

# ACTIVITIES UPDATE

2010 is the International Year of Biodiversity, and thanks to a grant from SNH we have been able to fund a series of biodiversity events for 2010:-

Firstly, in April, Mugdock Rangers led a walk from Lenzie station to Peel park in Kirkintilloch, a pleasant off-road route across the Moss, along Christine's Way down to the canal, and thence to Peel Park. Then in May we were treated to a very informative walk and talk from local bird expert John Knowler. In June we had a walk led by Medical Herbalist Catriona Stewart, where she explained medical uses for many of the plants growing on the Moss. All three events were very well attended and enjoyed by all.

Still to come: a walk explaining the History of the Moss on Wednesday 28 July, 7 – 8.30 pm: meet at the Moss end of Lenzie Rail Station car park; a family fun day on Thursday 5th August (see below), and a Build a Birch Broom session on Sunday 26 September.

There are three sessions planned for the Lenzie Moss Conservation Volunteers. This is a new group established and led by the Mugdock Rangers, and tackles some of the maintenance tasks such as clearing birch. Everyone is welcome to these events; no previous experience or equipment is required, and you can come along for whatever time you can give, - starting at 10.45 am and finishing about 2.30 pm. The group will set off from the end of Lenzie Station car park, but if you arrive later just come and find us! Join us and make a contribution to restoring the Moss.

Dates are: **5 August, 2 October** and **20 November**.

Also on 5th August there is a children's "Creepy-crawlies and Conservation" event, including minibeast hunting.

Full details of all these events can be found on our website and in leaflets available from committee members or your local library.

## Brownies Walk

On 9th June a group of about 12 young Brownies were led over the Moss and taught about it by Mary Scott (their leader) and Anna Illingworth, to complete their Nature badges. We were blessed with a lovely evening, and afterwards they all enjoyed a barbecue in Mary's garden.

## Membership

Please support this important greenspace by becoming a Friend of Lenzie Moss, thus helping us carry on the work of protecting this area to the benefit of the local community. You can join (or renew your membership) by contacting our Membership Secretary, or by downloading a subscription form from the website ([www.friendsoflenziemoss.org.uk](http://www.friendsoflenziemoss.org.uk)). Why not tell your friends and neighbours about it too?

### Annual Membership Fees are:

- Retired or Unwaged £7
- Single £7
- Family £12

Subscriptions cover the year 1st April until 31st March the following year. For this you will receive twice-yearly Newsletters and will be kept informed of events and activities concerning the Moss.

### Committee Members

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## Moth Trap

Would someone with a garden close to the Moss be willing to allow John Knowler, Dunbartonshire moth recorder, to set up a moth trap in their garden overnight? It is in the form of a wooden box containing a light to attract moths. An electricity supply to run a fairly low-wattage bulb would be required, and as the light is very bright, you would have to place the trap where it would not disturb neighbours or yourselves. After being identified and recorded, all the moths are freed in the morning alive and well. Ideally, John would like to train someone up to carry out the identifying and recording of moths on the Moss. If this is of interest to you, contact the Rangers at 0141 956 6100 or [rangers@mugdock.org](mailto:rangers@mugdock.org)

# friends of Lenzie Moss

Summer 2010



One of the new dams, with dam-builder Andrew, Mark

## Report to the Friends of Lenzie Moss AGM from East Dunbartonshire & Mugdock Country Park Ranger Service 24 June 2010

Since the last AGM the Ranger Service has continued to manage Lenzie Moss Local Nature Reserve with the Friends of Lenzie Moss, following the 2009 – 2014 Management Plan.

## REPORT

### Education:

Lenzie Moss continues to be well used by nearby schools for curriculum based activities, and the Ranger Service continues to facilitate these visits. These range from groups studying minibeasts to plants and trees as well as a nursery visiting Lenzie Moss to find out what lives and grows there for their Eco Schools Green Flag Award.

There has been interest from groups outwith Lenzie who were keen to discover what makes the Moss such an amazing place for wildlife.

### Events:

2009 events included

Clean up & Conservation days in June and November  
'Potter around the Peat' event in August

Six events are planned for Lenzie Moss this year. See the article **Activities Update** in this Newsletter. FoLM secured funding from SNH to produce 2000 double sided colour flyers to advertise

Sadly, one dam has been vandalised already. If you see vandals in action, call Crimestoppers 0800 555 111; if you find evidence of damage, inform the Rangers at 0141 956 6586

the events. The flyer has been distributed to primary schools in Lenzie as well as to libraries, local shops etc. The Ranger Service further advertise events by designing and putting up posters in the notice boards at the train station and Heather Drive as well as around the LNR. Special thanks to Joan Christie who is always willing to ask local shops to display them.

