

THE TRAVELLING NATURALIST

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Orkney's Wildlife & Prehistory 3 – 10 May 2017

TOUR REPORT

Leader: Steve Duffield

Wednesday 3 May 2017

We all arrived to some lovely, sunny weather with light easterly winds.

Thursday 4 May 2017

Light easterly wind blowing throughout the day with cloud at first soon clearing to become sunny and warm from mid-morning.

We started our exploration within sight of the hotel at the Stones of Stenness. These huge monoliths are one of the oldest Neolithic monuments in Orkney and we took some time wandering around them before heading on to the Barnhouse Village and the hide overlooking Loch Harray. Red-breasted mergansers and common terns were soon spotted whilst a few harbour seals were seen balancing on rocks, posing in their characteristic banana posture at Loch Stenness. A little further along the road on Loch Harray we pulled over to admire a large flock of at least 200 scaup which also contained a few long-tailed ducks and tufted ducks. A couple of red-throated divers were also close by along with red-breasted mergansers and another flock of around 50 tufted ducks. We parked up and took a walk around the Ring of Brodgar which sits on the hillside midway between both Loch Stenness and Harray. These stones are somewhat smaller and slightly more modern than those at Stenness although equally as dramatic in their own way. From the ring we also added to our list of wildfowl with shoveler, teal, wigeon, gadwall and coots all feeding on a small pool nearby. A couple of twite flew over and two male reed buntings were hanging around the car park. After a relaxing wander we continued west to the cliffs at Yesnaby stopping on route to see what we could spot following the tractor in the ploughed fields by the road. All the usual species of gulls were present as well as a juvenile Iceland gull. Once on the sandstone cliffs we took a short walk picking up a couple of puffins, razorbills and black guillemots. Fulmars were everywhere along the cliffs whilst great skuas patrolled along the edge keeping a watchful eye out for a meal. A few eiders and a male wigeon showed very well in a sheltered inlet whilst displaying rock pipits and numerous wheatears kept us busy. The short maritime grass on top of the cliff was bereft of flowers although bright patches of sea pinks were in bloom along sheltered parts of the cliff.

After lunch at Yesnaby we headed back to the main road stopping near the ploughed fields once again but this time to look at a flock of around 25 whimbrel feeding with several curlews. Two Arctic skuas flew over heading north before we also continued in the same direction and on to Skara Brae. A brief look at the loch near the visitor centre in the passing produced tufted ducks, goldeneye, red-breasted merganser and a

common sandpiper. We arrived at the visitor centre around the same time as a coach party so to try and avoid the crowds we headed straight for the remains of the Neolithic village. We first entered a mock-up of how a 5,000 year old dwelling would have looked before reaching the real thing with houses packed tightly together and perched on the edge of the Bay of Skail. It's quite amazing to think that if the whole thing hadn't lain buried under the sand for thousands of years it probably wouldn't have survived to be so admired in the present day. We finished our fascinating tour of the village with a look around the visitor centre and at an array of artefacts found on site. Skara Brae really is a must when visiting Orkney but don't expect to have it to yourself unless you go early in the day.

We moved on to Marwick Bay with a walk onto the headland to take a look at the seabird colony containing thousands of guillemots huddled close together on the precipitous cliffs. We also spotted razorbills, fulmars, kittiwakes and great skuas whilst in the fields we came across a couple of sunbathing rabbits and a jackdaw with its wings splayed, making the most of the sun. rock pipits and wheatears were much in evidence whilst Steve managed to spot a peregrine as we were heading back towards the car. A male ruff was also spotted and showed well, feeding on a marshy pool next to the bay. This is also a great area for brown hares and we came across several showing very well. We returned inland in the late afternoon, stopping at the Loons RSPB reserve where we found four black-tailed godwits, curlew, shoveler, wigeon, teal and moorhen. We finally tried a circuit of the moorlands, first taking the road from Dounby before returning past Cottascarth. We spotted great skuas and a few golden plover displaying at Birsay Moor whilst a short-eared owl flew over the road and the car near Tingwall before we took the minor road back west. Two common redpolls were on the wires briefly and we spotted a kestrel before returning to the hotel for a lovely evening meal.

