



## NEWSLETTER 120

JUNE 2012

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## CONSERVATION NEWS

### KITTIWAKE DECLINES

Early reports of seabird breeding performance indicate continuing problems for Scotland's internationally important kittiwake population with one breeding colony now extinct and others predicted to disappear within three years.

Although one of the world's most abundant seabirds, kittiwakes are declining at an alarming rate. Numbers have more than halved since the mid 1980s across the UK, and the Scottish breeding population has declined by almost two-thirds.



Some of the steepest declines have been in the far north of Scotland, particularly in Orkney and Shetland where around one-fifth of the UK population return to breed each year.

Counts by RSPB Scotland and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) of Orkney's 'seabird cities' revealed a staggering 82 per cent decline in breeding pairs of kittiwakes in just over a decade. Populations on the Orkney mainland fell from nearly 11,000 pairs in 2000 to under 2,000 this year.

At Mull Head on the Orkney mainland, the once bustling cliffs were empty this year as kittiwakes failed to return to the colony to breed. The cliffs at Costa Head and Birsay held less than 200 breeding pairs while three other colonies hung on by a thread with fewer than 90 nests each - indicating possible local extinction within the next three years.

RSPB Scotland's Marwick Head nature reserve hosted most of the breeding kittiwakes with 1,134 pairs. However, numbers were 75 per cent lower than in 1999, when there were 5,400 pairs nesting.

Elsewhere in the country, kittiwakes are experiencing mixed fortunes. RSPB Scotland's Sumburgh Head nature reserve in Shetland reported a poor year with only a small number of chicks fledging. In contrast, the kittiwake colony at RSPB Troup Head on the Moray Firth has experienced its best season in years with over 500 chicks fledging.

The charity's Fowlsheugh nature reserve on the Aberdeenshire coast reported a halt in the long-term decline in kittiwake numbers. The colony had been in freefall – 20 years ago there were over three times as many nests, but the number of chicks raised in recent years is encouraging. A colony at Splash Point, Seaford in Sussex has increased by 300 pairs. Numbers of kittiwakes have more than halved since the mid-1900s across the UK. A complete picture of the year's seabird breeding success will be available in the autumn.

Adapted from [www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk)

## SEABIRDS AND MPAS - UPDATE

Members will recall RSPB concerns, highlighted in the October 2011 newsletter (118) about slow progress in the identification of a network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) for seabirds across the UK. Unfortunately, we can report that progress continues to be slow, though there is a glimmer of good news coming through the gloom.

At the last stakeholder workshop on Scottish MPAs (March 2012), six sites were identified as search locations for black guillemot MPAs. It is certainly welcome that sites for this species have been identified, and while these represent a good geographical spread across Scotland (from the Clyde to Shetland), the small number of search locations identified is a concern – these six sites represent approximately just 10% of the GB tystie population. This includes just two sites in Shetland and Orkney (Fetlar and Papa Westray), in spite of the importance of these islands for the species. SNH is now looking at other potential sites for black guillemot, and RSPB remains hopeful that more substantive proposals for the network will come forward in the weeks ahead.

The last stakeholder workshop in Scotland also identified a number of search locations for sandeel MPAs – it is excellent to see proposals to protect aggregations of the two sandeel species (*Ammodytes marinus* and *Ammodytes tobianus*) in Scottish waters. However, it is concerning that sandeels are not being considered for protection on the Wee Bankie, the well-studied (thanks to CEH work on the Isle of May) and critically important

feeding grounds for several east coast seabirds. This area is currently served by a fisheries closure – but this only provides protection from a single pressure, and the closure itself is under regular pressure to be re-opened. It would be strange to identify a number of protected areas for sandeels and not include one of the most important areas for the species in the UK.

In an attempt to ensure some form of protection for seabirds in the MPA network, RSPB Scotland submitted six 'third party' proposals for nature conservation Marine Protected Areas in February this year. These are all seaward 'maintenance' extensions (between 1km and 4km in size) to Scottish SSSI seabird colonies that host species for which JNCC have published recommendations for colony extensions<sup>1,2,3</sup>. Unfortunately, these proposals were rejected. As seabirds are not 'search features' for MPAs, it is considered by the Scottish Government that seabirds cannot drive the site selection process – though the sites may be taken into account when SNH considers the overall ecological coherence of the network. RSPB Scotland's proposals are modest, easily-identified extensions to existing terrestrial protected areas which could be designated easily using robust scientific methods already developed by government advisors on nature conservation. More detail on the location of the sites [here](#).

