

KINGHORN BIODIVERSITY MONTHLY REPORT – AUGUST 2024 by Robert Mill



Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) flowers and fruits, 22nd August 2024. See text, p. 5. Photo Robert Mill.

August 2024 continued the unsettled theme we have experienced throughout the summer months, including Storm Lilian, the 12th and final named storm of the 2023/24 storm season, which brought strong winds and heavy rain on 22nd/23rd. Scotland as a whole had its windiest August ever, in a 56-year set of data going back to 1968, and also its 8th-wettest August in a 189-year-long set of data (Met Office, 2024b). However, although the entire country was much windier than a normal August, there was a very marked west-east divide with respect to rainfall: while Glasgow, Renfrewshire, Ayrshire and Arran had over twice the August average monthly rainfall (Met Office 2024a), Fife had roughly average values while in East Lothian and the Moray coast it was markedly below average (Met Office, 2024a, b). The Fife coast and parts of NE Scotland were also some of the few areas that had slightly above-average hours of sunshine (Met Office 2024b). Our local rain gauge at The Ecology Centre collected 70.4 mm of rain during August, 82% of the long-term August average for the site (85.8 mm). There were only eight totally dry days, while another eight had less than 1 mm. Just over 40% of the month's rain fell on two days: 12.0 mm on 12th, and 17.2 mm on 22nd during Storm Lilian (SEPA, 2024).

I made five visits to Kinghorn Loch during August and Paul Williams (PW) made eight. As usual I am deeply grateful to him for sending in bird records, as well as a few of mammals and insects, from the Loch and wider Kinghorn area. Thirteen species were added to the Loch list during August: 2 flies, 1 bug, 1 beetle, 5 fungi and 4 flowering plants. However, I decided that one of the liverworts on my list should be regarded as doubtfully recorded and removed it from the total; the total tally therefore increased by 12, from 1,742 on 31 July to **1,754** on 31 August. Apart from the above new species records, August was notable for the discovery, on 22nd, of a large western extension of Kinghorn Loch's marshy ground that I was previously unaware of and that will doubtless yield additional species records in future; already, two of August's new records were found there. It was obvious from my short initial visit that this area is very different to the wetter marsh nearer the boardwalk that I have explored since 2021. It contains the Loch's only truly wild large population of **Meadowsweet**, which I haven't found (so far) in the wetter marsh. All being well, I shall be giving this previously 'unexplored territory' a lot of attention in coming months, particularly next year during the new growing season, given that the area was discovered near the end of the 2024 flowering season.

AROUND THE LOCH



Loch Birds, August 2024. Left and centre: Spotted Flycatchers (*Muscicapa striata*) at Woodland Rise, 29th. **Left:** both together (arrows). **Centre:** close view of one of the birds. **Right:** Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*) on raft, 8th.
Photos Paul Williams.