Friday 5 May 2017

Light to moderate north-easterly winds with sunny spells and occasional cloud; warm.

This morning we had a short journey of around 15 minutes to the ferry terminal at Tingwall where we caught the first boat to Rousay. The crossing was calm although the tide was racing between the islands at the time and we spotted a couple of groups of gulls and Arctic terns in a feeding frenzy around the choppy water. There was also plenty of other bird activity too including great and Arctic skuas, red-throated divers, great northern divers, guillemot and black guillemots. Once on Rousay we took the turning left at Trumland and drove around the west coast of the island until we came to a parking place above Midhowe Broch and Cairn. The cairn is housed in a large building to protect it from the elements and is well worth the steep climb down (and up) as the sheer size of the structure is very impressive. The nearby broch is also stunningly situated on the edge of the narrow straights. Grey and harbour seals were hauled out on slabs along the shore where both pied and white wagtails were catching flies. A mute swan was also on the sea and red-breasted mergansers and black guillemots feeding in the channel. The fields held linnets and wheatears whilst back up by the vehicle a couple of widgeons were calling from the heather moorland above the road. We continued around the northern side of the island past Loch of Wasbister and parked by the shore at Nousty Sand. great northern divers, red-breasted mergansers and gannets were spotted off-shore as well as a couple of red-throated divers with one bird passing low overhead as it flew inland. The nearby loch held a few tufted ducks and greylag geese. We continued around the island completing a circuit and arriving back in Trumland around midday. We had a look at the small visitor centre and spotted a female hen harrier circling to the north of the village before tucking into our packed lunch by Taversoe Cairn.

After lunch we took a look in the nearby burial chamber which was unusual in having two chambers, one above the other with different entrance points although as modern visitors, you enter via a ladder through the top chamber. The neighbouring Trumland Wood provided sightings of buzzard, chaffinch, chiffchaff and willow warbler whilst a male blackcap was heard singing. We walked along the road past Trumland House, picking up a hunting male hen harrier before taking the path up onto the RSPB reserve and to the top of Knitchen Hill (227 metres). The weathered summit provided some great views of the surrounding countryside and islands although few birds were seen on this fairly strenuous walk. Meadow pipits, raven and the odd great skua were really the only birds of note as we completed the walk.

We got back to the car in the late afternoon and decided to visit a couple of the chambered tombs close to the road. Near the Blackhammer Cairn a small bird that was spotted flitting along the fence line turned out to be a migrant whitethroat making the most of the shelter along the west side of the island. We caught the return ferry at 5:30 pm and got some great views of great northern diver, Arctic skua and black guillemots on the half an hour journey back. We also picked up razorbills, guillemots, kittiwakes and of course plenty of great skuas before landing at Tingwall and the short journey back to the hotel.

Saturday 6 May 2017

Moderate north-easterly winds, cloudy and chilly during the morning with some low cloud and drizzle. This cleared late morning becoming sunny and warm for the remainder of the day.

We headed south this morning pausing by Loch of Ayre at Holm where we had good views of five long-tailed ducks intermittently calling as well as tufted ducks, goldeneye and several red-breasted mergansers displaying. A couple of ravens flew over whilst good numbers of swallows and sand martins were hawking over the water. Nearby and just on the other side of Churchill Barrier 1 we popped in to the Italian Chapel. The prisoners of war kept here spent any spare time they had creating an incredible work of art and devotion, modelling the ornate artwork from tin cans and various other bits of things lying about. Outside the chapel a summer plumage great northern diver was fishing the narrow channel and a couple of Arctic terns were hanging around the area.