Support for RSPB Scotland's third party proposals, or on any of the concerns raised in this newsletter, would be greatly appreciated, and can be expressed in writing to the SNH Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Unit, based in Inverness, or via Rory Crawford at RSPB Scotland.

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For more information on the Scottish MPA project:

<http://www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/protected-areas/national-designations/marine-protected-areas/scottish-mpa-project/>

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<sup>1</sup> **McSorley, C.A., Dean, B.J., Webb, A & Reid, J.B.** (2003) Seabird use of waters adjacent to colonies Implications for seaward extensions to existing breeding seabird colony Special Protection Areas. [JNCC Report No. 329](#)

<sup>2</sup> **Reid, J.B. and Webb, A.** (2005) Marine Natura 2000 - recommendations for the extension of existing seabird colony Special Protection Areas into the marine environment. [JNCC Committee paper 05 P14B](#)

<sup>3</sup> **McSorley, C.A., Wilson, L.J., Dunn, T.E., Gray, C., Dean, B.J., Webb, A., Reid, J.B.** (2008) Manx shearwater evening rafting behaviour around colonies on Skomer, Rum and Bardsey. [JNCC Report No. 406](#)

## MARINE CONSERVATION ZONES IN ENGLAND & WALES

The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and Natural England have presented the formal Advice Package on 127 recommended Marine Conservation Zones to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). This advice marks the latest step towards the Government's objective to create a well-managed network of Marine Protected Areas to help protect the range of habitats and species in our seas by the end of 2016. The Advice Package is being provided to Defra to support the decisions the Environment Minister will make on the designation of MCZs after a formal public consultation is held (the consultation will start in December 2012).

The process for making recommendations on where MCZs could be located has been unique, since sea users have been at the centre of it. For two years, four regional MCZ projects have worked extensively with specially formed groups of regional stakeholders involving representatives of different organisations, regulators, interest groups and individuals whose activities might be affected by MCZs. Balanced Seas represented the south-east; Finding Sanctuary the south-west; Irish Seas Conservation Zones the Irish Sea; and Net Gain represented the North Sea. These four regional MCZ projects submitted their final recommendations to JNCC and Natural England in September 2011.

Since then, JNCC and Natural England have assessed the ecological implications of the four projects' recommendations for MCZs, and the ecological evidence base for the sites. At the same time, economists from the four regional MCZ projects have prepared socio-economic impact assessments for each MCZ, as well as for all the sites combined.

All of this information – the regional MCZ projects' recommendations (from September 2011), the regional MCZ projects' impact assessments, and JNCC and Natural England's formal advice regarding the ecological evidence – was brought together to make up the Advice Package presented to Defra on 18<sup>th</sup> July.

### **Next steps**

Between now and the end of the year, Defra will assess each component of the Advice Package and will provide its own impact assessment, which will be used during the three month public consultation that will open in December 2012. Following the consultation, it is anticipated that the Minister will select:

- Sites that are backed by robust evidence, to designate in summer 2013
- Sites where further evidence is required, to designate at a later stage
- Sites that are not considered suitable to progress

Once the first wave of MCZs is designated in summer 2013, JNCC and Natural England will provide their conservation advice packages for each site to help inform how these sites should be managed. Management measures will be proposed by the appropriate regulatory authority for each designated MCZ and finalised following local consultations and input from sea users and other interested parties.

For more information see [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk) and [www.jncc.defra.gov.uk](http://www.jncc.defra.gov.uk)

## RESEARCH NEWS

### GLOBAL SEABIRD POPULATIONS REVIEW

The status of the world's seabirds has deteriorated rapidly over recent decades and several species and many populations are now perilously close to extinction. These are the findings of a major new review published by John Croxall *et al* in the journal *Bird Conservation International*.

