

Fallin Bing Nature Counts Survey Walk



Photos S Bairner

Fallin Bing is a very special site within the Inner Forth area. Occupying the site of the former Polmaise Colliery, it still bears some marks of its industrial past, including an adjacent open air museum, but is now also a natural haven, providing habitat for a vast array of plants and wildlife.

The colliery closed in 1987 and the spoilheap (the 'bing' which gives the site its name) was reprofiled in 1994. It was planted with birch, rowan and wildflowers to improve the habitat for wildlife and for the local people to enjoy.

Now managed by Stirling Council, the site has an established path network and stunning views over Stirling from the top of the bing, making it a great place to go for a walk on a clear day. The Inner Forth landscape Initiative has a project here run by Buglife called Bings for Wildlife. This project supports local volunteers creating a healthy ecosystem by planting wildflower meadows and removing scrub and invasive species.

<http://www.innerforthlandscape.co.uk/projects/conserving-restoring/bings-for-wildlife>

Start your walk from the Information board just inside the gates on the north side. As you walk round the site keep an eye out for all the fabulous flora and fauna that call this special place home. Don't forget to fill in your sightings sheet as you go around, making records of everything you see.

Much of Fallin Bing is open, nutrient poor grassland making it perfect for wildflowers like ox-eye daisy, common birds-foot trefoil and viper's bugloss, as well as invertebrates like 6-spot burnet moths, 7-spot ladybirds and marmalade hoverflies. Look out also for the yellowrattle, seeded here by volunteers as its parasitic lifestyle weakens grass, allowing other wildflowers to flourish.

There are also sections of shallow rooted broadleaved trees which provide homes for woodland birds such as great spotted woodpeckers, dunnocks and robins. To the south of the site is Wester Moss which you can look out over as you go along Section Four. Here can be found many bog specialist species like sundew and bog rosemary. You may even be lucky enough to spot a short-eared owl here or a large heath butterfly.

The Fallin Bing survey walk is approximately 1.3km long and should take you 45 minutes to an hour to walk. Remember to walk slowly, noting down everything you'd like to record as you go.

If you'd like more information you can contact Kate Fuller, IFLI Community Engagement Officer on info@innerforthlandscape.co.uk or 01324 831 568

From the information board head south and follow the path which leads round the right hand side of the bing. **Section 1** is mainly open grassland, much used by dog walkers and people looking to enjoy their local green space. (NS837913 at centre)

As you move into the area bounded by trees on your right hand side you enter **section 2** of the walk. Continue south along the marked path until you enter a more wooded area with trees on both sides where this section ends. (NS836912 at centre)

Section 3 is dominated by birch trees and has a very different feel to the open grass you've covered so far. (NS836911 at centre)

Section 4 begins as you exit the woodland and once again have open grass to your left. On the right keep an eye for gaps in the woods and you'll catch occasional glimpses of Wester Moss. (NS837910 at centre)

Soon you'll come to **section 5**, another area with trees on both sides of the path. (NS838910 at centre)



Section 6 begins as you enter a more open area once again. You're going to continue following the path until you reach a crossroads. (NS839910 at centre)

At the crossroads turn left and begin walking up the wildflower rich hillside which comprises most of **section 7**. Once you reach the summit (and have briefly admired the view!) you'll be turning right to begin the next section. (NS838911 at centre)

Section 8 is slightly different underfoot to the paths you've been walking on so far but you should be able to easily follow the trail through the grass, skirting the trees to your left, and heading downhill.

(NS838912 at centre)

