



PAISLEY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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Coming Events

Thursday 2nd December **Christmas Social**

Forget 'thir daurk an' drublie daiys' of winter that are now upon us. Come and join our Christmas Social and do bring a friend with you. This is an informal evening packed with quirky quizzes and fun-filled frivolity. Will members please remember that a contribution to the festive fare is welcomed?

Thursday 3rd February 2005 **Bird Nests**

Mike Hansell is a lecturer in Glasgow University and his research interests have always been on animal building behaviour of all kinds. He will talk in general terms about the size, shape and attachment of bird nests and mention the National Nest Reference Collection in the Hunterian Museum. The collection has around 1000 specimens representing over 100 species. You will have an opportunity to build your own nest!! If an upturned chair represents a 'tree', can you build a nest for four chocolate mini-eggs in the branches using shredded paper, cotton wool & sellotape? I hope the best nest-builder is allowed to eat ALL the eggs.

Reports on Recent Events

East Coast Birds (September) – A small but enthusiastic group of 'twitchers' set off to visit popular east coast birding sites in search of recently noted rarities. No rarities were seen but good views were had of Curlew Sandpiper and Grey Plover at Musselburgh. At Aberlady Bay Barnacle Geese, Greenshank and more Grey Plover were spotted. Off-shore at Gullane, Common Scoter were added to the day's tally of sightings.

Hen Harriers (September) – Iain Gibson, Senior Ecologist with Glasgow City Council, gave the Society an excellent talk on the local Hen Harrier project to a very well-attended meeting. Iain presented the members with numerous facts about this much persecuted bird-of-prey. Apart from shooting and poisoning, it was disturbing to find out what other devious means are sometimes used to keep these birds off stretches of moorland such as burning areas of long, deep heather to remove the Harrier's preferred nesting sites.

Marine Conservation (October) – Calum Duncan came from Edinburgh and gave an excellent talk about the work on Marine Conservation in Scotland. His enthusiasm for this subject seemed to know no bounds. He discussed the results of new researches into many denizens of our coastal waters. Recent studies into Basking Sharks have revealed that these large, plankton eating creatures, once thought to migrate south to warmer waters where plankton was more abundant, seem to stay in Scottish waters. The lack of sightings in winter months comes about because the sharks follow the plankton down to deeper, warmer waters.

Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP)

The recently appointed Biodiversity Officer for Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire & Inverclyde is Petrina Brown. She is keen to organise events for Scottish Biodiversity Week at the end of May 2005. Petrina would like the PNHS to help by locating new sites for two LBAP plant species namely Spignel and Butterfly Orchid. Your committee has invited her to give a short talk at the AGM next year when she will give details on how to identify the target species and how we can be involved in local surveys.

Subscriptions

Some subscriptions are still outstanding. The rates are the same as last year: Ordinary £6; Family £8; Unwaged £3 and may be paid to the Treasurer, Marian Coates at the next meeting.

Committee

The next meeting of the Committee will be held at 7pm in the Bull Inn on the 20th January 2005.

T. Norman Tait