



ORIOLE BIRDING



TOUR REPORT OUTER HEBRIDES 11TH – 17TH MAY 2017

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THURSDAY 11TH MAY – *Light Southerly winds and sunny spells, 16C*

We departed our Premier Inn stop in Carlisle at 0830 this morning, embarking on the five hour drive north to Mallaig for the evening crossing to Lochboisdale on South Uist. The journey was largely uneventful from a birding perspective, and we didn't really see anything of note until we reached the oak and birch woodland along the edge of the main road about fifteen miles west of Glenfinnan. This habitat is a good bet for **Wood Warbler**, and at our favoured pull in by the roadside, we heard two singing as soon as we stepped out of the van. With patience we managed some good but brief views of one of them, along with several Willow Warblers, male Blackcap and a bonus **Tree Pipit** which was singing from the top of a dead tree. It was a beautiful afternoon with warm sunshine and light winds, as we wound our way along the last few miles towards Mallaig. We still had an hour before ferry check in, so took the minor road off towards Loch Morar and did a little bit more birding en route. A family of **Dippers** was a highlight, where the river tumbles down the rapids into the tidal bay here. Two fledged juveniles were being fed by a very busy adult bird, which we watched diving under the water for prey right on the edge of the waterfall. It was amazing that it was never swept over the edge! Common Sandpiper was also seen, and a little further down towards the loch a smart pair of **Red-breasted Mergansers** were by the roadside. At the road end, we walked a bit and saw a few **Redpolls** buzzing about, and a **Spotted Flycatcher**, but an immature **Golden Eagle** sadly drifted over the ridge all too quickly, mobbed by Hooded Crows.

We set sail on time from Mallaig under blue skies, and enjoyed the smoothest of crossings out between Rhum and Skye and on across The Minch. The crossing was really good today for seabird activity – we saw scores of Common Guillemot on the water, along with a few Razorbills and some nice **Atlantic Puffins**, while **Manx Shearwaters** were seen in their hundreds, coming off the water in great rafts ahead of the ferry. We had some fantastic views of them as they flew alongside, keeping pace with the boat. A scattering of Northern Gannets, Northern Fulmars, Kittiwakes and European Shags were also seen, plus about four **Great Northern Divers** in various guises and one probable **Black-throated Diver**. **Black Guillemots** were more conspicuous in the harbour entrances at either end of the journey, and cetaceans were represented by several sightings of **Harbour Porpoise**, and one great sighting of **Common Dolphins**. Seeing these beautiful animals leaping across the wake of the ferry in the warm glow of evening sunlight was a bit special and perhaps the highlight of the day. A **Great Skua** rounded off the day as we entered Lochboisdale, passing across the bow and quite close alongside the ship. We actually arrived about twenty minutes early, and were soon enjoying a pint in the bar at the end of a very long day of travelling, but with a few good birds for the log call!

FRIDAY 12TH MAY – *Moderate SE winds and rain, 13C*

It was a damp and dreary start to the day for our first morning in the islands, but despite a fair amount of rain throughout the day, there were some brighter bits and we saw a great selection of Hebridean wildlife. Our first stop would be a favourite for kicking off the tour, the drive down across the Bornish machair to Rubha Ardvule. Just as we turned to cross the machair, our first **Corncrake** was calling by the side of the road, so we parked up for a listen. At times the bird sounded incredibly close, but we couldn't see it! Eventually Ashley picked it up head and shoulders above the vegetation, and two others in the group managed some good views as it came out into the open briefly before 'sneaking away cleverly' as it is so accurately described in the field guide! All around us **Common Snipe** were drumming – they were flying right over us and we could also hear their 'wicker-wicker' calls emanating from the grass on either side. At one point a group of five chased past us calling – great to see so many around. Across the machair we began to see Common Ringed Plovers and Dunlins in breeding plumage, and our first **Whimbrels** which showed brilliantly just beside the track. Lapwings had small chicks and there were Skylarks feeding in the sandy earth just feet from the van windows. A heavy squall came through as we tried to scope the lochan, so we didn't see much other than a few **Red-breasted Mergansers** and a drake Wigeon – instead we opted to proceed to the parking area at the point. Twenty **Common Ravens** were quite a sight, along one of the fencelines, and a soggy male **Northern Wheatear** was also beside the track. At the parking area, the rain cleared and we had perhaps our best hours birding of the day. A second calendar year **Iceland**

