



## Pittencrieff PARK

Across the woodland, parkland and the lower glen, Pittencrieff Park supports a variety of wildlife and has an interesting natural heritage.

There are plants, birds, insects, mammals and much more to see throughout the 'Glen'. Use this guide to find out what they look like, where to see them and when you've got the best chance of spotting them!



Nature & Wildlife



## Where can I see Pittencrieff Park's nature & wildlife?

Here in the park we have a number of types of birds, wildflowers, trees, insects and plants.

Unfortunately there is no guarantee of when and where you will be able to find them. Some of them can only be seen during summer whilst other species, such as bats, are nocturnal. Use our handy calendar so that you have the best chances of spotting different species throughout the year.

It is important to remember a few things when enjoying nature either here in the park or in other areas of the countryside:

- As tempting as it may be do not pick or damage any flowers, fungi or plants
- Avoid getting too close to any birds or animals that you see - they are wild animals and humans can cause them stress which may result in injury to themselves or you
- Young children or domestic pets should also be kept at a safe distance from any wild bird or animal
- Never attempt to handle any bird or other animal
- It is illegal to disturb nests of wild birds or animals' place of shelter or breeding site
- Be quiet and still when out looking for wildlife - they are less likely to flee and you can enjoy watching them for longer!

Nature is always changing and there are surprises in where and when we see species every year. We hope you enjoy coming to Pittencrieff Park and wish you luck in your wildlife watching!

# When to look

Use this calendar to find out when you are most likely to see some of our resident species in Pittencrieff Park:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
<b>Plants</b>					
Common Nettle					Flowering
Common Spotted Orchid					
Herb Robert					Flowering
Red Campion					Flowering
Hedge Woundwort					
<b>Birds</b>					
Song Thrush				Courtship & Nesting	
Great Spotted Woodpecker			Courtship & Nesting		Eggs laid
Wren			Courtship & Nesting	Eggs laid	
Buzzard			Courtship & Nesting	Eggs laid	
<b>Fungi</b>					
Candle Snuff Fungus	Flowering				
<b>Invertebrates</b>					
Peacock Butterfly	Hibernation		Emerge		Breeding
Green Veined White Butterfly				1st brood emerge	
Red-tailed Bumblebee	Hibernation		New Queen emerges	1st egg batch laid & hatched	
Carder Bee	Hibernation			Emerge	
<b>Mammals</b>					
Grey Squirrel		1st litter born			Young emerge
Pipistrelle Bat	Hibernation				Females give birth
European Hedgehog	Hibernation				Breeding



Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Flowering						
Flowering						
Flowering						
Flowering						
Eggs laid						
Young fledge						
Young fledge						
Young fledge						
Young fledge						
Flowering						
Next generation emerge						
2nd brood emerge						
2nd egg batch laid & hatched						
Males die						
Old Queen dies						
Hibernation						
Peak Activity						
Hibernation						
2nd litter born						
Storing food						
Young emerge						
Storing food						
Young emerge						
Mating season						
Hibernation						
Young born						
Peak Activity						
Hibernation						

This information is only a brief guide but if you have any questions, or sightings you would like to report, contact the team at Pittencrieff Park or the Fife Nature Record Centre.

Email: [pittencrieff.park@fife.gov.uk](mailto:pittencrieff.park@fife.gov.uk)  
[www.fifedirect.org.uk/pittencrieff](http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/pittencrieff)

Email: [nature.info@fife.gov.uk](mailto:nature.info@fife.gov.uk)  
[www.fifedirect.org.uk/nature](http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/nature)

# Plants

**Not sure what you're looking for? Here's a guide for each of the species listed above to assist with your search:**

From formal gardens to grass lawns and semi-natural ancient woodland, our park is home to a wide range of wild plant species.

