



ORIOLE BIRDING



TOUR REPORT MULL & IONA 19TH – 25TH JUNE 2017

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MONDAY 19TH JUNE – *Sunny spells in moderate NW winds, 18C*

A glorious day today as we travelled to Oban having overnighted in Doncaster en route from Norfolk. Gradually of course, the temperature headed south as we went north! It was still a beautiful afternoon for the crossing to Craignure on Mull, and we were able to enjoy a few common seabirds on the crossing, starting with the **Black Guillemots** in the harbour. A few **Arctic Terns**, single Common Tern, European Shag, Common Guillemot and Northern Gannet were also seen on the way across. The ferry was very busy, and there was a huge queue waiting to board at the other end too, but as usual on Mull it didn't take long to leave the crowds behind as we motored on down through Glen More to our base for the next six nights in Pennyghael. As is often the case on the island, we had a couple of impromptu roadside stops along the way! The first was a cracking **Short-eared Owl** up by the three lochs viewpoint, which was floating over the grassy hillside beside the road before landing obligingly on a rock. The second was one which would become a familiar sight over the coming days – a **Common Snipe** perched on top of a grassy knoll by the road. Arriving to Pennyghael around 1730, we were greeted by the calls of Common Sandpipers ringing out along the beach and our day ended with a superb sunset looking across Loch Scridain into Glen Seilisdair.

TUESDAY 20TH JUNE – *Sunny day in light N breeze, 22C*

It was a glorious morning in Pennyghael overlooking Loch Scridain and the top of Ben More which was free from cloud. The loch was calm and those who were out before our pre-breakfast walk saw an **Otter** swimming past and heading up towards Loch Beg. The rest of us had to make do with a Common Seal, plus a few birds [and a lot of midges!] – **Spotted Flycatcher**, Common Sandpiper, **Black Guillemot** and Eurasian Siskin were all around this morning. After breakfast we headed up Glen More, stopping first at the Three Lochs viewpoint where we had seen the **Short-eared Owl** yesterday afternoon. Amazingly it was still in virtually the same place sitting on a rock, and we had great views through the scope. A bit further on we stopped in Glen Forsa specifically to look for Tree Pipit, which we only heard distantly singing, but there were lots of Willow Warblers about, the first **Common Redpoll** and a cracking **Marsh Fritillary** butterfly which flew in and landed on the road next to us, no doubt taking warmth from the tarmac. The hardest of Mull's fritillaries to find, we were pleased to get such great views early on in the trip – though of course the sun is key! Next we turned down towards Loch Buie, passing first along the shore of Loch Spelve where a small party of eclipse drake Common Eiders were hanging out, and several Common Sandpipers were along the shore. The beautiful oak woodland which the road snakes through looked inviting and we saw a **Spotted Flycatcher** perched in the open briefly, and a **Tree Pipit** which came off the road and into a small rowan by the side. It soon disappeared into the bracken though, so we decided we would try properly on the way back but for now, continue to the parking area at Loch Buie post office. This is a stunning location, and under the blue skies it looked even more impressive today. Two **Red-throated Divers** were out in the bay, and there were Northern Gannets plunging into the water further out, the plumes of spray catching the eye each time one dived in! Eagles really stole the show here over the adjacent ridges – we had first a single **Golden Eagle** up on the east side, then an adult pair together on the west side of the loch, mobbing an adult **White-tailed Eagle** which then drifted slowly towards us and behind the highest peak. We briefly saw it again shortly after, thermalling up before gliding away out of sight. A solitary immature **Golden Eagle** then appeared, and soared up a bit closer showing its white tail base and giving everyone a chance to study the silhouette. The best view of all though was of one of the original adult **Golden Eagles** which came low along the ridge being mobbed by a Common Buzzard, which looked like a crow by comparison! After coffee, we headed back out along the road again, pausing briefly for some good views of **Common Redpolls** – a rosy red male on a roadside wire, and a female down in the grass gathering food. A Northern Wheatear moved ahead of us as we drove back along Loch Spelve, and the Eiders had now been joined by two **Red-throated Divers** which we stopped for a look at through the scope. We also saw a **Large Heath** butterfly here – particularly pale looking and with a densely hairy body at this latitude. Back in the woodland where we had seen the **Tree Pipit** briefly earlier on, we now had much better views and established that in fact an adult was feeding two fledged youngsters among the oaks here. We spent a while watching these birds and also picked up a **Golden-ringed Dragonfly** hanging on the Bog