We continued south stopping on Burray to have a look at Echna Loch which held large numbers of long-tailed ducks as well as red-breasted mergansers, tufted duck and around five wigeon. Lots of sand martins and swallows were hawking over the water whilst across the road and out to sea we spotted red-throated, great northern and a couple of black-throated divers in summer plumage. Large numbers of long-tailed ducks and eiders were also present but further out.

On the south side of Burray we stopped in the small car park although not for long as a couple of birders just leaving told us they had just been watching a white-billed diver close in to the south end of the barrier. Acting on the news we drove to the south side and were soon watching a stunning summer plumage white-billed diver. The bird was pretty unconcerned by us and allowed a close approach within 30 metres as it happily fed in the shallows and amongst the seaweed on the receding tide. We also spotted a single black-throated and a couple of great northern divers complementing our set of diver species. We headed to nearby St Margaret's Hope and on to Hoxa where we stopped at Wright Sands and took a short walk around the marshy pool. Snipe, moorhen, coot, turnstone and dunlin were noted whilst a migrant ring ouzel showed briefly in a nearby field before disappearing over the rise.

A kilometre or so further along the road from the sands we stopped for our packed lunch in the now warm sunshine before taking a walk around Hoxa Head. It was a great stroll around the old gunning placements along the coastline overlooking Scapa Flow with good views of black guillemots, shags, great skuas, Arctic terns and the ubiquitous wheatear although any cetaceans remained elusive. After the circular walk we continued south to the very tip of South Ronaldsay and Brough Ness. We parked at Burwick and walked down to the southern point overlooking the Pentland Firth. As we passed the farm buildings a female yellow wagtail flew up and a very fine wood warbler showed very well as it sallied after flies in a sheltered area on the west of the buildings. At the southern tip we saw plenty of shags and Arctic terns and enjoyed the afternoon sunshine before wandering back to the car. We all got views of the yellow wagtail on the way back and the wood warbler was still fly-catching in the same spot. From here we headed back north stopping at the car park by barrier 4 and took a short walk on the beach along the east side. A couple of ringed plovers were on the sands and Arctic terns were feeding off-shore in the glorious late afternoon sun. We returned north but this time took the southern road around the west mainland before heading along the road past Kirbuster Loch back to the hotel.

Sunday 7 May 2017

Moderate north-east to northerly breeze was blowing with mostly cloudy conditions throughout the day.

We left the hotel around 08:30 and took the moorland road across to Cottascarth where we walked up to the modern and well-kept hide. Three shelduck flew over the hide on our way up and a distant kestrel was spotted hovering over the hillside to the north whilst a couple of ravens were noisily making their presence felt. We had been in the hide, scanning for a while when the distinctive tones of a cuckoo suddenly came from behind the building. It didn't linger here long and soon flew across in front of us and landed in an old sycamore with attendant meadow pipits. We managed to get the scope on it as it called once again from its new perch although it always remained obscured by branches until it eventually disappeared. Not long after this a ringtail hen harrier appeared over the hills to the south. We vacated the hide and got some good views as it made its way down towards us and continued to hunt, very low to the ground as it headed for the lower moorland. Other birds seen here included the usual great skuas gliding over the moors and two or three red-throated divers that were seen distantly in flight.

We left around mid-morning and headed east towards Kirkwall, calling in at Rennibister Earth House which is situated in an active farmyard. The small souterrain is accessed by a ladder entering from the top and although thought to be used for food storage actually was found to contain 12 bodies when excavated. On the way back to the car we spotted plenty of Arctic terns on a shingle ridge and lots of swallows and sand martins hawking low over the shallow sea margins. We moved on, skirting around Kirkwall and down to Holm where we stopped to scan the loch at Graemeshall. This roadside marsh held gadwall, wigeon, shoveler and coot whilst off-shore we noted a razorbill, common terns, Arctic terns and a couple of great northern divers. Heading east from here we parked near the Gloup and admired the collapsed sea cave before taking a walk along the coast towards Mull Head. It was a very pleasant, if a little breezy walk along the low cliffs where we picked up the usual shags, great skuas, fulmars and gannets heading north into the wind as well as a couple of twite flying over.

