

Fellcroft Loch. 15<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Fellcroft Loch falls completely within one monad which is very handy for recording. The slopes below Suie Hill would probably warrant further investigation but the loch and its immediate border provided plenty of interest for one day.

Eight of us set out from the near the northern tip of the loch where there was plenty to get started with and we quickly realised that we had a fun day ahead of us. **Water plantain** *Alisma plantago-aquatica* with its lovely tall spikes and both **White Water-lily** *Nymphaea alba* and **Yellow water-lily** *Nuphar lutea* had been spotted on the way in. The boggy area directly in front of the car parking space yielded, **Marsh Cinquefoil** *Comarum palustre*, **Bogbean** *Menyanthes trifoliata*, **Branched Bur-reed** *Sparganium erectum*, **Bog Myrtle** *Myrica gale* and both **Common spotted Orchid** *Dactylorhiza fuchii* and **Heath Spotted Orchid** *Dactylorhiza maculata*.



**Water Plantain. Theo Stanning**

We eventually set off around the NE shore of the loch where the ground rises up towards Suie Hill. One or two wandered up the slopes returning to report on **Bog asphodel** *Narthecium ossifragum* and **Round-leaved Sundew** *Drosera rotundifolia*, which are often found together, **Common Butterwort** *Pinguicula vulgaris*, **Bog Pimpernel** *Anagallis tenella* and **Heath Milkwort** *Polygala serpyllifolia*.

Others remained at the loch side which proved to be rich in water plants. **Shoreweed** *Littorella uniflora* was found around the entire loch, some under water and many just above the water level in flower.



**Shoreweed. Sarah White**

Also, **Bottle Sedge** *Carex rostrata*, **Floating Club-rush** *Eleogiton fluitans*, **Lesser Marshwort** *Apium inundatum* and just before we stopped for lunch, Sarah was excited to spot a large clump of **Saw Sedge or Great Fen-sedge** *Cladium mariscus* a short distance from the shore.



**Saw Sedge or Great Fen-sedge**



Moving towards the South-East tip of the loch we found a few plants of **Lesser Skullcap** *Scutellaria minor* and in one patch of grassland near the dam some flowering **Whorled Caraway** *Carum verticillatum*, **Yellow Rattle** *Rhinanthus minor* and **Ivy-leaved Crowfoot** *Ranunculus hederaceus* on the muddy track. Rounding the end of the loch and heading back towards the cars we actually recorded Daisy, Foxglove, Nettles and Dockens, normally some of the first to be recorded but almost missed with so many other things to pay attention too.



Lesser Skullcap. Sarah White

On the final leg when we thought to be almost done Jim hesitated beside a tall clump of sedge with long, fine leaves. It had very few spikes but on closer inspection the utricles turned out to be very hairy and it was identified as **Slender Sedge** *Carex lasiocarpa*. Very nearly back at the cars we passed burr reed which was close enough to photograph and ascertain that it was **Unbranched Bur-reed** *Sparganium emersum* which has only one spike with 3 to 10 male flowers at the top of the stem.



**Unbranched Bur-reed**

There really was not a dull moment with something like 150 plant species recorded and insect and birdlife flitting around us the whole time.



**Common Darter. David Foreman**



**Blue-tailed Damsel Flies. David Foreman**

Many thanks to everyone, particularly Sarah and Jim for a huge amount of assistance with water plant ID and Theo, David and Sarah for photos.

The photos can be viewed by following this link

<https://1drv.ms/u/s!AjVuqkIKjrdVj01VKYbxgnccYPST?e=Iw2HWx>

**Footnote (David Hawker):**

Saw sedge: this is a new site for this rare species of which there are only 3 others in the VC, all around Colvend

Lesser skullcap: another scarce species, found at a few sites in the south of the VC.

Very many thanks to Lee for organising and leading this meeting, and for writing up the report. A very successful day with 140 species recorded