Myrtle on the slope below. Perhaps the highlight of the day came as we walked back up the road to the van though as a **Golden Eagle** appeared low overhead and began circling above the wood, mobbed by a Hooded Crow and a Lapwing! The bird didn't drift frustratingly away either, but instead circled for a good minute directly overhead, giving some absolutely jaw-dropping views. We would struggle to see a better one on the whole of the rest of the trip.



Greater Butterfly and Heath Spotted Orchids, a great display on the roadside verges today

Reaching the junction with the 'main' road again, we stopped to explore the verges for orchids. We managed to find one spike of **Greater Butterfly Orchid** in full bloom, plus plenty of **Common** and **Heath Spotted Orchids** and **Northern Marsh Orchid**. This is often a good spot for butterflies and odonata, and with the sun still shining we weren't disappointed.



Keeled Skimmer – this female was well camouflaged!

We had great views of Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Common Blue, Red Admiral and Green-veined White, plus Highland Darter, Keeled Skimmer, Large Red Damselfly, Golden-ringed Dragonfly and a female Beautiful Demoiselle. Lunch here was interrupted by a superb male Hen Harrier drifting over the road, and the songs of Blackcap and Willow Warbler were everywhere.



Common Blue – a stunning female photographed near Inverlussa



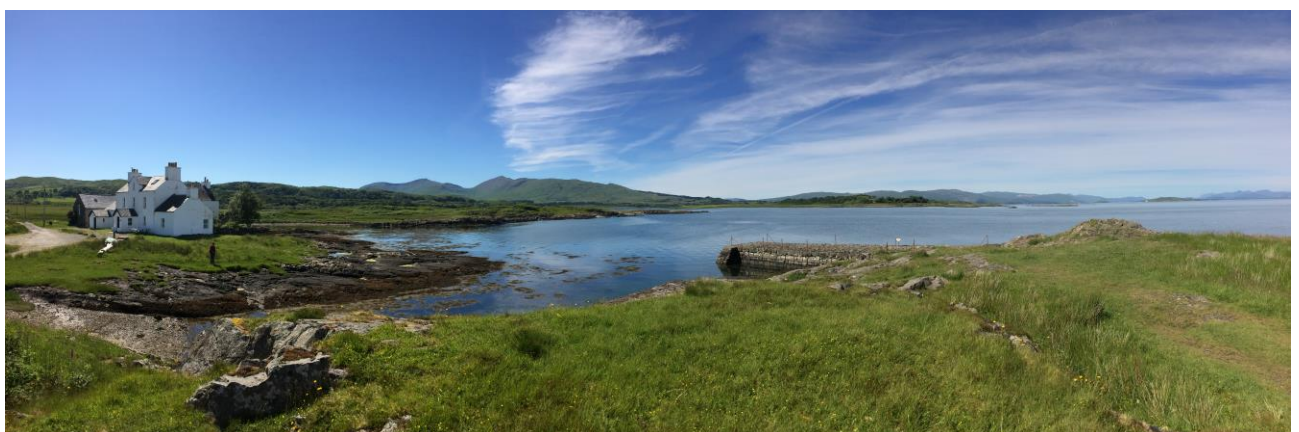
Golden-ringed Dragonfly and Heath Fragrant Orchid – a great day for general wildlife!

