



Scottish Ornithologists' Club
Scotland's Bird Club
Established 1936

Clyde branch outing to Newshot Island

30 July 2022 (1000-1530)

Leader: Allan Russell

15 people assembled at the riverside car park at Kilpatrick Drive, Erskine for the SOC outing to Newshot Island. Among the attendees included Dan Marion from Iowa, who was on holiday to visit family in Scotland. After Allan and Zul gave an introduction, the group headed to the Clyde walkway at Park Quay.



The Waverley passing by (David Palmar)

From the walkway, the group scanned the Clyde and picked up the first birds of the outing, including **Mallard**, **Mute Swan**, **Cormorant**, **Buzzard** and **Black-headed** and **Lesser Black-backed Gulls**. A scan of the gulls at the Dalmuir sewage outfall failed to turn up a hoped-for Mediterranean Gull so the group then headed along the path to scan the mouth of the creek at Newshot Island.

We quickly picked up the first waders of the outing in the form of **Oystercatcher**, **Curlew** and a small flock of **Lapwing**. Other sightings included **Goosander**, 2 **Grey Wagtails**, more **Cormorants** and a large flock of **Mallard**. While the group was watching, the Waverley paddle steamer went past which caused most of the birds on-site to take flight. The group then made the short walk to the viewpoint at Newshot Island, although it was overgrown and not suitable for looking out. Despite this we were still able to get views of **Lapwing**, **Redshanks**, **Cormorants**, assorted gulls and 2 **Common Sandpipers**. We had a look at some of the flora on site as well, which included plenty of **Broad-leaved Helleborines** and some faded **Common Spotted Orchids**.



Broad-leaved Helleborine (David Palmar)

The plan next was to climb over a stile into the field to view the reedbed and tidal 'lagoon' but the fence was too wobbly so we decided instead to go through the neighbouring housing estate and cross over the gate at Hawthorn Avenue. On the way the group got sightings of **Blackcap**, **Willow Warbler**, **Bullfinch**, **Greenfinch**, **Song Thrush** and **Swift**. On arrival at the gate there was the nice sight of a flock of 60+ **House Sparrows**. Once in the field the group checked the hedgerow and edge of the tidal reedbed, where there were more sparrows and singles of **Sedge Warbler** and **Reed Bunting** but otherwise it was quite quiet. The group moved up the field to check the lagoon and the back of the creek, where we got views of more **Common Sandpipers** (up to 10), 1 **Greenshank**, 1 **Snipe**, 1 **Moorhen**, 3 **Teal**, more **Lapwing** and **Mallard** and a few **Curlews**, **Redshanks**, **Swallows**, **House Martins** and **Starlings**.

The group then headed back to the Newshot Island LNR to have lunch on the benches. By then the sun had broken out, so we were able to enjoy butterflies such as **Meadow Brown**, **Common Blue** and **Green-veined White**, while one group member spotted a **Common Darter** dragonfly. There were also very close views of another **Common Sandpiper** on the riverbank, bringing the day total of them up to 11.

After lunch, most of the group headed home but a few went on by car to the woods at Boden Boo, further downriver towards the Erskine Bridge. The sunny weather was suitable for looking for **Purple Hairstreak** butterflies and it wasn't long before three individuals were found around the young oak trees, giving good views to all the remaining group members. Finally, a quick check of Erskine Harbour for waders was a bust as there weren't any birds at all there due to the high tide. After that the final group members said their goodbyes and headed home after a successful outing.

Thank you to everyone who attended, it was very nice to show a group around my local patch and I'm hoping for more people to visit this underwatched but rewarding area!

Allan Russell

43 species of birds were recorded on the SOC outing to Newshot Island and Boden Boo on 30th July

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|------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Mute Swan | Black-headed Gull | Wren |
| Teal | Lesser Black-backed Gull | Starling |
| Mallard | Herring Gull | Blackbird |
| Goosander | Woodpigeon | Song Thrush |
| Cormorant | Swift | Robin |
| Grey Heron | Magpie | House Sparrow |
| Buzzard | Jackdaw | Grey Wagtail |
| Moorhen | Carrion Crow | Pied Wagtail (yarrellii) |
| Oystercatcher | Great Tit | Bullfinch |
| Lapwing | Swallow | Greenfinch |
| Curlew | House Martin | Goldfinch |
| Common Sandpiper | Willow Warbler | Siskin |
| Greenshank | Blackcap | Reed Bunting |
| Redshank | Sedge Warbler | |
| Snipe | Treecreeper | |

Other species recorded

Butterflies

Common Blue

Green-veined White

Meadow Brown

Purple Hairstreak

Notable plants

Broad-leaved Helleborine

Common Spotted Orchid