We enjoyed our packed lunch by the small church in Skail, overlooking Sandside Bay before heading back west. A couple of kilometres along the road we stopped to have a look on the sheltered side of Dingieshowe Bay where we found a small flock of sanderling feeding on the shore as well as a couple of ringed plovers and a dunlin. A small group of terns flying overhead also provided us with a good chance to compare the subtle differences between common and Arctic terns as they headed low over us and into the bay to the north. After a pleasant 15 minutes here we moved on to Loch of Tankerness which held a few tufted ducks, a red-throated diver, more Arctic terns as well as both sand martins and swallows feeding low over the water. It was now around mid-afternoon and time for us to head for the Neolithic tomb of Maeshowe. We drove back west, calling in at the visitor centre where we got some good birding info from one of the staff before heading to the site with a local guide. The short walk from the road to the tomb was enlivened by the sight of a male hen harrier that dropped into the adjacent field giving us some excellent views before heading off. Once at the tomb the long, low entrance led into a square chamber, quite different from any other tombs that we had visited with the passage apparently aligned to the setting sun around the winter solstice. The guide provided us with lots of information on its Neolithic and more recent Viking past with evidence of the latter provided by the graffiti left in the shape of runes scribed on the walls. It was a fascinating site and well worth the visit with the bonus of a European eel in the burn running by the bus stop, rounding off another great day.

Monday 8 May 2017

Mostly cloudy with occasional brighter spells and a moderate north-north-easterly wind easing during the afternoon.

Today we took the early morning ferry from Houton to Hoy. The journey provided plenty of great northern divers, as well as long-tailed ducks, eiders, great skuas, Arctic skua, shags, black guillemot, guillemot and razorbills whilst in the harbour at Houton a mixed flock of turnstone and dunlin had a fly-by. Once on the island we headed straight for Rackwick and took the path to the Old Man of Hoy. A couple of common redpolls were near the hostel whilst a male hen harrier showed well on the lower slopes of the moorland. A female brambling was also found hopping around the track with a couple of twite in Rackwick before we

took the well-maintained path across the moor. Large numbers of shags were gathered in Rackwick Bay along with a couple of red-throated divers. Great skuas kept a watch as they glided past or were spotted taking up territory on the moors as were numerous wheatears in rocky areas along the route. As we neared the sea stack a distant mountain hare was spotted on a boulder slope although it stopped in an area of long grass where it remained difficult to see. We needn't have worried though, as the path almost reached the coast good numbers of mountain hares showed very well, allowing some great photo opportunities as they fed on the short turf and heather. Most of the hares had largely moulted into their summer coats although we did see one individual that still had most of its white winter fur showing. A few yards further on saw us on the cliffs, overlooking the dramatic coast and sea stack. We spent around half an hour admiring the stunning scenery and a few birds including gannets, great skuas and fulmars (the latter two passing within a few feet of us) whilst on the Old Man we spotted a handful of razorbills low down on the stack and a couple of puffins that flew in to land on the vegetated summit. It was hard to drag yourself away from the scene but lunch called and we headed back to Rackwick picking up two red-throated divers on a small loch and finding both bearberry and Arctic bearberry by the path side. In Rackwick a male blackcap and a couple of willow warblers were singing from the small trees near the visitor centre. We picked up the car and headed back along the valley to enjoy our packed lunch by the road opposite the Dwarfie Stane.

During our well-earned lunch we kept a watchful eye on the skyline when suddenly Kate spotted a couple of birds gliding along the hills on the far side of the U-shaped valley. One of these turned out to be a great skua whilst the other was an adult white-tailed eagle. Although distant, the distinctive shape and huge bulk was obvious, especially when being attacked by the local great skuas. It spent a few minutes circling above the hillside, allowing us plenty of time to follow it in the scope until it eventually dropped into a valley and out of view. After our lucky eagle encounter we took a walk across to the Dwarfie Stane where we clambered in and around this huge rock tomb that had been hewn out of a single rock. It's an amazing piece of work and the only one of its kind in the UK.