Grasspoint would be our next stop, though typically for Mull we had another impromptu stop at Inverlussa before we got there for a pair of **Whinchats** which were showing beautifully by the side of the road – the male was sallying up from the telegraph wires to take insects on the wing. A Reed Bunting and another **Common Redpoll** were also noted here. The road to grasspoint winds its way through the woods and down to the parking area where it was surprisingly quiet – the only other vehicle here left as we arrived and we had the place to ourselves. Common Whitethroat, **Whinchat** and Willow Warbler were along the road down to the point, the latter feeding a party of fledgelings and allowing us some really lovely views. A couple more **Small Pearl-bordered Fritillaries** were noted and a great showing of orchids included Heath Spotted, Lesser Butterfly and Heath Fragrant Orchids all in bloom along the side of the path.



Whinchat and Small Heath, two highlights on the way down to Grasspoint today

Down at the point, the views across towards Lismore and Oban and up the Great Glen to Ben Nevis, were simply spectacular. There were a few birds to see too, such as Rock Pipit and Common Sandpiper on the rocks and **Black Guillemot** and a pair of Common Shelducks with a brood offshore. We couldn't believe how warm it was as we enjoyed a brew back at the parking area stripped down to T-shirts! The route back took us along Glen More and here we made a couple of stops to soak up the grandeur and scan for raptors. We ended up seeing three different **Hen Harriers**, including one obliging male hunting the bracken-covered hillside just above the road, the strong afternoon light making him look almost white. A female was circling a bit further on down towards Kinloch, and rounded off what had been a pretty awesome day – perhaps predictably so given the perfect weather conditions.



Grasspoint - spectacular panoramic view in the sunshine today

WEDNESDAY 21ST JUNE – Showery morning turning to heavy rain later, 17C

A miserable day of weather today but in fact we were rather lucky, as it did remain manageable throughout our planned morning boat trip with Mull Charters from Ulva Ferry – the famous ‘Sea Eagle Adventure’ trip with Martin Keivers. This meant an earlier breakfast and a pretty direct drive around via Loch na Keal, but we did stop to watch a female **Otter** and cub briefly along the south shore of Loch na Keal – they disappeared all too quickly, due to long lenses being pointed at them by camouflaged photographers standing skylined on the rocks in front of them. We reached the pier at Ulva Ferry and met Martin, who already had a surprise in store for us – a male **Adder** was on the jetty, and had wrapped itself around the mooring point! We enjoyed the most amazing close up views of the animal, which seemed quite relaxed, and was in fact trying its best to get onto the boat! Not being quite sure how it had arrived there, one of the locals put it in a bucket and released it nearby into its more typical habitat! Soon we were on our way out alongside the Isle of Ulva, a beautiful rugged island with no roads and little habitation, that dominates the landscape at the mouth of Loch na Keal. It wasn’t long before we spotted an adult **White-tailed Eagle** perched on one of the reefs, keeping a watch over the many Common Seals in the vicinity which were having their pups just now. Further out into the loch, and the first **White-tailed Eagle** – an adult female – came in to the boat to take a Mackerel. Amazing close range views of this immense bird delicately plucking the fish off the surface without hardly a ripple. She took it back to a nearby nest which we could now see held two very large chicks. Further on down the loch we watched **Razorbills**, **Shags** and **Black Guillemots** on the water before finding a sheltered spot for a brew. The rain came though quite heavily, but soon cleared and with that a **Golden Eagle** appeared briefly over one of the adjacent ridges. Then out of the blue, ‘compo’ appeared, a young male **White-tailed Eagle** who had a nest further down the island. He came in slowly into the wind, incredibly close to the boat, and plucked a fish – much closer than the previous female and the light was fantastic now too – what a sight! We watched him fly some distance away to the nest, but he soon returned for another fish, giving everyone a second chance to get some shots. We chugged bag in the rain towards Ulva Ferry, picking up two **Otters** along the way which were fishing among the seaweed covered rocks on the rising tide. They were always a bit tricky to see, splashing around right at the back and too far into the rocks for us to follow closely with the boat. Back on dry land, all agreed that it had been an exhilarating morning!