Birds: Forty-eight bird species were recorded on and around Kinghorn Loch during August, 11 less than in July and seven fewer than in August last year. Many commonly-seen or heard species, such as **Oystercatcher, Cormorant, Skylark, Chiffchaff, Starling, Pied Wagtail, Linnet and Yellowhammer** to list just a few, were unrecorded in August even though at least some may well have visited. By far the most notable record was at the end of the month, when Paul Williams saw not just one, but two **Spotted Flycatchers** together in a bush at the top of Woodland Rise on 29th. Have they gone unnoticed there all summer? Or were they just passing through on autumn passage back to Africa? There have been a handful of earlier Loch records, the most recent being on 12 August 2020 when one or possibly two were seen (Fife Bird Club, 2020). The **Mute Swan** family of five cygnets and mother remained intact during August but the only ducks reported (other than Mallards) were four **Tufted Ducks** on 1st (PW). Two **Grey Partridges** were again seen in the Red Path Brae Path end of the horse pasture next to the Craigencait access road (6th, PW). **Little Grebes** were present all month, usually just one or two, but PW saw four on his last visit (29th). **Great Crested Grebes** and their youngsters from (so far) two broods remained all month. A **Common Sandpiper** visited one of the barley rafts on the Loch on 8th (PW). **Curlew** was the only other **wader** species recorded, this time a flock of 13 at Rodan Braes on 14th (PW). Once again, **Grey Heron** paid at least five visits to the Loch in August but no **Cormorants** were noted. **Sparrowhawk, Buzzard** and **Kestrel** were all recorded. Around 70 **Rooks** were in the horse pasture next to the Craigencait access road on 14th along with a few **Jackdaws**. **Sand Martins** were recorded on 1st, 5th and 6th by PW but not thereafter, and **House Martin** was unrecorded, but **Swallows** remained all month. **Willow Warblers** and **Blackcaps** were reported but **Chiffchaff** and **Common Whitethroat** were not. On 16th, PW saw a single **Goldcrest**, as well as a **Treecreeper**; on the same date he also noted a single **House Sparrow** among the resident **Tree Sparrows**. **Grey Wagtails** were present on 1st and 5th but unusually no-one reported **Pied Wagtail**. The full list of birds recorded at the Loch during August 2024, in the systematic order of the *British List* (BOU, 2022), is: *Greylag Goose, Farmyard geese hybrids, Mute Swan, Mallard, Tufted Duck, Grey Partridge, Pheasant, Feral Pigeon, Wood Pigeon, Moorhen, Coot, Little Grebe (Dabchick), Great Crested Grebe, Curlew, Common Sandpiper, Black-headed Gull, Common Gull, Herring Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Grey Heron, Sparrowhawk, Buzzard, Kestrel, Magpie, Jackdaw, Rook, Carrion Crow, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Sand Martin, Swallow, Long-tailed Tit, Willow Warbler, Blackcap, Goldcrest, Wren, Treecreeper, Blackbird, Spotted Flycatcher, Robin, Tree Sparrow, House Sparrow, Dunnock, Grey Wagtail, Chaffinch, Bullfinch, Greenfinch, Goldfinch.*

Mammals, amphibians and fish: Paul Williams recorded single **Brown Hare, Rabbit** and **Roe Deer**, all on 14th. After a gap of a few months over summer, I once again began to notice fresh **Mole** hills on 6th. Unusually, no-one recorded **Grey Squirrels**. Single **Common Toads** were seen on both 6th and 16th by PW.

Invertebrates ('minibeasts'): Only 58 invertebrate species were recorded and identified at the Loch during August in what was generally another poor month for them, no doubt due to the unseasonable often wet,

windy and/or chilly weather. As usual, a few others remain unidentified. Four of them were new Loch records (NLRs).



Kinghorn Loch invertebrates, August 2024. **A**, *Phaonia* cf. *valida*, 14th, NLR. **B**, galls of the gall midge *Dasineura ulmaria* on Meadowsweet leaf, 22nd, NLR. **C**, Black-kneed Capsid (*Blepharidopterus angulatus*), 14th, NLR. **D**, Blue Willow Beetle (*Phratora vulgatissima*), 14th, NLR. **E**, larval case of Common Case-bearer (*Coleophora serratella*) on Birch leaf, 12th. **F**, Rose Hip Fly (*Rhagoletis alternata*), 12th. **G**, Great Pied Hoverfly (*Volucella pellucens*), 14th. **H**, Dead Head Hoverfly (*Myathropa florea*), 14th. **J**, sawfly (*Tenthredo notha* agg.), 22nd. Photos Robert Mill.

Seven **butterfly** species were recorded during August. The first spotted was a **Ringlet** on 3rd, the month's only record of that species. Its close relative the **Meadow Brown** was seen by myself or PW on four occasions between 5th and 16th but not thereafter. **Speckled Woods** were also seen in the same period by one or both of us, and PW also noted many flying on 29th. **Green-veined White** was spotted once (5th, PW) and **Small White** on four dates between 5th and 14th. **Red Admiral** was seen by me on 6th and PW on 29th, while I saw a **Peacock** on 12th. Only two **moths** were recorded during August, neither as adults. **Cinnabar Moth** caterpillars were seen on their food-plant (Ragwort) by PW on 5th and by myself on 12th. The other was a larval case on Birch that I photographed on 12th. I sent my photo to Nigel Voaden, county moth recorder for Fife, who has decided that it is most likely to be **Common Case-bearer** (*Coleophora serratella*) which is apparently the most commonly found species of *Coleophora*. It is on the 'Loch list' based on a previous record by Nigel. No **caddis-flies** were seen during August.

