Scotland – The Isle of Coll in Summer

Naturetrek Tour Report 29th April – 6th May 2024



Early Purple Orchid and Primrose



Green Hairstreak



Female Emperor Moth



Brown Hare

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Summary

Six Naturetrek clients spent a happy week exploring the spring-time delights of the Isle of Coll and mainland Argyll. We visited some very special habitats (Caledonian rain forest, machair grasslands, vast, empty beaches and upland moorland and bog) and saw some delightful landscapes and geology, all abounding with characteristic wildlife. Our bird list included Hebridean specialities such as Corncrake, Puffin, Hen Harrier and both Golden and White-tailed Eagles. Other vertebrates included two species of seal (Grey and Harbour/Common), two reptiles (Viviparous Lizard and Slow Worm), Palmate Newt and Brown Hare. Invertebrates included Green Hairstreak, Moss Carder and Heath Bumble Bees and a moth trap full of wonders, including the impressive Emperor and Puss moths. The plants were no less interesting, including early spring specialists of woodland (especially Wood Anemones and Primroses), grassland (Mossy Saxifrage and the exceptionally rare Many-lobed Dandelion), rocky shores (Sea Campion and Roseroot) and upland lochs (Pipewort). Add to this some fantastic food, some surprising archaeology and great company, and it was a perfect trip.

Day 1 Monday 29th April

Rendezvous in Oban

Our group of six intrepid Naturetrekkers met with their guide on a wet Monday evening at the Oban Bay Hotel. After an initial welcome session, where we shared our respective aspirations for the week ahead, we went out to a local restaurant for a meal. The only wildlife sighting of note was of the Black Guillemots in the bay: it's a sure sign that you've reached the wild north when you find these delightful auks haunting every sheltered inlet.

Day 2 Tuesday 30th April

Glasdrum Wood NNR and Loch Creran, then the ferry from Oban to Arinagour

We were booked on the afternoon ferry to Coll today so, in the morning, we were treated to a trip to one of Scotland's finest nature reserves, Glasdrum Wood: a cracking example of the so-called 'Caledonian rain forest'. That was an appropriate name for the conditions today!

On the way, our guide pointed out some large specimens of Wych Elm along the roadside: the Argyll mountains to the south evidently represented a barrier to the northward progression of the bark beetles which carried the Dutch Elm Fungus to devastating effect across so much of England and lowland Scotland.

We were grateful for the shelter offered by the canopy of Sessile Oaks at Glasdrum and we delighted in the colourful ground flora of ancient woodland specialists including Anemone, Bluebells and 'pin' and 'thrum' Primroses. As we headed up through the wood the changing geology under our feet was reflected in the changing flora, with sections of Bilberry, Heather and the bromeliad-like leaves of Great Woodrush and, above them, a boggy stand of coppiced Alders and the associated clearings where charcoal was made.

We discovered that not all silver-barked trees are Silver Birches as the trunks of Downy Birch, Rowan, Hazel and Holly all shone out at us. We were invited to nibble on the vanilla-flavoured stems of Sweet Vernal Grass and were shown the whiskery leaves of two more species of woodrush. But most impressive were the huge tumbledown Rowan trees, whose exposed footplates provided habitat for countless solitary bees and wasps, while each branch on the upper-side of the fallen trunk formed a new tree-sized stem growing strongly upwards.

We also delighted in the epiphytic growth on the ancient oaks, with Common Polypody, Tree Lungwort and even Honeysuckle finding a footing in the mossy bark. We were too early for most of the migrant birds which would slowly fill this wood over the coming weeks but, as the rain cleared, we were treated to the calls and songs of the local resident bird species including Nuthatch, a relative newcomer to the Scottish bird list.

We lunched on a picnic bench overlooking Loch Creran and here we were treated to some migrant bird action: including Cuckoo, Greenshank, Curlew and a pair of Common Sandpipers, whose familiar chittering was suddenly replaced by a frantic whistle as a Sparrowhawk shot along the bank of the loch in an unsuccessful sortie.

As we got back into the van for the return to Oban, a Clouded Border (our first moth of the trip) obligingly allowed our guide to pick it up and show it around – though John, the photographer in the group, eschewed such an unnatural setting as 'moth in hand'.

