

Clyde SOC Discussion Group meeting minutes



Location: Online, via ZOOM

Date: Tuesday 21 March 2023

Time: 1900-2100

Attendees: Zul Bhatia, Gordon Brady, John Chapman, Judith Chapman, Kirsten Ferguson, Alan Ferry, Tony Hall, David Horsburgh, Sean Kerr, Stuart Milligan, Andrew Monaghan, Ania Owsianka, David Palmar, Craig Postlethwaite, Andrew Russell, Nigel Scriven, John Simpson, Kevin Sinclair, Chris Waltho and Clare Winsch.

Agenda items

1. Apologies: Gavin Baptie, Rick Bolton
2. Updates from last meeting:
 - 2.1. Generic email address active clydesocdiscussion@gmail.com This can also be used for people who want to join the Discussion Group or find out more.
Discussion/outcomes: Access to be shared between ZB, TH, and SK.
 - 2.2. We have 35 people on our email distribution list. The WhatsApp group set up by Tony has 20 participants and 16 people have written a bit about themselves on it.
Discussion/outcomes: ZB reiterated, please join the WhatsApp group and introduce yourselves. You can use this link to self join <https://chat.whatsapp.com/IlkVaW6oks47r72FMJYekA>
 - 2.3. Sean Kerr has agreed to be our Secretary.
 - 2.4. Alan Ferry has volunteered to be the link between mentors and mentees and Craig has produced a draft list of categories to facilitate this.
 - 2.5. Draft reports for Raven and Goosander received (works in progress). Rick & Gavin working on Yellowhammer.
Discussion/outcomes: Re **Raven**, JS invited all to Cardross, around 3rd week in April, to view Raven nests and ring birds. He suggested that raptor nests in general, and Raven nests in particular, are under-monitored in the Clyde area. JS to update Excel spreadsheet of bird projects in the Clyde area with his current projects. JS Photographs to accompany Raven monitoring document to be included with document on SOC branch website. JS also suggested he is working on fostering a partnership between Raptor Study

Groups (RSG) and SOC where data is shared. What John has produced has been shared at <https://www.birdsinclyde.scot/raven.html>

Re **Yellowhammer**, Rick/Gavin proposed identifying monads (based on existing/historical data) where surveyors can look for them.

Re **Goosander**, CW presented data from surveys conducted over 1980s-2010s, highlighting the nationally significant numbers of Goosander on Loch Lomond, and breaking down the seasonal nature of their presence different areas of the Clyde recording area.

2.6. Dedicated space created on SOC Clyde branch website for the Discussion Group. See <https://www.birdsinclyde.scot/discussion-group.html> ZB suggested that our minutes should be lodged there and asked if anyone minded if their names being shown. No one objected.

3. Mentoring (incl. identifying people willing to mentor for WeBS, BBS, RSGs, etc.). Input in to Craig's list, add geographical areas and habitats for mentoring.

Discussion/outcomes: AF, willing to develop and co-ordinate mentoring scheme, suggested that the more experienced ornithologists in the group share their expertise, working with the less knowledgeable to boost their experience. ZB suggested a mentoring scheme whereby experienced surveyors contributing to BTO projects take mentees along on WeBS/BBS/etc. surveys. GB suggested that he would be willing to provide GDPR-compliant data on BTO surveyors to facilitate. JC suggested that co-ordinator (AF) matches mentors with mentees geographically. Lots of discussion around mentoring categories document, with broad agreement on changes to be made to this. In summary, 'identification' section to be updated to focus on birds by habitat type - coastal, woodland, upland, etc. Several suggestions that mentoring outings should always include focus on basic counting and estimating of bird numbers (survey skills), and calls and songs. KS spoke on personal ringing projects and Clyde Ringing Group projects and will update projects spreadsheet. ZB suggested that BirdTrack training with BTO's Scott Mayson will be scheduled in this year. Quite a few people were generally keen for this to happen sooner rather than leave until autumn. ZB suggested that a local GIS contact may be willing to run a workshop on QGIS for the group.

4. Geographical coverage gaps (see map) - how to address?

Discussion/outcomes: Disagreement on this point. Suggestion that splitting group into smaller geographical regions would be unhelpful. SK suggested providing data (maps) showing location of under-recorded monads on the Clyde SOC website with a suggestion to provide records for these areas, and ZB agreed to produce this.

5. Outings - 'ad hoc' ones as well as 'organised' ones

Discussion/outcomes: On ad hoc meetings, TH suggested a WhatsApp group where anyone can inform the group when they are going birdwatching, with an invitation for others to join. ZB suggested that rather than setting up a new group this should be trialled in the current Clyde SOC Discussion Group WhatsApp.

6. **Focal species** (Yellowhammer, Tree Sparrow, Rook, Nuthatch, Goosander, Cuckoo, Raven and Kingfisher) - progress so far and lessons learnt, how /where to promote the focal species. Create a calendar for any survey / promotion. ZB suggested that we start with Raven and focus on others during their 'peak' seasons. Some photos received but more required. Need to build a timetable / calendar of activities.

Discussion/outcomes: AR suggested that focussing on 8 species is a lot to take on but we agreed that it would not matter if we weren't able to do a full treatment on all 8 species. We could still promote recording and reporting of these 8 species. ZB clarified that anyone who 'takes on' a species should do a bit of a desk study investigation to identify current status as a starting point for further investigation.

7. Developing more scientific based approaches

Discussion/outcomes: ZB suggested this can be an ultimate goal of the group

8. BirdTrack training

Discussion/outcomes: Previously discussed under 3.

9. Venue for meetings

Discussion/outcomes: ZB discussed potential venue in Lochwinnoch that would be happy to host us for a small donation. KS suggested Clarkston Halls available to hire for £10-15 for 2 hours, which accommodates 20 people. ZB noted that additional, more central, venues being investigated.

10. Clyde branch AGM, 3 April 23 - Discussion Group input into

Discussion/outcomes: NS would be willing to speak on the Woodcock survey. DP would be willing to speak on upcoming BTO training courses. DH would be willing to speak about his thoughts on the Discussion Group

11. AOCB

Discussion/outcomes: JS announced that Glasgow University and partners have installed a Peregrine nest box and camera on Gilbert Scott Building, with plans for displays in Kelvingrove museum and The Hunterian museum.

12. Date of next meeting.

Discussion/outcomes: Face to Face meeting, 1830-2000 on Monday 24th April. Room 223, Advanced Research Centre, Glasgow University. 11 Chapel Lane, Glasgow G11 6EW