Gull was in the surf feeding with a congregation of other large gulls, a really nice view as it was pretty close. The beach as always here was full of summer plumaged waders – Dunlin and Sanderling being the most numerous. Two **Bar-tailed Godwits** and a sprinkling of rusty-backed Ruddy Turnstones were also among them, and a stunning **Great Northern Diver** was catching crabs just off the beach. The sea soon turned azure blue when a few rays of sun dropped onto the water, transforming the whole vista! A pair of Common Eiders were in close to the shore, and another **Whimbrel** showed well as it picked through the rocks below us. The small lochan just behind the beach held two **Pale-bellied Brent Geese**, a drake Northern Shoveler and two lovely **Icelandic Black-tailed Godwits** which were feeding in the long grass on the bank. Suddenly all the waders took flight in swirling flocks – not a raptor, but a dark phase **Arctic Skua**, which came in over the peninsula and flew right past us. Brilliant! After a cup of tea, we were ready to move on to our next stop at Loch Bee.



Iceland Gull, Ardivachair 12th May

Pulling up on the Southern shoreline of Loch Bee to scan the waders, we noticed a large raptor making off across the loch – it was a migrant **Osprey**, carrying a large fish and being escorted off the premises by several gulls! A bit distant, but a nice bonus nonetheless. On the loch itself, we saw plenty more waders and common wildfowl, but the highlight was another distant one – a family of three **Otters** out playing on the bank at the far side of the loch. At one point, we had them in the water within the same scope view as a large dark blob on the bank – a young **White-tailed Eagle**! The eagle was very far away, but did give us a short flight which was much better, before landing on another conspicuous perch. We decided it was worth driving the few miles around to the north end of the loch, to see if we could see it from the Ardivachair road. Sure enough, we located it quite near the road just past the Hebridean Jewellery, and had superb views of it through the scope. Another **Corncrake** was calling close to the road here too, and a couple more people in the group had views of it in the open – not bad for day one, for nearly everyone to have seen one! It was already nearly 2pm though, and very much lunchtime, so we headed on down to a spot where we hoped we might find **Arctic Skua** nesting. Our parking spot for lunch conveniently overlooked a beautiful pale phase adult **Arctic Skua** sitting on a mound of heather, and it stayed with us the whole time – particularly good views through the scope of it preening and showing its central tail spike.

After lunch we headed back along the Ardivachair road, checking for Corncrakes again but now they had gone a bit quitter and we didn't find one. A **Great Skua** flew past, mobbed by Lapwings, and there were lots of gulls and waders on the north beach with the dropping tide. Our main aim though

was to head out onto the Range and check for migrant Dotterel, which often appear here during our stay. A comprehensive search failed to produce any Dotterel, but we saw several **Whimbrel** close to the tracks and ten smart **European Golden Plovers**. The rain was falling heavier now and we decided to seek shelter at North Loch Aeynort and check the copse for migrants. **Black Guillemot**, lots of **Common Seals** and **Red-breasted Merganser** were seen on the loch, but the woodland produced only common birds – a Goldcrest, several Willow Warblers and five **Common Redpolls** being the highlights. Similarly at Askernish, we found a couple of Common Linnets, Sedge Warbler, Willow Warbler and a Common Buzzard. It was nearly 6pm by now though, and we had enjoyed a pretty good first full day on the islands.