## Common Nettle (*Urtica dioica*)

- Found in and around the woodland areas of the park
- Also known as stinging nettle that is found throughout Europe, Asia, North Africa and North America
- Nettles are the exclusive larval food source for several species of butterfly and moth that have also been recorded in the park, including the Peacock and Small Tortoiseshell butterflies and moths such as Angle Shades and Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing



## Common Spotted Orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*)

- Only found in one location (so far) within the park on the steep banking to the north of the Abbey Gates
- Can vary greatly in colour, markings and size but flower spikes and purple colours make them easy to see amongst grass and other foliage
- Found across Europe and northern Asia
- Orchids are an important food source for nectar feeders and will often colonise nutrient deficient habitats



## Herb Robert

### *(Geranium robertianum)*

- Prefers shaded areas, such as the lower glen and the wooded areas of the park
- A small, pink flower found in a variety of habitats throughout Europe, Asia and North America
- A food source for many animals and insects for several months throughout the summer and into autumn



## Red Campion

### *(Silene dioica)*

- Found in the wet meadow areas and banks of the Tower Burn which provide a good habitat for red campion to thrive
- An abundant wildflower found throughout Europe, which grows well in damp soil
- It is recognised by its bright pink flowers behind which there is a bladder like growth attaching the flower to the stem
- Provides food to numerous species of butterfly, bee and moth well into autumn