The review—based on BirdLife International's data and assessment for the IUCN Red List—reveals that seabirds are now more threatened than any other group of birds. Of the 346 seabird species, 97 (28%) are globally threatened and a further 10% are close to being so. Nearly half of all seabird species are known or suspected to be experiencing population declines. The albatross family is especially imperilled with 17 of the 22 species currently threatened with extinction.

There may still be time to reverse these declines and the review is clear on the actions that need to be taken. The sites where seabirds congregate—both onshore breeding colonies and offshore feeding grounds must be protected. BirdLife has already identified many Important Bird Areas (IBAs) for seabirds on land and is about to publish the first inventory of marine IBAs in the high seas. It is hoped that these will help develop a global network of Marine Protected Areas and assist the implementation of new approaches to the management and protection of marine systems.

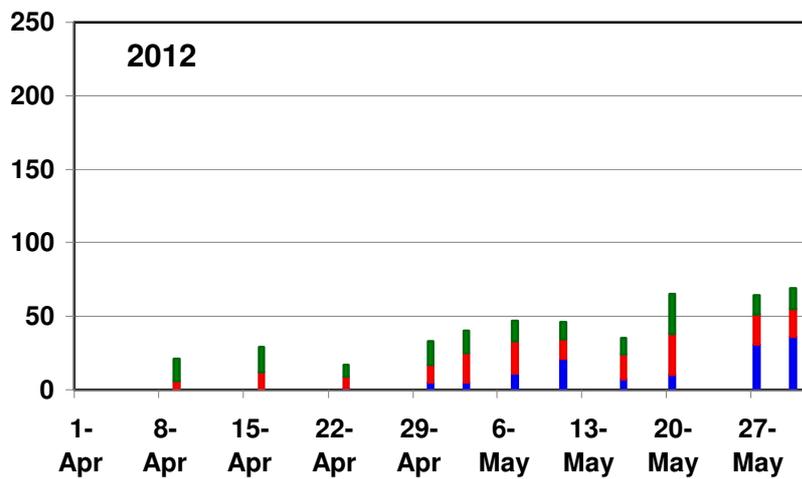
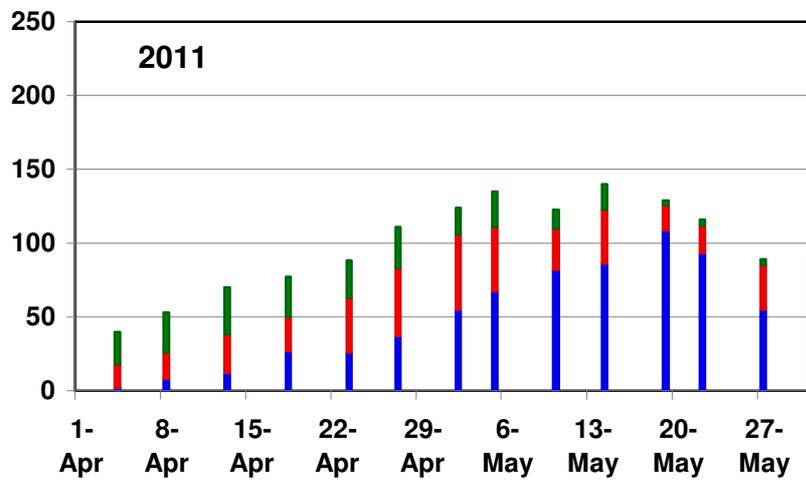
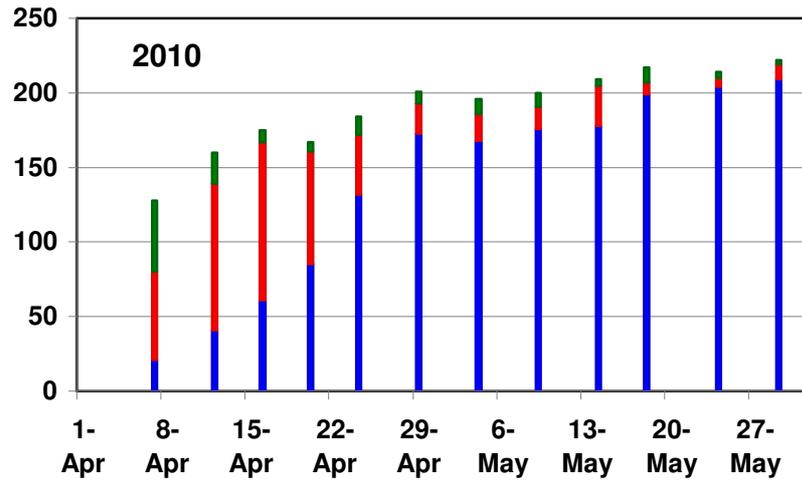
Invasive species, especially introduced rodents, must be removed from major seabird colonies. Several successful restoration projects have already taken place and BirdLife is currently collaborating with Island Conservation and the University of California, Santa Cruz to compile a list of priority sites for future eradication operations. There is also a need for more research to fill existing knowledge gaps and address emerging threats such as aquaculture, energy generation operations and climate change.