Adder at Ulva Ferry – not in its natural habitat!

It was now lunchtime and so we headed round to Eas Fors waterfall just a short distance along the coast, overlooking Ulva. **Grey Wagtail** was a new species added here, where the tumbling waters go straight over the cliff edge and down into the loch below. Three **Common Raven** were overhead, but the rain began to fall more heavily as we continued on towards Calgary and in fact the heavens properly opened as we headed across the Treshnish peninsula. Our plan was to head down to Caliach Point but the weather was pretty awful now and we weren't able to fully enjoy the views out towards the islands of Coll and Tiree. We did spend some time between showers scanning the sea here and saw lots of auks and shags moving, two **Manx Shearwaters** passed by and a couple of **Kittiwakes** were on the rocks. There were also lots of Northern Wheatears about on the hillside here, but one final front of rain finished us off and we had to dive back into the vehicle. A stop further east at Dervaig was made and here a female **Goosander** and duckling were seen, feeding in the shallow bay on the high tide. Several Common Redshanks were also breeding here and we saw well grown Common Gull chicks too. Our route back took us down Glen Aros to Salen, and into Craignure. A stop here for the shop and toilets yielded and obliging **Spotted Flycatcher** in the car park, but this proved to be our last meaningful bird of the day as we headed down a very soggy Glen More to Pennyghael.



Eas Fors – the upper part of the waterfall, home to Grey Wagtails

THURSDAY 22ND JUNE – *Showers and drizzly rain in light N winds, 16C*

Today we journeyed down the Ross of Mull peninsula to Fionnphort and joined the Staffa Tours boat for the Treshnish Isles wildlife cruise for the day. It was a nice morning and the sea was lovely and calm as we set off down the Sound of Iona, and out into the Atlantic towards the island of Staffa. Soon we began to see many seabirds from the top deck of the boat – **Common Guillemots**, **Razorbills** and **Atlantic Puffins** were all plentiful on the water. **Kittiwake**, **Northern Gannet** and **Arctic Tern** were also seen, but the highlight was a complete and utter surprise. Two of the group spotted a small bird sat on the water, which they called out as something odd as it took flight. Ashley then picked it up and it was clearly a small wader, with prominent white wing bar and distinctive 'jinking' flight. Those who had seen it on the water described a long fine bill, and a black stripe down

the back of the neck – it was clearly a **Red-necked Phalarope**! It has been a good year for passage of this species in the British Isles, and this was in fact the third we had seen on tours in recent weeks – it was certainly the first we had ever seen around Mull though! Reaching Staffa, we had around forty five minutes ashore to visit Fingal's Cave. Ashley took a walk around the island seeing several **Twite**, displaying **Common Snipe**, and a pair of **Great Skuas** which the group then all caught up with as they flew over the jetty. A pair of **Black Guillemots** showed superbly by the cave entrance, and we could see several Northern Fulmars along the columnar basalt cliffs.