White-tailed Eagle, Loch Bee 12th May

SATURDAY 13TH MAY – *Mist and rain in light SE winds, 13C*

With some pretty rough weather forecast to move in over the coming days, and a light south-easterly and mist on for today, we thought that this might be the best time to make our day trip over to the Isle of Barra. Such a beautiful island, and with so much ultra-promising habitat and a track record for autumn rarities, it always seems to somewhat disappoint in the spring – perhaps as much to do with a lack of coverage as much as a lack of rare birds. This would be our seventh visit to the island, and we were yet to see so much as a scarcity here – would today be the day we finally broke our Barra duck? On our journey down towards Eriskay to catch the ferry, we had a bit of time to spare and so diverted the short distance to South Glendale. This sheltered valley has a number of excellent looking gardens and is often a good place generally for passerines – sure enough we saw several Willow Warblers, Sedge Warbler, our first Common Whitethroat and a family of Common Stonechats along the vegetated gully by the road. A **Common Cuckoo** was calling, and eventually gave some superb views as it flew in and landed on a wire close by. Heading across the causeway onto Eriskay, we met

the ferry for the 1015 crossing to Barra, noting four **Red-throated Divers**, **Arctic Tern**, **Rock Pipit**, **Northern Wheatear** and a huge raft of **European Shags** from the jetty before we got on board. The Sound of Barra crossing is always productive, and we saw lots of **Common Eider**, **Common** and **Black Guillemots**, and at least fifteen **Great Northern Divers** on the way over. We didn't think much to the weather though, which contrary to the forecast had now closed in to pretty terrible visibility in fine, mizzly rain. We at least had hope for some migrants though, but these were quickly dashed when the first two plantations had produced two **Goldcrests**, a **Chaffinch** and two **Robins**!! We continued on though, checking the promising looking grove of **Sycamores** at Brevig where things perked up a bit – great views of another **Common Cuckoo**, several **Willow Warblers**, a **Common Chiffchaff** and male **Blackcap**. **Sedge Warbler** and **Reed Bunting** were also in the surrounding scrubby patches and a **Grasshopper Warbler** reeled briefly, but remained hidden. We met two local birders here who kindly showed us on the map the three best spots to check for an immature **Night Heron** which had been on the island several days, and so armed with this information we set off to try for it.

The first spot to look for the **Night Heron** was in willows overhanging a small stream. The second was in an **Alder** above a black dustbin. It wasn't in either. The third place was in a small grove of trees above a ditch above Gleann, but we couldn't see it there. We were just about to give up when we met the same two birders once more and they had just inadvertently flushed the bird from the roadside **Sycamores** and it had dropped into a new spot further up the burn! They very kindly walked with us to show us the exact spot, but the bird had skulked out of view and despite peering up and down the channel we couldn't spot it, even though there didn't seem like anywhere for it to really hide. We edged along the stream slowly, scanning and hoping we could spot it before it spotted us. Still we couldn't see it, until suddenly it flew out right in front of us, flying close by and back along the burn before dropping back into the **Sycamores**. A passer by soon flushed it again though and we saw it well again in flight, and this time it dropped into its favourite spot in the willows by the small bridge. Driving back round, we found it sitting above the black dustbin, where it should have been earlier! Brilliant views through the scope, and despite several people walking past chatting loudly it now seemed far enough from the road not to be bothered and it settled down nicely. It did look a little anxious when an adult **White-tailed Eagle**, which had circled up over the ridge behind, flew low and directly overhead! What a beast! Lunch beckoned now though, and after a trip to Castlebay Co-op for the facilities we continued on towards Vatersay.



Night Heron 13th May

The rain really closed in as we took the causeway across the Vatersay and had a drive round to check the bay for divers. The visibility was very poor though and it was clear we were going to struggle to see anything. So we returned to Barra and headed back along to Nasg, where a **Corncrake** creaking by the side of the road caused an impromptu stop. The bird sounded close, and sure enough we could see it on the top of a grassy mound, standing proudly in the open in the pouring rain and calling its head off! We even had time to park, get everyone out and set up three scopes on the bird, and watch it for five minutes, before it decided to slink off into the grass. A bit of an unexpected bonus, given the weather! By now it was 4pm, and the day had absolutely flown by, so we needed to continue around the rest of the clockwise loop back towards Northbay. This took us around the spectacular and beautiful west coast of the island, where the Atlantic rolls in onto white sandy beaches. In our favourite viewing spot, a trusty flock of **Long-tailed Ducks**, which have been here four years in a row, were bobbing in the waves just offshore. About fifteen birds, with several in full summer plumage – a perfect accompaniment to afternoon tea! We now had one more target from the island, and this took us to a small lochan where we often see a pair of **Red-throated Divers**. Pulling up to scan, there was no sign of the birds at all, but just as it looked as if all was lost, a dark object came plunging down out of the sky, with raised wings half closed. As the free-faller splashed into the water, we were amazed to see it was a **Red-throated Diver**! Well worth taking a few minutes to enjoy through the scope – the finely striped crown and nape being a feature seldom visible on birds at sea. A really exquisite bird and we were very pleased that it had decided to sky-dive in front of us! And that was it, back for the ferry, for 1730. The return crossing produced our best views yet of **Great Northern Divers**, which were close in and in full plumage to boot. Barra had not only provided a very entertaining days birding, but finally we had come away with a rarity under our belts too – perhaps there will be no stopping us next spring!