The review paper [Croxall, J. P., Butchart S. H. M., Lascelles, B., Stattersfield A. J., Sullivan B., Symes, A. and Taylor, P. (2012) Seabird conservation status, threats and priority actions: a global assessment. *BIRD CONSERV. INT.* 22: 1–34.] is the lead article in a special seabird edition of *BIRD CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL* and can be accessed for free [here](#).

## BREEDING SEASON NEWS

### SHETLAND'S SHAGS IN TROUBLE?

Throughout the late 1980s and 1990s, when the lack of availability of sandeels in Shetland was having an increasing impact on the breeding performance of Arctic Terns and Black-legged Kittiwakes in particular, one of the more resilient species appeared to be European Shag, the perceived wisdom being that they could forage at depth, and possibly catch sandeels by disturbing them from the sediment in a way that other seabirds do not (Watanuki *et al.* 2008). This all changed in the poor breeding season of 2004, when Shags gradually deserted Foula (Mavor *et al.* 2005), the largest colony in the northeast Atlantic at the time of both the 1985-88 Seabird Colony Register (2,400 AON) and the 1998-2002 Seabird 2000 (2,277 AON) censuses (Wanless & Harris *et al.* 2004).



**Figure 1. The number of apparently incubating (blue), empty AON (red) and trace (green) European Shag nests recorded on checks of the same breeding success plots at Sumburgh Head, Shetland, 2010-2012.**

Breeding success was relatively low elsewhere in Shetland that summer, and in 2005, but by 2006 had returned to 'normal' on Foula and Fair Isle, and at Sumburgh Head, the main colonies monitored, although breeding numbers on Foula have remained well below their pre-2004 level (Mavor *et al.* 2008). Another poor season in 2008 saw almost complete breeding failure on Fair Isle and very low success on Foula, yet at Sumburgh Head (just 40 km northeast of Fair Isle) Shags had very good season with 1.51 young fledged per egg-laying pair and 22% of pairs fledging a brood of three (Shaw 2008; Heubeck & Mellor 2009). A census on Fair Isle in 2008 found just 235 AON, 68% fewer than in 2003, whereas numbers at Sumburgh Head remained stable (219 AON in 2008, 213 in 2007, 221 in 2003).

Since 2008, Shag numbers on Fair Isle have declined further. By 2010, increased numbers in the southeast Mainland of Shetland (877 AON from Sumburgh Head to Mousa, c.f. 781 in 2009, 564 in 2005 and 548 in 2003), and sightings of ringed adults in colonies with no history of ringing, strongly suggested immigration of established breeders from Fair Isle. After a generally good breeding season in 2010 (1.29 fledged per AON on Foula, 0.86 on Fair Isle, 1.17 at Sumburgh Head), non-breeding was evident at colonies elsewhere in Shetland in 2011, particularly at Sumburgh Head where many of the pairs that did nest gave up their breeding attempt from late May onwards (Figure 1). This spring, it became obvious that the Shag breeding season was either going to be very late or non-breeding was going to be even more extensive. During Black Guillemot monitoring in April on coasts all around Mainland Shetland, adult Shags in full breeding plumage were seen either standing on empty nest ledges or in roosts. At the time of writing, it looks like it will be a non-breeding year rather than just a late season, and the outcome will be reported on in the next Newsletter.