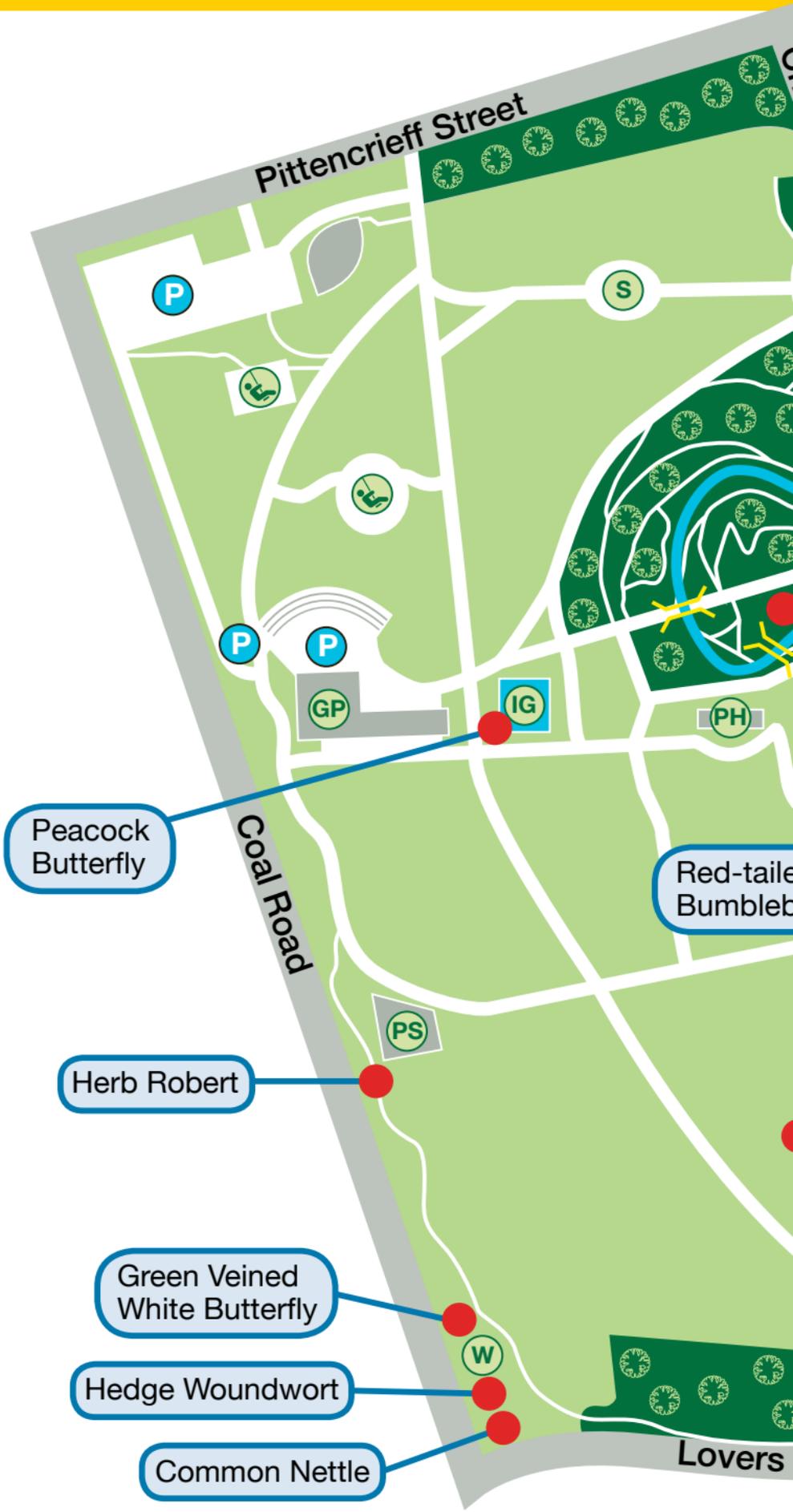
## Hedge Woundwort

### *(Stachys sylvatica)*

- Grows in hedgerows and woodlands
- Flowers are a dark pink/purple and appear from June to October
- It has an unpleasant, astringent smell
- As the common name suggests this plant has wound healing properties



# Nature & Wildlife



## Key

- Andrew Carnegie Statue
- Glen Pavilion
- Italian Garden
- Pittencrieff House
- Glasshouse
- Lairds Garden
- Peacock Sanctuary
- Wildlife Area
- Waterfall

- Playpark
- Parking
- Woodland
- Lawn
- Bridge
- Humpback Bridge



# Birds

Many of the park's species are resident all year round though some migrants, such as swallows, have also been recorded in the park.

## Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*)

- Resident in the UK and seen in gardens, parks, hedgerows and woodlands
- They eat worms, fruit and snails (they break open their shells by smashing them against stone)
- Musical song
- These birds can be seen throughout the lower Glen, wooded areas and shrub beds as can the evidence of their snail meals!



## Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*)

- Seen in the oak and lime trees in the southern areas of the park although some have been observed drumming on the lamposts throughout the park!
- Where deadwood is still standing in the lower glen, boreholes are clearly visible
- Of black and white colouring, this bird is recognised for “drumming” its beak against tree trunks
- Distributed throughout Europe and is usually a year round resident
- Feeds mainly on insects and in winter on fruits and seeds but may also eat chicks of other bird species and small rodents



## Wren

### *(Troglodytes troglodytes)*

- Spotted in the park within the wooded areas and along the Tower Burn
- Another year round resident in deciduous woodlands of the UK, the tiny Eurasian wren is found throughout Europe, Asia and northern Africa
- Wrens breed in this country but can suffer dramatic declines after particularly long, cold winters
- Insects and spiders are their main food source
- A loud trilling call which lasts for about five seconds



## Buzzard

### *(Buteo buteo)*

- Resident buzzards within the park have been recorded on several occasions in the lower glen
- As the most widespread bird of prey in the UK, it is found in most habitats including woodland, moorland and towns and cities
- Buzzards prefer to prey on small rodents, birds and carrion but will eat earthworms and insects where other food is in short supply
- A loud “meew! meew!” call



RSPB  
Big Garden  
Birdwatch

Takes place every January,  
all you need to do is find a  
place to count birds

[www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk)



# Fungi

There are many dark and damp areas in the lower glen and wooded areas of the park which provide excellent habitat for fungi to flourish. Retaining deadwood throughout the park is also important for the success of fungi.