Next we steamed across to the uninhabited isle of Lunga in the Treshnish archipelago, and had a great two hours ashore despite the horrible drizzly rain setting in and blanketing what should have been superb views out to the other islands. The water around Lunga was carpeted with auks, and as we clambered up the rocks from the landing pontoon we could hear a **Corncrake** crekking distantly. Rock Pipit, Northern Wheatear, Common Sandpiper and Common Ringed Plover were just around the small beach and once up on the clifftop, we could of course get very close to the thousands of **Puffins** on the island. They seemed to be bringing in good quantities of sandeels this year, so hopefully there were plenty of healthy chicks below ground. Another **Corncrake** was then heard, calling from a rough area of bracken just back from the clifftop. The vegetation looked far too tall for a sighting, though the bird was only a few feet away and almost deafening us! A narrow path looked like a good spot for it to run across, but it didn't! Following the precipitous route along the edge of the islands, we headed towards the auk colony on Harp Rock. Here we had point blank encounters with nesting **Shags** by the side of the trail, and **Puffins** all along the walk. The **Razorbills** looked absolutely superb today, with the rain beading on their backs – their plumage was clearly the most perfect waterproof gear! At the Harp Rock, we marvelled at the sight of the closely packed ranks of breeding **Common Guillemots**, and picked out several of the bridled form. **Kittiwakes** were nesting here too – altogether a fantastic sight, sound, and smell! Walking back, a couple of **Twite** flew by calling, and some hung back for another try at the **Corncrake** which had begun crekking again after we passed. These lucky two had a fantastic sighting of the bird, which came out into the open onto the small path we had hoped it might cross earlier! An awkward one for the checklist later! Down at the boat, two **Great Skuas** gave a superb display as they came in right over our heads and along the cliffs, sending the **Puffins** scattering off the top like dominoes as they cruised along. Time flies though and it was now time to board the boat again for the one hour run back into Iona.



Razorbill exhibiting its waterproof plumage on Lunga today!



The sail out to Staffa with the Burg peninsula in the background

It was now about 1500 and we decided to get off on Iona, and spend a couple of hours trying for views of Corncrake as the weather forecast for the coming days suggested strong winds would be moving in. Our circular walk around the famous Abbey and round the top of the island produced only one distant creaking bird though, so a bit of a disappointment. We had to make do with just a few Rock Doves, Song Thrushes and Common Linnet on our walk round, before catching the ferry back across to Fionnphort. Everyone was pretty weary after a long day, so we headed straight back to Pennyghael wrapping up the day there around 1800.

FRIDAY 23RD JUNE – *Breezy day with frequent light showers, 14C*

Our main target for this morning was to try and get some better views of **Otters**, as we had only seen them either briefly or distantly so far. With this in mind we set off in the rain and wind around the far side of Loch Beg – good weather in fact for seeing **Otters** and the tidal state was suitable too. Sure enough it didn't take long to locate a lone dog **Otter** catching crabs and bringing them up onto the seaweed covered rocks to feed. We had some pretty good views for about fifteen minutes, and he caught three in that time alone! Further on, in the next bay, we found another lone dog **Otter**, but this one was closer – by staying in the vehicle we were able to enjoy fantastic close ups of him rolling around on the rocks and marking them with his scent. Eventually he took to the water and headed further out into the loch, when other people started walking along the road with cameras – an increasing problem in Mull where it seems everyone now wears camo and has a long lens, but no binoculars or fieldcraft. We continued on our way around past Tiroran and along Glen Seiliseir, getting some good views of **Common Ravens** and seeing **Northern Wheatears** flitting ahead of us all the way. Once we broke out the other side by Gribun Cliffs and dropped down to the shore of Loch na Keal, we found a nice spot to stop and stretch our legs and scan the loch. The first thing we saw

was another lone **Otter**, fishing by a small skerry of rocks and again regularly bringing crabs up to feed out of the water. We were able to scope this one, so perhaps even better views. Also along the shore were Rock Pipits and more Wheatears, while the odd Common Eider was out in the bay. We drove further on, and chose another stopping place for morning coffee. Here we picked out a very distant **Golden Eagle** way up on a crag, drying its wings in between the showers. A female Red-breasted Merganser was also seen, and the sun even came out briefly transforming the view and illuminating everything beautifully – the Grey Heron fishing in front of us suddenly looked stunning! Two **Twite** flew by calling, but were too brief – we still needed a proper view of one this trip. Our final stop of the morning was looking up to an active **Golden Eagle** eyrie and the female flew in just as we arrived. We quickly put up scopes and had a cracking view of her circling the crags before dropping down to perch in the open on a bare branch, where she sat for then next twenty minutes at least. The sun glinting off her golden nape feathers as she preened was a really awesome sight. Two more **Twite** flew in, and landed briefly to drink from a puddle – some of the group at least saw them this time, and it was even possible to see their pink rumps as they flew off!