Non-breeding by adults which have bred before is a well-known phenomenon in European Shags and related species, and is probably a response to low food availability in the pre-laying period (Aebischer & Wanless 1992). Mass non-breeding, with apparent population 'crashes' has been documented at colonies on the west and east coasts of Scotland (Aebischer & Wanless 1992; Swann 2000; Wanless & Harris 2004), but where adult survival was unchanged the population 'recovered' in subsequent years. The events on Foula in 2004 and Fair Isle in 2008 were the first occasions that abrupt, mass non-breeding of Shags had been recorded in Shetland, which held 19% of the British and Irish population in 1998-2002. The apparent desertion of Foula and Fair Isle by a substantial proportion of the breeding population would seem to contrast with previous events at other Scottish colonies.

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## RIVER TYNE KITTIWAKE BREEDING IN NORTH EAST ENGLAND: OFFICIAL ATTITUDES AT SOME SITES IN THE NEWCASTLE-GATESHEAD AREA



***The main nesting ledge at the Baltic, Gateshead, on 14 May 2012 (Daniel M Turner)***

### ***The Guildhall, Newcastle quayside.***

This site has been used by breeding Kittiwakes since 2007 and held 27 AON (Apparently occupied nests) in summer 2011. Between 17-20 January (2012) the window ledges of the upper eastern elevation were cleared of old nests and spikes - then the elevation was netted to stop nesting. The work was carried out by Rentokil as arranged by Newcastle City Council. The City Council was genuinely concerned about this Grade 1 Listed Building and obligations to their tenants. On 14 May 2012 – up to eight apparently occupied nests were observed on the building – at two positions on either side of the new netting

### **Tyne Bridge**

North abutment (also termed 'buttress' or 'tower') area, Newcastle quayside. This site has been used by breeding Kittiwakes since 1996 and held 317 AON in summer 2011. Following a conversation on 24.01.12 it was confirmed that the City Council has no plans at present to deter the nesting gulls from this site.

### **The Baltic, Gateshead.**

Kittiwakes returned here in 2004, after some years of discouragement when the site was netted during conversion to an Arts Centre. In summer 2011 the site held 53 AON. On 20.01.12 a member of staff from the Baltic stated ...

*'They are a protected species ... they were here before us ... it is more their building than ours'.*

The staff now make a feature of the nesting Kittiwakes on the building - which are viewable from the Level 4 terrace. During summer 2011 a 'Kittiwake cam' was installed so the birds' activities may be watched from inside the building on a screen. During the nesting period a walkway is closed, outside the property, directly beneath the nesting ledges (on the north face) to protect the public from falling material. This is a nice example of acceptance of the birds and should encourage others.

The RSPB film unit is planning a new production about Kittiwakes and intends to visit Newcastle Quayside during 2012 as part of this project.

### **Reference**

**Turner, D.M.** (2011) Counts and breeding success of Black-legged Kittiwakes *Rissa tridactyla* nesting on man-made structures along the River Tyne, northeast England, 1994-2009, *Seabird*, Vol. 23 (2010), 111 - 126.

**Daniel M Turner, North Shields**

(email [dan.m.turner@btinternet.com](mailto:dan.m.turner@btinternet.com))

## **FAIR ISLE BREEDING SEASON - 2011**

***For Shetland 2011 breeding season summary please see SGN 118: 12-14.***

It was yet another year of very low to zero breeding success for most species. Gannet *Sula bassana* and fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis* were the only seabirds to have reasonably successful breeding, though productivity was lower for both than in 2010. One glimmer of hope was the suggestion of at least a marginal recovery by the puffin *Fratercula arctica* (Table 2). Low breeding success over a long period of time is now beginning to impact on population sizes. The accelerating decline in breeding populations (Table 1) has to be of great concern. If these conditions continue it is not inconceivable that kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla* and shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* will be lost to the isle as breeding birds in the near future.

