

Eden Estuary Annual Report 2015-2016

Presented is the annual report of endeavour and gain to achieve the objectives laid out in the 2013-2018 management plan. The reporting year has been quite challenging and uncertainty over changes driven by diminishing budgets and administration changes have presented issues requiring navigation and negotiation. Through all the challenges and changes we have managed once again to demonstrate how the Eden can thrive and indeed rise to the challenges and succeed in achieving our objectives.

Some significant gains made again on the coastal habitat front with the 'Saltmarsh on The Fringe' project kicking off, implementing planting plots of new saltmarsh grasses around both the north and south shores. This project is highly innovative and seeks to maintain and improve the Eden's saltmarsh habitat. Many volunteers joined Clare Maynard out on the mud in some quite cold and hostile weather. Well done. The West sands Dune Restoration programme went into its 4th Phase with Links Trust and FCCT combining under licence from Marine Scotland to recharge 5 large blow outs with 900tons of new sand. This was then planted up by 40 volunteers over 3 days. Again well done.

Habitat management and improvement have begun at Coble Pools with some much needed intervention on the pipe feed system to the pools, we hope this will allow for a better flow and continue the sites wetland character for the next few years.

Sea eagles are still hot news and the visits made to the reserve from this fine bird have increased steadily. News from the nest site is another juvenile should be joining the ranks soon. RSPB intend to hold eagle-watch events every weekend at Outhead in October which draws attention to the reserve as a good spot to see these icons. To also reinforce the value and potential of the Eden LNR a recent study commissioned by FCCT on Coastal Usage and Visitor Impact concluded Tentsmuir, West sands and the Fife Coastal path were in the highest positions for visitor attraction and use, the Eden is indeed in a good place.

Links around the reserve continue to grow and strengthen. The Links Trust and FCCT have joined forces on many small projects and the Dunes of West Sands. The R&A have started an Open Championship Legacy fund, which gave out funding to 3 projects to support local biodiversity and greenspace projects, the dunes on St Andrews is one. The links made here may have good future potential for the Eden.

The Army are settling in well and the reserve is getting to know them and them us. Discussions on military access to parts of the local countryside and the reserve are ongoing however we have a current guarantee that the estuary itself will be out of bounds at all times to personnel and manoeuvres.

The St Andrews University Green Energy plant is really coming on now and the highly disruptive pipeline works are nearly complete. This work was quite difficult for access to the Eden LNR and the Eden centre however it was done well and it is recognised it is important work. We look forward to greater relation with the University on this site and welcome some of their proposed plans.

As you can read in the body of the report, the reserve is very much a functioning body, most if not all objectives set out for the year have been achieved and under considerable pressure. The reserve is well placed for another year and all efforts should be given to maintaining the links and relations that so clearly give great ecological, environmental, social, community and visitor enhancement. The reserve is more than simply an estuary, it's about people, working with, learning about, growing within and enjoying their natural world. The one all around them not the one on the TV. Brilliant stuff!

Fife Coast and Countryside Trust

Fife Coast and Countryside Trust continue the commitment to high quality and sound management of the reserve on behalf of Fife Council. The Trust is under the same pressures being experienced elsewhere in the public sector. With cuts to the Trust budgets of close to 10% challenges and changes inevitably lay ahead. Recent changes include the resignation of Amanda Macfarlane as CEO, beginning a series of changes that look set to continue for some time.

The Trust continues to develop with Lochore Meadows on board and the development of the Fife Pilgrims Way a long distance route between the Forth and St Andrews.

Volunteer Input

The reserve is committed to sustaining a strong voluntary input and the ranger greatly appreciates the dedicated effort and meticulous input of our volunteers to the function of the reserve. The ranger would especially like to thank our dedicated volunteers George Adams, Gordon Maxwell, Ian Cumming, Tom Ross, Gordon Shepherd, Richard Pennington and Steven Watson. All these volunteers carry out vital and helpful actions including, surveys, wildfowl patrols, litter picks, bird recordings and information sharing. ***Thank You!***

Sincere Thanks

The ranger would like to thank all of the LNR network members and landowners whom have greatly assisted another busy year and allowed us to achieve our objectives again. The ranger is very grateful of your time, effort and consideration...***Thank you.***

Ranald Strachan



Ranger Report 2015-2016

Objective 1: Maintain and Enhance the Integrity of the Reserve to Support Viable Populations of Wildfowl and Waders (SPA, Bird Populations)

National Bird Surveys: SPA1/01

- Heronry Census 2015 (Reres Wood) was carried out in March, April and May by ground survey: **9 estimated pairs**.
- Wetland Bird Surveys (BTO) carried out each month (including sea duck counts)
- Icelandic Goose Counts (WWT): Carried out October and November. Results passed to Allan Brown (Fife Swan Group)
- Beached Bird Survey 2016 (RSPB): February. No birds found.

Non-Breeding Birds Monitoring: SPA1/02

- Monthly counts of selected species (SSSI and Grey geese) are included as appendices.
- All EELNR bird records captured and forwarded to Fife Nature, BTO and bird report.
- Tay Ringing Group has been active around the Coble Pools with results passed to ranger.

Objective 2: Protect, Maintain and Improve Key Habitats and Related Species within the Reserve (SAC, Habitats)

Monitor Harbour Seal Population 2015: SAC2/01

- Monthly low tide counts at the main outhaul areas. The main outhaul is now the Balgove site. All records are passed to SMRU, St Andrews for their data.

Highest Count: **11** (Sep)

Lowest Count: **0** (Jan/Mar/Apr/May/Nov)

Average: **3**

Control Invasive Non Native Species (INNS) including Spartina: SAC2/09

- Spartina grass is prevalent in 2 areas, Shelly Spit and Balgove Bay. The ranger hand dug pioneer plants in Balgove and the mudflats west of Shelly Spit. The species is mainly contained within Shelly Spit. The policy for containment of spartina within established saltmarsh and to remove pioneer plants from mudflats is to continue.
- Giant Hogweed at Motray Water is at infestation levels higher up the watercourse. The lower reedbed areas were sprayed and are under control. Significant effort may be required to manage the upper reedbeds, the lower reedbeds will continue to require annual treatment to prevent recurrence.
- INNS removal continues with volunteer assistance at Outhead and along West Sands as part of the Dune Restoration programme. 5 days completed in 2015.

Monitor Saltmarsh: SAC2/03

- Edenside Saltmarsh was thoroughly surveyed by volunteer Richard Pennington once again in 2015. Richard produced a report giving an up to date analysis of the saltmarsh, species and general health. The report is archived and distributed to SNH.
- New SERG projects have been permitted to begin surveying remnant and new saltmarsh areas, this is part of, and related to the 'Saltmarsh on the Fringe' project and long running studies.

Create New Saltmarsh: SAC2/04

- The next phase of saltmarsh regeneration plantings under the 'Saltmarsh on the Fringe' project begun in March 2016. This will see additional areas including Motray sea wall, Shelly Spit, Coble shore and River Eden all placed under study, monitoring and new plantings taking place. Once again, saltmarsh regeneration demonstrates the importance of research in supporting and delivering sound management on the reserve. In turn the potential to validate and include research in the management matrix of the site aids demonstrating the real time potential of such tested methods. Thanks to SERG in particular Clare Maynard once again for being the driver in this project and for including a substantial volunteer input into the reserve.

