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NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2025
VOLUME 21 ISSUE 2

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WELCOME

TO THE AUTUMN NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter and thanks to our editor, Lynn and all those who have contributed articles and photos.

In the past six months our efforts have continued to focus on the walled garden but we have also done work at the Pinetum and our volunteers continue to look after all aspects of the park. A problem this year has been the lack of rainfall, particularly affecting the wetland.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

LITTER PICK

Sunday 9th November
at 10.00 a.m.
meeting at Cammo Lodge

GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 3rd December
at 7.30 p.m.
in Cammo Lodge
(including Christmas refreshments)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 4th March 2026
at 7.30 p.m.
in Cammo Lodge

CAMMO WETLANDS



The wetland in August

'Met Office statistics confirm that summer 2025 was officially the warmest summer on record for the UK'

Just one of the many headlines that appeared in the press and news programmes this summer. It certainly was a wonderful summer, which has continued well into a beautiful Autumn. However, the continuous warm weather, with very little rainfall, has had a knock on effect on our flora and fauna in Cammo and in particular our wetland.

Many of you will have seen and been concerned about the very low water levels in the wetland.

It is not unusual for wetlands to dry out in extremely warm weather and some wetland species can adapt to periodic drought, however prolonged drought is a major threat that can lead to habitat loss and biodiversity decline.

In the case of our Cammo wetland we were fortunate that our tadpoles had by late summer metamorphosed into frogs. Some of our sticklebacks were rescued by Helen and Fraser and are now living in their new temporary home in their garden pond safe from our ever watchful heron.



Fishing made easy!!!

CAMMO WETLANDS

The wetland takes water via the burn across South Field from the Canal, which in turn is fed by the woodland marsh and Turnhouse Golf Club. The dry summer has meant that the level in the Canal has been too low to feed the outflow into the wetland. Recent rains have been insufficient to restart the flow into the burn but we hope that the wetland will recover over Autumn/Winter.

However, the low water level did give our volunteers the opportunity to clear

quite a bit of the non-native Elodea pond weed and cut back some of the 'reeds' (various species). Whilst dense reeds are good for nesting moorhens and mallards, the density and coverage of the reeds has increased over time and we want to maintain a reasonable amount of open water.

The low water levels also didn't thwart the growth of the Flowering Pond Rush, Water Forget-me-knots and Water Mint.



*Water Forget-me-knots
& Water Mint*



Flowering Pond Rush

In the past few weeks we have had some rain and the water level has risen in the Canal. This in turn means that the Canal water is now beginning to slowly trickle down the stream towards the wetland. Unfortunately, the stream is still drying up half way prior to reaching the wetlands. Hopefully this problem will resolve itself when we have had some substantial rainfall and the Canal has fully filled up.



Stream starting to gradually flow from the canal



Stream drying up prior to wetland

We are regularly monitoring this issue and considering options should the dry weather continue.

INSIDE THE WALLED GARDEN

The Walled Garden is now beginning to return to its wild and wonderful state since the major building work to the wall was completed. The soft fruit garden has now been fully planted and we hope that by next year we will be able to offer our members the opportunity to pick the fruit growing there. The flower garden has been a haven this summer for our bees and butterflies and in the next couple of weeks it will be cut back and fully weeded.

THE ORCHARD



Two of our fruit tree labellers

The Orchard has recently had tree identification labels fitted. We had a good crop of apples this year but our pears were hard and our plum trees were reluctant to bear fruit! If there are any plum tree growing specialists out there we would love to hear from you.

THE SOFT FRUIT GARDEN

We planted up our new soft fruit garden in April and even then the ground was beginning to dry out. We did not have access to the well at this time and water had to be collected from either the Canal or the stream leading out of the Canal. Taking the trolley, with eight watering cans down to either of these locations was not a problem, however, bringing them back was, as it was mostly uphill. After several weeks of these trips back and forth to collect water I had a 'cunning plan'. I put a large plastic box with a lid into the back of my car with the seats folded down and filled it with water.

Everything was working as planned until I came to the steep hill before the walled

garden, this is when the water moved to the back of the tank. Unfortunately, there is a dip in the path prior to reaching the garden that caused a mini tsunami that covered me and my hapless passenger, leaving little water in the tank and the majority of water over us!!!

Needless to say we went back to the trolley and watering can system! The good news is that we managed to keep the fruit bushes alive and watered until the joyous day when the council gave us the key to the well. That very same day, for the first time in weeks, it rained! The positive outcome of this tale is that all fruit bushes have survived and are thriving.



Our volunteers finishing off the soft fruit planting in the Walled Garden

OUR WALLED GARDEN BEES & THEIR HIVES

Before we move out of the walled garden we cannot forget about our amazing bees and butterflies. What follows is our Summer/Autumn report from our bee keeper, John and our butterfly person, Michael (he is not actually a butterfly but he is our FoC Chairperson):

It has been a busy Summer/Autumn for the bees at Cammo Estate.