Once onboard the ferry, we all met up on the deck as the weather slowly began to improve. The bright greenery of the fresh vegetation on the Lismore limestone contrasted with the still wintry browns and greys of the Glen Sanda granite beyond. Gangs of 'teenage' Common Gulls (last year's young) loafed in the Sound of Mull while, on the skyline above Ardtornish, a Red Deer posed in silhouette. We were bemused by the bins on deck with carefully labelled slots for "Glass", "Recycling" and "Other Waste" all emptying into a single rubbish bag beneath!

As we came past Ardnamurchan and out onto the open sea, Kittiwakes (both adult and second-year) and Manx Shearwaters appeared, the latter elegantly skimming the surface of the water. The low cloud shrouded the surrounding islands but we could just make out Muck to the north and the Treshnish islands to the south, and Coll itself emerged out of the gloom as we sailed ever further west.

We had time for a hasty check-in at our guest house, where we met our ebullient host Paula, before heading up to the Coll Hotel for dinner – followed by an early night.

Day 3 Wednesday 1st May

Road tour of Cliad and Ballyhaugh, followed by a boat trip to Lunga and the Treshnish Isles

Another wet start this morning, so we began the day with a tour around the middle of the island, following the route taken by Boswell and Johnson, who stayed on Coll some 250 years earlier. Greg pointed out the places they stayed and the sights they mention from their trip, while also picking out older features including a fishing gate, a souterrain and some classic glacial features. We were joined for the day by Jane, a local nature enthusiast who is also convener of the Coll History Society.

We rounded a corner to come upon a convention of six Brown Hares in a roadside field, which brought us back to the present day. They seemed unbothered by our proximity and we had great views as they milled around. Suddenly, one of them (we presumed the female) took off across the field and the others (males?) followed in hot pursuit. They all crossed the road ahead of the van except one which took a detour along a fence line and, olonized its error, soon gave up the chase. Here we also picked up our first Twites of the trip, a party of four using the same fence. The young lambs of the Soay sheep in the field, looked for all the world like fawns, with their long, spindly legs, narrow faces and dark brown fleeces.

Further up the field we found a nice party of migrant waders including sixteen spangly summer-plumaged Golden Plover and five similarly-attired Dunlin, the latter appearing to be of the arctica subspecies, to judge from their short bills and diminutive stature. As we drove along, a male Hen Harrier made a fleeting appearance over the sand hills to the north and a pair of Cuckoos flew by to the south.

At Ballyhaugh, we spent 15 minutes scanning the loch and surrounding moorland. Here we had a pair of Little Grebes and two pairs of Moorhens (both scarce Hebridean breeders), while the more ubiquitous Wheatears and Hoodies (Hooded Crows) gave close views. In the marsh by the loch, we found Marsh Marigold and Cuckooflower in bloom and the distinctive leaves of Marsh Cinquefoil promising future splendour, while out in the loch itself beyond the reed-fringed margin we could see the pinky-white flowers and glaucous trefoil leaves of Bogbean. A blast of Chiffchaff song from a tiny clump of bushes was a surprise, though we could only see Stonechats when we scanned them.

We went back to our guest house to pick up our packed lunches, and then drove to the pier to meet the boat which was our transport for the afternoon. As we waited for it to appear out of the watercolour skies towards Mull, we watched Great Northern and Red-throated Divers fishing, while overhead Arctic and Common Terns, newly arrived, shrieked their gratitude at being back safely.

When the boat arrived we quickly clambered down the rusty ladder and onto the deck, where our skipper Struan gave us a safety briefing and explained the plan for the afternoon. As we headed out, the Harbour (Common) Seals in the bay came to see us off and a pair of Eider bobbed among the offshore skerries.

As we sailed south towards Lunga, the numbers of seabirds slowly increased: Razorbills, Puffins,Common Guillemots, Shags and the occasional Gannet. A Harbour Porpoise surfaced several times relatively close to the boat, but there was no sign of the Minke Whales which Greg's wife Sarah was at the same moment watching from shore on the other side of Coll!

On reaching Lunga, we scrambled ashore from the boat and made our way carefully across the basaltic lava flows while Rock Pipits and Skylarks sang around our heads. We headed up through banks of Lesser Celandines, Bluebells and Primroses to the platform where Puffins nest in their hundreds. On the way we passed an unintentionally amusing National Trust for Scotland sign: it listed all the hazards and risks that you might come across while visiting Lunga, and then offered a rather doleful postscript: "We hope you enjoy your visit!"