Survey Human Impact on Reserve: SAC2/05

- Regular surveys are carried out during operational visits by ranger and the impacts noted are mainly to do with sustained access to certain areas. The use of Coble Pools to Balgove shoreline is still being used for dog walking however in much lower levels of intensity.
- Meetings have been held with MoD Army over access to Eden Estuary, Earlsall and associated coastline. The discussed agreements are under Liaise with MoD (Objective 8)

Monitor Tipping, Waste and Tip Sites: SAC2/07

- The West Sands Partnership continues to monitor and advise on the situation of the old tip site at Outhead. There is a plan of action detailed however no lead has been agreed and at the present time no further action will be forthcoming.
- Marine waste, especially plastics continues to be a problem throughout the reserve. Volunteers and groups including Virgin Media, EASWC, FCCT, and local students all have made significant inroads into removing some of the waste with nearly 25% recycled. 6 clean ups were conducted, 3 on West Sands, 1 on north shore, 1 on Coble shore and 1 on River Eden.
- FCCT rangers removed large scale plastic waste by boat. 4 boat loads removed including BBQ's, wheelie bins, crates, TV's. This will be done again in Spring 2016.

Manage Coble Pools: SAC2/08

- The pools have been poorly filling this winter with what is believed to be blockage in the feed system. The pools inlet pipeworks and chambers have been reconstructed to promote better flow and management with drain rods. This work was funded by reserve donations. Further works may be required with additional funding to secure the water flow.
- Discussions with Fife Amphibian and Reptile Group are underway now for a joint project revitalising the pools for wildlife and longevity. This will seek to pool funding and resources to improve the wetland.

- Access for fishing remains at a high level with many days seeing 6-8 cars parked here. The 'right' to park here is down to landowner approval and this is managed by permit and contact with the site ranger. Wildfowlers can park there under their EELNR Permit, fisherman can park there if they hold an Eden Fishing permit, Works and Research permit holders may also park here under their LNR permits, all other users must contact the ranger for approval. This system does not control busy days and there could be future conflict here between different users and the landowner. At present it is manageable and the ranger will continue to monitor the situation and liaise with landowner over any issues.

Objective 3: Maintain and Improve the Value of the Reserve as a Breeding Area for Birds (Breeding Birds)

Breeding Bird Monitoring: BB3/01

- Breeding Bird Surveys on 6 Key Sites within LNR. Breeding Bird Surveys conducted April and May. Breeding notes included in Bird Report and forwarded on to Fife Nature.

Protect Ground Nesting Birds: BB3/02

- Breeding bird signs placed out at Goosepools and Coble Pools for April-August.
- Outhead Grassland has been put under winter grazing by Hebridean sheep for the past 2 years, according to surveys the site has seen approximately a 30% rise in breeding activity records. This is backed up by casual records from Links Trust whom also, under guidance from the Tay Ringing Group, conducted ringing of local species.

Objective 4: Protect, Maintain and Enhance the Structure and Function of the Estuary (Estuarine Function and Coastal Management)

Survey Effects of Coastal Erosion: ECM4/01

- A watching brief continues on the erosion on north shore by radar tower.
- Long term monitoring by St Andrews University of the Outhead Dune Recharge area continues on behalf of Links Trust, this has been extended and integrated into the West Sands monitoring for actions relating to the dune restoration programme and to support data required by the Marine Scotland licence for sand harvesting for the dune repairs.
- Monitoring of the Outhead and West Sands dune system continues. This includes regular site condition surveys by ranger.
- Beach and coastline changes at Edenmouth are continuing to erode along north shore. The current HT is back to the 1940's defence blocks.
- Saltmarsh and some stretches of hard defence have been surveyed for erosion and suitability for mitigation under the latest saltmarsh regeneration programme by Clare Maynard and local landowners.
- Links Trust continue monitoring Outhead and the Links courses gabion defences.

Implement and Support Coastal Management: ECM4/04

- West Sands Dune Restoration project continues with 9 volunteer days providing 45 volunteers to plant dune stabilising grasses and remove non-native invasives. This included Elmwood College, St Andrews University, Virgin Media, DWP works teams, Links Trust and

FCCT volunteers. Further funding has been achieved from the R&A, Fife Council localities and Transportation. Phase 4 began in February 2016 with repair by recharge of 4 large blowouts, thanks to Links Trust and Transportation for men and machines, a great job done. FCCT volunteers have been stabilising the blowouts with dune grasses.

- The Eden Estuary 'Saltmarsh on the Fringe' new planting project was back in full swing in March 2016, thanks to Clare Maynard and SERG. This is making a major contribution to coastal management within the reserve itself and is a key component part of the site management.
- Ranger gave support information and permits for Clare Maynard's 'Saltmarsh on the Fringes' project and related monitoring studies.
- Links Trust continued their gabion repair works in 2015 with no fuss and minimal impact.

Objective 5: To Maintain and Increase our Knowledge and Understanding of the Physical, Biological and Human Features of the Estuary (Research)

Research Project Records: RS5/03

Research permits operational in 15/16 reporting year.

- S. Watson, SERG, St Andrews University: *Benthic Macro fauna Sampling and Coring*.
- William Austin, St Andrews SERG: *Sediment sampling*.
- Claire Maynard. SERG, St Andrews: *'Saltmarsh on The Edge' Planting Project*.
- Benjamin Taylor, SERG: *Sediment sampling and monitoring*.
- Julie Hope, SERG, St Andrews University: *Sediment trapping*.
- Fabricio Guaman, St Andrews Geoscience: *Sediment sampling*.
- Tay Ringing Group (Robertson/Hatton): *Ringing selected species as Identified*.
- Sea Mammal Research Unit, St Andrews: *Harbour Seal monitoring*.
- SEPA: *Algal coverage monitoring 2015*.
- Aidan Millar, Stirling university: *Sediment coring Edenside*.

Biological Recording Data (Fauna): RS5/01

- All records were passed to ranger for collation by volunteers and members of the public. Dates and locations forwarded to Fife Nature.
- Additional Species to LNR List (Non Bird): 1 Bivalve: *Artica islandica*; Outhead January 2016.

Vegetation Recording Data (Flora): RS5/02

- Volunteer Richard Pennington carried out annual vegetation survey at Outhead Grassland. This is archived and sent to SNH for record. No substantial change noted in species or sward height in 2015.

Research Liaison: RS5/04

- Constant liaison with St Andrews University has taken place with permits, definitions and access advice for various projects this year. Protocols have been defined and regular contact and meetings are in place to manage the research input into the reserve. Communications between the University, SNH and the reserve are becoming more clearly defined and are most helpful.

Objective 6: Provide, Promote and Facilitate Responsible Public Access

Eden Estuary Centre: AC6/01

- The centre continues its main function of providing a visitor focus for the reserve and acting as a source of recording information. The centre contains a log book of all bird recordings made from there and a visitor record log, 1590 entries for 2015.
- Donations continue to be accepted at the centre and this year they have been used to provide bird food (bought from the Tay Ringing Group) and feeders. All donations are spent within the reserve itself.
- Centre eaves were replaced due to delamination. Windows were checked and the front wall painted.
- Trees have been removed around the centre by the ranger to allow better views and to assist with building safety. New bird boxes and feeders were put in place.
- The centre use has been affected by the road closure at Guardbridge for the University pipeline works in February to April 2016.

