



Paisley Natural History Society

Paisley Natural History Society Evening Talks 2023/24

Thursday 7th September 2023

Eagles in Southern Skies: 6 years with the South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project by **Rick Taylor**, (Community Outreach Officer, South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project)

Rick has been with the project since it began in 2018. Prior to that he worked on the Making the Most of Moorlands Project in Langholm, engaging locals and visitors with the fantastic wildlife of Langholm Moor, in particular the hen harriers and other raptors. Rick's route into conservation was somewhat convoluted as he left school and joined a rock band, ended up teaching music in a Northumbrian school where he developed the outdoor education programme for disengaged youths which rekindled his desire to return to his love of wildlife.

Thursday 5th October 2023

Threats to the badger population in Scotland

by **Joe Connelly** (Species Protection/Information Officer, Scottish Badgers)

This talk will look at the current state of the badger population in Scotland and discuss some of the threats to badgers including development, badger baiting and other wildlife crime. Please note that this talk includes pictures of dead or injured badgers.

Thursday 2nd November 2023

Lichens, Perfect symbiosis

by **Craig Postlethwaite**

In this illustrated talk Craig will give an overview of what lichens are, how they fit in ecosystems and how you can study them. It will have a focus on those lichens found locally, with lots of photographs to inspire you to get out over the winter and start looking for them.

Thursday 7th December 2023

Jenny's Well Nature Reserve

by **Matthew Smith and Dee Murray** (Friends of Jenny's Well Committee)

Matthew and Dee will provide an introduction to this Local Nature Reserve in Paisley and some of the wildlife to be found there. In addition, they will describe the accidental journey the Friends group are on, which started with a bit of casual litter picking and bramble snipping, but grew into a multi-faceted and long-term environmental and community endeavour!

Thursday 11th January 2024

Wildlife Photography

by **Kirsten Ferguson**

Kirsten will share her love of photographing wildlife. As a passionate amateur wildlife photographer Kirsten firmly believes that it's vital not to disturb the balance in nature, and to leave the habitat as though you had never been there.

Thursday 1st February 2024

Botanical recording in Renfrewshire

by **Michael Philip** (BSBI Recorder vc99 Dunbartonshire and Joint Recorder vc77 Lanarkshire)

In addition to his roles as BSBI Recorder, Michael is co-organiser of the vc76 Botany Network for Renfrewshire. The development of the new Botany Network in Renfrewshire since 2021 has led to increased activity in recording the county's wild plants. Through many photographs, maps and stories, Michael will illustrate progress – as well as inviting participation and offering training and mentorship. Never has it been more important to know our wild plants, and to monitor changes in the health and diversity of our flora.

Thursday 7th March 2024

Oceans of Value workshop

by **Elouise Cartner** (Scottish Wildlife Trust, Living Seas Public Engagement Officer)

The Living Seas project focuses on the Trust's marine conservation work. They are taking the Oceans of Value film on tour all over Scotland, a film made in Orkney which showcases how local people value the marine environment and the importance of community voices in marine policy. In this workshop Elouise will show clips from the film and encourage discussion as to how Scotland's seas should be managed. All the feedback from discussions is passed along to Marine Scotland, to shape the new National Marine Plan (NMP2) which is in development. So every comment counts and this feedback will influence how Scotland's seas are managed.

Thursday 4th April 2024

Secrets in the Scrub: Lesser Whitethroats of Ardeer revealed

by **Tom Byars**

This talk replaced the talk by Mark Kirkland on underwater photography, as listed in the programme.

Tom has been studying the Lesser Whitethroat for over forty years in Clyde & Ayrshire and his talk tonight will focus exclusively on Ardeer, which holds half of Ayrshire's Lesser Whitethroat breeding population. Ardeer was known as the largest explosives factory in the world but this derelict brownfield site is now under threat from massive development instigated by the land owners and North Ayrshire Council. What does the future hold for Ardeer and can one of Scotland's most biodiverse sites survive?

Tuesday 16h April 2024 - Glasgow /Paisley Natural History Society joint talk

Beavers in Scotland: a 20 year journey

by **Nigel Willby** (Stirling University)

The talk will review some of the research led by Stirling University over the last two decades exploring habitat engineering by beavers and its effects, both in Scotland and further afield and where this journey will take us next. Nigel Willby is a Professor of Freshwater Science at the University of Stirling where he has been based for the last 25 years, much of which, along with several colleagues including Alan Law, and an increasing team of PhD students, has been devoted to research on the ecological effects of Eurasian beavers. He also works on water policy, invasive species and habitat restoration and spent some of his formative years in the Graham Kerr building, University of Glasgow