Monitoring parameters	2011 count	Last census	Change since last census
Fulmar (plots)	303 AOS	2010	-19/6%
Fulmar (whole-island)	29,640 AOS	2006	+ 6.25%
Gannet (whole-island)	4085 AON	2010	+ 2.95%
Shag (plots)	20 AON	2010	- 59.2%
Arctic Skuas (whole-island)	29 AOT	2010	- 58.6%
Great Skuas (whole-island)	227 AOT	2010	- 18.9%
Kittiwake (plots)	81 AON	2010	- 52.4%
Kittiwake (whole-island)	1438 AON	2008	- 46.5%
Arctic Tern (whole-island)	9 AIA	2010	- 97.6%
Common Terns (whole-island)	0 AIA	2010	<b>remains zero</b>
Guillemot (plots)	995 individuals	2010	- 29.2%
Razorbill (plot)	23 individuals	2010	- 17.8%
Black Guillemot (east coast)	161 BPA	2010	-16.1%

**Table 1. Population monitoring**

AOS = Apparently Occupied Sites, AON = Apparently Occupied Nests, AOT = Apparently Occupied Territories,  
AIA = Apparently Incubating Adults, BPA = Breeding Plumage Adults

Monitoring parameters	Productivity in 2011	Change from 2010
Fulmar (plots)	0.52 chicks fledged per AOS	- 3.7%
Gannet (plots)	0.72 chicks fledged per AON	- 6.5%
Shag (plots)	0.11 chicks fledged per AON	- 87.2%
Arctic Skuas (whole-island)	<b>zero chicks fledged</b>	- 100%
Great Skuas (whole-island)	0.25 chicks fledged per AOT	- 59.7%
Kittiwake (plots)	<b>zero chicks fledged</b>	- 100%
Arctic Tern (whole-island)	<b>zero chicks fledged</b> (as in 2010)	no change: <b>remains zero</b>
Common Terns (whole-island)	<b>zero nests</b> (as in 2010)	no change: <b>remains zero</b>
Guillemot (plots)	<b>zero chicks fledged</b>	- 100%
Razorbill (plot)	0.02 chicks fledged per egg laid	up from zero in 2010
Puffin (plots)	0.39 chicks fledged per egg laid	+ 17.9%

**Table 2. Breeding success**

AOS = Apparently Occupied Sites, AON = Apparently Occupied Nests, AOT = Apparently Occupied Territories  
NB: previously monitored east coast plots for black guillemots were no longer viable due to insufficient sites

### **Adult survival**

From a total of 127 colour-ringed puffins known to be alive in 2010, 71 were re-sighted in 2011 giving a year-to-year survival estimate of 55.9%. This was relatively low compared with the 2009 to 2010 estimate (80.4%). The long-term trend is that adult survival was relatively high and stable from 1987 to 1999 (> 85% in the majority of years), but has dropped slightly since 2000 (<85% in the majority of years). The kittiwake adult survival study at Goorn is no longer viable. Nesting has not occurred at this site since 2009. Kittiwake numbers have severely declined on Fair Isle and during the 2011 whole-island census, no sites were found that would be suitable for adult survival monitoring.

## ***Diet***

The number of occasions when fish were brought to chicks by adult common guillemots during a 24hr feeding watch was 77.9% less in 2011 (27 flights in with fish) than in 2010 (122 flights in with fish). Sandeels (51.9%) and clupeids (33.3%) were the most commonly recorded prey-types brought back by guillemots during the 24hr feeding watch, as was true in 2010. The majority (59.3%) of fish brought back by guillemots were 1 to 1.5 times the length of the bill in 2011. No prey samples were collected from European shags, black-legged kittiwakes, razorbills and guillemots in 2011 because, within the accessible colonies, no adults were encountered that were carrying food. Chick starvation was apparent throughout the breeding season. Many chick corpses were seen in the colonies during all visits. The total number of occasions when fish were brought back to burrows by Atlantic puffins during a 24hr feeding watch was 69.8% less in 2011 (86 flights in with fish) than in 2010 (285 flights in with fish). In 2011 and 2010, Rockling and small Sandeels were the most abundant prey-types in food samples collected from puffins and the most abundant prey-types seen during 24hr puffin feeding watches.