Information and Interpretation: AC6/05

- Monthly newsletter circulated by email list, FCCT Facebook page and on site.
- FCCT Facebook page and 'Friends of the Eden estuary' (FOEEG) is a good way to disseminate information and EELNR receives good coverage on social media.
- Monthly article placed in Bird Watching magazine, a UK wide publication.
- Eden Estuary Visitors Handbook 2016. Produced by FCCT this holds site visitor information, bird statistics, bird checklist for ticking off sightings and tide times. Priced at £1 and available from Eden Centre and other outlets, 2015 raised £70 for the reserve.
- EELNR inclusion in the British Birdwatchers Yearbook 2014, a national publication given site information for bird watching.
- New interpretation boards for the 'Saltmarsh on the Fringe' project were placed at Outhead viewing platform, Eden Centre and Links courses.

Maintain Infrastructure: AC6/04

- Quarterly site condition surveys and maintenance programme took place on all access points with monthly maintenance visits May-Sep.
- Evans Hide Balgove has been completely refurbished by FCCT in January 2016.

Works Permits: AC6/09

- Links Trust: Gabion repairs
- St Andrews University Estates: Reservoir vegetation control (as per reservoir act).
- Clare Maynard St Andrews University: Saltmarsh Planting Work.

Guided Site Visits and Events: AC6/06

- Site visits to Outhead for the St Andrews in Bloom judges in July.
- St Andrews University Walking Group (15) guided walk round the Kincapple to EELNR loop to look at the natural heritage and familiarise members of staff whom may be sited at the new University campus at Guardbridge.
- Site visit with Donald Muir of BASC in June to look at the River Eden relating to new shooting area E definition on permit.

Monitoring Angling and Bait Collection: AC6/03

- **Bait digging** is prohibited under the Byelaws 2008. However the reserve allows a small amount of mussel collection for personal use. 4 permits are available per year for this activity, 2 permits were taken up this year.
- **Angling:** The reserve has received a significant increase in fishing interest in the last 2 years which has caused some issues with parking and overcrowding at Coble Shore, fishing here is by permit from Eden Angling Club. The ranger has been in touch with Eden Angling Club and highlighted these issues. There is a determination to ensure that those using the estuary for fishing do so legally and by permit only, that they consider other users including other fisherman and wildfowlers and that they park correctly. The ranger will continue to monitor and advise on the Coble Shore parking and will liaise with EAC on any matters arising.

Objective 7: Encourage Educational Use of the Reserve at all levels from Primary Schools to Universities. (Education)**Educational Visits to Reserve: ED7/01**

- Elmwood College HNC Countryside Management students (8) visited reserve April 2014 studying 'Designated Sites, Ecology and habitats'. Ranger provided site visit and information.
- St Andrews Sustainable Development students (15) visited the Outhead and dunes in November to look at sand dune restoration.
- St Andrews University Sustainable Development students (11) visited the reserve in November to look at the reserves coastal management and saltmarshes. Ranger gave introduction on ecosystem management and the role of saltmarsh in the wider environment.
- St Leonards School pupils under St Andrews University CBESS programme (18) visited the reserve in October to look at the reserve management and saltmarshes. Ranger gave introduction on ecosystem management and the role of saltmarshes in the reserve.
- St Andrews Sustainable Development students (10) visited the reserve in March 2016 to hear about ecosystem management, natural heritage designations and local planning issues affecting the reserve.

- Elmwood College NC Countryside Management students visited reserve March 2016 to look at Bird ID and Surveying techniques.
- Dundee University Geography Students (17) visited the reserve to look at prehistoric sediment layering including permitted core sampling on River Eden marshes. Ranger gave introduction to the reserve and guided access.

Illustrated Talks and Presentations: ED7/02

- *'The Long Drive' West Sands Dune Restoration:* Ranger gave presentation to attendees of the Links Trust Information Evening for the Open Championship 2015.
- *Coastal Community Connections:* Ranger gave presentation to Forth Estuary Forum Annual Conference on the current projects along the Fife Coastal Path that support coastal community development. The EELNR, Guardbridge energy centre, coastal path/cycle route to St Andrews, Tayport community hub, Tentsmuir and the sea eagles project were all included.

Facilitate Volunteer Input LNR: ED7/03

- West Sands Dune Restoration Project: Significant volunteer effort and hours has gone into this project, co-ordinated by the ranger. Volunteers have carried out work including survey work, dune grass planting, fencing, litter removal and signage. Once again-Thank you All!!
- Saltmarsh on the Fringe: Clare Maynard organised volunteer planting days in March 2016 with great input for the reserves commitment to voluntary involvement, thanks Clare and all her muddy helpers.
- East Scotland Wildfowling Club carried out a clean-up along the shore line of Coble Shore in March 2016. Great effort and thanks!
- Bird Surveying. Gordon Shepherd has covered Outhead and Goosepools on monthly visits passing on bird info and images. Ian Cumming has conducted the monthly estuary duck counts again this year.
- Volunteer Wildfowling Warden, Mr Steven Watson has been extremely helpful in covering flight patrols and reporting interesting finds, incidents and issues. Thanks Steven!
- Richard Pennington gave his time and expertise to conduct vegetation surveys at Outhead grassland and Edenside saltmarsh looking at site health and change. This is ongoing at Outhead and the 2015 reports have been passed to the ranger. These have been passed to SNH for their information.

Objective 8: Promote and Ensure Efficient Management and Administration.

Liaise with MoD: MA8/04

- Meetings have been held with MoD Army over access to Eden Estuary, Earls Hall and associated coastline. There is still some discussions to be had, however the current agreement appears to stand at;

Formal Training Access can be taken to Reres Wood under specific agreements between MoD and FCS.

Formal Training Access to Tentsmuir forest is by notified agreement through present comms channels and protocols between MoD and FCS.

A route has been identified for formal training use as most appropriate to cross Earshallmuir and this is agreed as the route by Comerton and Ward Farm and back along the Tentsmuir to Leuchars road to camp.

No agreed official use of the Coastal path across Earshall.

No official use of the beach route between Edenmouth and Tentsmuir to large parties, no vehicle access and with all off-duty personal use a recommendation to use at lower tidal states has been made. This route will be monitored for any user induced erosion and access related issues.

All agreed that the Eden Estuary itself will be out of bounds to all personnel at all times.

Liaise with Local Reserve Landowners: MA8/05

- Discussions held with Peter Wallace to manage the Coble Pools area, fishing rights and parking issues.

Liaise with Local Communities (and Police): MA8/06

- Ranger held further discussions with the Wildlife Crime Officer, SNH and RSPB staff on awareness raising of the newly established White tailed eagles around the NE Fife area.
- Ranger responded to enquiries from members of the public on the EELNR and West Sands during routine visits, issues such as dead seals, litter, dune use and dog related issues. Dog mess remains a real issue in Guardbridge, in the centre park, Tip Point and Outhead. Ranger placed temporary signage for dog mess in Guardbridge and local dog walker has taken up voluntary park 'dog mess' guardian. Good for Margaret!
- Signage was placed at Tip Point access path to advise users to stop entering St Andrews University grounds and use footpath however this was consistently ignored and now has been removed.
- Ranger held meetings and discussions with contractors and local community members on the pipeline works and road closures in Guardbridge Feb-April 2016.

Liaise with Forestry Enterprise/Commission: MA8/07

- Day to day management issues were assisted greatly from co-operation from all FCS staff especially Robin Lofthouse. These included coastal path works, information sharing and access assistance.
- Ranger was kept up to date on the closure and tree works on the new Tentsmuir car park.
- Access to the barrier system and wider forest is greatly appreciated by the ranger.