At this time of year, the Puffins were busy tending to their nest holes, and beaks-full of Sand Eels were replaced by beaks-full of grass which they use to construct their simple nests. We stayed here for a while, delighting in the extraordinarily close views which the Puffins allowed, as we munched on our sandwiches.

On the neighbouring cliffs, Fulmars' guttural cackles and Kittiwakes' name-calling revealed that these seabirds too were settling down to breed. We made our way along the cliff-top path, where Roseroot, Sea Campion and Thrift were flowering in cracks and crevices in the cliffs. Clive pointed out a large, dark bird with "roundels under its wings" and we quickly locked on to a Great Skua: a happy find since the population of this species has crashed as a result of H6N1 bird 'flu.

At the end of the cliff path, the Harp Rock loomed: a vast sea stack with hundreds of Kittiwakes nesting around its base and a few Razorbills and Puffins gathering. The vast thousands of Common Guillemots which blanket the steeply sloping flanks of the rock had not yet arrived, though they were gathering in numbers down on the sea close by. "Any day now this rock will be teeming with them!", we were told. In anticipation, Herring Gulls and Great Black-backed Gulls were patrolling the airspace, "licking their lips" hungrily!

After we had had our fill of the Puffins, we headed back to the landing site where Struan was waiting in a small rubber dinghy to row us back to the boat. He then motored slowly around the back of Lunga, and past Fladda and the Cairn na Burghs while we enjoyed more amazing sights: parties of male Eiders loafing on the rocks; breeding pairs of Great Black-backed Gulls standing proud on small promontories; vast Grey Seals snoozing on the rocks or towering out of the water to watch suspiciously as we passed; a couple of small dark waders on the waterline which our guide told us were Purple Sandpipers; and, among Cairn na Burgh Mòr's Napoleonic fortresses, a natural sea-arch like a needle's eye winking.

As we returned to Loch Eatharna on Coll, the Harbour Seals came off the rocks into the water to greet us. With their smaller size and kinder faces, they were far less intimidating than the Greys we had left behind. Our meal this evening was at the Island Café – another excellent experience after a day of wonders.

Day 4 Thursday 2nd May

RSPB Totronald, Machair Mhòr and Hogh beach

After breakfast we met Sarah, Greg's wife, who was to join us for the day. She quickly told us about the three Minke Whales she had seen to the west of Coll on the previous day. Greg (hearing the tale for the third time) was not impressed!

The drive across the island did not take long, but we did add singing Blackcap and Greenfinch from the minibus and a party of Whimbrels stopping over en route to more northerly climes. At the Totronald viewing platform, we settled down for the obligatory Corncrake vigil. We heard a bird calling its distinctive, rasping 'crex crex' call while we were still getting our things from the back of the minibus, though it soon stopped, and soon after a second bird called but, as always, they were reluctant to give away their whereabouts. It was an overcast morning with a cool breeze blowing so not the best conditions but we persevered. We scanned the patches of longer vegetation which we knew the birds would favour, but without success, though the sawing of Snipe, squabbling of Redshank and the "Star Wars" sound effects of the Sedge Warbler were a pleasant distraction.

By way of encouragement, Sarah promised a coffee to whoever found a Corncrake and soon Sara (her near namesake) had come up with the goods: "What's that by the gate?", she asked and we all peered into the longer vegetation to see a Corncrake casually standing there. Then, as is often the way, a second bird appeared not far

from the first, but as we watched through our telescopes, they both merged back into the vegetation. In hope of better views, we then walked up to claim the bench in the RSPB warden's garden, where Corncrakes are frequently seen. A bird calling just round the corner drew us into a familiar game: "It must be just there!" "No – there!" "Now it's over there!" as a bird which seemed just feet away waltzed across the unmown grass in front of us, quite invisibly!

For those in the first stages of 'Corncrake crackers', the Linnets on the fence line and a large Drinker moth caterpillar were useful distractions, as were the various bees on the dandelions. The familiar White-tailed and Red-tailed Bumblebees were present, but so too were several examples of the Hebridean speciality, the Moss Carder Bee, with its bright ginger thorax. For a while, we watched a Hooded Crow who was stalking a lamb, sneaking up on it and pecking at its flank. The mother ewe sitting 10 feet away did nothing and it was down to a brave local Lapwing to intervene and drive the corvid away.