After the short walk back to the car we continued down towards the southern end of the island stopping briefly to watch a female hen harrier cruising along the hillside. A little further along the road we paused once again at a roadside loch where we got some stunning scope views of a pair of red-throated divers resting and preening. After our fill of these gorgeous birds we headed for the south end of the island picking up a couple of twite en route including a male showing off his pink rump. The final stop was at the most southerly point of the island at Cantick Lighthouse. We didn't have much time as our ferry was due to leave just after 4.30pm but a quick scan of the rapids produced lots of Arctic terns and kittiwakes as well as razorbills, guillemots, black guillemots and the odd puffin. It was a shame we had to leave but time was ticking although the island had one more delight for us as a male hen harrier flew over the road, close to us as we headed back for the ferry. The journey back to Houton produced over 20 great northern divers, more long-tailed ducks, eiders and of course great skuas.

Wednesday 9 May 2017

A cool north-westerly wind kept temperatures down today in the cloudy conditions.

Our first stop today was Happy Valley; a small wooded garden that is open to the public and a lovely little spot to spend half an hour. Our visit produced a singing chiffchaff, willow warblers and two brief redwings that dropped in for five minutes before moving on. We also headed back down to the main road picking up another brown hare en route before pulling over at Brig o' Waithe. We were hoping for the ever elusive Orkney otter and although we didn't spot any we did see a couple of grey herons, two whimbrel and plenty of red-breasted mergansers. This is a busy site next to the main road with plenty of traffic going by so we didn't hang around long before moving on to Waulkmill Bay. Parking near the head of the bay we took the footpath towards the saltmarsh noting a singing willow warbler, stonechats, twite and a couple of common redpolls. There were a few red-breasted mergansers and harbour seals in the bay, as well as another grey heron, a couple of redshanks and of course passing great skuas. We returned to the road and then took the circular path across the RSPB Hobbister reserve picking up a migrant sparrowhawk that flew across the bay. Greenfinch, linnet, twite and lots of stonechats were present whilst off-shore were several black guillemots, a razorbill and two great northern divers, one being pursued relentlessly by the other. The summer

plumage diver chased the other round and round with frequent dives and wing flapping in what seemed an unnecessary degree of aggression considering the amount of sea out there! After a pleasant walk we headed for Rendall Dooct on the eastern side of West Mainland. The dove cot was an impressive structure made into a tower of stone with metre-thick walls and cracks on the inside for the birds to nest in. This must have been a prized structure during its day considering the amount of work that had gone into its construction with rock doves still inhabiting it today.

After lunch we headed around the northern end of the island passing Loch Swannay where we spotted a small flock of five or six goldeneye in flight, adjacent to the road. A little further on was Birsay with its well preserved palace and the Viking settlement on the Brough of Birsay. The latter is a small island accessible at low tide and home to small numbers of seabirds. A walk to the lighthouse perched on the cliff top and around the north side of the island produced guillemots, razorbills, gannets, kittiwakes, fulmars, shags and a single puffin. A few sand martins were also seen hawking around the remains of the settlement on the east side of the island which we were free to wander round as it had not officially opened for the summer. We left the village of Birsay along the road to Dounby, where we stopped on the roadside to view Loch of Banks. This marshy area close to the road is good for breeding wildfowl and waders and on our brief visit produced five pintail (three males and two females), several gadwall, teal, little grebe, coot, moorhen and three black-tailed godwits. Steve also glimpsed a water rail in flight that was being chased by a moorhen but it was gone before he could even point it out.