Liaise with St Andrews University Estates Guardbridge: MA8/08

- Ranger met with a member of the Green energy development team, mainly as an update on progress and the shaping of the sites development. Further discussions should be had regarding interface with the new site, the bird hide and park and access to the reserve.
- The University kindly agreed to allow FCCT to keep a skip at Guardbridge for the use of collecting waste from beach sites and litter collections and clean ups again this year. Thank you.

Liaise with SNH: MA8/11

- SNH were consulted and consent given for use various management operations including Spartina control, the Eden saltmarsh projects and research project and military access.
- SNH and ranger were involved with discussions with the Army over access and use of the surrounding area and this is an ongoing discussion.
- Thank you once again to SNH staff at Cupar in particular, Gavin Johnson, whom have been very helpful and supportive as well as offering sound advice on many matters this year including the West Sands Partnership and management, site designations, operational consents, research consent, saltmarsh management and site development.
- SNH will be conducting site condition survey work on the Eden's saltmarsh elements this year.

Liaise with Fife Council: MA8/12

- The administration of the EELNR Advisory Group is the remit of Natural Heritage department under Richard Smith. The wildfowling permit system will remain with PO department for the time being, and Kathryn Bell continues to administer this. This has continued through 2015/2016. Ranger held informal discussions with both Richard and Kathryn on relevant issues.
- Ranger attends meetings of the St Andrews Sands Group to discuss relevant issues affecting the reserve and the beaches and coastline of St Andrews. Again this group has been instrumental in the support and funding of the West Sands dune project. Thank you to all the elected members for their continuing support.
- Ranger greatly appreciates Fife Council Transportation donation towards the dune restoration project.

Liaise with Links Trust: MA8/09

- The Links Trust are a key partner in the Dune Restoration Project and are a member of the EELNRAG, West Sands Partnership and the Saltmarsh Restoration Project, they have been highly supportive and have input much time and resources. They are a key reserve partner and deliver important elements of the reserves objectives in coastal management and estuarine function. This is greatly appreciated as they bring highly effective and efficient approaches to all projects. The ranger is in regular contact with Links Trust discussing updates and planning.
- The ranger communicated regularly with James Hutchinson the Links environmental officer giving advice and receiving local updates and records. James has now left the Links Trust.
- The ranger appreciates the contact with the Links Trust, in particular, Gordon Moir, and this communication has dealt with many matters this year such as Outhead grazing, dune restoration, volunteer provision, coastal management, access, biodiversity and drainage. Thank you again.

Fife Biodiversity Partnership (LBAP): MA8/24

- The ranger consulted with Fife Council Biodiversity officer through the year on matters relating to LBAP implementation and biodiversity outcomes.

- Ranger attended Fife Biodiversity Partnership meeting to update on coastal and EELNR reserve LBAP targets and projects.
- Once again the EELNR in 2015/2016 has delivered on certain LBAP targets including, Saltmarsh and Sand Dunes. The EELNR is a significant site for Fife Council LBAP delivery on habitats, species and public engagement. Well done all.

Liaise Fife Nature Records Centre: MA8/25

- All records were passed to Fife Nature for record and digitising.
- Fife Nature assisted in the production of the annual report by collating, digitising and producing the EELNR Bird Report. This is a crucial function which greatly assists the ranger in management of the reserve and the time taken to do so. Thank you Mhiari and Lindsay.

Liaise with Friends of the Eden Estuary Group: MA8/27

- The group has had no further meetings. Gavin Johnson has kept FOEEG facebook page up dated and this is useful. It would be good to get this group up and running if feasible.

Wildfowling Season Report 2014/2015

The Ranger has compiled this report for the Advisory Group of the Eden Estuary LNR in accordance with the requirements of the Management Plan 2013-2018.

The Permit System

Permits for 2015/2016 Wildfowl Season (1st Sep-20th Feb) were available on application to the council. Advertisements were placed in the national shooting press and local papers advising wildfowlers of the procedure for obtaining a permit.

The permit shows the LNR boundary, shooting and sanctuary zones. Information for wildfowlers including how to complete the permit and the return policy is included.

It is stated on the permit that it must be returned within 21 days of expiry date (12th March 2016).

An information letter, a copy of the Byelaws, guidance notes and a copy of the wildfowlers newsletter accompanied each permit. The visiting wildfowler was thus informed of access, parking, permit system, general behaviour and legal aspects of shooting.

2015/2016 Season Weather Conditions

Month	Rain (mm)	Temperature (Celsius)		Days with Airfrost
		Max	Min	
Sep 2015	39	16	8	0
Oct 2015	48	14	6	0
Nov 2015	110	10	4	2
Dec 2015	121	10	3.5	5
Jan 2016	158	7	1	15
Feb 2016	35	7	0	15

Permit Returns

Permit Issue Area	Issued	Returned	%Returned	Used	Visits
Fife	47	43	91%	25	209
Tayside	8	7	88%	5	22
Scotland (Other)	22	22	100%	7	21
England/Wales	33	29	88%	15	55
Total	110	101	92%	52	307
2014/2015	149	124	83%	75	512

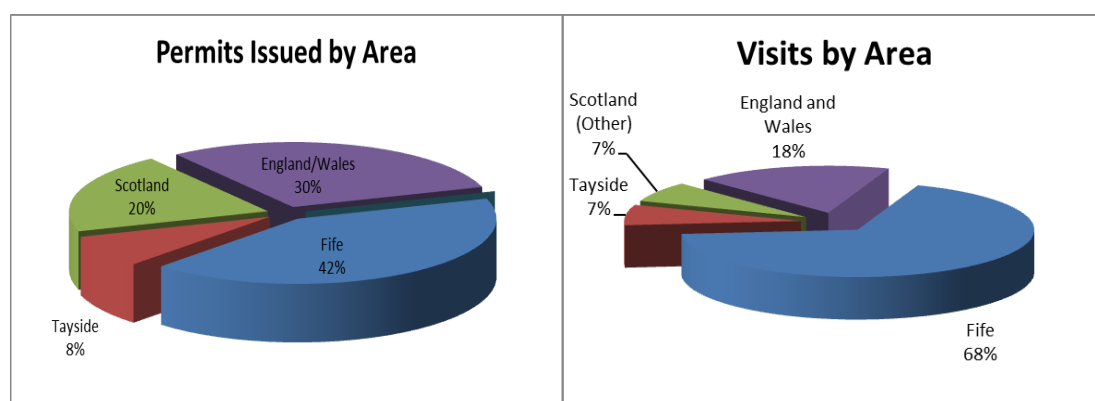
In the 2015/2016 season a total of 110 permits were issued constituting a 7% drop in issued permits from last season, this halts the recent trend upwards in permit issues seen in previous two years. The number of used permits dropped as did the number of visits made. Lower permits issued, poor winter weather and access issues with the St Andrews road closures all played a part.

The number of permits returned increased to 92% from last years 83%. This is very welcome and more in line with recent times and expectations.