A loo break gave us good views of another Brown Hare and a flock of nine Whimbrel while we tried to capture the subtle scent of coconut on the gorse flowers. Back at the viewing platform, Sarah and John, who thanks to their strong bladders had stayed behind, pointed out another Corncrake which had been stood out in the open for an extended period, calling repetitively.

A Buzzard fell from a great height in an attempt to maraud among the breeding waders, but the alarm call of a Redshank drew the attentions of the other birds and quickly the Lapwings were up and aggressively chased it off. As the sun came out, we now headed out into the rolling sand dunes, to experience Machair Mhòr ('the great machair'). And it was indeed great! An extraordinary variety of wild flowers was evident even at this early stage of the season: Dove's-foot Cranesbill, Mossy Saxifrage, Dog Violets, Common Milkwort, Birdsfoot Trefoil, Cornsalad and Wild Thyme. There were a myriad fast-moving spiders on the shorter vegetation, and two very different species of snail continued the invertebrate proceedings.

The black-flowered Common Sedge and 'long-lining' Sand Sedge taught us that 'sedges have edges', while the sandstone calcretions hidden among the dunes were home to Hairy Rock-cress, Ivy-leaved Speedwell and Early Hair-grass. We learnt that, by storing nutrients in their bulbs, some perennial spring flowers (like Bulbous Buttercup) can steal a march on their rivals. This is because the latter, which rely on roots to gain their nutrition afresh each year from the soil, are slower to mature, so the bulbous forms are able to gain the exclusive attention of pollinators before the competition hots up later in the year.

We made a judicious detour to gain access to the beach while avoiding a herd of cows and calves, and came across Coltsfoot in all stages, from flowers, to seedheads, to well-developed leaves (which is the unusual sequence that this species adopts to achieve early flowering). Among the continuous Marram Grass, we found several specimens of the distinctive Marram Weevil. We zigzagged down the face of the dune to a delightful classic Hebridean beach of rolling yellow sand. Several of our group removed their walking boots and socks to paddle in the (very cold) water.

Two Little Terns (a rare breeding bird throughout Britain) 'shreeped' above us as they fished along the beach, like wind-up clockwork 'bird mannequins'. We studids the prints on the beach and Greg pointed out the differences between the rounded, five-padded Otter prints and the more pointed, four-padded dog prints.

At the end of the beach we had a session shell-spotting: it was surprising how quickly folk were able to pick out the Spotted Cowries among the millions of other shells and shell fragments on the beach. There's something particularly satisfying about a cowrie, but we were also able to put names to several other species: the Grey and Painted Topshells, the Flat Periwinkles, Dog Whelks, Prickly Cockles and at least two different Limpets. A stone drilled with neat tubular orifices was apparently made by a Piddock, a species of bivalve mollusc which literally drills through rock. Maintaining the shell theme, a Shelduck flew over (which Greg helpfully observed is neither a shell nor a duck!).

We headed back to the car park (where the Corncrake was still calling) and drove back towards the village. On the way, we stopped beside a roadside loch and spent ten minutes scanning the loch and surrounding moorland. In no time, we had picked up two different female Hen Harriers quartering the hillside. A smart drake Red-breasted Merganser drew our attention back to the loch where we also saw Greylag and Canada Geese, the latter being a relatively recent summer regular to the island.

We were back at the Coll Hotel for dinner tonight and the huge picture windows came up trumps with a close-passing Arctic Skua (for those looking in the right direction). Over dinner, the group shared their 'getting back to Britain as Covid began' stories. First prize must go to the enterprising couple who ticked the "returning after selling fish" box on a form in order to re-enter Britain! Later this evening, as darkness sort of fell, a hint of a Northern Lights aurora was visible in the northern sky.

Day 5 Friday 3rd May

Pre-breakfast walk to The Lodge, Killunaig, Loch à Mhill Aird, graveyard and Chapel Beach

Before breakfast, we gathered for a walk through the village to the Lodge plantation. The weather appeared promising for the day ahead, with high cloud and a warmth which the north-easterly breeze could not hide. In the grounds of the community centre, we found the feathery leaves of Pignut and the crocodile-skin leaves of Yellow-rattle. By the gate, Greg got very excited as he found a new site for Thale Cress on the island: not a rare plant on the mainland, but a species only previously recorded on Coll in the hotel beer garden (which may tell us more about the habits of botanists than it does about Thale Cress).