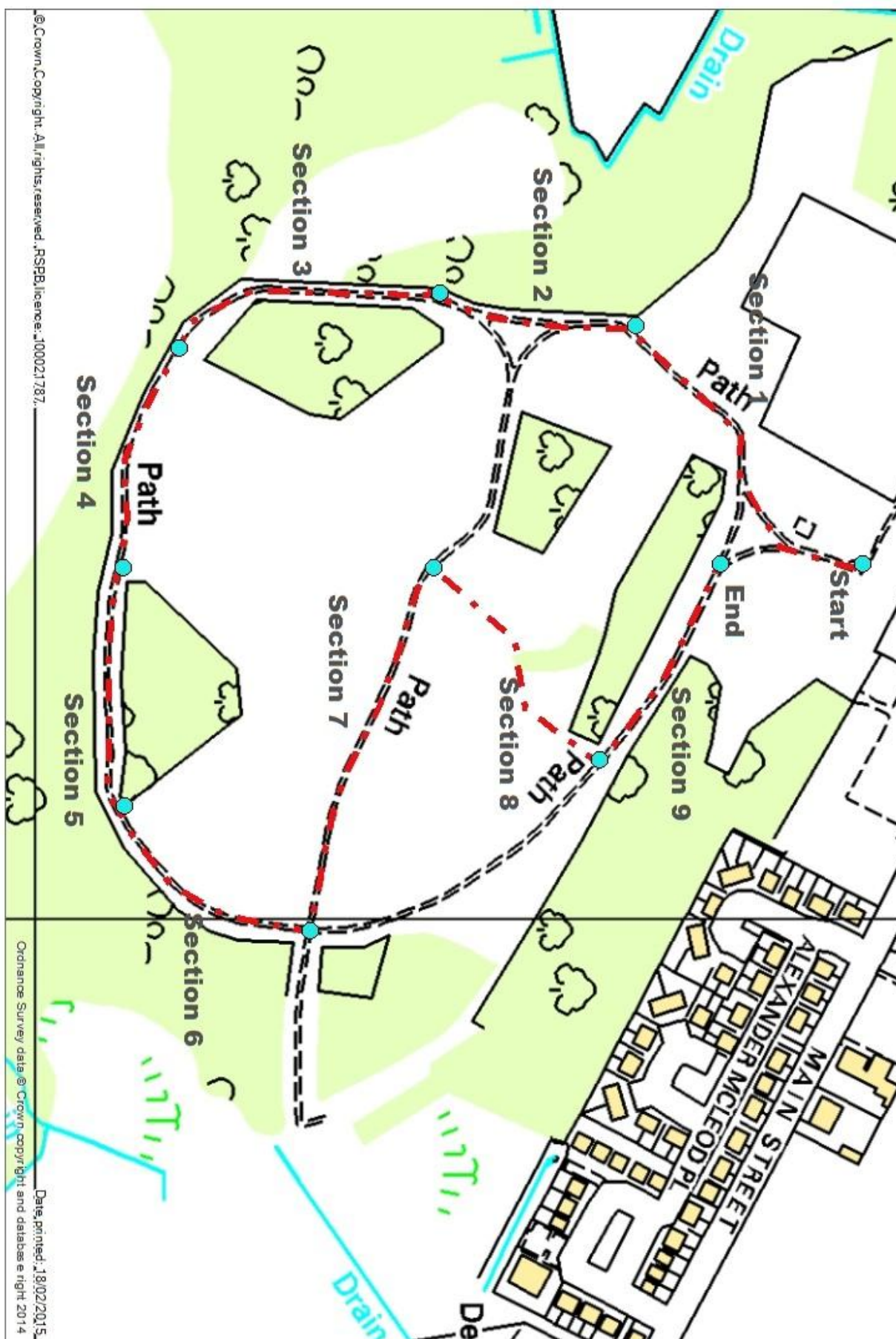
Once you reach the made path again turn left and begin **section 9** which will take you through the trees and back to the grass where you began your walk. (NS838913 at centre)

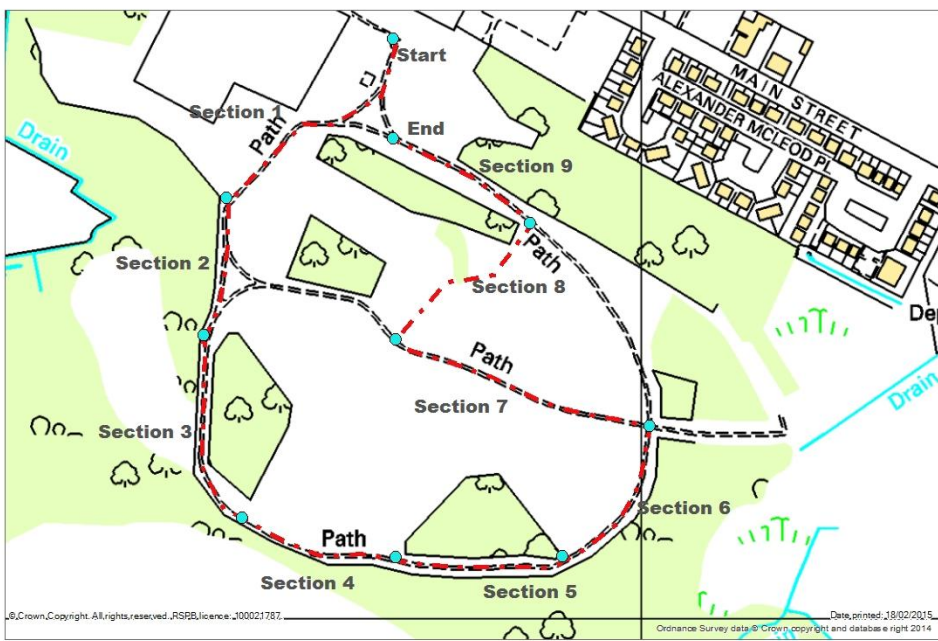
Thank you for taking the time to walk the Inner Forth Nature Counts survey walk around Fallin Bing. Don't forget to log on to iRecord and upload your records <http://www.brc.ac.uk/irecord/enter-inner-forth-records>