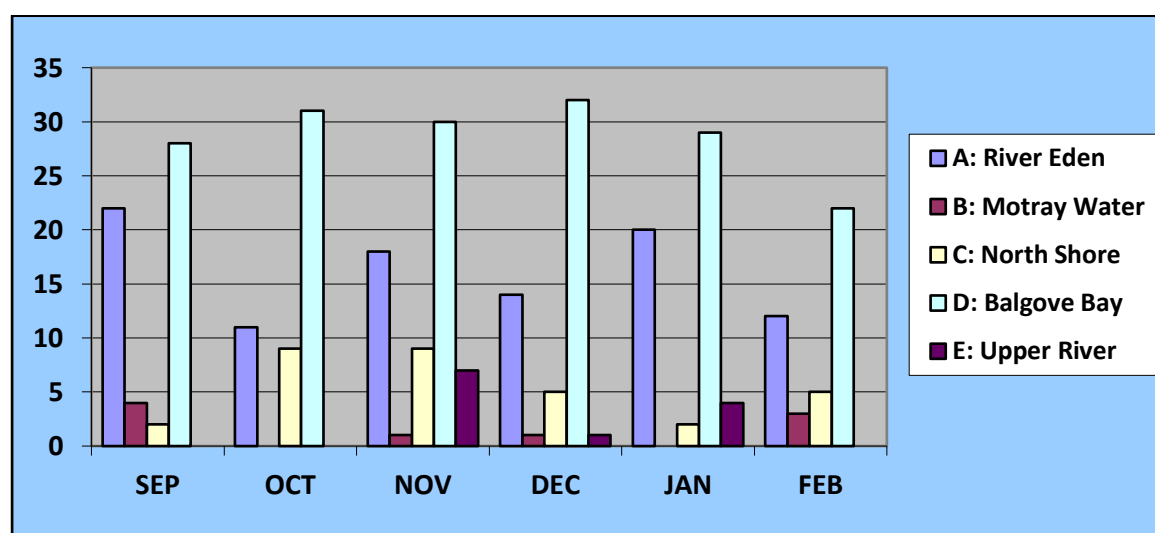
The highest numbers of used permits were from Fife area and the highest number of visits made by Fife wildfowlers. Once again showing that although the EELNR is still well visited by wildfowlers from further locations and of particular interest to those south of the border, the reserve is mainly of interest to local wildfowlers.

Permit Issue Geography

The spread of issues remain broadly similar to recent years with the reserve receiving most interest and visits from Fife wildfowlers. Drops in issues were evident across the areas, most notable from England. Both in permits issued and visits made Fife and Tayside forms over 50% of the interest and participation.



Distribution of Wildfowlers Within the Reserve: Shooting Areas ABCD



The Balgove Bay area remains the constant main shooting area, however this year has seen a marked rise in the use of the River Eden (A). With the introduction of the Upper River (E) as a separate area receiving 12 visits. Roadworks during January and February may have contributed however changes in geese distribution and movements could also be a factor.

Permit Use, Birds Shot and Bag Rates

2014/2015	Days Available	Total visits	Birds Shot	Average Bag
September	26	59	69	1.2
October	27	50	64	1.3
November	25	67	59	0.9
December	26	50	45	0.9
January	26	48	34	0.7
February	18	33	19	0.6
Total	148	307	290	0.9
Last season	148	451	376	0.8

The season's average bag rate rose to 1.3 with the early season being very productive, Canada and duck species added to this, woodpigeon would also tilt the figures in that direction. Highest bag rates in October.

Numbers and Species of Birds Shot

Month	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Total
Visits	59	50	67	50	48	33	307
Species							
Pink Footed Goose	-	13	26	16	17	4	76
Greylag Goose	-	1	1	-	-	1	3
Canada Goose	18	-	-	1	1	-	20
Wigeon	2	19	7	10	4	5	47
Mallard	10	12	12	7	5	3	49
Teal	17	10	2	3	2	1	35
Goldeneye	-	-	4	2	1	4	11
Pintail	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Gadwall	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Tufted Duck	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Snipe	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Golden Plover	-	5	-	-	-	-	5
Shoveller	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Woodcock	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Woodpigeon	22	4	6	6	4	1	43
Totals	69	64	59	45	34	19	290

This season has seen a significant drop in permits issued and visits made over last season. A relatively poor season for geese bagged which is in line with lower numbers roosting on the reserve. Greylag continue to drop as a bag which reflects the population status. A good early bag of Canada geese and a steady bag rate for Mallard, Teal and Wigeon in line with reserve counts for these species. Early season appears more productive however there are many factors that may have influenced this.

Monthly Counts of Key Quarry Species: Sep 15-Feb 16

Species	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Pink Footed Goose	40	3000	2250	2000	1200	2000
Greylag Goose	50	3	22	1	1	5
Canada Goose	250	0	2	2	1	0
Wigeon	50	131	122	266	110	201
Mallard	80	40	40	35	100	78
Teal	150	250	200	235	102	112
Goldeneye	0	2	22	18	17	21
Pintail	5	5	24	33	52	138
Tufted Duck	2	5	0	0	0	0
Snipe	0	0	0	0	0	0
Golden Plover	0	247	1	0	0	0
Shoveller	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gadwall	0	0	0	0	0	0

Rangers Wildfowling Season Report**Season Summary**

Another mild and wet winter had an effect on the quarry species and the quality and number of days for wildfowling. Geese numbers were quite low in general, many nights saw very few roosting within the estuary. This gave the season a quiet feel and indeed the drop in visits made confirmed this. Wildfowling using the River more than in the past hints at the changing way the geese were using the estuary. Another major influence on the season has been the roadworks in Guardbridge which effectively shut off access along the south shore and the River by usual means for a considerable time January and February. Good to see an increase in returns and no byelaw related incidents.

Patrols

The wildfowling commitment and patrols were covered by the ranger and Mr Steven Watson EELNR Volunteer Warden.

Out of 296 flights, 94 (32%) were covered this season.

Byelaw Related Incidents: None this season.

Notable Occurrences:

Incident 3rd November Coble Shore: A heated dispute between two sets of 2 wildfowling regarding shooting position, safety and etiquette. Ranger took verbal statements from both parties and warned of unacceptable animosity whilst shooting and the need to ensure safety and safeguarding of sport for other wildfowling at all times. Warnings given to fowling showing poor safety attitude. Apologies received and ranger monitored visits. No further action deemed necessary.

Daytime Shooting: This was monitored this year, levels remained low during the season.

Empty cartridge cases: Found at Coble Shore on many occasions, this is simple laziness and not acceptable.

Sanctuary Zone Monitoring: The north zone at Goosepools has been eroding in recent years due to geomorphological changes and onshore winds. The ranger monitors the coastline here. During 2015/2016 significant erosion continues and the coast due East of Reres wood is now back to 1940's line. Loss of front dune, dune slack and reed marsh has taken place along the line of the zone. This has prompted a move in the HT wader roost away to the north and geese have been noted roosting on the sandbanks south east of Shelly Spit, well within the shooting zone.

Volunteer Warden

Mr Steven Watson. The warden has done another superb job in support of the ranger despite having some personal issues and a full time job to cope with. The warden has not only supported with Wildfowl Patrols he has also once again instigated clean ups and passes valuable habitat and bird information to the ranger. Once again he has demonstrated high standards and has been a genuine asset to the reserve. Thank you.

Administration

The support given to the ranger in the management of the permit system from Kathryn Bell from Fife Council has been superb once again and is very much appreciated. Thank you.

Eden Estuary Bird Report 2015

Red-throated Diver: Peak count of 7 on 25th November.

Little Grebe: Present Jan-Apr and Oct-Dec. Peak count of 7 on the 23rd Nov.

Great Crested Grebe: Birds recorded Apr-Jun and Sep-Nov. Peak count of 7 birds recorded 25th November at Outhead.

Slavonian Grebe: Present Feb-Apr and Oct-Nov. Peak count of 3 on 15th Oct.

Fulmar:

✓ *Nesting locally on St Andrews sea cliffs.*

Gannet: Present Mar-Sep. First record on 10th Mar and last record of 25 on 24th Sep. Peak count of 95 on 15th May.