As in July, ten species of **Hymenoptera** were seen during the month. The most frequently seen **bees** were **Buff-tailed Bumblebee** (seven dates) and **Common Carder Bee** (six occasions). **Large Red-tailed Bumblebee** was seen on four days between 3rd and 12th, while there were single sightings of **Early Bumblebee** (12th, PW) and **White-tailed Bumblebee** (14th by myself). **Honey Bee** was only seen twice (6th and 12th); sightings at the Loch seem to have significantly decreased this year. There was only one sighting of **Common Wasp**, on 5th. **Burnet Rose Galls** (*Diplolepis spinosissima*) remained on their host (12th). Adult sawflies of the *Tenthredo notha* species aggregate were seen on umbellifer and knapweed flowers on 3rd, 12th and 22nd while the mine of another sawfly, *Heterarthrus nemoratus*, was found on birch (14th).

Seven **hoverfly** species were seen in August although with one exception abundance remained low. **Marmalade Hoverflies** (*Episyrphus balteatus*) were everywhere on the afternoon of 12th, which was warm, humid and sunny after a thunderstorm in mid-morning over the Forth that largely missed Kinghorn. They were also seen, in much lower numbers, on four other dates up till 14th. Other species noted were **Dead Head Hoverfly** (*Myathropa florea*) on 12th and 14th, **Great Pied Hoverfly** (*Volucella pellucens*) at the marsh on 14th, **Humming Syrphus** (*Syrphus ribesii*) on 12th and 14th, *Melanostoma scalare* on 14th, and both *Scaeva pyrastris* and **Tapered Drone-fly** (*Eristalis pertinax*) on 12th.

Nineteen other **flies** were also recorded, two of which were NLRs. These were *Phaonia cf. valida* (14th), a fly in the same family (Muscidae) as the house-fly, and the galls of *Dasineura ulmaria*, a gall midge, found on Meadowsweet leaves on 22nd in the newly discovered western part of the marsh. Besides these, I recorded *Empis livida* (one of July's NLRs) for a second time on 3rd; this was the first Loch record of the species in the western Ordnance Survey monad NT2587. **Rose Hip Fly** (*Rhagoletis alternata*), one of August 2022's NLRs, was seen on 12th and a pair of mating **crane-flies** (*Tipula oleracea*) was photographed in marshy woodland on 14th. **Greenbottles** (*Lucilia sericata*) were seen on 12th and 14th and another shiny green fly, *Eudasyphora cyanella*, also on 12th. August's other fly records comprised the mines of 11 different leaf-miners on a variety of hosts, and the gall of another gall midge, *Hartigiola annulipes*, on beech leaves.

Four different **bug** species were found during August. One of them, **Black-kneed Capsid** (*Blepharidopterus angulatus*) on 14th, was a new Loch record (NLR). The others were yet more records of **Potato Capsids** (*Closterotomus norwegicus*) on 6th, 12th and 22nd, in what seems to have been an exceptionally good year for this species; another two individuals of the black-and-yellow bug *Grypocoris stysi* on 6th; and the leafhopper *Empoasca vitis* on 6th. Just two **beetle** species were recorded in August. In contrast to July, **Red Soldier Beetles** (*Rhagonycha fulva*) were only seen on 3rd and 6th. On 14th, I noticed two **Blue Willow Beetles** (*Phratora vulgatissima*) walking in opposite directions along the blades of two long, narrow willow leaves, a new Loch record despite their scientific epithet *vulgatissima* meaning 'commonest'. It was quite a good month for Odonata: **Common Blue Damselflies** were seen by myself or PW on four occasions (6th, 12th, 14th and 16th) in the first half of the month, while Paul saw both **Blue-tailed Damselfly** and **Common Darter** dragonfly on 6th. Lastly among August's insect records, I once again found '**Clover Thrips**' (*Haplothrips leucanthemi*) on Ox-eye Daisy at one of the sites where I first recorded it in June.

