



Dr Marie Athorn, RSPB and R&A business conservation advisor, and Royal Dornoch head teaching pro Gary Dingwall visited Dornoch Primary School to meet some of the youngsters taking part in a the bird spotting competition.

Royal Dornoch contest is a birdie

ROYAL Dornoch Golf Club is encouraging young people in its area to immerse themselves in nature. The club has introduced a bird-spotting competition aimed at the 70-plus members of its Wildcat and Minis sections.

Also involved in the initiative are Dornoch Primary School, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews.

Royal Dornoch decided to launch the competition following an approach from Dr Marie Athorn, business conservation advisor with the RSPB and The R&A partnership.

An RSPB pin badge she helped create is given away with the

competition entry forms and prizes will be Royal Dornoch logoed golf balls.

Ms Athorn said: "It is an exciting initiative that we'd like to see replicated at clubs around the country. The feedback has been fantastic."

The young people are currently being asked to keep an eye open for birds like swallows, oystercatchers, yellowhammers and skylarks. Later in the year the project will focus on Canadian geese and other wildlife, including otters and porpoises and seals, which can be found in the Dornoch Firth.

Royal Dornoch club captain and retired teacher Willie Mackay

said: "We are lucky to share the Championship and Struie courses with a rich array of wildlife, flora and fauna.

"The bird spotting competition has proved popular with the youngsters at Dornoch Primary School taking part in our coaching sessions. There is scope for broadening this out to older kids and also encouraging other golf clubs in the area to join us."

The RSPB has been boosted by a £500 donation for badges from the Captain's Charity Fund.

Royal Dornoch enjoys GEO Foundation accreditation for the sustainable management of their courses.