Although we humans have had a great summer it has been too dry for the bees. This has resulted in a significant decline in nectar and pollen available food resource and hence the honey harvest was not as good as anticipated. In addition, there must have been some fields with oil seed rape reasonably close by and hence about 40% of the Cammo Estate harvest was found to have crystallised. You have to be very quick in extracting such honey before it crystallises in the comb. But the crystallised honey was not wasted, it was fed back to the bees. So overall I harvested 22kg of saleable honey and it can be bought at Cloudberry Café in Barnton.

Due to the hot Summer weather, this causes the bees to think about swarming. Fortunately I managed to contain the swarming tendency of the hives

at Cammo Estate but I was called out 6 times to swarms around north west Edinburgh. One such swarm is now located at Cammo Estate. Here is an example of a swarm collected in a hedge at Drum Brae this summer.



Swarm of bees

The three hives have now all been prepared for winter. The bees have been fed syrup and fondant. Mouse guards have been fitted to the entrances and the hives insulated inside and out. I shall be checking the hives over the winter to ensure that they have enough food still available as well as treating one hive for varroa.

Thanks to all the garden volunteers for all their hard work in making the walled garden such an attractive place for the honey bees.

Cheers,
John Jeffrey
(Cammo Estate beekeeper)

OUR VICTORIAN BEE & BUTTERFLY GARDEN

Our final area in the Walled Garden due for cultivation is the area where the old Glass House was located.

This will be a Victorian Garden and will be another source of nectar for our bees and also encourage butterflies.

Many Victorian gardens grew extremely poisonous plants, including deadly nightshade, monkshood and hemlock, which were known for their toxic properties and used in both medicine and in some cases for murder.

Other poisonous plants common in this era included laurel, foxglove and castor oil plants. For obvious reasons we will be giving them a miss!! Work in our Victorian garden will start at the end of October with our team of young volunteers.



Butterfly sighting at Cammo Estate

AROUND CAMMO ESTATE

A varied selection of other organisations also use Cammo. One of these organisations is Lewis Leap, who have for the past few years. They have been holding a wonderful and successful Dog Show in Cammo. What follows is a report from Elizabeth, Lewis's mother and also one of the main organisers of the Lewis Leap Dog Show.

LEWIS LEAP DOG SHOW AND SERVICE LAUNCH A COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

The Lewis Leap Dog Show, held on Sunday, 24th August 2025, brought together the local community for a joyful celebration of canine companions and charitable spirit. With ten fun categories, from the ever-entertaining Musical Sit to the coveted Dog the Judges Would Most Like to Take Home, there was something for every dog and every owner to enjoy. The showgrounds buzzed with laughter and excitement as dogs displayed their quirky talents and affectionate personalities.

Participants and visitors indulged in classic treats such as hot dogs, ice cream, and sweets, while the tombola added a dash of suspense and delight. The event was marked by a vibrant atmosphere, with happy, smiling faces everywhere and a parade of fantastic dogs competing and playing.



Lewis Leap Dog Show

FUNDRAISING SUCCESS

The day proved to be a phenomenal success, raising an impressive £6,204 for Lewis Leap. The generosity and enthusiasm of all who attended underscored the community's commitment to supporting the charity's vital work.

LAUNCH OF LEWIS LEAP SUDDEN AND TRAUMATIC BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

A defining moment of the day was the launch of the Lewis Leap Sudden and Traumatic Bereavement Support Service. This new initiative will offer early, dedicated support to individuals and families in the first six months following a bereavement, with a special focus on those affected by sudden and traumatic loss. Currently, there is no comparable service available, making this launch an important step in bridging a crucial gap in community care.

From the laughter-filled contests to the meaningful launch of a much-needed support service, the Lewis Leap Dog Show was more than just an event—it was a testament to the power of community, compassion, and the enduring bond between people and their dogs. Everyone had a fun day, united by a common purpose: raising funds and awareness for a fantastic charity.

NEW MAPS & INFO BOARDS

A new series of maps and interpretation boards are located throughout Cammo Estate. These boards are an excellent tool to educate all visitors to Cammo Estate and help create an understanding and respect for these relevant surroundings.



New map & info board

CUTTING OF SOUTH FIELD

On 6th October the top half of South Field was cut and baled, to improve it as a habitat for wildflower. The bottom half of the field was left, as it is the location for a trial of alternative approaches to habitat improvement by TCV (The Conservation Volunteers). This is part of a three-year cycle to cut the three fields.



Cutting of South Field

AROUND CAMMO ESTATE CONT

THE WEEKLY RECORDING OF OUR BUTTERFLY SPECIES & NUMBERS

Provided by Michael

A group of volunteers record butterfly species and numbers once a week in Cammo. This year has been better than last with impressive numbers of Speckled Wood butterflies and with more Small White, Large White and Red Admirals than last year. Orange-tip, Comma and Green-veined White numbers have been steady. However, it hasn't been a good year for Small Tortoiseshell, Ringlet and Meadow Brown. Small Skippers appeared briefly in decent numbers and a Small Copper was sighted. The Walled Garden 'planting for bees' area is a big attraction to our butterflies.

OUR BUMBLEBEES

We asked Huw, our Bumblebee transect volunteer, how the Bumblebees have fared on the Estate this year.