One spider (**Autumn Orbweaver**, *Metellina segmentata*) and two gall-mites (*Aceria pseudoplatani* on Sycamore at two localities on 6th and 12th, and *Eriophyes laevis* on Alder at two sites on 14th) were recorded during August. No **molluscs** or other invertebrates were found.

Flowering plants and ferns: 218 wild or naturalised flowering plant species as well as 11 ferns and fern-allies, were recorded around the Loch during August. Of the 218 flowering plants, 176 were in flower at some time during the month and the other 42 in a vegetative state or with young or ripe fruits. Forty-six cultivated plant species were also noted, of which 43 were in flower. There were four new Loch records. The first was the large leaves of **Horse Radish** (*Armoracia rusticana*), of which my wife Andrea had found a discarded leaf by the track to the allotments a couple of months ago. Its identity had puzzled me until I found the plant myself on 6th August and photographed it. The other three were all found on 22nd, in widely scattered locations during a very long walk. The first to be found was **Devil's-bit Scabious** (*Succisa pratensis*) at the north end of the ecocemetery meadow. Being brought up in the west of Scotland, I associate this plant with acid, rather boggy places where it grows in the company of insectivorous plants such as Butterwort (*Pinguicula*) and Sundew (*Drosera*), not with a rather dry meadow! However, Ballantyne's checklist of Fife and

Kinross plants says that over here it is “common in grassy places, both dry and damp” (Ballantyne, 2002). Shortly afterwards, I found a still unidentified **hawkweed** species (*Hieracium* sp.) on land belonging to The Ecology Centre. Unlike *Hieracium grandidens* that I found a year ago, this plant had many leaves all up the stem, rather than a basal rosette and almost leafless stems. It therefore belongs to a completely different section of this large, very difficult to identify genus (about 400 British species) than *H. grandidens*. I am therefore very confident that, even though I don’t yet know what species it is, this is a new Loch record. Some hours later, I found **Hairy Brome** (*Bromopsis ramosa*) at two locations along the Great North Road.



Kinghorn Loch flowering plants and ferns, August 2024. A & B, Devil’s-bit Scabious (*Succisa pratensis*), 22nd, NLR: **A**, front view of inflorescence; **B**, back view of inflorescence and involucre. **C & D**, unidentified leafy Hawkweed (*Hieracium* sp.), 22nd, NLR: **C**, inflorescence; **D**, some of the many stem leaves. **E**, Horse Radish leaves (*Armoracia rusticana*), 6th, NLR. **F**, Hairy Brome (*Bromopsis ramosa*), 22nd, NLR. **G**, Common Hemp-nettle (*Galeopsis tetrahit*, white-flowered form), 6th. Photos Robert Mill.

The most significant other botanical find during August was of course the large western portion of the marsh, the existence of which I had previously been totally unaware (see p. 1). It contains a very large population of **Meadowsweet** (*Filipendula ulmaria*) as well as other tall grasses and possibly sedges that do not occur closer to the Loch, mixed with **Marsh Horsetail** (*Equisetum palustre*) which does. The full significance of this area will not become apparent until next year’s recording season.