Corncrake, 13th May

SUNDAY 14TH MAY – *Fresh SW winds and sunshine, 14C*

We set off from Lochboisdale under blue skies for the first time this morning, and our journey north was therefore perhaps unsurprisingly punctuated by two roadside stops! The first was for two **Short-eared Owls** tussling with each other over the road, eventually splitting and heading in opposite directions. The second was for a stunning male **Hen Harrier** which appeared right beside the van at 50mph! As we stopped it crossed right in front of us, giving folk on each side a chance for a good view. With it being Sunday, the road all the way to Balranald in North Uist was very quiet and we completed the trip in an hour and ten minutes. Pausing for the facilities at the Visitor Centre, we then continued across the machair to Aird an Runair. We knew from the forecast that our opportunities for skua-watching were going to be limited to trying in marginal conditions, and this was one such chance with a little west in the wind. This is a stunning place in any case, with the beach brim full with breeding plumaged waders, Common Eiders loafing in the surf and the headland buzzing with nesting **Arctic Terns**. At the headland, we sat down for a half hour watch to see if anything was happening – it wasn't! Apart from a large concentration of **Arctic Terns** fishing offshore, we saw very little in the way of seabirds – not even the commoner skuas. We did, however, see a **White-tailed Eagle** come lumbering in off the sea from a visit to the Monach Isles! Quite a sight! Working our way back along the beach, we spent some time with the waders – just stunningly plumaged Turnstones, Dunlin and Sanderling. Six **Purple Sandpipers** were a nice if expected bonus, as they too were in breeding plumage and a chance to see the chestnut scapulars with bronze and occasionally even purple sheen! We enjoyed some excellent views of them, as they were only a few metres away feeding on the rotting seaweed at the top of the beach. After a brew, we returned to the Visitor Centre where a **Corncrake** was creaking in the small field behind, in the same place as every year! We all had some superb views of it, as it kept popping right out in the open each time it called. We had done well with this species on the tour this year.



Arctic Terns, 14th May

Next stop was the machair at Balemor, where a small trip of Dotterel had been seen recently. It turns out they had been flushed by a skua in the morning and seemingly disappeared since then, and our own exploration of the area failed to turn them up. The area was bustling with small waders though – Dunlin and Ringed Plover mainly – and we also saw a stunning albino Common Gull which could be a pitfall for the unwary! We lunched up in the hills on Committee Road, hoping for one or two raptors, but we saw very little in the now pretty strong winds. A pair of **Common Greenshanks** were at least a nice list addition, down in the sandy bay at the north end. It was a beautiful sunny afternoon at least, despite the wind, and so we wanted to spend a bit more time looking for Golden Eagle in particular. On our way south though, we stopped off at a spot for Red-necked Phalarope to check if the birds were around. A lovely location, with lots of waders and wildfowl to be seen, but despite searching hard there was no sign of the phalaropes. A pair each of Gadwall and Northern Pintail were new for the trip, and a **Little Tern** was a nice bonus too. Single drake Eurasian Wigeon and Common Teal, lots of Dunlin and **Arctic Terns** were also seen as we scanned around the edges for small dark swimming waders! Best sighting was probably yet another **White-tailed Eagle** – a young bird which flew in and began hovering above something at the far end of the loch, which it eventually dropped down onto much to the mass annoyance of every gull and Lapwing in the vicinity.

