the fleshy fruit into a black sticky goo, hence the name inkcap. **NB It is always sensible to ask an expert when picking fungi, berries, etc. to eat. Some poisonous fruits can easily be mistaken for edible ones, even by people who've done it for years.**

## Winter Migrants

All over Fife, the sight and sound of skeins of geese flying overhead is becoming more regular, whooper swans have arrived, and it won't be long before the winter thrushes return. 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](mailto: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](mailto: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

After recent vandalism the locks on both hides have been changed. For further information and to obtain the new access codes please call 01592 656080.