Apart from that major find, I was delighted that last year’s record of **Goat’s-beard** (*Tragopogon pratensis*) is not only back at last year’s site (more-or-less) but has actually increased in number, with four flowering stems found. I could not re-find last year’s plant (it can behave as both an annual and a perennial, so it may have died off over last winter) but its progeny were found in July and August just a few feet away and have themselves being setting seed, so here’s hoping for a further increase in the still tiny population at the Loch next year. Among the 11 ferns and horsetails found in August was a second record of **Broad Buckler Fern** (*Dryopteris dilatata*) on 6th; like the first, it was in woodland, this time on the way to the allotments. Right at the far end of the allotments track that day, various ruderal species were flowering on the steep bank below the Great North Road, including a white-flowered variant of **Common Hemp-nettle** (*Galeopsis tetrahit*), as well a couple of dumped but still thriving clumps of **Garden Nasturtium** (*Tropaeolum majus*). On 12th, I found **Soft Brome** (*Bromus hordeaceus*) near the dam, the first Loch record of this species since the BioBlitz held in 2018. Numerous small **Guelder Rose** (*Viburnum opulus*) bushes were found on 14th and 22nd on the south edge of the marsh, where they looked native.

Cryptogams Thirty-eight fungi were recorded during August, eight more than in July. Five of them were NLRs. These were **Meadow Puffball (*Lycoperdon pratense*)** at the north end of the ecocemetery meadow on 22nd; ***Erysiphe hyperici*** (a powdery mildew on St John's-wort) on 6th; ***Erysiphe pseudoregularis*** (another powdery mildew, this time on Goat Willow, *Salix caprea*) in a woodland margin just south of the newly discovered western part of the marsh on 22nd; ***Ramularia kriegeiriana*** on its host, Greater Plantain (*Plantago major*) on 12th; and ***Venturia saliciperda***, a black leaf spot, on a long-leaved willow, probably the hybrid *Salix* × *fragilis* (Crack Willow), on 6th. Of the other 33 fungal records, 12 were powdery mildews, seven were rusts, five were white moulds, one was **Campion Smut** and eight were other leaf spots. It still being summer, I paid little attention to other cryptogams but four lichens, one bryophyte (plus another yet to be identified) and three terrestrial algae were also noted, as well as the symptoms of RVCV virus on wild raspberry leaves.



New fungal records, Kinghorn Loch, August 2024. **A**, remains of a Meadow Puffball (*Lycoperdon pratense*), 22nd. **B**, *Erysiphe hyperici* on St John's-wort, 6th. **C**, *Erysiphe pseudoregularis* on Goat Willow, 22nd. **D**, *Ramularia kriegeiriana* on Greater Plantain, 12th. **E**, *Venturia saliciperda* on willow, 6th. Photos Robert Mill.

VILLAGE, BEACH AND COAST

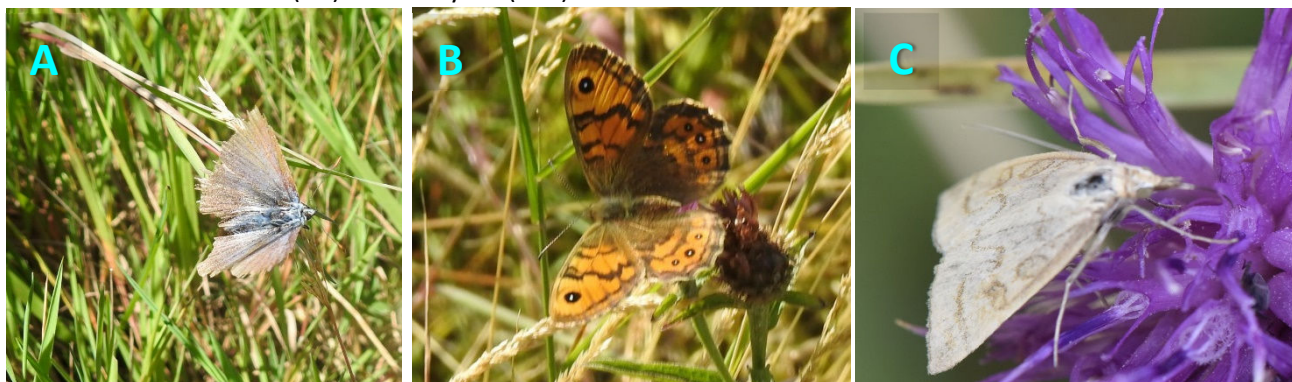
Mammal records in August were very few. My wife Andrea saw a young **Hedgehog** just outside our garden on a couple of nights and on one of them she was thrilled to see it go through the special 'hedgehog hole' we have cut out from our garden fence and into our back garden, which has a 'hedgehog house'. A few days later on 21st, Sam Tedcastle (KDWG) also saw one at the Harbour View Café. Marine mammals were limited to **Bottle-nosed Dolphins** on eight days throughout the month, with 25 seen on 26th by Sam Tedcastle.