As always seems to happen up in these islands, the day had once again evaporated and it was now almost 5pm already! We really did want to make the most of the sunshine though as you never know when you are going to see it again! So back onto South Uist and down towards Loch Druidibeg to scan the ridges for raptors and it didn't take long to pick up a **Golden Eagle** – very distant over the mountain top about a mile away though. We decided to set the scopes up for a bit in one spot and scan, knowing it to be a good place to pick them up. Over the next forty minutes we saw three different **Golden Eagles**, the best of which was a sub-adult bird which spent some time hunting the ridge by hanging into the wind. When the bird dipped down in front of the mountain we could see its golden nape and white tail base, so not bad views. We certainly had prolonged views, with a bird on show in the scope virtually constantly throughout our watch – especially nice as this was a lifer for some of the group! Nearly 6.30pm now though and time to head back to the hotel – we would have to batten down the hatches for tomorrow, looking at the forecast!

MONDAY 15TH MAY – *Gale force south-easterly winds and rain, 12C*

A rather challenging day today with gales coming in from the south-east, strong enough to cancel the ferries to mainland and to restrict us to birding from the van all day. It was barely possible to stand in the winds, so using a scope was out of the question, and in any case the wind was accompanied for the most part by heavy rain! But we didn't give in to the weather, and actually went on to compile a very respectable species total and even add one or two quality birds to the trip list in the process! Heading north up the island we took the Bornish turn but this time followed the road around Peninerine. A Little Grebe was a new for the trip and a couple of Whimbrel were on the machair, but otherwise the day took a while to get going. The Range felt like a good bet, with the rough weather maybe grounding a Dotterel there, but we couldn't find anything better than two **European Golden Plovers**. The south end of Loch Bee was great for close views of feeding Dunlin though, with at least one hundred here, and accompanied by another new trip bird in the form of two Red [or should that be grey!] **Knots**. Crossing to Benbecula, three stunning male **Ruff** were roadside near Borge and we spent quite a while alongside them admiring their contrasting plumages. One was very dark, with black ruff and chestnut nape, one paler orange and the third had a beautiful finely barred ruff which he frequently fluffed out to full volume – the first such specimens that many of the group had ever seen. Further north the Red-necked Phalaropes continued to give us the slip though, and another quick check of their favoured lochans proved fruitless – the pair of Northern Pintails from yesterday were still present, along with a large number of Dunlin and a fourth male **Ruff** – this one brick red in colour.

The rain continued to lash down as we continued across North Uist, heading for the RSPB reserve at Balranald where a **Glaucous Gull** had been seen again yesterday. Even as we approached along the entrance road, we could see a large white blob in a field with Herring Gulls, and sure enough it was

the **Glaucous Gull**! A second calendar year beast, it dwarfed its congeners and we ended up getting fantastic close up views of it from the van. The nearby visitor centre provided useful facilities and a parking spot for lunch, and throughout we were entertained by a showy **Corncrake**, which was wandering around in the small meadow behind, creaking occasionally. We then began to work our way south, checking spots along the way. Loch Sandaray was unusually quiet other than a few Sand Martins, gulls and a drake Northern Shoveler, while a revisit to Balemor to double check for the Dotterel produced only yesterdays stunning albino Common Gull again – a very smart bird! Onto Baleshare and the machair was busy with small waders – Dunlin, Ringed Plover and Turnstone. A pair each of Northern Pintail and Common Teal were on a small lochan, and the rain actually stopped as we enjoyed a brew parked up overlooking the spectacular beach here. As we had to pass the phalarope lochans again on our way south, we tried once more to see if they had appeared, but were again unlucky. Perhaps this was going to be our bogey bird of the trip! North Loch Aeynort was our final call of the day, to check if any wind blown migrants had dropped in. We had Willow Warbler, Common Chiffchaff and Goldcrest in the trees and **Black Guillemot** and Red-breasted Merganser on the loch, but perhaps the highlight was a very close encounter with a beautiful **Red Deer** stag by the side of the road. A distant **Golden Eagle**, hanging over the ridge into the wind, was our only raptor of the day, not counting the **Short-eared Owl** which floated over the road in front of us as we came back into Lochboisdale. Not quite the right off that the forecast had suggested the day might be, so we were pretty happy with our efforts!



