

Cosses Country House Trail



View of Cosses Country House and Knockdolian



Crailoch Burn

Burns may support a variety of fish, eels, otter or water voles, and along with hedges, act as 'wild life corridors' where animals can move across the area. Rough grass and scrub along the banks encourage birds to nest and feed. You may see Heron, Kingfisher, Dippers and Grey Wagtails here. Daffodils adorn the banks in the spring.



Cosses Pond

Ponds provide valuable areas of open water which attract wildfowl, insects and amphibians. Trees or tall vegetation provide nesting sites for birds and habitats for amphibians. Pond margins support many insects and they in turn provide food for a range of birds. Cosses Pond was artificially created by Lady Glenapp, as a Curling Rink in the 1800s. It has been regenerated to provide a safe habitat. Bull rushes, iris, pontederia, water lilies and other species have been planted. There is a bird hide where you can look out for moorhens, mallards, wigeon, teal and herons. Or you can just enjoy the peace, reflections and the sunset. This area is part of Scotland's first biosphere, where real darkness allows amazing views of the night sky.



Wetland

From a distance, wetland can appear like a monoculture of rushes. Close-up, many wetland plants can be seen along with butterflies such as the 'Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary

Hedgerows

A mix of native plants in a hedge provides diverse food and habitat to a range of wildlife, and can provide a safe connection between other habitats. Trimming in the winter ensures safe nesting sites and supply of berries. Hedgerow trees provide 'song' posts and perches for birds such as the Barn Owl.



Broadleaf Trees

Mature Trees provide habitat for insects, roosting sites for bats and nesting sites for many birds which feed on the insects living in the trees. Ash Trees have brittle branches which break off and leave holes making ideal nesting sites. Trees are significant historical features in the landscape. There is evidence of coppicing, an ancient form of woodland management.



Woodland

Mature Native Woodland are rich in wildlife and contain diverse ground vegetation. Bluebells, woodland anemones, celandine, daffodils, snowdrops, wood sorrel, greater stichwort, red campion and orchids are all found in abundance. Much of the woodland has been undisturbed for over a hundred years and 'Dog's Mercury' is evidence of this. Dead wood is an important part of the woodland, providing habitat for fungi and insects which in turn feed the many birds and mammals. Newly planted areas on either side of the drive, such as The Acer Glen – designed and supplied by Linda Ensby of Norfield Nurseries, will provide new habitat and regenerate the woodland. Listen for birds such as the woodpecker, great tits and song thrush and barn owls at night. Look out for the red squirrels and roe deer.



Farmland

Surrounding farmland is grazed by Blackface and Suffolk sheep and lambs. Friesian bullocks and heifers can be quite excitable –look out for the bull! Winter barley and grass for silage grow in the fields. Pheasants squawk as they take off when disturbed in the undergrowth. Buzzards are heard calling to one another and occasionally a peregrine flies overhead.

Hills, Valleys and Coastline

Wonderful views from all the surrounding hills reveal the coastline with Ailsa Craig, the Mull of Kintyre, the Isle of Arran and Ireland. The sea and Ireland can be seen from the Crab Apple avenue view point. There are lovely views across the valley from various points. Walk past the sheep shed and up the track to link with Carrick walks. Roe deer and occasionally red deer can be seen grazing on the hills.

