

friends of Lenzie Moss

Summer 2022

The Friends of Lenzie Moss is a voluntary association dedicated to conserving the Moss for the benefit of present and future generations by all possible means: through education, liaison with official bodies, and appropriate environmental management.



Silver-ground carpet moth



Green-veined white butterfly



New water vole bund

Wildlife on the Moss in this issue



Female jumping spider



Male lesser redpoll



Frog in drainage ditch

SPIDERS - an interesting post on our Facebook page from Craig McEwan

I had a fantastic day on the Moss one Saturday early June. The weather was great and brought out a lot of the wildlife. One highlight was seeing a deer taking a drink from one of the pools. The main reason for my visit was to take a look at the invertebrate life on Lenzie Moss, spiders in particular - not everyone's cup of tea, I know! However, I did find a couple of species especially worthy of note, which I thought you may like to know about.

The first was a female Sun jumping spider (photo page 1); one of the *Heliophanus* species of spider. They can be recognised by their yellow-green pedipalps, which stand out against the spider's black body - handy, as this spider only grows to about 5mm in length. Checking on the National Biodiversity Network, there haven't been any records for this spider on the Moss, so I'm going to log this one with them.

The second interesting spider I found is from the *Pirata* species, also known as Otter spiders (see photo below). These spiders are found in a range of wetland habitats, and are most active on vegetation and water during sunny spells. Again, the day was perfect weather for them. The spider I found is likely to be a Pirate wolf spider, *Pirata piraticus*. However, given that it was found at the edge of a peat bog, it could be a nationally scarce *Pirata tenuitarsis* - which favours acidic bog habitats. Still getting a final confirmation on that, but either way, I'll record it on the National Biodiversity Network - as I do with all my finds. All photographs were taken at the location where each spider was found, and the spiders were returned to the exact position they were collected from.

Lenzie Moss has great biodiversity, especially in terms of invertebrates, and I'd encourage anyone out walking to stop for a few moments, focus on a flower or a tree, to see what they can spot.



Pirata piraticus

THE BUTTERFLY EVENT - report by Anthony McCluskey of Butterfly Conservation Scotland

In May and June, I ran two guided walks on Lenzie Moss to look for the Green Hairstreak butterfly. The May day started bright, but by the time we set off the clouds were gathering and the wind picked up. We made our way to the northeast corner of the Moss where we found a number of Common Heath moths. This moth is very similar to the Green Hairstreak when it flies, as the upper side of both insects' wings is actually brown!

We also found the small but beautiful *Eulia ministrana* moth, whose golden scales shone even on this dull day. The caterpillars of this species feed on a variety of deciduous trees, so it's likely to be relying on the trees around the Moss.



Eulia ministrana

We also found another species of charming micro-moth, *Ancylis myrtillana*. The caterpillars of this species feed upon bilberry, and will spin the leaves together to form a pod to live in safely. Despite their charm, we were still not seeing the insect we wanted - the Green Hairstreak! We had all but given up, but were guided to a corner of the north-western edge of the bog by Scott Donaldson, also of Butterfly Conservation. This area is protected from wind on two sides by surrounding woodland, so is slightly warmer. And to everyone's relief, as we emerged from the trees, a single Green Hairstreak took flight and was caught. Everyone got to have a look at this elusive charmer, and our day was complete. Unfortunately by the time of the second trip on 7th June, Green Hairstreaks seemed to have finished flying for the year. Despite good weather conditions, none were to be seen. However we did find other butterflies including Green-veined White, Small Heath, Small Tortoiseshell, and moths, including the Silver-ground Carpet.

Breeding birds on the Moss

A recent survey of birds breeding on the Moss recorded 28 species. Starlings were also recorded using the site but not nesting.

- chaffinch, bullfinch, greenfinch, goldfinch
- coal tit, blue tit, great tit, long-tailed tit
- reed bunting
- lesser redpoll
- meadow pipit
- dunnock
- robin
- blackbird
- mistle thrush, song thrush
- wren
- goldcrest
- whitethroat
- blackcap
- chiffchaff
- willow warbler
- carrion crow
- jackdaw
- magpie
- snipe
- collared dove
- woodpigeon



Snipe



Meadow pipit

New bird boxes

Thanks go to the EDC Community Grant Scheme for contributing £393 towards more bird boxes for the Moss: 16 basic ones fashioned out of hollow logs, and larger ones for owls, kestrels, tree creepers and woodpeckers. Thanks to the Mugdock Rangers for installing these.

Items purchased	Cost
16 basic bird boxes – 4 types of holes	144
2 woodpecker boxes	50
2 tree creeper boxes	30
1 owl box	99
1 kestrel box	70
Total	£410



NEWS IN BRIEF

Activities on the Moss

On 23 June Lucy Cunningham of Starling Learning led a well-attended group of 18 adults and 4 children on a walk on the Moss to learn more about the fossorial water voles now resident there. The group met at the station carpark entrance, where Lucy outlined the story of the voles in the Glasgow area.

They then walked along Bea's Path towards the Hawthorn Avenue entrance to the Moss, where Lucy talked further about the voles' habitat and living habits. The group looked at the recently constructed bunds and traces of recent "vole hills". It was interesting to note that the existence of the voles had been discovered by accident from the droppings noticed during the course of the recent bird survey.



Upcoming events

Starling Learning plan to run a Foraging Walk on the Moss in August.

The Rangers also hope to run a climate change walk in September.

More to come on both these events.

Continuing maintenance on the Moss

Work has continued throughout the year. In particular, the Rangers carried out fortnightly safety checks on the boardwalk, repairing rotted deck boards and rotted side pieces, shoring up collapsed sections, nailing down loose boards, and stapling mesh netting. Other jobs included litter picking; felling unsafe trees near the paths; replacing a broken board on one of the bridges; drainage ditch clearing; weed wiping.

Work in the autumn will include the removal of rhododendron bushes, and applying herbicide to Japanese knotweed.

Boardwalk upgrade

The projected date for the installation of the new boardwalk is 22 August 2022, and should take about 16 weeks to complete. The boardwalk will be closed during the upgrade.

New research on peat extraction on Lenzie Moss

We recently received from Bill Black a very detailed exploration of the history of peat extraction on Lenzie Moss. This covers its known history from 1226, when peat was extracted under the auspices of the monks of Cambuskenneth Abbey, up to 1966 when 20th century industrial extraction of peat was known to have ceased. We don't have room to print this in the newsletter but we have put it on to our website. Do have a read of this fascinating history.

AGM 2022

At the AGM conducted via Zoom we enjoyed an interesting illustrated talk on the fossorial water voles on the Moss given by Liz Parsons of Starling Learning. We've forwarded the annual reports to members.

Membership

We are very grateful for your support, which is vital to us in our work of protecting this outstanding local greenspace; so please continue your membership, and persuade others to become Friends of Lenzie Moss too.

Annual Membership fees are:

- **Single, retired or unwaged £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 notified of events and activities concerning the Moss.

Committee Members

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Members wishing to join the committee are always welcome.