### Conservation:

Practical conservation tasks have been ongoing at Lenzie Moss for many years. However, with the introduction of the 2009 – 2014 Management Plan these tasks can be undertaken in a more formal way. The first thing was to establish a Lenzie Moss Conservation Volunteer Group. The group will meet 6 times a year and undertake tasks outlined in the management plan. Volunteers were recruited at the Canal Festival and clean up days. Posters advertising the group have been put up around the Moss as well as in local shops. East Dunbartonshire Volunteer Centre has the details of the group and refers interested parties on for further information. The group already has a few regular volunteers, but we are always looking for new folk to join.

(Cont. page three).

## Chairman's Report

Some time ago, I did an Open University course on the environment, and part of that included a dissertation about an environmental issue, local or national, that had an impact on you. I decided to write about Lenzie Moss because it had always been there whilst I was growing up and whilst my own children were growing up, but I was concerned that it wouldn't be there forever. During the research phase, I was pointed in the direction of Bea Rae, who was the founder of FoLM and a tremendous source of knowledge, which she was very willing to share with me. She spoke clearly about the value of Lenzie Moss – historical, ecological, educational; for health and wellbeing, and as a great community asset. But she also told me about her concerns for the future of the Moss. Having seen off a plan by developers, there were other threats, including from encroaching birch.

The solution was to have Lenzie Moss adopted by the local authority as a Local Nature Reserve. Bea was confident that such a measure would give the Moss a degree of protection and that this would take place shortly. Sadly, she died before this came to fruition, but this conversation was my introduction to FoLM and, since then, this small community group has tried to continue this work, to see her vision of a rare, wild urban green space protected for future generations.

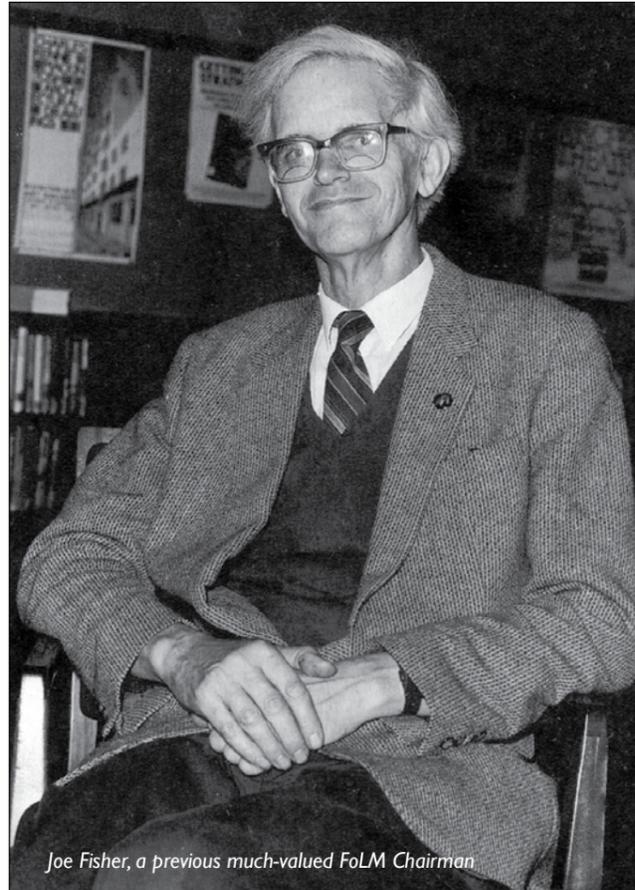
That was well over a decade ago, and there are many, myself included, who despaired of the slow pace of change and, sometimes, of ever achieving LNR status. It seemed to take forever to get through all the bureaucratic necessities, multiple legal procedures, including something known as an excambion (exchange of land), and a unique parliamentary process. Every time we thought we were making progress, it seemed that someone in the council would leave and we would have to wait until a replacement was appointed and got up to speed with what was happening.

However, in August last year, Lenzie Moss finally got the long-awaited status of Local Nature Reserve, which means that it's now protected from development, that the conservation activity in the management plan can start, and that we, as a community group, can apply for grants to fund some of the work.

This is a real step forward for us, a significant achievement, and among those who were tireless in their work, and consistently optimistic that we would get there, was Joe Fisher, who died in May this year. Joe was a past Chairman of FoLM; he was one of those rare wise people, who had the ability to share his knowledge in a way that was accessible to everyone. We will miss his wit, his wisdom and his friendship.

I know that both he and Bea would be extremely proud of what FoLM has achieved, but would be equally determined that this is only the start.

A lot has been achieved, but there's still an awful lot to be done! The Management Plan calls for ditch-blocking to conserve the hydrology, and the establishment and continuous maintenance of the boardwalk, to ensure access for all. We want to continue to see the Moss used by local people and have been celebrating



Joe Fisher, a previous much-valued FoLM Chairman

International Year of Biodiversity with a wide range of events, with several still to come (see the article **Activities Update** in this Newsletter)

We're also talking to the Council about an appropriate memorial for Bea Rae on the Moss, in recognition of the significant contribution she made to ensuring that Lenzie Moss is still here today.