Our final stop was on the edge of Birsay Moor and a short walk to the reconstructed 19th century Click Mill. The site is on the edge of the moors and surrounded on three sides by rough grassland which proved great for us as on the way there we spotted a male hen harrier hunting close by and last but not least a lovely short-eared owl quartering the moor rounding off an excellent week.

Thursday 10 May 2017

The early morning flights meant we had little time to do anything this morning apart from enjoy our final breakfast at the hotel before heading to the airport in Kirkwall.

SPECIES LIST

Birds:

Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>
Very common and widespread	
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>
Fairly common and see virtually every day in small numbers	
Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>
Fairly common and seen on five out of six days	
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Common	
Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>
Seen by the Ring of Brodgar and at Graemeshall Loch	
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>
Fairly common in wetland areas	
Wigeon	<i>Anas penelope</i>
Small numbers were seen on four dates	
Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>
Occasionally seen	
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>
Fairly common	
Scaup	<i>Aythya marila</i>
A large flock of over 200 individuals was on Loch Harray, 4 May	
Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>
Seen well on several days with large numbers on Echna Loch, Burray	
Red-throated Diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>
Common with good views on several days although seen best on Hoy	
Black-throated Diver	<i>Gavia arctica</i>
A couple in summer plumage were on the sea off Burray, 6 May	
Great Northern Diver	<i>Gavia immer</i>
Common and seen daily	
White-billed Diver	<i>Gavia adamsii</i>
An adult in summer plumage was seen very well in Water Sound off Churchill Barrier 4, 6 May	
Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>
Very Common	
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
A couple were on Loch of Banks, West Mainland	
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Uncommon with two at Brig o' Waithe and one at Waulkmill	
Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>
Small numbers along the coast	
Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
Small numbers seen	
Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>
Common	
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
A young male was seen at Waulkmill Bay, 9 May	
Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>
Seen on four dates with good views of males at Click Mill and Maeshowe	
White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>
An adult was seen on Hoy	

Buzzard One was seen on Rousay	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Coot Fairly common on wetlands	<i>Fulica atra</i>
Moorhen Fairly common	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Oystercatcher Very common	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>
Lapwing Seen daily	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>
Golden Plover Noted on Birsay Moor and Hoy	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>
Ringed Plover Small numbers were seen on four dates	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>
Turnstone Small numbers were seen on four days	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
Dunlin Seen on three days in small numbers	<i>Calidris alpina</i>
Sanderling A flock of around 30 were at Dingieshowe Bay	<i>Calidris alba</i>
Snipe Common, seen displaying on a couple of days	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>
Black-tailed Godwit Three or four were seen at both the Loons and Loch of Banks	<i>Limosa limosa</i>
Whimbrel 25+ were seen near Yesnaby, 4 May, and two at Brig o' Waithe, 9 May	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
Curlew Common	<i>Numenius arquata</i>
Ruff A male was seen by Marwick Bay	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>
Redshank Common and seen daily	<i>Tringa totanus</i>
Common Sandpiper Only noted on 4 May near Skara Brae	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>
Black-headed Gull Common	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>
Common Gull Very common	<i>Larus canus</i>
Herring Gull Common	<i>Larus argentatus</i>
Great Black-backed Gull Common	<i>Larus marinus</i>
Lesser Black-backed Gull Fairly common and seen virtually daily	<i>Larus fuscus</i>
Iceland Gull A first year bird was seen near Yesnaby, 4 May	<i>Larus glaucoides</i>
Kittiwake Common cliff nester and seen daily	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>
Common Tern Common	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>
Arctic Tern Very common	<i>Sterna paradise</i>