Ruff and Glaucous Gull, 15th May

TUESDAY 16TH MAY – *Strong Southerly winds and rain backing WSW and sunshine later, 12C*

Our final day in the islands at it was another stormy start, with yesterdays gales and rain persisting overnight and through until lunchtime today. This meant another difficult morning, but with news of a Kentish Plover coming in late yesterday from Berneray, we decided a good way to use a wet morning was to drive up there and have a look for the bird on the machair. Actually Berneray was a new island for us on the tour, joined to North Uist by a causeway north of Lochmaddy, and so it was a nice place to visit in any case! When we arrived at the site, there were a few birders looking for the plover, but no sign of the bird. The newly tilled strips on the machair were full of Ringed Plovers, but we couldn't find their Mediterranean cousin among them. After using the facilities at the nearby ferry terminal, and enjoying a warming cup of tea and biscuits in the van, we set off across North Uist

picking up a nice male **Hen Harrier** along the way. A break in the rain allowed us to check some lochs for divers, noting a single **Red-throated Diver** in smart breeding plumage. Our aim though was to be at Balranald in time for the forecast change in the wind to a more westerly quarter, so that we could get a parking spot and be in situ on the headland at Aird an Runair if any skua passage were to kick off. The **Corncrake** was still showing superbly behind the visitor centre – we had now seen one on every day of the trip! Down at the headland, we walked to our favoured seawatching spot on the rocks overlooking the foaming Atlantic Ocean and the distant Monach Isles. We had to occasionally batten down the hatches against squalls of rain coming in off the sea, but already we could see a **Great Skua** passing by and we enjoyed really close views of two **Arctic Skuas**. The sea was awash with **Arctic Terns** and several Northern Gannets and Northern Fulmars were frequently passing close inshore. Small parties of Kittiwakes were nice to see, battling by against the wind, but as yet there were no rarer skuas to be seen! About an hour in, and on the back of a passing squall we picked up four skuas coming towards us. Clearly big and powerful, we knew right away that they were **Pomarine Skuas** and sure enough they breezed past within binocular range sporting full tail 'spoons'. Unfortunately though, that turned out to be it, and we didn't see anything more in a further hour of watching. Four **Purple Sandpipers** with Dunlin among the seaweed and a smart **Great Northern Diver** hurrying past were other birds of note before we plodded back up to the parking area for a late lunch. A **Corn Bunting** was jangling its keys from the fenceline by the Balranald Visitor Centre on the way back, and our first **Peregrine** of the trip powered overhead here too.

The remainder of our afternoon was spent trying to catch up with missed species. This involved our fifth check for Dotterel, still with no success despite the birds being seen again yesterday [a **Little Tern** provided some compensation on the Balemor machair] and then on to check the favoured lochans for Red-necked Phalarope again. The sun was out now, and despite the continued wind we were finally able to get out of the van and do some scoping of the pools. A superb male **Ruff**, one of yesterdays birds, was a great start, but we still could not find the phalarope. We weren't giving up though, and eventually on a pool we had scanned umpteen times already, a small spinning form was picked out on the water – a female **Red-necked Phalarope**! Over the next forty minutes we managed to piece together some views, as she was reluctant to remain in open water for more than a few seconds before disappearing frustratingly back into the vegetation. In the end, she gave herself up though and we were able to get some lovely views with the sun picking out her red neck despite the half mile distance involved. It had been a really tricky bird to connect with this year, but we had it at last! On our way back to base, we checked Loch Druidibeg again, picking up a lovely male **Hen Harrier** over the moorland, and 'our' **Short-eared Owl** in Lochboisdale put on its best show yet, flying right alongside the van and hovering as if to give us a farewell send off! A trip not without challenges this year, but some great birding and despite the rain – a stunning place!