## **Other seabird studies on Fair Isle in 2011**

### ***Seabird tracking***

Research was undertaken by RSPB and Aberdeen University to determine the foraging behaviour of northern fulmars, European shags, black-legged kittiwakes, common guillemots and razorbills and identify important feeding areas. The project involved fitting adults with GPS trackers and TDR data loggers and integrates into a UK-scale study lasting 3 years (Future of the Atlantic Marine Environment project, 2010-2012; [www.FAMEproject.eu](http://www.FAMEproject.eu)). It is hoped that aspects of this work, in particular the field-based studies using remote tracking devices, may be continued by Fair Isle Bird Observatory in 2012.

### ***Puffin population monitoring using time-lapse photography***

Monitoring of puffin populations using a remote camera and time-lapse photography was trialled at the Roskilie colony. This research was part of a PhD study supervised by Glasgow University and 2011 was the pilot year. The photographic data collected by staff at the Bird Observatory will be analysed by Glasgow University over the winter of 2011-12.

### ***Great Skua diet analyses***

Prey-types and the proportions of different prey-types in the diet of great skuas were assessed through the breeding season by systematic analysis of regurgitated pellets and prey remains found in the nesting territories of all great skua pairs on Fair Isle. This was a baseline survey which will hopefully be repeated in future and facilitate between year comparisons of skua diet.

### ***Leach's Storm-petrel surveys***

Breeding by Leach's storm-petrels has long been suspected on Fair Isle, where a downy juvenile was found at the South Lighthouse in October 1975, three adults were heard calling from the north cliffs in July 1981 and at least two adults were heard calling from the cliffs and scree in the Kirn o' Skroo in July 2006 and July 2007. Using call-playback, nine sites were surveyed for burrows occupied by Leach's storm-petrels, but none were found. This work was part of a Shetland-wide project looking at burrow occupancy by Leach's storm-petrels and the breeding status of adults.

**Adapted from The Fair Isle Marine Environment and Tourism and Initiative Newsletter**

## PAPER REVIEW

Paterson, A. 2012. *Pelagic Birds on the North Atlantic: an Identification Guide*. New Holland, London. ISBN 978-1-78009-228-7. 32pp, B&W illustrations, softback. £9.99.

This is a small, pocket-sized guide designed to be taken to sea on pelagic trips in the North Atlantic (both sides). It is printed on waterproof paper (similar to that used in Rite in the Rain notebooks preferred by many for wet fieldwork). Although I have not yet had the chance to test it at sea, tests in my bathroom demonstrate that the book will put up with getting a thorough soaking and remain fully useable. The core of the book are a series of black and white illustrations of upper and lower flight views of species that occur offshore in the North Atlantic (the auks are also shown with an on-water view). Key features to look for in the field are summarised in a sentence or phrase. Species that are particularly difficult to separate (e.g. Fea's and Zino's petrels; Cory's and Cape Verde shearwater) are placed on the same page. The choice of species covered excludes most gulls, ostensibly because they are not pelagic – but then black guillemot is included. I think that this guide fills a niche of a book that you could take onto a wet deck with you – and would be a very use aide-memoir of what to look for on species that you may not be familiar with – the paper would also allow pencil notes to be put in the book against species that you might see. It will not replace the more detailed books such as Onley and Scofield 2007. Albatrosses, petrels and shearwaters of the world, Blomdahl *et al.* 2003. Flight identification of European seabirds or either the Harrison books, but these will not put up with wet conditions for long.

Mark Tasker

## SEABIRD GROUP NEWS

### 47<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SEABIRD GROUP

**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> November**

**Scottish Ringers Conference**

Carrbridge Hotel

Minutes from the 46<sup>th</sup> AGM can be found in SGN 118

Please contact the secretary Linda Wilson if you have any items for the agenda

#### SEABIRD 25

While a number of papers and shorter submissions have been finally accepted, and others are in revision stages, there is still space for more material for SEABIRD 25, which will hopefully be published and distributed to members before the end of this calendar year.

If you have any material suitable for inclusion, please contact Martin Heubeck  
[martinheubeck@btinternet.com](mailto:martinheubeck@btinternet.com) as soon as possible

## CONFERENCES

### 1ST ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 37TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE WATERBIRD SOCIETY, 24 – 29 SEPTEMBER 2013, WILHELMSHAVEN, GERMANY

The Waterbird Society will hold its 37th annual meeting in 2013 in Germany for the first time. The Institute of Avian Research “Vogelwarte Helgoland”, one of the oldest ornithological research institutes in the world, will be the host. The meeting venue is the Stadthalle, located in the centre of Wilhelmshaven on the German North Sea coast.