We planned to lunch at Knock, but we had yet another impromptu stop as a bright red bird flew up from a channel of water by the side of the road – a cracking male **Common Crossbill**! It took us a little by surprise, and unfortunately was only seen [very well!] by those on the right side of the van. We didn't have to worry though, because a female flew in and began feeding in the treetops just above our parking spot for lunch, and we watched her in the scope for ten minutes solid. A juvenile Goldcrest was also foraging in the conifers close by, and we added Coal Tit to the trip list courtesy of a juvenile in the trees by Knock bridge. The water was rushing through here after the heavy overnight rain – no rocks for Dippers to sit on today! After lunch, we set off on the Loch Ba walk, one of the most beautiful walks on Mull. Once the path opened out near the start of the loch, we noticed a number of small birds feeding under the trees to the left and walked a short way up a side track for a better look. There were scores of birds – Chaffinches, Siskins, a few **Common Redpoll**, four **Bullfinches**, **Spotted Flycatcher**, Song Thrushes and our first **Common Treecreeper** of the trip. It took a while for everyone to see all of them, but we got there in the end! The **Spotted Flycatcher** ended up being particularly obliging, and everyone got a nice view in the scope. Further down, a **Grey Wagtail** was feeding a fledgling up a little burn to the side of the track, and there were several Sand Martins zipping by giving their trilling calls. The weather eventually perked up and the dramatic mountain scenery all around was beautifully illuminated. A good moment to scan for raptors, and straight away we picked a **Golden Eagle** up hanging on the ridge opposite. This was soon followed by two young **White-tailed Eagles**, which circled in and landed on the top of the mountain. Another eagle then appeared further to the right, and it was coming towards us – another adult **Golden Eagle**. Suddenly the eagle folded its wings and stooped from a great height, almost striking a Common Buzzard in the valley below. The eagle made several further attempts on the Buzzard, before its mate came up from the trees and assisted in seeing off the eagle which then drifted all the way along the ridge in front of us. The views through the scope were superb! The fifth eagle in five minutes then appeared and this time it was an adult **White-tailed Eagle**, which soared up and could be seen in the same field of view as the goldie. We followed the **White-tailed Eagle** as it drifted high across the valley, and suddenly noticed two very small birds coming in to mob it aggressively. One of the group remarked that they looked like hirundines, but they were in fact **Merlins**! Two of Britain's smallest raptors mobbing the biggest – what an amazing sight! We hadn't even made a start on looking for our actual target bird here, which was **Common Redstart**! We walked on along the edge of the trees, noting a Tree Pipit creeping in the grass, and several Willow Warblers, before we heard the distinctive persistent 'hoo-eet' call of a **Redstart**. Sure enough a female flicked up onto the deer fence and we also noticed a spotted fledgling skulking close by. We waited patiently and in the end, everyone got a decent view – they didn't sit in one place for very long! The walk back gave us time to reflect on what had been an absolutely brilliant hours birding, and to see some of the birds again. Over a brew back at the car park, we were treated to excellent views of four **Common Crossbills**, including two males in full song flying back and forth over the track – superb!

It was now gone 4pm and we had crammed a lot in already, but we still had time to just check one more spot nearby. As we drove along, an adult **White-tailed Eagle** flew alongside the loch shore

