

BIRDS OF THE SHIANT ISLANDS

June/July visits 1970-1976

1970 and 1971 observations have already been published as
Birds of the Shiant Islands, Outer Hebrides. M de L Brooke, Bird Study Vol 20: 197-206

This list summarises these, and further observations 1972-1976

Storm Petrel	May breed in small numbers. Seen only on or from House Island. Total of 56 caught 1970-1972 and 1976
Manx Shearwater	No evidence of breeding. See offshore in small numbers all years.
Fulmar	Many breeding. 1970 count was 3781 ± 132 apparently occupied nest sites. Two blue phase birds seen in 1970.
Gannet	Seen offshore in all years. An adult was seen on a ledge with Guillemots on Rough Island on 23 June 1975, 29 June 1976 and 14 July 1976.
Shag	Breeding. 1970 count was 360 ± 40 nests.
Heron	Two seen July 1970, one July 1974.
Eider	Breeds in small numbers. Eight to ten females with chicks in 1970 and 1971 but only two with chicks in 1973, 1974 and 1976.
Red-breasted Merganser	One seen June 1970.
Greylag Goose	One seen June 1970.
Barnacle Goose	One seen June 1971. Much evidence in all years of wintering population – droppings, feathers and occasional corpses.
Buzzard	One seen June 1971.
Golden Eagle	Two birds apparently resident in all years but not breeding. A third bird seen in 1971, 1974 and 1976.
Peregrine	Single birds seen in 1970, 1971, 1974 and 1976. No evidence of breeding.
Oystercatcher	Breeding in all years with up to about 20 pairs. Also flocks of non-breeding birds in some years e.g. maximum of 32 in July 1976.
Ringed Plover	Odd birds seen in 1971 and 1976. Not breeding.
Turnstone	Up to four seen June and July 1970.

BIRDS OF THE SHIANT ISLANDS

June/July visits 1970-1976

Snipe	Breeds on Rough and House Islands, typically three pairs on each.
Curlew	Several seen each year with maximum of 16 in July 1974. Not breeding.
Common Sandpiper	Bred in 1970 but odd birds only seen in other years.
Redshank	Seen in most years occurring especially on north east coast of Rough Island. Maximum four in 1974.
Greenshank	One seen June 1976.
Arctic Skua	A few birds seen offshore each year, mostly dark phase. Maximum day total 11 in June 1971.
Great Skua	Single birds only seen offshore in 1970, 1971, 1974 and 1976 with maximum day totals of two in July 1970, July 1974 and July 1976.
Great Black-backed Gull	Breeding on all islands with Mary Island being the main colony. Occupied nest total in 1970 was 197 ± 15 .
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Breeding. Main colony near top of House Island estimated at nine pairs in 1970, 16 in 1971, 25 in 1974, 32 in 1975 and 22 in 1976.
Herring Gull	Breeding on all islands. 1970 population was 204 ± 20 pairs.
Common Gull	Breeding proved in 1974 only but may breed every year in very small numbers.
Kittiwake	Breeding on all islands. 1970 total was 1000 ± 15 nests and this was still increasing in 1976.
Arctic Tern	Singles seen on several days in 1972 only. Not breeding.
Razorbill	Breeding on all islands with main concentration in boulders on east of Rough Island. 1970 total was 3535 ± 240 birds.
Guillemot	Breeding on all islands with main concentration on Mary Island. 1970 total was 7970 ± 350 birds.
Black Guillemot	Breeding around all the islands but population probably does not exceed ten pairs.
Puffin	Breeding on all islands with main concentration on the east of Rough Island. 1970 estimate was 77000 ± 13500 occupied burrows. Partially albinistic bird seen in all years 1972 to 1976.

BIRDS OF THE SHIANT ISLANDS

June/July visits 1970-1976

Rock Dove	Breeding. Less than half a dozen pairs.
Collared Dove	Single birds seen in 1970, 1971 and 1973
Swift	A few birds seen 1970, 1971 and 1976 with a maximum day total of 31 in July 1976 in very hot weather.
Skylark	Breeding on all islands.
House Martin	Two seen 1971 and one in 1972 and 1973.
Raven	Breeding assumed. Typically half a dozen seen in any year around any of the islands, but especially north and west of Rough Island.
Hooded Crow	Breeding. Largest flock 25 in June 1976.
Wren	Breeding.
Stonechat	One seen June 1972.
Wheatear	Occasional breeding. From six or seven in 1970 to four or five in 1971 to single birds only in 1972 and 1973 and none seen 1974.
Blackbird	Juvenile seen 1972 and at least one adult present in all years 1970-1975 but not 1976.
Song Thrush	Singing birds 1970 only.
Sedge Warbler	Singing male heard June 1971.
Meadow Pipit	Breeding.
Rock Pipit	Breeding and more numerous than Meadow Pipit. There were at least ten individuals around the cottage alone in 1976.
Pied Wagtail	Singles seen in 1975 and 1976, and two in July 1976.
Starling	Breeding.
Twite	Breeding. Probably not more than a dozen pairs.
Crossbill	Two males and two females seen in June 1972.
Red-headed Bunting	One on Rough Island July 1976.

Compiled by D J Steventon March 1977.