

BIRD REPORT FOR SHIANT ISLANDS 23rd JUNE - 4th JULY 1979

Storm Petrel	A total of 72 ringed, 10 released unringed, and 4 controls from four catches. All on House Island using a tape lure. Birds with good brood patches seen to come from crevices in cliff. Estimate of 40 flying around on 23rd June.
Manx Shearwater	See offshore on 3/4 days. Total of 13 seen on crossing from Tarbert to Shiants on 23rd June.
Fulmar	First chick seen 6th July. 1 blue phase bird seen.
Gannet	1 adult seen on ledges on the east cliffs of Mary Island on three occasions, but not on ledge on the NW of Rough Island where seen in 1975 and 1976. Otherwise usual numbers seen offshore on most days.
Shag	Maximum clutch size 7 eggs and maximum brood size 4 pulli. Ringed birds from 245 broods, suggesting considerably more pairs breeding than the 360 ± 40 counted in 1970.
Eider	Rough Island – 3 females in NE. Mary Island – female with chicks plus 4 other females and 1 male. House Island – female with 5 chicks, female with 2 chicks, female with 4 chicks, and 1 other female.
Red-breasted Merganser	1 female seen 24th June.
Golden Eagle	1 immature on Rough Island, seen most days.
Peregrine	1 immature on Rough Island once, and 1 male on Rough Island.
Oystercatcher	Total of 18 pairs estimated. Rough Island – 5 pairs and 6 non-breeders. Mary Island – 5 pairs. House Island – 8 pairs and 8 non-breeders.
Golden Plover	1, House Island, 5th July.
Snipe	3 drumming on House Island, and estimate 3 present on Rough Island.
Curlew	2 seen on a limited number of occasions, usually at the west end of Rough Island.
Common Sandpiper	Single birds seen House Island 30th June and Rough Island and House Island 5th July.
Redshank	1, Rough Island, 29th June.

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Arctic Skua	Seen regularly, usually off Mary Island with maximum day total of 3.
Great Skua	Seen regularly, with maximum of 4 at any one time (over Mary Island).
Great Black-backed Gull	Poor breeding season, with for example very few chicks found at the southern tip of Mary Island where there are normally many.
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Estimated 14 pairs in the colony on House Island.
Herring Gull	Generally a poor breeding season.
Common Gull	1 pair House Island, and 1 immature. 1 pair with pullus near natural arch, Rough Island, and 2 other adults in the west of Rough Island.
Kittiwake	Total of 1170 nests counted. (1000 \pm 10 in 1970).
Arctic Tern	1 over storm beach, 29th June. 2 'Comic' Terns at southern end of House Island, 30th June.
Razorbill	See detailed counts.
Guillemot	See detailed counts.
Black Guillemot	7 around Galtachean, 7 south end of House Island, 6 north of Rough Island, 3 off Mary Island. Total of 23 birds. Breeding population estimated at 10 pairs in previous years.
Puffin	See detailed counts. Apparently a successful breeding season with burrows not waterlogged and many having eggshell in or near entrances.
Rock Dove	2 birds Mary Island, 2 birds Rough/House Island. Scarce compared with previous years.
Turtle Dove	1, House Island, 24th and 26th June.
Swift	4, Rough Island, 25th June. 1, Rough Island, 26th June.
Skylark	Estimate minimum 3 pairs Rough Island, 2 pairs House Island.
Raven	Maximum 7, Rough Island, 26th June.
Hooded Crow	Maximum 15, Rough Island.

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Wren	Minimum 6 definite territories, House Island; 18 territories Rough Island (spacing indicating that most territories found); 6 territories Mary Island.
Wheatear	Minimum 2 pairs, Rough Island and 1 pair, House Island.
Dunnock	Certainly 1, maybe 2 singing birds above Puffin colony at the north of Rough Island and 1 singing bird at the top of cliff over boulders on east of Rough Island.
Meadow Pipit	Estimate 15 pairs on Rough Island.
Rock Pipit	Only about 4 pairs located. Scarce compared with previous years.
Starling	Seen regularly, with largest flock 50 on Rough Island. Probably 100 birds in total.
Twite	No records at all.

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Report compiled by * July 1979