Thank you for making Forth Nature Count!

This survey walk is part of IFLI's Forth Nature Counts project which aims to increase the number of verified biological records for the Inner Forth area. We are doing this by encouraging volunteers and local people to become citizen scientists through surveying sites then adding their wildlife records to our iRecord page; running a series of free wildlife identification workshops covering a wide range of species; and promoting wildlife recording through IFLI's social media pages, website and e-newsletter. Find out more about this project on our website:

<http://www.innerforthlandscape.co.uk/projects/recording-celebrating/forth-nature-counts>



Transect Name		Fallin Bing		
Insert a map or even a simple drawing of your transect location and route				
Location name		Fallin	OS 6 fig grid ref (at centre of transect)	NS838912
County		Stirling	Transect Length (m)	1350m
Section	6 Figure Grid ref (at centre of section)	Length (m)	Habitat Description (e.g. farmland, urban etc.)	
1	NS837913	150	Amenity grassland, wildflowers, scattered trees	
2	NS836912	110	Amenity grassland, broadleaved woodland, brambles, wildflowers	
3	NS836911	160	Broadleaved woodland	
4	NS837910	130	Amenity grassland, wildflowers, broadleaved woodland	
5	NS838910	135	Mixed conifer and broadleaved woodland	
6	NS839910	135	Amenity grassland, wildflowers, broadleaved woodland	
7	NS838911	205	Amenity grassland, scattered trees, shrubs	
8	NS838912	140	Amenity grassland, wildflowers, broadleaved woodland	
9	NS838913	125	Broadleaved woodland, amenity grassland, wildflowers	



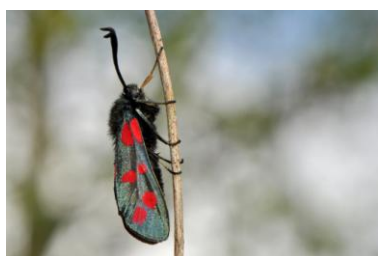
Short Eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*)

A medium sized owl with a brown body, pale under wing and yellow eyes. They are often seen gliding over open ground during the day, hunting for small mammals in the undergrowth. Capable of hovering into the wind before pouncing on its prey.



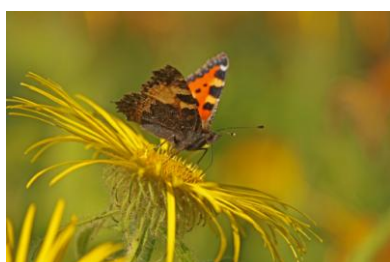
Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*)

Sometimes known as the 'hedge sparrow' dunnocks have a grey breast and spend a lot of time near to the ground, creeping along hedgelines. Often overlooked (the name dunnock means 'little and brown'), they have a surprisingly loud sweet song.



Six-spot Burnet Moth (*Zygaena filipendulae*)

On the wing from June to August this medium sized day flying moth is often mistaken for a butterfly with its black wings and six bright red spots on each forewing. Adults nectar on thistles, knapweed and scabious, the caterpillars live on common bird's-foot trefoil.



Small Tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae*)

One of our most common butterflies – but a species that is showing worrying signs of decline. Can be seen on any sunny day of the year but most active May to September. Often found near nettles which are an important food source. Hibernates in wood piles, hollow trees and outbuildings.



Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*)

A native broad leaved tree the silver birch owes its name to the distinctive silvery white bark on the trunk. The serrated triangular leaves turn yellow in Autumn. A hardy 'pioneer' tree species, the silver birch is often one of the first to recolonise newly bare ground.



Common Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*)

Flowering May to September, this widespread plant is a vital food source for species such as six-spot burnet moths, common blue butterflies and red-tailed bumblebees. Commonly known as 'eggs and bacon' thanks to its yolk yellow flowers and red buds. Its seed pods are said to look like bird's feet.

Name			
Location		Date	

Section	Species Name	Comments