Wilhelmshaven can be reached easily by train from the nearby airports: Bremen, Hamburg, Hannover, Frankfurt or Amsterdam. Wilhelmshaven is located adjacent to the World Heritage Site “Wadden Sea National Park of Lower Saxony”. There will be good opportunities to experience the rich biodiversity of the Wadden Sea, which provides critical habitat for both breeding and migrating waterbirds along the East-Atlantic Flyway.

The opening reception will be held on Tuesday evening 24 September, the closing banquet on 28 September. The three day scientific program will consist of plenaries, symposia, contributed papers and poster sessions. Saturday 28 September will be a joint scientific day with the International Wader Study Group (IWSG) annual conference (27 to 30 September). Mid-conference field trips will be offered on Friday 27 September. Exhibitors, including book and equipment suppliers, will be present during the meeting.

**Please check [www.waterbirds.org](http://www.waterbirds.org) for updated information.**

The 37th annual meeting of The Waterbird Society is organized by the Institute of Avian Research, Wilhelmshaven, and The Waterbird Society



<http://www.bou.org.uk/conference/marine-renewables-and-birds/>



Website: [www.seabirdgroup.org.uk](http://www.seabirdgroup.org.uk)

Seabird Group Forum:  
<http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/seabirdgroupforum>

**Registered charity No. 260907**

The Seabird Group promotes and helps co-ordinate the study and conservation of seabirds. Members also receive the journal *Seabird*. The Group organises regular conferences and provides small grants towards research.

**CURRENT SEABIRD GROUP COMMITTEE**

Current retiral dates (at AGM) are shown in brackets:

Chairman	Russell Wyn (2015)	<a href="mailto:rbw1@noc.soton.ac.uk">rbw1@noc.soton.ac.uk</a>
Secretary	Linda Wilson (2012)	<a href="mailto:Linda.wilson@jncc.gov.uk">Linda.wilson@jncc.gov.uk</a>
Treasurer	Kerry Leonard (2014)	<a href="mailto:kerryleonard@hotmail.com">kerryleonard@hotmail.com</a>
Membership Secretary	Ilka Win (2012)	<a href="mailto:seabirdgroup.membership@gmail.com">seabirdgroup.membership@gmail.com</a>
Seabird Editor	Martin Heubeck (2015)	<a href="mailto:martinheubeck@btinternet.com">martinheubeck@btinternet.com</a>
Seabird Publishing Editor	Andy Webb (2012)	<a href="mailto:andy@andywebb.org.uk">andy@andywebb.org.uk</a>
Newsletter Editor	Claire Smith (2014)	<a href="mailto:seabirdgroup.newsletter@gmail.com">seabirdgroup.newsletter@gmail.com</a>
Newsletter Assistant Editor	Mark Newell (2014)	<a href="mailto:manew@ceh.ac.uk">manew@ceh.ac.uk</a>
Ordinary members	Chris Thaxter (2014)	<a href="mailto:chris.thaxter@bto.org">chris.thaxter@bto.org</a>

<b>Current membership rates</b>	
Standing Order	£20.00
Concession	£15.00
Institution	£35.00
International:	£21

The Newsletter is published three times a year. The editor welcomes articles from members and others on issues relating to Seabird research and conservation. Deadlines are: 15<sup>th</sup> May (June edition); 15<sup>th</sup> September (October edition) and 15<sup>th</sup> January (February edition).

Submissions for the newsletter must be in electronic format, preferably in word and should be no more than 1500 words. Please email photographs/figures as separate files and with full credits.

Every effort is made to check the content of the material that we publish. It is not, however, always possible to check comprehensively every piece of information back to its original source as well as keeping news timely. Please will readers make further checks at their own discretion, if they have any concerns about any of the information or contacts provided and contact me to allow feedback to other readers if necessary. **We also try to provide a forum for readers' views so that those provided in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor or Seabird Group.**

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