We'll be continuing to work with the Council, to ensure that we get the right balance of public sector input with community participation. We'll be helping the Rangers establish a conservation volunteer group and, whilst there is currently no Greenspace Officer since Lesley Scott left for pastures new, we understand that an appointment is imminent and hope to work closely with them.

We're committed to ensuring that the next generation is able to continue to enjoy this wild space on their doorstep, that this rare example of a raised-bog wetland in an urban area is conserved – not only for its ecological and environmental value, but also that Lenzie Moss remains a vital and vibrant part of our community.

**Kate Sanford**

Chairman, Friends of Lenzie Moss. June 2010.



Birch clearing in progress

(Cont. from front page.) The main focus of practical work has been the removal of birch scrub from the cut peat fields. Tackling one compartment at a time, the birch scrub is cut and laid along the edge of the baulks. The stumps are sprayed with herbicide to prevent the trees growing again. The spread of birch trees if left unchecked would lead to further loss of bog vegetation communities and the functioning mire. It is thought that this work along with the plastic piling dam work (see photograph) carried out by contractor earlier this year will promote the recovery of the cut areas.

Over the last year there have been many other groups taking part in conservation tasks at Lenzie Moss. These include: Mugdock Conservation Volunteers (Sat, Mon & mid-week group), Community Service Volunteers, Shell UK, BTCV and Princes' Trust.

Monitoring and spraying of Japanese knotweed is ongoing. There are 3 areas that are treated with herbicide every year.

In October last year several mature birch trees were reported to the Ranger Service as having been vandalised. The trees targeted had been left in a dangerous condition. A day was spent making these trees safe and tidying up the mess.

### Recreation:

The Ranger Service encourages people to use Lenzie Moss for recreation by promoting the Scottish Outdoor Access Code as well as carrying out minor repairs on the path network. Advice is given to people regarding suitable paths to walk, cycle, horse ride etc. and how Lenzie Moss Local Nature Reserve links to many other routes in East Dunbartonshire.

The circular route around the Moss has been included in the 'Healthy Habits' walk booklet which is now available from the Healthy Habits shop, Cowgate, Kirkintilloch. The aim of the booklet is to promote walking routes in East Dunbartonshire. There is also a "Day of Walks Around Kirkintilloch" planned for Wednesday 4th August. One of the walks will circuit the Moss. Pick up a leaflet from the Healthy Habits shop or contact the Ranger Service on 0141-956-6586 [rangers@mugdock.org](mailto:rangers@mugdock.org)

The Ranger Service prepared an entry for the Glasgow Wildlife Gazeteer. This is a new publication that features places of unique wildlife interest in and around Glasgow.

The Ranger Service is looking forward to another year working with the Friends of Lenzie Moss at Lenzie Moss LNR.

## Water Beetles at Lenzie Moss

Earlier this year I encountered Professor Garth Foster, of the Aquatic Coleoptera Conservation Trust, and his wife, on the Moss. He has very kindly submitted this article about his findings here. (I now know that "coleoptera" means "beetles"! Pictures of all the beetles he found can be viewed on the internet. In particular, look at the pretty *Plateumaris*, *Hydroporus gyllenhalii*, *Helophorus flavipes* and *Cyphon variabilis*. Contact me if you would like his full list of 12 species.

**N.B.** Prof. Foster owns the copyright for the beetle image below, so it can't be copied without permission.

**Anna Illingworth**, 0141-776-1560

Following an invitation by the Glasgow Naturalists to talk at their autumn conference on urban biodiversity I decided to survey as many wetland sites as possible in and around Glasgow – and I managed 37 before other priorities – and a distinct lack of rain – intervened. I visited Lenzie Moss on 10 April when I recorded 12 species, not many in comparison to the current total of 73 species but including several species of interest and one not found elsewhere. The latter was *Agabus congener* (below), a diving beetle that has attracted the common name The Relative Diver in Ireland. It was found in the deepest part of the flooded peat cuttings in the middle of the reserve. Ordinarily I would associate it with small hard-bottomed ponds on peat on moorland. As to its identification the trouble is that these beetles are tricky – and this one looks rather like the much more common *Agabus sturmi*. *A. congener* is 6.6 to 8 millimetres long and has what one sees of the thorax, the pronotum, black in contrast to the dark brown wing-cases. Photos cannot really separate it with certainty from similar species though I now regularly receive records for the national recording scheme based photos of the larger diving beetles.

Another beetle found in the peat cuttings was the reed beetle, *Plateumaris discolor*, otherwise found only at Linwood Moss on the far side of Glasgow. The two common *Plateumaris* are mainly associated with sedges but can be found sitting on marsh marigold flowers. They are amazing because their beautiful metallic colouring varies so much between individuals – bronze, brassy, green, blue, even violet.

If anyone has wetland beetles they would like identified I can do my best, but be warned that I must have locality data, preferably including a grid reference, to make it worth the effort. Garth Foster

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(*Agabus congener*)