Little Egret: Present May-Nov. Peak counts of 4 on 11th Jun, 31st Aug, 1st Sep and 11th Sep.

Cormorant: Present throughout the year. Peak count of 63 on 23rd Oct.

Grey Heron: Present throughout the year. Peak count of 13 on 17th Sep.

✓ *Breeding: Reres Wood Heronry census Mar-May. Overall visits noted max of 19 possible nests. Visit of 16th Apr noted 9 occupied nests with 7 young present on 11th May. Final census visit of 11th May notes 9 estimated pairs.*

Mute Swan: Present throughout the year. Peak count of 40 on 6th June.

✓ *Breeding: Pair on Motray 12th May no cygnets noted. Pair on Coble Pools with nest on 13th May and again on 8th Jun with 1 cygnet on 23rd Jul. Pair noted on River Eden on 14th May no cygnets seen after.*

Whooper Swan: Present Jan-Apr and Oct-Dec. Peak count of 31 on 5th Feb.

Pink-footed Goose: Present Jan-May and Sep-Dec. Peak count of 3750 on 20th Feb.

Greylag Goose: Present Jan-Apr, Jun, July and Sep-Dec. Peak count of 250 on 22nd Jan.

Canada Goose: Present Apr, Jun-Sep and Nov. Peak count of 300 on 29th Aug.

Barnacle Goose: Recorded on 3 days in Oct. The 5th, 10th and a peak count of 704 on 16th Oct.

Brent Goose (Light Bellied): Present Jan-Apr and Sep-Dec. Peak count of 26 on 13th & 15th Dec.

Brent Goose (Dark Bellied): Single bird recorded on 15th Dec.

Whitefronted Goose: 12 birds roosting on 12th Nov.

Shelduck: Present throughout the year. Peak count of 380 on 13th Nov.

✓ *Breeding: Peak Juvenile Count: 27 on 6th June.*

Wigeon: Present Jan-Jun and Sep-Dec. Peak count of 266 on 15th Dec.

Gadwall: 2 birds seen on 4th May, single bird on 13th July.

Teal: Present throughout the year. Peak count of 500 on 23rd Jan.

✓ *Breeding: 1 pair on Coble Pools on 13th May. Not seen after.*

Mallard: Present throughout the year. Peak count of 80 on 24th Sep.

✓ *Breeding: Pairs at Coble Pools, Motray and River Eden by 14th May. Peak juvenile count of 15 on 14th Aug.*

Pintail: Present Jan-Apr, Jun and Sep-Dec. Peak counts of 75 on 19th Jan and 15th Mar.

Garganey: Single bird recorded on 4th May.

Shoveller: Single bird recorded on 28th Feb.

Tufted Duck: Recorded May-Jun, Sep and Oct. Peak count of 5 on 23rd Jun and 12th Oct.

✓ *Breeding: 1 pair on Motray (GB Pond) on 12th May.*

Scaup: Present Feb and May. Peak count of 6 on 21st May.

Eider: Present throughout the year except Dec. Peak count of 600 on 9th July.

✓ *Breeding: Peak count of 22 juveniles recorded on 8th July.*

Long-tailed Duck: Present Jan-Mar and Nov. Peak count of 17 on 15th Mar.

Common Scoter: Present Jan, Apr, Nov and Dec. Peak count of 2000 on 25th Nov.

Velvet Scoter: Single bird seen on the 19th Jan.

Goldeneye: Present Jan-May and Oct-Dec. Peak count of 22 on 23rd Nov.

Red-breasted Merganser: Present throughout the year except Dec. Peak count of 15 on 15th Mar.

Goosander: Present Feb, Apr-Oct and Dec. Peak count of 31 on 27th Aug.

Sparrowhawk: Present Jan-May and July-Dec. Peak count of 2 birds seen on 4 days. 39 single birds seen throughout the year.

Buzzard: Present throughout the year. Peak count of 4 on 23rd June.

Osprey: Present from 13th April to 18th Sept. Peak count of 5 on 29th Aug.

Kestrel: Present in Feb-Apr and Jul-Aug. Single birds seen on 12 occasions

✓ *Breeding: single bird seen carrying food on 2nd July at Coble Pools*

Merlin: Single birds seen on 10th Feb and 29th Oct.

Peregrine: Present Jan-May and Aug-Nov. Peak counts of 2 on 7 days, 16th & 22nd Jan, 2nd & 3rd Feb, 16th, 18th and 31st Mar.

White-tailed Eagle (Sea Eagle): Recorded all months except Apr. Peak counts of 3 on 8th & 16th Oct, 15th & 22nd Nov and 20th Dec.

✓ *Breeding: Breeding locally. 1 juvenile fledged Tentsmuir. 1 Pair with large juvenile occasional sighting throughout late 2015, last of the year in estuary on 20th Dec*

Great Grey Shrike: Recorded at Reres Wood and Goosepools on 10th Mar.

Grey Partridge: Recorded Feb, Apr, Aug, Nov and Dec. Peak count of 11 on 15th Dec.

✓ *Breeding: 6 pairs at Coble pools on 2nd Apr. Family with 4 juveniles at Coble Pools on 27th Aug.*

Water Rail:

✓ *Breeding: 1 calling at Goosepools on 11th May*

Moorhen: Recorded in Jan and Mar-May. Peak count of 6 on 17th Jan and 6th Mar.

✓ *Breeding: 1 pair at Coble pools on 16th Apr.*

Oystercatcher: Present throughout the year. Peak count of 1750 on 17th Jan.

Ringed Plover: Present May, Aug, Nov and Dec. Peak count of 105 on 10th Aug at Outhead.

Golden Plover: Present Feb, Aug, Oct-Nov. Peak count of 247 at Shelly Spit on 23rd Oct.

Grey Plover: Present Jan-Apr and Aug-Dec. Peak count of 220 on 17th Jan.

Lapwing: Present most months except May. Peak count of 500 on 12th Oct.

✓ *Breeding: 2 pairs at Goose Pools on 7th May. Up to 4 pairs by 17th May. 1 pair on field by River Eden on 14th May. No juveniles recorded.*

Knot: Present most months except May and June. Peak count of 250 on 1st Oct.

Sanderling: Present Jan, Mar, Aug and Oct-Dec. Peak count of 100 at Outhead on 10th Aug.

Curlew Sandpiper: Present Aug. 5 single birds seen during Aug.

Dunlin: Present throughout the year except June. Peak count of 2170 on 17th Jan.

Ruff: Present Mar, May, July and Aug-Oct. Peak count of 4 on 16th Oct.

Jack Snipe: Single bird recorded on 25th Nov at Coble Pools.

Snipe: Recorded in Feb, Sep and Nov. Peak counts of 3 on 3rd and 4th Feb at Goosepools and Coble Pools respectively.

Woodcock: 2 birds seen at Reres Wood on 30th Nov.

Black-tailed Godwit: Present throughout the year. Peak count of 277 on 6th Mar.

Bar-tailed Godwit: Present Jan-Apr, Aug-Oct and Dec. Peak count of 158 on 3rd Feb.

Whimbrel: Present Apr, May, Aug and Sep. Single birds recorded each month 30th Apr, 11th May, 13th Aug and 12th Sep.

Curlew: Present throughout the year. Peak count of 535 on 23rd Oct.

Spotted Redshank: Single bird recorded on 20th May.

Redshank: Present throughout the year. Peak count of 1128 on 17th Jan.

Greenshank: Present all months except Jun. Peak count of 10 on 11th Sep..