putting up all the gulls, and it did a spectacular mid-air roll to present its talons to an onrushing Buzzard! Parking up further down, we could see the second adult **White-tailed Eagle** perched up in the trees, and really this was our first chance so far to study a perched one in the scope. The first bird flew back in too, right overhead, much to the annoyance of the local Hooded Crows! Our route back to base today was basically a retrace of our steps along Loch na Keal and back down Glen Seilisdair where we noted some lovely **Rock Doves** flying through. The tide was really high now though around Loch Beg, so we didn't see any more Otters. A female **Hen Harrier** appeared though and was quartering the boggy grassland at Kinloch. We parked up for a better view, but then realised the male was flying straight down the road towards us! A really fantastic view as he passed our van and joined the female, and they both circled up against the hillside in dramatic brooding light. Amazingly, we had only driven a mile when another **Hen Harrier** literally dropped out of the sky and began quartering right alongside the road – a superb adult female with strongly spotted chest and beautifully barred underwings. We were so close we could see every detail. Her mate, our fourth **Hen Harrier** in quarter of an hour, was seen further along towards Pennyghael, flying low over the grassland. When Mull decides to deliver, it certainly does so on a spectacular scale! Three Otters, nine eagles and four Hen Harriers was not a bad day at all.

SATURDAY 24TH JUNE – *Strong westerly winds and heavy showers, IIC*

A bit of a 'mopping up' day today as we planned to visit the north-east end of the island, the only part we had not been to so far. Our journey started with a superb view of a male **Hen Harrier** flying low across Loch Beg and off across the grassland towards Pennyghael, but was otherwise uneventful until we reached Salen. Here we parked by the old boats in Salen bay and saw three **Red-breasted Mergansers** and several Common Seals around the exposed skerries. Our main target bird for morning was **Wood Warbler**, which can often be found in the mixed Oak, Ash and Beech woodland along the Sound of Mull. We tried one short walk, but didn't hear anything at all, so returned to the parking area. Just as we approached we heard the familiar high pitched shivering trill of a **Wood Warbler**, but it was in a tricky spot on a busy narrow stretch of the road. We tried watching patiently from the parking area, and eventually among a number of roving tits, we had a glimpse of a **Wood Warbler** feeding in a big Beech tree. Over the next twenty minutes or so, we worked out the birds feeding pattern as it was clearly ferrying caterpillars to a fledged youngster somewhere nearby. Eventually we all managed to piece together some excellent views of this most delightful of British warblers, and we even saw the youngster briefly too. After a coffee we continued on to Aros Bridge, and explored here and a mile or so upstream along the Aros River for Dipper. We weren't lucky with a sighting, and had to make do instead with **Grey Wagtail** and **Spotted Flycatcher** sightings. As we drove on up Glen Aros, the rain became heavy and more prolonged, but we still had another stunning male **Hen Harrier** float down along a ridge and across the road in front of us – it was certainly shaping up to be an excellent trip for this species. Reaching Dervaig we turned right and took the narrow winding road along the north end of the island towards Tobermory. Luckily by the track to Loch Frisa, and a brief stop at the Mishnish Lochs, produced only Little Grebe of note as the weather continued to close in.

We always try to build in a short visit to Tobermory itself as it is a beautiful town and worth seeing, and this seemed like as good a time as any to go. We did also hope we might have another chance for Dipper in the distillery burn, but again we only found Grey Wagtail here. After folk had done their souvenir shopping, we began to head south back generally towards base, along the Sound of Mull to Craignure. It rained for most of the journey back to Kinloch, but as it was only just 4pm, we decided to take one last drive around the far side of Loch Beg to see if we could find another Otter. A **Common Greenshank** was a nice bonus – a bird we had looked for here all week without success, and a lovely spotted breeding plumaged bird too. Presumably one of yesterdays single Otters was located again in a similar spot, feeding fairly close to the shore on the rising tide. We parked in a strategic pull off and waited, hoping it might catch a crab and bring it to shore underneath us. After only a few minutes, the Otter caught a fish which was too large for it to handle in the water, and began making its way to shore. Sure enough, it came out onto the rocks just below us, and we had absolutely brilliant views of the animal until it had devoured its catch and re-entered the water. A bit

further out, a breeding plumaged **Red-throated Diver** was bobbing on the water, and as we had only made one previous sighting on the trip so far, we felt it warranted a proper look through the scope. It was great to be able to see its red throat, and finely striped nape, as it preened on the water. Heading back across Kinloch, a female **Hen Harrier** rounded off our day as she crossed the road just in front of our van – we had lost count now how many we had seen on the trip! A great end to our final day and despite some pretty changeable weather, another excellent visit to the island.

