



Orkney Field Club

Founded in 1959
Aim: To encourage the study and conservation of the natural and cultural heritage of the County.



Orkney Field Club is a Registered Scottish Charity and SCIO No. SCO12459

Newsletter December 2015

Our late winter / early spring programme is overleaf and we very much hope you will join us in some of these activities, whether indoors or outdoors. **We are always looking for suggestions of places to visit, talks or other events, so please do get in touch with any ideas you may have.**

ACROSS	DOWN
1. Grumpy game bird	2. Root
5. Sounds like a parish in a roll	3. Brackish loch
7. Fur-bearing cetacean?	4. White jacket for Hoy
8. Latin flies	5. Purple jacket for Hoy
9. Peerie, Laird or Heldale	6. Here today, gone tomorrow
10. OFC mass trespass 2014	7. and 11. <i>Caltha palustris</i>
12. Jellyfish	12. Whales and us
14. Orkney harvest	13. Latin sundew
17. 37 acres and a horse	15. Orkney woodlouse
18. Builder wasp	16. House, Field or Wood
20. Flycatcher, orchid or dogfish	19. Sounds like a turnip tide
21. Mrs. Ruff	
22. All around us	
23. A botanist better known for his light-bulb moment.	

Answers in next newsletter

ORKNEY FIELD CLUB CROSSWORD 2015

**A very happy Christmas to you all
and a wonderful new year full of flowers, birds,
dragonflies and sparkling seas!**

Update on Volunteer Stoat Trapping Progress

As members will be aware, the arrival of stoats in Orkney several years ago has raised huge concerns over the effects that this voracious predator could have on wildlife, from our unique Orkney vole and the birds that feed on it (like hen harriers and short-eared owls) to our many ground-nesting birds.

After the well attended talk held by OFC in early November, Scottish Natural Heritage were able to recruit 54 volunteer trappers. 34 of these have already been trained and are trapping now with 70 traps. Another 20 volunteers are waiting for training, which should take place before Christmas. These volunteer trappers are situated all over Mainland and the linked south isles, from South Ronaldsay, to Tankerness, to Birsay.

22 stoats have been caught in the last few months, prior to the volunteer programme starting, by two individuals on Mainland.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer trapper, then please get in touch with Rachel Cartwright at SNH - tel. 875302 or email Rachel.Cartwright@snh.gov.uk

We hope to keep you updated on the progress of this project.

Reporting Stoat Sightings

Sightings of stoats throughout Orkney are always welcomed and help to inform the trapping programme. You can report any sightings to SNH on 875302 or email Rachel as above, and/or on the 'Stoats in Orkney' Facebook page. Take a note of where and when you saw the animal and any interesting behaviour.

Orkney Wildlife Information and Records Centre

Sydney is now looking at ideas for potential wildlife courses for 2016 and would welcome any suggestions from our membership. Get in touch with him by email on biodiversity@orkney.gov.uk.

Meantime more records have gone online - amphibians, bees, beetles, caddisflies, dragon and damselflies, flatworm, harvestmen, hoverflies, marine mammals, spiders, terrestrial mammals and wasps. Take a look on <http://www.orkneylibrary.org.uk/OBRC/html/Map.htm>

Nature Showcase Night (see below)

We know there are lots of members with interests and knowledge which the rest of us do not hear about, except perhaps on Facebook. To fill a whole hour or so of a full Field Club talk can be a daunting effort and may be too much anyway for those smaller gems of knowledge. With mini-talks and presentations there is a chance to share your special interests in a more informal way. No need to prepare a time-consuming Powerpoint production (unless you want to). **Contributions and suggestions are welcomed from ALL members.** Please contact John Crossley on 831507 or email flawsjohn@gmail.com. by 15th January.

OFC Programme - Late winter 2016

NB Unless otherwise specified, indoor events begin at 7.30 pm in the venue stated. Any additions to the programme or last minute changes or additions will be notified by email, on Radio Orkney, on the OFC website and Facebook page.

1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th January - New Year's Ramble

A chance to get the new year off to a good start and take in some lovely views and wildlife on a gentle walk. The day and venue will be picked according to the forecast weather. If you would like to come along, please contact Penny on 761168 or email: physiopenny@hotmail.co.uk

Friday, January 22nd - 5000 years of Orkney Beachcombing with Martin Gray (St Magnus Centre Friends Room - Talk)

From the early days of human settlement in Orkney, the beach sometimes provided what the land and the sea could not. This has remained so until recent times. Nowadays, sadly the common imagery is of beaches littered with refuse from many sources. Tonight we will look at how the shore has provided for the islands over the centuries and how in recent times, beach finds tell a story of global disregard for the health of the seas.

5th February - OFC's 'Not-Christmas' Meal

In recent years we have decided to avoid the pre-Christmas rush and to hold our annual club dinner early in the new year. Join us for our annual meal at the Ayr hotel - please contact Anne email: hewin7@btinternet.com by 30th January if you'd like to come along. We look forward to seeing you there. Woolly hats, binoculars and wellies are optional.

Friday, 19th February - Nature Showcase (King St Halls)

An evening to be entertained by the wealth of interests and knowledge of local naturalists. There will be mini-talks/presentations and question and answers to go with them. Please also bring along mystery photos and objects for local experts to try to identify. Subjects of presentations will be announced nearer the date.

Saturday, 19th March - Stromness Museum Visit

A joint event with our friends at the museum. Come along to the museum at 11.30 am to see Robert Rendall's shell collection and some of the other special natural history collections which are on display, or behind the scenes. Bring along any shells you might have to identify. There will be a Science Week quiz to challenge you too. Donations to the museum's conservation fund would be welcomed.

Friday March 25th - Lichens in Orkney (King Street Halls - talk)

Roger Davies takes us through the many and varied lichen species that we can find locally and the different habitats they inhabit. This will be followed up by -

Saturday March 26th - Lichens in Orkney (walk)

An expedition, led by Roger, to find and identify a range of lichens. The time and venues to be decided. Bring a lens if you have one.

For more information about the club and our events, including trip reports in our 'Out and About Blog' see the Club website at www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/FIELDCLUB. Meantime our Orkney Field Club Facebook site brings you great regular updates and news.

Help Needed Please

The OFC committee members can be stretched a bit thin at times and we would very much welcome offers of help from anyone who could join in at our events with, for instance, taking money on the door, or making tea and coffee. If you can help on any occasion, please contact Trevor on 781407 or simply offer on the night