Common Sandpiper: Present Apr-Sep. Peak count of 5 on 30th June.

Turnstone: Present Aug and Sep. Peak count of 3 on 25th Aug. Single bird on 13th Sep.

Mediterranean Gull: Single bird recorded on 21st July.

Black-headed Gull: Present throughout the year. Peak count of 5 on 18th May.

Common Gull: Present throughout the year. Peak count of 2 on 4 days, 30th June, 24th & 28th July and 14th Aug.

LBB Gull: Present Feb-Oct. Peak count of 18 on 31st Mar.

Herring Gull: Present through the year. Peak count of 26 on 2nd Apr.

GBB Gull: Present throughout the year. Peak count of 12 on 28th Dec.

Sandwich Tern: Present May-Sep. Peak count of 72 on 11th Sep at Goosepools.

Arctic Tern: 3 birds recorded on 14th Aug at Goosepools.

Stock Dove: Single birds recorded on 26th July, 30th Aug and 22nd Sep.

Woodpigeon: Present throughout the year with a peak count of 19 on 11th May.
✓ *Breeding: across the reserve*

Collared Dove: Present Mar, May, Aug and Sep. Peak counts of 2 on 19th & 22nd Mar.

Cuckoo: Single bird recorded on 8th Aug.

Short-eared Owl: Single bird recorded on 18th Nov.

Swift: Recorded in May-July. Peak count of 100 on 9th July at Goosepools

Kingfisher: Recorded Jan, Mar and Jul-Dec. Peak count of 1 on 26 days.

Great Spotted Woodpecker: Recorded throughout the year. Peak count of 3 on 29th Oct.

Skylark: Recorded Mar-May and Jul-Sep. Peak count of 18 on 20th Apr.
✓ *Breeding: across the reserve with peak territory count of 18 at Goosepools on 20th Apr. 13 Juveniles at Outhead on 10th Aug.*

Sand Martin: Recorded Apr-Jul. Peak count of 5 on 14th May at River Eden.
✓ *Breeding: 1 pair on dunes at Links Courses on 20th May.*

Swallow: Recorded Apr-Sep. Peak counts of 100 on 9th July and 20th Aug.
✓ *Breeding: 1 pair with nest material at Outhead on 16th May. 2 juveniles at Outhead on 8th July.*

House Martin: Recorded May and July. Peak count of 21 on 14th May at River Eden.

Meadow Pipit: Recorded Jan, Feb, Apr, May & Oct. Peak count of 23 on 20th Apr at Goosepools.
✓ *Breeding: Across the reserve with peak display count of 8 at Goosepools on 17th May. Peak juvenile count of 6 at Outhead on 10th Aug.*

Rock Pipit: Single birds recorded 26th Jan and 15th Oct.

Tree Pipit: Single bird recorded on 16th Oct.

Pied Wagtail: Recorded Jan-Oct. Peak count of 30 on 4th Aug at Balgove.
✓ *Breeding: 1 pair at Outhead on 20th Apr.*

Wren: Recorded Jan-Sep. Peak count of 5 on 16th Apr.

✓ *Breeding: Across the reserve with peak of 5 singing at Tip Point on 16th Apr. Nest with 2 young at River Eden on 6th June.*

Dunnock: Present throughout the year with peak count of 7 on 16th Apr.

✓ *Breeding: Across the reserve with peak singing count of 7 at Tip Point on 16th Apr.*

Robin: Present throughout the year with peak count of 6 on 16th Apr (3 pairs).

✓ *Breeding: Across the reserve with peak of 3 pairs on Motray on 16th Apr. 2 juveniles at Eden Centre on 20th Aug.*

Redstart: Recorded on 31st Mar.

Stonechat: Present Apr, May, July, Aug, Nov and Dec. Peak count of 4 on 25th Nov at Outhead.

✓ *Breeding: 1 pair at Outhead on 20th Apr, 1 pair at West Sands dunes throughout May-Dec. 1 pair at Goosepools on 17th May. 1 pair with nest at Earlsall Muir coastal path on 23rd July.*

Wheatear: Present Apr and May. 3 single birds recorded in addition to the breeding pairs below.

✓ *Breeding: 1 pair at Goosepools on 11th May, 1 pair at River Eden on 14th May.*

Blackbird: Present throughout the year with a peak count of 8 on 16th June.

✓ *Breeding: Across the reserve peak of 7 singing at Tip Point on 13th May. 3 pairs on River Eden on 14th May, one with nest.*

Fieldfare: Recorded in Jan and Nov. Peak count of 11 on 30th Nov at Kincaple.

Song Thrush: Recorded most months except Dec. Peak count of 2 on 9th Mar, 27th May and 19th June

✓ *Breeding: 1 singing at Tip Point on 16th Apr. 1 singing at River Eden on 14th May*

Redwing: Mostly single birds recorded Feb-Apr, Oct and Dec. Peak count of 22 on 16th Feb.

Mistle Thrush: Single bird recorded on 13th Jan.

Grasshopper Warbler:

✓ *Breeding: 1 breeding record on Motray on 10th July.*

Sedge Warbler:

✓ *Breeding: 2 singing at Motray on 12th May. 1 singing at Goosepools on 11th May. 4 singing at Tip Point on 13th May. 4 singing at Coble Pools on 13th May with 3 singing there on 8th June. 18 singing along the River Eden on 14th May. 1 pair with 2 juveniles at Goosepools on 9th July.*

Whitethroat:

✓ *Breeding: 1 singing at Coble Pools on 13th May.*

Blackcap: Present Apr-July with peak counts of 2 on the 9th & 13th May and 4th June.

✓ *Breeding: 1 pair and 2 singing at Tip Point on 13th May. 1 singing at Eden Centre on 29th Apr and 12th-20th June.*

Chiffchaff: Single bird recorded on the 20th Apr at Goosepools in addition to breeding below.

✓ *Breeding: 1 singing at Reres Wood on 16th Apr. 2 singing at Tip Point on 13th May. 1 singing at River Eden on 14th May. 1 singing at Eden centre on 6th June and again on 8th June.*

Garden Warbler:

✓ *Breeding: 1 singing at the Eden Centre on 3rd June.*

Willow Warbler: Recorded between Apr-Jun. Peak count of 6 on 9th May.

✓ *Breeding: Across the reserve. Peak of 5 singing at Tip Point on 13th May*

Goldcrest: 2 birds recorded on 22nd Jan and a peak count of 6 on 16th Dec.

Long-tailed Tit: Recorded Jan, Feb, Mar, May, Sep and Dec. Peak count of 8 on 16th Dec.

Coal Tit: Recorded most months except May and July. Peak counts of 2 on several days.

✓ *Breeding: 1 singing at Motray on 16th Apr.*

Blue Tit: Present all months. Peak count of 10 on 12th Dec.

✓ *Breeding: Across the reserve with 2 pairs nesting in boxes at Eden Centre and peak count of 9 juveniles at feeders on 23rd June.*

Great Tit: Present all months. Peak counts of 5 on 19th June and 23rd Nov.

✓ *Breeding: Across the reserve with peak juvenile count at Eden Centre feeders of 4 on 19th June.*

Treecreeper: Single bird recorded on 16th Dec at Goosepools.

Jay: 2 birds recorded on 7th Oct.

Magpie: Recorded every month except June and July. Peak counts of 5 on 18th Feb and 31st Mar.

Carrion Crow: Present throughout the year with a peak count of 36 on 27th May.

