



Scottish Ornithologists' Club
Scotland's Bird Club
Established 1936

Clyde branch outing to Drumpellier Country Park

24th February 2024

Weather: Sunny, mild, light wind.

Leader: Peter McGeough

The group met in the car park near Lochend Loch. Zul Bhatia welcomed everyone and Peter gave a brief introductory talk about the site before we set off on our walk.



© Zul Bhatia

The group first headed across Townhead Road, opposite the Visitor Centre, to Woodend Loch, a relatively undisturbed area. We proceeded down the path to the viewing area on the southern shore of the loch. There were good numbers of **Tufted Duck**, **Coots** and **Goldeneye** on the loch. Some of the drake Goldeneye were displaying, cocking their heads back. There were a few **Mute Swans** and **Canada Geese** on the loch as well as a small flock of **Wigeon**.



Tufted Duck © John Chapman

A scan around the reedy edges revealed a number of **Teal** scattered around the left edge. A single **Moorhen** was spotted in the same area. A juvenile **Grey Heron** was also picked out there, standing motionless, then another, this time an adult bird skulking amongst the reeds on the north shore. Nearby, a **Cormorant** perched on a stump at the water's edge. The whinnying call of a **Little Grebe** was heard before being picked out in the near left corner of the loch by one of the group and a **Great Crested Grebe** was out in the middle of the loch, as were three **Shelduck**, a very unusual record for Drumpellier.

An **Oystercatcher** flew across the loch from Gartcross Farm fields, where a flock of **Greylag Geese** had landed and were grazing.

There were also a number of **Woodpigeons** in the fields, with a few **Magpies** feeding too. In the trees behind us there was a party of **Long-tailed Tits**, with some **Blue Tits** also present. On the walk back up the path, a **Wren**, a **Blackbird** and a **Song Thrush** were all heard, the latter then flew over our heads. Some of the group also spotted a **Kestrel** over the meadow.

The group then crossed the road and headed anti-clockwise round Lochend Loch. Some bread had been thrown into the water and there was a bit of a feeding-frenzy, mainly involving **Mallards**, **Goosander** and **Mute Swans**. There were **Coots** and **Moorhens** on the adjacent West Pond, with a few **Canada Geese** there too.

Some **Snipe** were spotted out on the lower branches and stumps on the islands on Lochend Loch. As we headed round, more Snipe became visible and the count rose to 13 birds. Several **Common Gulls** were seen, perched on posts amongst the **Black-headed Gulls** in the same area. The Black-headed Gulls nest in a colony there in summer. **Buzzard** and **Carion Crow** were added to the list as we headed round the lochside path. More **Mallards**, **Tufted Duck**, **Mute Swans** and **Goldeneye** were seen, then a raft of assorted gulls out on the water provided an opportunity to study the differences between **Lesser Black-backed** and **Herring Gulls**.

We reached the Peace Garden at the entrance to the woodland area. There were three **Stock Doves** high up in tall trees opposite, one of which later flew over to the trees in front of us.



Robin © John Chapman

Food was scattered on a log, which brought down **Blue**, **Coal** and **Great Tits**, plus **Dunnock**, **Robin**, **Woodpigeons** and a pair of **Chaffinches**. One of the group then spied a small, streaky finch at the edge of a puddle on the path, which, to our delight, turned out to be a **Lesser Redpoll**. The bird then flew up and perched on top of a conifer, providing great views before flying off.

As we headed round the path towards the batbox off the main path through the woods, a **Kestrel** was spotted flying across from over the trails. We then got fabulous views of two **Treecreepers**, which spiralled up the trees right where we were standing. We had close-up views of a group of three **Roe Deer** crossing the path from the new plantation trails to the driving-range side of the path.



Nuthatch using a batbox © Ania Owsianka

The group then observed the **Nuthatch** pair coming and going from their nest in the batbox above the pathside. We then headed to the area where a male Great Spotted Woodpecker had recently been observed excavating a nest-hole. The group saw the nest-hole but unfortunately no woodpeckers were seen or heard. More Nuthatches were heard calling nearby and also several wrens. A mixed flock of tits fed high up in branches overhead, with all four common species present. A **Grey Squirrel** was seen feeding on scattered birdseed on the edge of the path as we made our way back to the car park.

Peter McGeough, February 2024



Treecreeper © Ania Owsianka



Stock Dove © Robert Wall

No of bird species recorded: 43

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|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Mute Swan | Moorhen | Carrion Crow |
| Greylag Goose | Coot | Blue Tit |
| Canada Goose | Oystercatcher | Great Tit |
| Shelduck | Snipe | Coal Tit |
| Wigeon | Black-headed Gull | Long-tailed Tit |
| Teal | Common Gull | Nuthatch |
| Mallard | Lesser Black-backed Gull | Treecreeper |
| Tufted Duck | Herring Gull | Wren |
| Goldeneye | Feral Pigeon | Blackbird |
| Goosander | Stock Dove | Fieldfare |
| Cormorant | Woodpigeon | Song Thrush |
| Grey Heron | Kestrel | Robin |
| Great Crested Grebe | Magpie | Dunnock |
| Buzzard | Jackdaw | Chaffinch |
| | | Lesser Redpoll |