Corn Bunting, 16th May

WEDNESDAY 17TH MAY – *Fresh SW winds and sunny spells, 15C*

It was an early start this morning for the ferry from Lochboisdale back to Mallaig, which was thankfully back on schedule after two days of disruption due to the high winds. So after breakfast on board, we made our way onto the stern to do a spot of seawatching for a couple of hours. Crossing The Minch the swell was heavy but thankfully it soon calmed down and we began to pick up birds – plenty of Gannets, Fulmars and Kittiwakes interspersed with the odd **Great Skua**, Common Guillemot and **Atlantic Puffin**. Several hundred **Manx Shearwaters** were a highlight as we passed Canna, and a **Common Dolphin** was also seen just before we reached Mallaig. Our journey south today by road would be as far as Carlisle, and so we took our time with a birding stop along the way near Loch Tulley. This turned out to be quite productive, with a cracking male **Common Redstart** singing from the top of a pine by the side of the road down to the loch. We were able to enjoy him in the scope for several minutes singing his heart out from his lofty perch, and we heard another one a bit further down. Eurasian Siskins were new for the trip, but surpassed by three **Common Crossbills** which we picked up due to the subtle song of one of the males. Great perched views in the sunshine, and another nice bonus for the trip! The only other species of note here was **Tree Pipit**, with a couple heard singing and one flushed off the road as we headed back up towards the main drag. From here it was a lunch stop in Tyndrum [and more Siskins!] before a straight run down to Carlisle where we checked in weary just before 7pm.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

1. Red-throated Diver
2. Great Northern Diver
3. Northern Fulmar
4. Little Grebe
5. Manx Shearwater
6. Great Cormorant
7. European Shag
8. Northern Gannet
9. Grey Heron
10. Night Heron
11. Mute Swan
12. Greylag Goose
13. Canada Goose
14. Pale-bellied Brent Goose
15. Common Shelduck
16. Mallard
17. Eurasian Wigeon
18. Gadwall
19. Northern Shoveler
20. Northern Pintail
21. Common Teal
22. Common Eider
23. Red-breasted Merganser
24. Tufted Duck
25. Long-tailed Duck
26. Common Buzzard
27. Golden Eagle
28. White-tailed Eagle
29. Hen Harrier
30. Common Kestrel
31. Osprey
32. Peregrine

33. Corncrake
34. Common Moorhen
35. Common Coot
36. European Oystercatcher
37. Common Ringed Plover
38. European Golden Plover
39. Northern Lapwing
40. Ruddy Turnstone
41. Purple Sandpiper
42. Dunlin
43. Red Knot
44. Sanderling
45. Ruff
46. Common Redshank
47. Common Greenshank
48. Eurasian Curlew
49. Whimbrel
50. Common Snipe
51. Bar-tailed Godwit
52. Black-tailed Godwit
53. Common Sandpiper
54. Red-necked Phalarope
55. Great Skua
56. Arctic Skua
57. Pomarine Skua
58. Black-headed Gull
59. Common Gull
60. Herring Gull
61. Lesser Black-backed Gull
62. Great Black-backed Gull
63. Iceland Gull
64. Glaucous Gull
65. Black-legged Kittiwake
66. Arctic Tern
67. Little Tern
68. Razorbill
69. Common Guillemot
70. Black Guillemot
71. Atlantic Puffin
72. Short-eared Owl
73. Common Cuckoo
74. Common Swift
75. Collared Dove
76. Rock Dove
77. Woodpigeon
78. Dipper
79. Skylark
80. Meadow Pipit
81. Rock Pipit
82. Tree Pipit
83. Pied Wagtail
84. Barn Swallow
85. Sand Martin
86. House Martin
87. Winter Wren

88. European Robin
89. Dunnock
90. Northern Wheatear
91. Common Stonechat
92. Common Redstart
93. Common Blackbird
94. Song Thrush
95. Mistle Thrush
96. Grasshopper Warbler [H]
97. Willow Warbler
98. Common Chiffchaff
99. Wood Warbler
100. Sedge Warbler
101. Blackcap
102. Common Whitethroat
103. Goldcrest
104. Spotted Flycatcher
105. Great Tit
106. Coal Tit
107. Hooded Crow
108. Carrion Crow
109. Common Raven
110. Jackdaw
111. Rook
112. Common Starling
113. House Sparrow
114. Chaffinch
115. Greenfinch
116. Goldfinch
117. Eurasian Siskin
118. Twite
119. Common Linnet
120. Common Redpoll
121. Common Crossbill
122. Reed Bunting
123. Corn Bunting

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