✓ *Breeding: Across the reserve, primarily River Eden and Motray.*

Jackdaw: Recorded Apr, May, July and Aug. Peak count of 9 on 19th May.

Raven: Mostly single birds recorded in Mar, Apr, Aug, Oct and Nov. Peak count of 2 on 14th Oct.

Starling: Recorded all months except Mar. Peak counts of 35 on 23rd and 27th Nov.

House Sparrow: Recorded throughout the year. Peak count of 9 on 24th Nov.

✓ *Breeding: 5 pairs at Motray on 12th May and 2 pairs on River Eden on 14th May*

Tree Sparrow: Present throughout the year with a peak count of 17 on 5th Mar

✓ *Breeding: 1 pair in box at Eden centre with 3 juveniles on 25th May. 1 pair on River Eden on 14th May.*

Chaffinch: Present throughout the year. Peak count of 15 on 18th Dec.

✓ *Breeding: Across all sites, peak count of juveniles noted as 12 on 12th Aug at Eden Centre.*

Greenfinch: Present throughout the year. Peak count of 12 on 22nd June.

✓ *Breeding: 1 pair at Tip Point on 13th May. 1 adult with 1 juvenile at Outhead on 8th July.*

Goldfinch: Recorded all months except Oct and Dec. Peak count of 100 on 11th Nov.

✓ *Breeding: 1 pair and 2 singing at Tip Point on 16th Apr down to 1 pair on 13th May.*

Siskin: Single bird recorded on 19th Mar.

Linnet: Recorded Feb-Aug. Peak count of 60 on 23rd July.

✓ *Breeding: 10 pairs at Coble pools on 16th Apr down to 5 pairs on 8th June. 5 pairs at Outhead on 20th Apr with 12 juveniles there on 16th May. Mix of 44 including many juveniles at Outhead on 15th July. 3 pairs at Goosepools on 11th May.*

Bullfinch: 4 birds recorded on 16th Dec at Goosepools.

Snow Bunting: Birds recorded Jan, Feb and Nov. Peak count of 20 on 20th Feb.

Yellowhammer: Present on 11th & 12th Feb and singing on 12th to 14th May.

✓ *Breeding: 2 singing at Motray on 12th May. 1 singing at Tip Point on 13th May. 2 singing on River Eden on 14th May.*

Reed Bunting: Recorded Jan, Apr, May, July and Dec. Peak count of 9 on 8th July at Outhead.

✓ *Breeding: 1 pair on Motray on 16th Apr. 4 singing at Coble pools and 13th May. 1 pair at Outhead carrying material/food on 16th May. 1 pair at Goosepools on 17th May.*

Waxwing: 2 birds seen on the 15th Dec at St Andrews Links

Shag: 2 birds seen on 23rd Oct on North Shore

Monthly Peak Counts of SSSI Selected Species 2015

Species	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Shelduck	355	170	275	127	188	117	36	22	122	241	380	336
Scaup	-	2	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Common Scoter	20	-	-	5	-	-	45	-	-	22	2000	-
Velvet Scoter	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Red Breasted Merganser	1	5	15	6	4	2	1	2	3	10	5	-
Oystercatcher	1750	765	500	252	391	59	245	865	580	1132	610	692
Ringed Plover	-	-	-	-	82	-	-	105	-	-	11	19
Grey Plover	220	91	10	41	-	-	-	20	1	112	9	4
Black tailed Godwit	250	225	277	220	33	3	2	8	16	70	70	250
Bar tailed Godwit	98	158	11	15	-	-	-	4	11	105	-	69
Redshank	1128	456	373	424	22	20	227	300	800	1000	200	202
<u>Grey Geese</u>												
Greylag goose	250	11	48	11	-	2	2	-	50	3	22	1
Pinkfooted goose	3450	3750	1050	600	1	-	-	-	40	3000	2250	2000

(- None recorded.)

Objective 1: Maintain and Enhance the Integrity of the Reserve to Support Viable Populations of Wildfowl and Waders. (SPA. Bird Populations)			
Priority	Project		Qualifying Task
1	SPA1/01		National Bird Surveys (Bird Data Collection)
1	SPA1/02		Monitor Non-Breeding birds
3	SPA1/04		Beached Bird Survey
Objective 2: Protect, Maintain and Improve the Key Habitats and Related Species within the Reserve. (SAC. Habitats)			
1	SAC2/01		Monitor Harbour Seal Population
3	SAC2/03		Monitor Saltmarsh
3	SAC2/04		Create New Saltmarsh
1	SAC2/05		Survey Human Impact on Reserve
2	SAC2/07		Monitor Tipping and Tip Sites
1	SAC2/08		Manage Coble Pools Wetland
1	SAC2/09		Control Invasive Non Native Species (INNS) including Spartina
Objective 3: Maintain and Improve the Value of the Reserve as a Breeding Area for Birds (Breeding Birds)			
1	BB3/01		Monitor Breeding Birds
1	BB3/02		Protect Ground Nesting Species
3	BB3/03		Encourage Breeding Birds on and Adjacent to Reserve
Objective 4: Protect, Maintain and Enhance the Structure and Function of the Estuary (Estuarine Function and Coastal Management)			
1	ECM4/01		Survey Effects of Coastal Erosion
2	ECM4/02		Implement Action to Prevent Erosion
2	ECM4/04		Implement and Support Coastal Management
Objective 5: To Maintain and Increase our Knowledge and Understanding of the Physical, Biological and Human Features of the Estuary (Research)			
3	RS5/01		Biological Recording Data (LNR Species: Fauna)
3	RS5/02		Collect Vegetation Data (LNR Species: Flora)
1	RS5/03		Research Project Permits and Records
3	RS5/04		Research Liaison
Objective 6: Provide, Promote and Facilitate Responsible Public Access. (Access)			
1	AC6/01		Eden Estuary Centre (Manage and Maintain)
1	AC6/04		Maintain Infrastructure and Access Points
1	AC6/05		Information and Interpretation
2	AC6/06		Guided Visits and Events
1	AC6/09		Operate Works/Access Permit System
1	AC6/10		Operate Wildfowling Permit System
2	AC6/03		Monitor Angling and Bait Collection
Objective 7: Encourage Educational Use of the Reserve at all levels from Primary Schools to Universities (Education)			
2	ED7/01		Educational Visits
3	ED7/02		Illustrated Talks and Presentations
1	ED7/03		Promote/Facilitate Volunteer Input LNR
Objective 8: Promote and Ensure Efficient Management and Administration			
1	MA8/02		General Enquiries
1	MA8/04		Liaise with Ministry of Defence (Army)
1	MA8/05		Liaise with Reserve Landowners
1	MA8/06		Liaise with Local Communities
1	MA8/07		Liaise with Forestry Enterprise
1	MA8/08		Liaise with St Andrews University Estates
1	MA8/09		Liaise with Links Trust
1	MA8/10		Liaise with SEPA and Environmental Health
1	MA8/11		Liaise with SNH
1	MA8/12		Liaise with Fife Council

1	MA8/27		Liaise with Friends of Eden Estuary Group
1	MA8/19		Prepare Wildfowling Report
1	MA8/20		Prepare Annual Ranger Report
1	MA8/22		Attend EELNR Advisory Group Meetings
1	MA8/25		Liase Fife Nature Records Centre
3	MA8/24		Fife Biodiversity Partnership (LBAP)

Priority 1- Carry out in reporting year.

Priority 2- Carry out if time and resources allow.

Priority 3- Occasional projects/ external lead/ guide and advice