Great Skua Very common and widely seen	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>
Arctic Skua Regular sightings in small numbers	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>
Common Guillemot Common with a colony of around 8,500 at Marwick Head	<i>Uria aalge</i>
Razorbill Common	<i>Alca torda</i>
Black Guillemot Common	<i>Cephus grille</i>
Puffin Small numbers (one or two) were seen at Yesnaby, Brough of Birsay and on Hoy	<i>Fratecula arctica</i>
Rock Dove Common	<i>Columba livia</i>
Wood Pigeon Common	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
Collared Dove Only seen in St Margaret's Hope	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
Cuckoo One was seen at Cottascarth, 7 May	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
Short-eared Owl One flew over the car on the main road, 4 May, and one was watched hunting Birsay Moor, 9 May	
Peregrine Falcon Steve saw an individual hunting at Marwick Bay, 4 May	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
Kestrel Seen on 3 days, including a bird hunting by the hotel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Jackdaw Common around Marwick and Kirkwall	<i>Corvus monedula</i>
Rook Common and seen most days	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>
Hooded Crow Common	<i>Corvus cornix</i>
Raven Noted virtually every day in small numbers	<i>Corvus corax</i>
Skylark Common	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>
Swallow Common	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
House Martin One was seen at Echna Loch, Burray, 6 May	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>
Sand Martin Common and seen on four out of six days	<i>Riparia riparia</i>
Blackcap Heard singing on Rousay and seen at Rackwick, Hoy	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
Whitethroat One was seen on the west side of Rousay	<i>Sylvia communis</i>
Willow Warbler Fairly common	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>
Chiffchaff Singing birds were seen on Rousay and in Happy Valley	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
Wood Warbler One was seen very well at Brough Ness, South Ronaldsay	

Wren Noted every day	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
Common Starling Very common	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Blackbird Common	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Ring Ouzel One was at Hoxa	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>
Redwing Two were seen at Happy Valley, 9 May	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>
Robin Small numbers were noted every day	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Stonechat Common, especially at Hobbister	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>
Northern Wheatear Common and widespread	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>
House Sparrow Common	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Pied Wagtail Fairly common with the odd White Wagtail also noted	<i>Motacilla alba yarrelli</i>
Yellow Wagtail A female was seen at Brough Ness, South Ronaldsay, 6 May ^h	<i>Motacilla flava</i>
Rock Pipit Common along the coast	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>
Meadow Pipit Common	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>
Chaffinch Occasionally seen in small numbers	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
Greenfinch Occasionally noted; seen on three dates	<i>Chloris chloris</i>
Twite Fairly common and noted most days	<i>Linaria flavirostris</i>
Linnet Common	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>
Common Redpoll Fairly common and seen on three dates	<i>Carduelis flammea</i>
Reed Bunting Seen on two dates during the week	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>

Mammals:

Common Seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>
Grey Seal	<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>
European Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>
Brown Hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>
Mountain Hare	<i>Lepus timidus</i>

Butterflies and Moths:

Green-veined White	<i>Pieris napi</i>
Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Aglais urticae</i>
Emperor Moth	<i>Saturnia pavonia</i>

Other Insects:

White-tailed Bumblebee

Bombus lucorum

Plants:

Bearberry

Arctostaphylos uva-ursi

Arctic Bearberry

Arctostaphylos alpina

Scots Lovage

Ligusticum scoticum

Bog Asphodel

Narthecium ossifragum

Marsh-marigold

Caltha palustris

Lesser Celandine

Ficaria verna

Dog Violet

Viola riviniana

Red Campion

Silene dioica

Thrift

Armeria maritima

Eared Willow

Salix aurita

Creeping Willow

Salix repens

Cuckooflower

Cardamine pratensis

Common Scurvygrass

Cochlearia officinalis

Crowberry

Empetrum nigrum

Heather

Calluna vulgaris

Cowslip

Primula veris

Primrose

Primula vulgaris

Silverweed

Potentilla anserina

Bird's-foot Trefoil

Lotus corniculatus

Bugle

Ajuga reptans

Greater Plantain

Plantago major

Ribwort Plantain

Plantago lanceolata

Lousewort

Pedicularis sylvatica

Daisy

Bellis perennis

Colt's-foot

Tussilago farfara

Bluebell

Hyacinthoides non-scripta

Yellow Iris

Iris pseudacorus

Woodrush

Luzula campestris