We saw or heard 30 different bird species on the walk: nothing out of the ordinary but it's always nice to see and hear a Cuckoo, and the buzzing Lesser Redpolls in the treetops were a treat. The whole 'island bio-geography' theme, which had arisen in conversation earlier in the week, was further illustrated by our guide's excitement at adding Blue Tit and Woodpigeon to our Coll list for the week, two species which would not have drawn the slightest attention had we been on the mainland.

After breakfast we headed out towards the eastern end of the island and parked up by an old chapel and graveyard. Our plan was to circle up and across the moorland via a loch in the morning, and then head down through the machair to the beach in the afternoon, thereby enabling us to have lunch back at the minibus.

As we headed up on to the moors, a bubbling song made us think Curlew but closer inspection of the flock of waders flying over, enabled us to correct this to Whimbrel. It is not often heard in Britain (away from Shetland and Orkney where it breeds in small numbers), but the Whimbrel has a bubbling song to go alongside the more

familiar seven-note piping whistle which the guide books describe. Our guide explained the history of the Lewisian gneiss rock which underpins the entirety of Coll, from its origins in the volcanic fires of the early Earth, through to its more recent shaping by the glaciers of the last ice-age.

A good list of upland plant species quickly began to develop, including the uncommon Mountain Everlasting, the insectivorous Common Butterwort, and Common Lousewort (with its big pink flowers flat to the sward). We were invited to imagine the medicinal applications of the Lesser Celandine (hinted at in its alternative name, Pilewort). The moorland landscape was littered with evidence of past human activity in the shape of old walls, lazy beds, a shelter stone and a pair of Iron Age cairn burials. But what got Greg very excited were several sightings of Green Hairstreak butterflies: not an uncommon species but one that he rarely sees on his spring walks on the island. And we had to admit that the butterfly at rest on the heather was a very striking shade of green. It was not the only insect on the wing, as we also saw Common Heath moth and the Heath Bumblebee.

Down by the loch, we sniffed the crushed leaves of Bog Myrtle which gives the distinctive flavour to Coll Gin, and were shown the rosette leaves of this year's Pipewort, an exceptionally rare species for which Coll is the European stronghold. Sadly, it will not flower for another three months but we did get to see last year's rotting stems which gave us some idea as to the unusual form of this submerged-emergent.

As we were studying the Pipewort, the 'cronk' of a Raven made us look heavenward, just as an adult White-tailed Eagle flew low over our heads. Magical for most, but poor John pointed his camera at it only for the 'change battery' light to come on. He desperately hurried to replace the battery as the bird drifted further away and out of sight.

By this point, lunch was beckoning, so we had a bit of a route march to make it back to the minibus, made all the more difficult by Greg regularly stopping to show us some new delight, be it a rare club-moss, the ruins of a black house, the germolene-smell of young Meadowsweet leaves or yet another flipping Green Hairstreak! We finally made it back for a well-earned sit-down and sarnie against the graveyard wall. After a decent rest, we were led off again, this time into the sand dunes past the old bulb fields (still replete with Daffodils), which were the Hebrides' new but short-lived economic fad of the 1950s.

From the dunes we stepped down onto another glorious beach, with rocky offshore islands and a sandy tombolo of sand running out to them. A pair of Common Terns (replacing the Arctic Terns which usually occupy these particular skerries) were evidenced by their voices, longish legs and black-tipped bills. The Great Northern Diver in the bay was showing off its distinctive 'snorkelling' fishing technique: paddling around at the surface with its head submerged till, spotting potential prey, it quietly slips beneath the surface. A Red-breasted Merganser appeared in the same spot after the diver had dived, causing Greg a brief moment's doubt as to whether he had imagined the diver completely!

More Whimbrels and a smart Pied Wagtail occupied the beach while Greg told us about the dune-building, ecosystem-engineering skills of the Marram Grass. Next, we turned and headed into the saltmarsh where we were lectured on the properties of halophytic (salt-tolerant) plants. We saw tiny Danish Scurvy-grass in flower (contrasting with the large luscious examples of Common Scurvy-grass that we had seen on Lunga), and Gutweed in a hyper-saline pool, looking as intestinal as it name suggests it should.