Bird sightings around Kinghorn during August were mainly by Paul Williams (PW), with additional ones by myself, Graham Sparshott (GS: Fife county bird recorder) and various people on eBird. Since this report is being written a bit later than usual, I've also been able to summarise a lot of interesting records, mainly from Pettycur, in the August 2024 sightings report on the Fife Bird Club website (Fife Bird Club, 2024: abbreviated FBC). It's clear from these especially that autumn seabird migration really got under way in August, with many reports of skuas and shearwaters off the local coastline.

Two **Gadwall** were at Seafield on 21st (PW) and a couple of **Mallards** on the coast both there and nearer to Kinghorn on 26th (PW). Up to 5 **Teal** were at Seafield on 6th, 7th and 14th (PW) while GS saw 15 going east off Pettycur on 12th. A **Scaup** at Pettycur on 14th (FBC) was quite unusual. Only three **Common Scoters** were reported during August, all off Pettycur: one on 12th (GS) and two on 16th (FBC). **Goosanders** were frequently recorded, especially at Seafield, with the highest counts being 75 at Kinghorn on 14th (Lukasz Pulawski, eBird: LP) and 60 at Seafield the same day (PW) and at Pettycur on 23rd (FBC). Southward **Swift** migration began mid-month with GS noting 13 off Pettycur on 12th. More **waders** began to return to our coastline for the coming winter months. As well as the species mentioned in last month's report, single **Knots** were at Seafield (5th, PW) and East Braes (23rd, GS; 26th, PW); **Dunlins** were first noted on 12th at both Seafield (PW) and Pettycur (GS), with numbers slowly building up thereafter; one or two **Common Sandpipers** were at Seafield between 15th and 26th (PW), as well as the one at the Loch; and four **Black-tailed Godwits** were at Pettycur on 17th (FBC), with two **Whimbrel** there on 19th (FBC). Besides these new arrivals or passage travellers, up to six **Sanderlings** were at Seafield all month (PW), with three also at Pettycur on 27th (Jonathan Lethbridge, eBird: JL). **Purple Sandpipers** were yet to return, however. There were several sightings of **Kittiwakes**, the highest count being 80 on 27th at Pettycur (JL). Single **Little Gulls** were at Pettycur on both 12th and 14th

(FBC). **Herring, Common** and **Great Black-backed Gulls** were present all month; the latter two have very recently been upgraded to the British Red List, from Amber, because of significant declines due to avian flu (Stanbury et al., 2024) and now join Herring Gull which was already on the Red List. **Sandwich Terns** were often seen off the coastal path, Kinghorn and Pettycur by various observers, with about 120 at East Braes on 20th (PW). Significant numbers (up to 90, on 13th) of **Common Terns** were also seen at Seafield and elsewhere by various observers. **Arctic Terns** were also seen from 12th onwards, with 24 at Pettycur on 14th (FBC). Less common tern visitors included two **Roseate Terns** at Pettycur on 6th and single birds there on 9th, 12th, 23rd, 27th and 30th, as well as three **Little Terns** there on 11th (FBC) and **Black Terns** there from 11th onwards, with 15 on 11th being the highest count. The 'skua season' progressed through August; four species were seen. **Arctic Skuas** were the most often seen, on at least eight occasions, mostly off Pettycur where there were 12 on 25th. Single **Pomarine Skuas** were there on 11th and 23rd, and three **Long-tailed Skuas** and a single **Great Skua** on 27th (all FBC). Single **Red-throated Divers** (or maybe the same one?) were also at Pettycur on four days between 8th and 25th (FBC). Although there were no **Fulmars** on Kinghorn's breeding site during August, they were often seen offshore, with 87 on 19th being the highest count (FBC). **Shearwater** passage also took place off Pettycur; **Manx Shearwaters** were seen by various people from 8th-17th with the highest number counted being 56 on 16th (FBC). Later in the month, **Cory's Shearwaters** were seen there on 21st, 25th (two) and 28th, and a **Balearic Shearwater** on both 26th and 27th (FBC). Two **Little Egrets** visited Pettycur on 8th (FBC) and a **Kingfisher** was at Seafield on 28th (PW).