SUNDAY 25TH JUNE – *Sunshine and showers in westerly winds, 15C*

A travelling day today as we departed the island after a leisurely breakfast and made our way up to the Craignure ferry. We enjoyed a smooth sail back over to Oban despite the brisk winds, and noted plenty of seabirds such as Northern Gannets, Common Guillemots, **Black Guillemots**, Kittiwakes and **Arctic Terns**. A **Harbour Porpoise** was noted too – perhaps surprisingly our only cetacean of the trip. After various drop offs on the way home, we eventually made it back to Norfolk around 2300.

Systematic List

Birds

1. Red-throated Diver
2. Little Grebe
3. Great Cormorant
4. European Shag
5. Northern Gannet
6. Northern Fulmar
7. Manx Shearwater
8. Grey Heron
9. Mute Swan
10. Whooper Swan
11. Greylag Goose
12. Canada Goose
13. Common Shelduck
14. Mallard
15. Common Eider
16. Red-breasted Merganser
17. Goosander
18. Common Pheasant
19. Eurasian Sparrowhawk
20. Common Kestrel
21. Merlin
22. Common Buzzard
23. Golden Eagle
24. White-tailed Eagle
25. Hen Harrier
26. Corncrake
27. European Oystercatcher
28. Common Ringed Plover
29. Northern Lapwing
30. Common Redshank
31. Common Greenshank
32. Eurasian Curlew
33. Common Snipe
34. Bar-tailed Godwit
35. Common Sandpiper

36. Red-necked Phalarope
37. Black-headed Gull
38. Common Gull
39. Herring Gull
40. Lesser Black-backed Gull
41. Great Black-backed Gull
42. Black-legged Kittiwake
43. Great Skua
44. Arctic Tern
45. Common Tern
46. Common Guillemot
47. Black Guillemot
48. Atlantic Puffin
49. Razorbill
50. Woodpigeon
51. Collared Dove
52. Rock Dove
53. Short-eared Owl
54. Skylark
55. Great-spotted Woodpecker
56. Meadow Pipit
57. Rock Pipit
58. Tree Pipit
59. Pied Wagtail
60. Grey Wagtail
61. Sand Martin
62. Barn Swallow
63. House Martin
64. Winter Wren
65. European Robin
66. Dunnock
67. Common Stonechat
68. Whinchat
69. Northern Wheatear
70. Common Redstart
71. Common Blackbird
72. Song Thrush
73. Mistle Thrush
74. Willow Warbler
75. Wood Warbler
76. Common Whitethroat
77. Blackcap
78. Sedge Warbler
79. Goldcrest
80. Spotted Flycatcher
81. Blue Tit
82. Great Tit
83. Coal Tit
84. Treecreeper
85. Rook
86. Hooded Crow
87. Common Raven
88. Western Jackdaw
89. Common Starling
90. House Sparrow

91. Chaffinch
92. Goldfinch
93. Common Linnet
94. Twite
95. Common Redpoll
96. Eurasian Siskin
97. Common Crossbill
98. Bullfinch

Butterflies

1. Green-veined White
2. Common Blue
3. Large Heath
4. Small Heath
5. Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary
6. Marsh Fritillary
7. Red Admiral

Odonata

1. Large Red Damselfly
2. Beautiful Demoiselle
3. Keeled Skimmer
4. Highland Darter
5. Golden-ringed Dragonfly

Mammals

1. Red Deer
2. Rabbit
3. Mountain Hare
4. Common Seal
5. Atlantic Grey Seal
6. Otter
7. Harbour Porpoise

Orchids

1. Common Spotted
2. Heath Spotted
3. Lesser Butterfly
4. Greater Butterfly
5. Heath Fragrant
6. Northern Marsh

Species seen on the journey to and from Oban are not included

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