Beyond the saltmarsh, we clambered down onto the rocky shore to be shown a basaltic dyke created by magma forced under high pressure through a crack in the gneiss from a volcano on Mull, its angular step-like structure being a function of how it cooled and was subsequently eroded. In one of these steps, a rolling stone, constantly moved by the intertidal waters, had worn a deep well-like hollow (over a metre deep). Local tradition suggests this has been used as a wishing well, and the evidence of rusty coins in cracks around the feature seemed to support this theory.

Greg was momentarily distracted by another wagtail on the rocks and a closer look revealed that this one was a smart, male White Wagtail, the continental relative of our resident Pied Wagtails, which is migratory. These birds head out to Iceland or Scandinavia for the summer to breed. Greg now wished he'd taken a closer look at the Pied Wagtail on the beach earlier! Out to sea a large flock of birds on the water drew our attention – were they Shags drawn to a boil of fish created by a hunting cetacean? No, they weren't. As they took to the air, it was evident that they were another flight of Pink-footed Geese who had dropped onto the sea for a break from the strong north-easterly headwind they were fighting.

Turning our backs on them, we headed up into the machair, where we quickly found some short sward specialists in bare patches of sand: tiny Rue-leaved Saxifrage, Sea Mouse-ear, Biting Stonecrop and the miniature blue-flowered Cornsalad. We walked on through the Marram-dominated machair and down into a dune slack where we were shown a Bronze Age cist burial site. Another patch of bare sand brought more delights in the form of a fat dusty click beetle going by the name Agrypnus murinus (not uncommon on Coll but scarce elsewhere across Scotland), another huge Drinker moth caterpillar (surely just days from pupating), and the pink-flowered bedstraw Field Madder (a real rarity on the west-coast machair which Greg had not seen on Coll before). But best of all was a diminutive, innocuous-looking dandelion with fine orange florets going by the name Many-lobed Dandelion (Taraxacum obliquum). Here was another European rarity with a stronghold on Coll. There are few confirmed records in Britain but Greg has found it regularly at this time of year on the Coll machair. Clive quickly found two more flowering specimens and then a third. So much for being rare!

We made it back to the village in time to catch the shop where ice creams and the local gin were purchased. Then to the Island I for another wonderful meal (especially the homemade soup which was lovely whatever flavour it was!) followed by a leisurely evening walk to the ferry pier for interesting conversations about island living, but nothing new to report on the natural history front.

Day 6 Saturday 4th May

A moth trapping session, a slow drive via the roadside lochs, then a walk in the Crossapol machair and along Crossapol Beach

This morning's pre-breakfast walk turned up a dead Pigmy Shrew on the road, prompting discussion over whether we could add it to the list! Out on the loch a 'porpoising' Harbour Seal drew our attention as it streaked up the bay, repeatedly launching itself bodily out of the water. We discussed the reason for its evident joie de vivre and concluded that it was a male attempting to impress the ladies. "Well, I was impressed", observed Christine drily, to much hilarity!

Our morning began at the local community centre visiting the Saturday market and the post office/gift shop, while Greg checked the catch in his moth trap from the previous night. After a brief spot of retail therapy, we all joined him and emitted appropriate "oohs" and "ahhs" at the fabulous variety of delights emerging. In the trap were 50 individuals of 17 different species. A full list is provided in the checklist, but the highlights were a couple of Puss Moths, the tent-like Pebble Prominent, the neatly calligraphed Hebrew Character, and a chunky Sexton beetle with a hitch-hiking mite onboard. But putting the rest in the shade (both literally and metaphorically) was the majestic female Emperor Moth, a beautiful blue-grey and pink moth with black and orange eye spots, and one of the biggest beasts on the UK insect list. We left Greg's wife Sarah sorting through the remaining moths in the trap: "What could be better than a female Emperor moth?", we reasoned. "Well, how about a second female Emperor moth in the trap!", was Sarah's texted reply thirty minutes later!

Feeling optimistic we headed out into the fine weather and stopped by the roadside lochs which had provided our Hen Harrier moment two days earlier. "There's one!", called Greg soon after we had clambered out of the minibus. Then "Hang on! It's a Short-eared Owl – no, two Short-eared Owls!". We watched the distant pair of birds as they spiralled around each other getting higher and higher: a courtship flight between a pair perhaps, or two males vying for supremacy in the skies? Whichever, it was very exciting as Short-eared Owls are not a common bird on Coll. We shortly passed the postie on her rounds and Greg wound down the window to tell her what we had seen. She in turn reported an eagle sighting further back up the road. We joked that it was like two safari guides in their jeeps on the Serengeti exchanging intel on where the lions were! A little further on, we put the windows down and were treated to the distant reeling of a Grasshopper Warbler. Not to be outdone, a Whitethroat sang from the bushes close by and a pair of Stonechats perched up confidingly in some brambles.