For the most part, August's land bird records were much less notable compared with all the seabird migration. Gavin Wilkinson (Kinghorn District Wildlife Group: KDWG) saw a **Peregrine** at Seafield Tower on 15th. **House Martins** were at Seafield all month (PW) but GS also noted three heading southeast, along with 23 **Swallows**, on 12th – possible early migration? PW noted **Willow Warblers** along the coast path from 12th and I heard one at Mid Mire on 30th, as well as a **Common Whitethroat**; PW noted the latter species at Grangehill on 14th and 29th and Seafield on 16th. Paul also saw between one and four **Whinchats** at Whinnyhall on 14th, 21st and 29th, and **Wheatears** passing through at Seafield (8th and 24th with three on the latter date) and Grangehill (two on 29th). **Pied Wagtails** of the British race *Motacilla alba yarrellii* were at Seafield all month, with 10 on 15th (PW), while single birds of the continental **White Wagtail** race *M. alba alba* were recorded on 23rd at both East Braes (GS) and Pettycur (FBC).



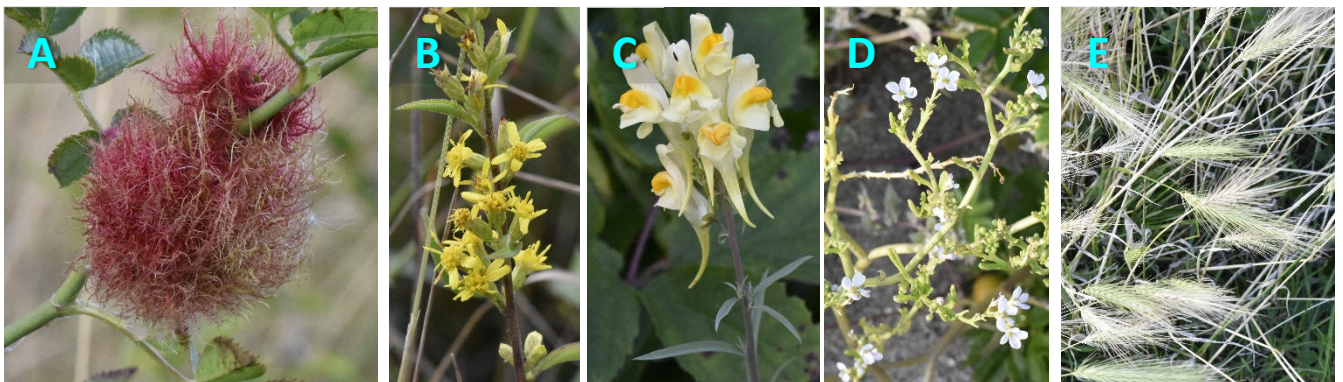
Kinghorn area Lepidoptera, August 2024. **A**, Common Blue (*Polyommatus icarus*), Seafield, 14th. **B**, Wall Brown (*Lasiommata megera*), 14th. **C**, Pale Straw Pearl moth (*Udea lutealis*), Mire Path, 30th. Photos: **A & B** Paul Williams; **C**, Robert Mill.