There are 24 species of Bumblebees in the UK and this year saw a good recovery in their numbers in North West Edinburgh and here at Cammo. With a 53% increase in records of the 10 species found on the Estate from 181 to 277 across the recording season.

WINNERS

Buff Tail/White-tailed Aggregation
Common Carder Bee
Red-tailed Bumblebee

LOSERS

Early, Tree & Garden Bumblebees

UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS

Southern Cuckoo Bumblebee
Forest Cuckoo Bumblebee

A NEW CHAPTER FOR CAMMO INTRODUCING THE CAMMO MINI LIBRARY

Visitors to Cammo Estate may notice an exciting new addition nestled just inside the main gate - the thoughtfully crafted Cammo Mini Library, ready to welcome readers of all ages.

This new feature is the result of a community project led by local Cammo resident, Ben, as part of the Join In Award Scheme (JAS). Within the "Me and My World" section of the programme - which encourages young people to engage with and contribute to their local communities - Ben took on the challenge to create something meaningful for Cammo.

Originally planned as an upcycling project, the idea evolved thanks to the creative vision of Ben's Grandpa Ron, who upgraded the initial concept of repurposing an old CD cabinet. Instead, he crafted a bespoke, weatherproof structure designed for purpose. Built over many hours in his garage and then installed by the duo at Cammo, the result is a sturdy mini free library that blends beautifully into its natural surroundings.

The concept of a mini free library is simple but valuable: it fosters sharing, encourages reading, and strengthens community bonds. Whether you're out for a walk, exploring nature, or just passing by, you're invited to browse the selection, contribute a book, or take one home to enjoy. There's even a nearby bench for those who fancy a reading break in the fresh air.

So next time you're at Cammo, please stop by the Mini Library, feel free to pick up a book - and enjoy!



Mini Library

THE PROPOSED BARNTON HOTEL GOLF COURSE IN CAMMO & THE CRAMOND BRIG GOLF COURSE

Our special feature in this Newsletter is the brief history of the proposed 1897 Barnton Hotel Golf Course in Cammo and the Cramond Brig Golf Course of 1908 -1931 located in Cammo Estate

THE PROPOSED 1897 GOLF COURSE IN CAMMO ESTATE

In 1897, the Barnton Hotel Company proposed to build a golf course at Cammo Estate linked to Barnton, using Cammo House as the club- house, but nothing came of this.

Instead, Cammo Estate was sold to the private owner later known as Mrs Maitland-Tennent, and in 1908, she leased a large part of the estate to the newly formed Cramond Brig Golf Club.

Grateful thanks to golf historian, Harry Ward for permission to use extracts from his website:

WWW.FORGOTTENGREENS.COM

For more information, see Harry's articles:

CRAMOND BRIG GOLF CLUB

BARNTON HOTEL GOLF COURSE



The Barnton Hotel

Image courtesy of Harry Ward

THE CRAMOND BRIG GOLF COURSE OF 1908 -1931 WAS LOCATED IN CAMMO ESTATE

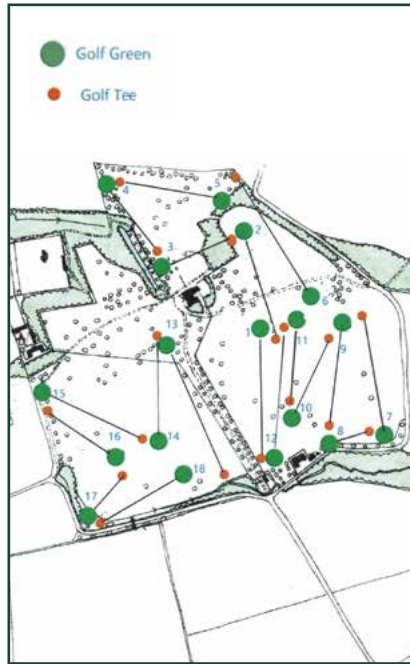
This 18 hole golf course at Cammo Estate was established from 1908 -1931, occupying about three quarters of Cammo Estate.

Almost all signs of the golf course have disappeared, only the mound on the 6th tee can be clearly seen above the western boundary path, at the top of the climb up from the north gate.



Site of the 6th tee

The club had a disagreement with the Landlord and the lease was terminated in 1931. The club then moved to Dalmahoy, changing its name in the process.



The Cramond Brig Golf Course layout at Cammo Estate as produced by Harry Taylor

CRAMOND BRIG GOLF CLUBHOUSE

The golf clubhouse was neglected through the 1930s, until Mrs Maitland-Tennent moved there when Cammo House was requisitioned by the Air Ministry in 1940. In 1952 it became a farmhouse, later known as Cammo Home Farm. In 2016 it was demolished to clear the site for a private dwelling.



The Cramond Brig Golf Clubhouse

Image courtesy of Harry Ward

THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Once again, a huge thanks to all our hard working volunteers and rangers. Cammo Estate is shining example of what a community can achieve when we work together and we thank you all kindly for your essential contribution.

Thank you!



Email: friendsofcammo@yahoo.co.uk
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