Next, we passed two Cuckoos on the wire, being escorted by their highly suspicious potential victim, a Meadow Pipit. We wondered why, when the pipit clearly olonized the danger that the Cuckoo represents and goes to enormous lengths to remove any mismatched egg from its nest, it somehow completely fails to notice, when the Cuckoo chick emerges, that it is so obviously not of its kind! To distract us from our puzzlement at nature's idiosyncrasies, Greg stopped the minibus and we all climbed out to see an extensive stand of Early Purple Orchids on a roadside knoll. They were still mostly small but, as Pam observed, "The first orchid of the years is always special", and they looked a delight alongside the Primroses.

We lunched in the dunes at Crossapol, where Christine found a Dor Beetle rolling cow poo, and a male Hen Harrier hunted through the fields while an elusive Corncrake called persistently from an area of tall vegetation deliberately left for it. We could see Linnets, Whimbrel, Lapwing and Brown Hares in the fields. One of the Lapwings was persistently dive-bombing an electricity pole: the telescopic zoom on the camera revealed a Hooded Crow perched on the top of the pole with hunched shoulders, but otherwise seemingly untroubled by the attention. Storksbill and Doves-foot Cranesbill were in flower side-by-side enabling a helpful comparison of the two, and further up in the machair Clive pointed out a Yellow Field Cap on a cowpat and later photographed another mushroom which turned out to be a Common Field Cap. Clive was on a roll by this stage, for next he spotted more Many-lobed Dandelions in just the same short and bare habitat that we had seen them in yesterday. The group were beginning to doubt Greg's claims as to how rare this species really was, a doubt which increased as we found more and more of them through the machair! New plants included a pretty, white form of the usually pink-flowered Common Milkwort, tiny specimens of Knotted Pearlwort, the grey-green leaves of Lesser Meadow-rue and the miniature Honesty-like seed pods of Common Whitlow-grass. Greg studied the various specimens of Sea

Mouse-ear until, with satisfaction, he presented us with a specimen of Small Mouse-ear – a tricky and rarely recorded species he had been tasked to find by the BSBI county recorder.

Greg's next find were the elytra and thorax of a Short-necked Oil Beetle, a species recently rediscovered on Coll after being thought to be extinct in Britain since the 1940s. Along with other oil beetles, it has a fascinating life-history involving emerging from its egg as a tiny ant-like creature which climbs onto a yellow-flowered composite and waits for a solitary bee of the right species to come along, onto which it then jumps and hitches a ride back to the bee's nest which it proceeds to devour! Since its discovery on Coll (by the RSPB warden), the beetle has now olonized neighbouring islands. Being flightless, it has presumably made its way to these on the back of a wandering bee. Wonderful!

Another day, another Hebridean beach: though this one was let down by the clutter of marine litter in one corner. We found unusual clumps of dead grass stems tightly tangled together, which we were told were called sea balls (or 'Nun's farts' in Italian owing to their rarity!) and were created by the rolling action of the sea on a curved beach. More Great Northern Divers, Little Terns and Eider Ducks were in evidence, but the only new species we added here were the Sanderlings which had joined the Dunlins and Ringed Plovers. Sporting reddish-chestnut feathers, these summer-plumage Sanderlings looked very different to the grey and white birds we are used to seeing in the winter, though they still had the characteristic bicycling gait as they scurried along the beach.

Day 7 Sunday 5th May

Walk at Cliad Beach, ferry to Oban and walk in Dunollie Woods

Our last day on Coll began with a trip to another wonderful beach, this time at Cliad. The misty start gave way to a pleasant sunny morning and we all managed good views of a male Hen Harrier as it hunted over the dunes. More Marram Beetles in the fore-dunes were joined by a Black Snail Beetle, which might have accounted for the number of empty snail shells we found along the path. We peered over the final dune onto the beach in hope of the 'mammal that dare not speak its name' (Otter), but the best we could manage were some nice fresh prints along the edge of the burn down onto the beach.

