



## Scottish Natural Heritage Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba

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M Thrane

By email: [request-421067-62780dd9@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-421067-62780dd9@whatdotheyknow.com)

Our Ref: SIR146930/A2381371

23 August 2017

Dear M Thrane

### Information Request – Isle of Rum Seabird and Raptor Monitoring

Thank you for your information request, which we received on 26 July. We have considered your request under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 ('the EIRs').

You asked us for a summary of any Seabird and Raptor monitoring carried out on the Isle of Rum in 2016/17, and requested that methodologies for the monitoring, by species, also be included with a clear indication research aims and objectives. You also noted you would be keen to know what staff or contractors do this work (not specifically by name) and what qualification, certification or experience levels they have to allow them to carry out the work/project. Any interim results on research would be appreciated also, if available.

We have carried out a detailed search of the information we hold, and our response is set out below.

We undertake monitoring of occupancy and breeding success for the following species: red-throated diver, Manx shearwater, golden eagle, white-tailed eagle, hen harrier, sparrowhawk, peregrine, merlin, short-eared owl and raven. Weather permitting; we undertake island counts of seabird assemblage every two years in particular the Guillemot and kittiwake populations.

We use the following methodologies:

- Seabird monitoring handbook for Britain and Ireland. Walsh, P.M., Halley, D.J., Harris, M.P., del Nevo, A., Sim, I.M.W., & Tasker, M.L. (1995)
  - Manx shearwater – occupancy and breeding success
  - Kittiwake and Guillemot population count
- Bird Monitoring Methods by Gillian Gilbert, David W Gibbons and Julianne Evans (RSPB, 1998).
  - Red-throated diver occupancy and breeding success
- Raptors: a field guide to surveys and monitoring by Jon Hardey, Humphrey Crick, Helen Riley, Brian Etheridge and Des Thompson (2013)
  - Occupancy and breeding success for: golden eagle, white-tailed eagle, hen harrier, sparrowhawk, peregrine, merlin, short-eared owl and raven.

Our monitoring work contributes to our overall objective to undertake and facilitate appropriate research, survey, surveillance and monitoring on the Reserve to inform future management and contribute to national programmes. These national programmes are the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme, <http://raptormonitoring.org/>, and the Seabird Monitoring Programme,

<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1550>. Our monitoring of golden eagle, red-throated diver, Manx shearwater, kittiwake and guillemot contributes to our site condition monitoring of designated features under European and domestic legislation, [https://gateway.snh.gov.uk/sitelink/siteinfo.jsp?pa\\_code=8574](https://gateway.snh.gov.uk/sitelink/siteinfo.jsp?pa_code=8574).

Our Reserve Manager Lesley Watt leads on the monitoring and surveillance work. Lesley has led on this work for several years. We use a variety of volunteers and staff to assist with this work including:

- A long-term raptor monitoring volunteer who has monitored Rum NNR raptor populations for many years;
- One long-term shearwater monitoring volunteer; and
- Several staff members who have many years of seabird experience for a wide range of species.

We also involve several volunteers who are looking to gain experience in this work. These volunteers usually come with limited or no experience of this work.

The 2016 monitoring results for Manx shearwater were included in the response we sent to you on 23 February 2017, [https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/manx\\_shearwater\\_and\\_brown\\_rat\\_da#incoming-942648](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/manx_shearwater_and_brown_rat_da#incoming-942648).

Our results are as follows:

<b>Species</b>	<b>Occupancy sample</b>	<b>Productivity</b>
red-throated Diver	2016 Occupied lochans = 15 Breeding attempts = 12  2017 Occupied lochans = 21 Breeding attempts = 20	2016 Chicks fledged = 10 (includes 1 set of twins)  2017 Chicks fledged = 14 (includes 1 set of twins)
Manx shearwater	2016 144 occupied burrows from 165 checked  2017 145 occupied burrows from 156 checked	2016 101 chicks fledged from 144 breeding attempts from 165 study burrows (70%)  2017 Fieldwork still to be completed and analysed
guillemot	Last count 2015 1278 adults	No productivity measured
kittiwake	Last count 2015 468 occupied nests	No productivity measured
golden eagle	2016 3 territories  2017 3 territories	2016 1 chick fledged  2017 3 chicks fledged

<b>Species</b>	<b>Occupancy sample</b>	<b>Productivity</b>
white-tailed eagle	2016 1 territory	2016 0 chicks fledged
	2017 1 territory	2017 2 chicks fledged
hen harrier	2016 2 territories	2016 4 chicks fledged
	2017 Still awaiting results	2017 Still awaiting results
sparrowhawk	2016 None recorded	2016
	2017 Still awaiting results	2017 Still awaiting results
peregrine	2016 None recorded	2016
	2017 Still awaiting results	2017 Still awaiting results
merlin	2016 2 territories	2016 4 chicks fledged
	2017 Still awaiting results	2017 Still awaiting results
short-eared owl	2016 None recorded	2016
	2017 Still awaiting results	2017 Still awaiting results
raven	2016 2 territories	2016 2+ chicks fledged
	2017 Still awaiting results	2017 Still awaiting results

As we are still waiting for some of the 2017 survey results, this means that we do not hold some of the information you have requested. I therefore need to explain that this means that EIRs Regulation 10(4)(a) (Information not held) applies in part to your request for the 2016/17 interim survey results.

We anticipate that we will have the remainder of the 2017 survey results by the end of September.

### **How We Handled Your Request**

We believe you have asked for environmental information as defined in the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 ('the EIRs'), so we are dealing with your request under those regulations. To be able to use the EIRs, we must apply an exemption under section 39(2) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 ('FOISA'). The Scottish Information Commissioner's guidance recommends that public authorities apply this exemption to environmental information and handle requests under the EIRs.

If you would like to find out more about the access to information legislation there is a guidance booklet available on the Scottish Information Commissioner's website:

<http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.aspx?IID=5487&sID=5024>.

### **Review and Appeal**

I hope this information meets your requirements but if you are dissatisfied with how we have responded to your information request, please write to us within 40 working days explaining your concerns. You can contact us at Battleby, Redgorton, Perth, PH1 3EW or email us at [foi@snh.gov.uk](mailto:foi@snh.gov.uk). We will carry out a review of our response and contact you with our findings within 20 working days.

If you are not satisfied following this, you can make an appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner. The Scottish Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Scottish Information Commissioner  
Kinburn Castle  
Doubledykes Road  
St Andrews  
Fife  
KY16 9DS

Online appeal service: [www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal)

Website: <http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/>

Telephone: 01334 464610

Yours sincerely

*Rhoda Davidson*

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