## Candle Snuff Fungus (*Xylaria hypoxylon*)

- Can be found throughout the lower glen
- Appears throughout the year but is much more common in late autumn and winter
- Often widespread and seen on deadwood or tree stumps



# Invertebrates

Insects such as bees and butterflies have been surveyed regularly, more often during the warmer summer months and are a good indicator of biodiversity in the area. Some examples include:

## Peacock Butterfly (*Aglais io*)

- Eggs of this species are laid on Common Nettle plants, found throughout the woodland areas of the park, which then provide food for the newly hatched caterpillars
- A distinctive butterfly that has been observed in different parts of Pittencrieff Park (look for the almost black underwings and the orange coloured upperwing with peacock “eyes”)
- The formal gardens offer an abundant supply of nectar as do a number of buddleia shrubs growing in the park



## Green Veined White (*Pieris napi*)

- The most regularly observed species of butterfly in the park in recent years, the best sightings have been reported in the Lairds Garden but also seen in the lower glen where patches of wildflowers can also be found
- One of the most widespread species in the British Isles (a white butterfly with green veins on its underwings)
- Adults prefer to feed on nectar from species such as red campion, bluebells and various thistles all of which can be found in the park
- In most years two broods are successfully reared and sometimes three in very warm years which means we see this butterfly from spring through to autumn



## Red-tailed Bumblebee (*Bombus lapidarius*)

- Most sightings have been made in the Laird's Garden
- Lavender and lupins in the gardens are particularly attractive
- Found throughout the UK except the far north



## Carder Bee (*Bombus pascuorum*)

- Recorded throughout the park from April to August
- Preferred food plants such as lavender and foxglove
- Species is common in the UK except the far north



# Mammals

Mammals are the most elusive group of animals within the park but there is evidence of several different species being present.

## Bats:

**Common Pipistrelle** (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)

**Soprano Pipistrelle** (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*)

**Brown Long Eared Bat** (*Plecotus auritus*)

**Daubenton's Bat** (*Myotis daubentonii*)

**Natterer's Bat** (*Myotis nattereri*)

- Pipistrelle species and the Brown Long Eared Bat are the most likely to be encountered in the park
- Females occupy communal, maternity roosts in the summer where a single offspring is born
- In autumn bats leave the summer roosts to mate and move to winter hibernation roosts
- It is an offence to destroy or damage a bat's place of shelter and to capture, kill or disturb a bat!



## Grey Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*)

- There is a large population of grey squirrels within Pittencrieff Park
- Food sources are abundant throughout the park although many are not natural!
- A non-native species that displaces our native red squirrel



# European Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*)

- Found in western Europe and as far north as Scandinavia
- Hedgehogs will eat almost anything but particularly enjoy earthworms, millipedes, eggs and will also eat fruit and mushrooms
- Easily recognised by their spiky coat and surprisingly loud snuffling, “hog-like” grunting!
- Found in many habitats but prefer woodlands and hedgerows



There is also evidence of foxes (droppings and kill sites) in the park.

Remember, both foxes and bats are nocturnal and unlikely to be seen during daylight hours!

Do you want to find out more about wildlife? There are lots of fun, easy ways to get involved:



## iSpot

Upload your photographs and find out what you've spotted!

[www.ispotnature.org](http://www.ispotnature.org)

## Big Butterfly Count

Takes place every summer in July and August - great on a sunny day

[www.bigbutterflycount.org](http://www.bigbutterflycount.org)



## BeeWalk

From March to October when bumblebees are most active

[www.beewalk.org.uk](http://www.beewalk.org.uk)

## TCV

You can find lots of activities on The Conservation Volunteers website too

[www.tcv.org.uk/scotland/discover/scotland-counts/citizen-science-your-community](http://www.tcv.org.uk/scotland/discover/scotland-counts/citizen-science-your-community)



## Pittencrieff Park restoration project

Thanks to funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund with match support from the Carnegie Dunfermline Trust and Fife Council, a £1.6 million transformation to return this much loved green space to its former glory began in Autumn 2012.

Producing this guide about the wildlife found here in the park is part of this project.