Eight **butterfly** species were recorded around Kinghorn during August. Paul Williams saw a worn-looking **Common Blue** at Seafield on 14th. On the same day he noted a second flush of **Wall Browns** there and on the coast path nearer Kinghorn, as well as another at Seafield on 18th, while I saw another Wall Brown along the Mire Path on 30th. Stephen Sorbie (KDWG) saw a **Meadow Brown** at Grangehill on 2nd and PW recorded one along the Kinghorn coast path on 14th. Also on 14th, Stephen Sorbie photographed a **Painted Lady** somewhere in the Kinghorn area but unfortunately did not say where. I saw several **Peacocks** and **Red Admirals** on buddleia bushes by the Mire Path on 30th, as well as **Small Whites**. On the previous day I saw five **Small Whites** and one **Speckled Wood** along the coast path between Kinghorn and Seafield Tower. The only **day-flying moth** record was a **Pale Straw Pearl** (*Udea lutealis*) that I saw by the Mire Path on 30th.



Mire Path insects, 30th August 2024. **A**, Cereal Leaf Beetle (*Oulema melanopus* agg). **B & C**, ichneumon wasp (possibly *Diphys amatorius*). **D**, Turnip Sawfly (*Athalia rosae*). Photos Robert Mill.

The most notable of my other insect records was a **Cereal Leaf Beetle (*Oulema melanopus* agg.)** on a grass blade by the Mire Path next to the recently ploughed cereal field (30th). This would appear to be the first record from the Kinghorn area 10 x 10 km OS grid square (*hectad*) NT28 as there are no records of the species from it in NBN Atlas; the nearest records are from the adjacent hectad NT18, which has nine, six of them from Cullaloe Local Nature Reserve (NBN Atlas, 2024). Also found on the same outing were a striking black-and-yellow ichneumon wasp that resembles ***Diphys amatorius***, a species with very few records in NBN Atlas (possibly because it is so difficult to identify ichneumons), and a **Turnip Sawfly**, which I also found at Mid Mire at about the same time last year. On the previous day (29th), I found numerous **Robin's Pincushion galls (*Diplolepis rosae*)** on rose bushes along the coastal path – it seems to be an exceptional year for them.



Coastal path (A-D) and village (E), 29th August 2024. **A**, Robin's Pincushion gall (*Diplolepis rosae*) on wild rose bush. **B**, Goldenrod (*Solidago virgaurea*). **C**, Common Toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*). **D**, Sea Rocket (*Cakile maritima*). **E**, Wall Barley (*Hordeum murinum*) near Primary School. Photos Robert Mill.

Along the coastal path on 29th, I found a third locality for **Hare's-foot Clover (*Trifolium arvense*)** en route to Seafield Tower, much further north than the two sites near Kinghorn. **Lords-and-Ladies (*Arum maculatum*)** was in fruit on a shaded stretch. **Sea Rocket (*Cakile maritima*)** was flowering on the beach near Seafield Tower while, looking down from the path in the direction of the beach next to Seafield Cave, I noticed a large patch of **Meadowsweet** just a few metres inland from the high tide mark. **Common Toadflax** was flowering next to the railway just before the Tower and **Burnet Saxifrage (*Pimpinella saxifraga*)** – neither a burnet nor a saxifrage but a member of the carrot family!) was flowering in a couple of places. **Goldenrod (*Solidago virgaurea*)** was in bloom between the 'zigzag' and Seafield Tower, while **Sea Campion (*Silene uniflora*)** was still flowering at the foot of some rocks on the beach just beyond Kinghorn, and a sure sign that autumn was approaching was **Michaelmas Daisy (*Symphotrichum* × *salignum*)** in flower in several places.

On my way back home through the village after my coastal path walk on 29th, I found **Opium Poppy (*Papaver somniferum*)** in both flower and fruit at the foot of Harbour Road, **Wall Barley (*Hordeum murinum*)** near the school and both **Wild Clary (*Salvia verbenaca*)** and **Salad Burnet (*Sanguisorba minor*)** in fruit by the Burnside Path.

In contrast to the three notable insect records, there was little of botanical interest on my Mid Mire walk the following day (30th), although **Common Rock-rose**, **Wild Thyme** and **Rest-harrow** still had a very few flowers (as well as much fruit), on the calcareous outcrop beside Kissing Trees Lane or (in the case of Rest-harrow) beside the Mire Path.

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