The beach itself had the usual complement of Whimbrels, Ringed Plovers, Sanderlings and Dunlins. We watched Gannets plunge-diving offshore and up to eight Great Northern Divers using a different technique to the same end. Closer in, Little Terns were 'shreeping' as they fished in the shallows, and Harbour Seals snorted and cavorted among the rocky islets. A briefly glimpsed Bonxie (Great Skua) was, surprisingly, only our second of the week, and a party of four Black-headed Gulls was a reminder of their rarity status on the islands. A loud, forlorn honk behind us drew our attention to a lone Whooper Swan flying south along the beach, no doubt in search of some pals to share the journey north. In the machair, Clive again excelled himself by finding three new specimens of the Many-lobed Dandelion. What a star!

We drove back to the ferry port where our wait for the boat was enlivened by a pair of Red-throated Divers flying around the bay. Out on the water, a shout of "Whale!" had us all running to the railings, but the beast remained stubbornly submerged until it was very distant and gave some of us at least just a brief view as it surfaced again.

The sail training boat 'Provident' under full sail was a sight to behold. This 100-year old gaff ketch, which started life as a Brixham trawler, is now teaching enthusiasts how to shiver their timbers in the seas around the Hebrides. A more modern whale-watching trip boat out of Tobermory seemed to change course and speed off down towards the Mull shore, leaving us all wondering what might have been spotted.

In the Sound of Mull, the mist thickened and the ferry began to loudly proclaim its presence on its fog-horn, causing us all to jump out of our skins each time it sounded. Unbothered by the noise, a Harbour Porpoise surfaced close to the boat.

After checking in to our hotel in Oban, we took a late afternoon stroll around the woods at Dunollie. We saw some striking geology in the form of a smooth, basaltic glacial erratic, known as Ossian's Putting Stone, and a marooned conglomerate sea-stack traditionally called Fingal's Dog-stone. Inosculating beech trees hinted at the bunch-planting technique used when they were first established. And down by the shore a Rock Pipit used the seaward face of the cathedral like a cliff perch from which to project its descending song. Our evening meal tonight was at the Coast restaurant – a special treat for the group.

Day 8 Monday 6th May

Kilmartin Glen, Crinan Canal and Knapdale Forest

The last day of the trip was a bonus day in Argyll. The day began with an early and substantial breakfast at the hotel and, as we left, our guide pointed out a couple of Cormorants flying overhead, a bird we had surprisingly not picked out among the Shags on Coll, so another addition to the week's list. We popped into M&S for some lunch items before driving south-west through the stunning Argyll countryside towards Kilmartin.

The weather was splendid and the journey delightful: with the windows down, Sedge Warblers and Willow Warblers could be heard, and somewhere along the way a Grasshopper Warbler tested the ears of most of us. Two Mute Swans on a small roadside loch kept the species count ticking over towards 100.

In Kilmartin Glen, we popped in to a small car park from where a length of boardwalk took us out onto the vast Moine Mhòr National Nature Reserve. Hare's-tail Cottongrass bloomed among the Sphagnum and Heather, while Common Heath moths and Large Red Damselflies flitted about.

A small patch of woodland proved what the clearance of rhododendrons can do for the regrowth of Rowan and Alder. Fomes brackets on the Downy Birch trees looked like the horses 'hooves from which it takes its English name, while Holly, Bilberry, Wood Sorrel and Dog-lichen abounded in the undergrowth. An unfamiliar member of the rose family on the track had the botanists scratching their heads. Was it a funny-looking Great Burnet or perhaps a big Agrimony? No, on further investigation it proved to be a South American interloper going by the name Acaena ovalifolia.

A short drive took us to the Crinan Canal where we parked and headed up over the canal onto the flanks of the National Nature Reserve at Cnoc na Moine. A small water body with the hybrid Water x Wood Avens and a Common Lizard basking on the boardwalk showed early promise for the walk, but subsequent views across the

bog were obscured by unhelpfully positioned hills and plantation woodland. So, after a bit of a hike, we decided to cut our losses and headed back.

As soon as we did, a Grasshopper Warbler reeled from bushes close to us (there was no mistaking it this time) and then came the surprise of the week in the form of a Slow Worm wiggling snake-like across the Molinia swamp. The walk back also provided our only woodpecker of the trip, a Great Spotted, scolding as we walked close to its nest site in a hollow tree, followed by some angry drumming, once we had passed it, as if to say "Behold my power, mortals!".

A Mistle Thrush sang mournfully from the top of a distant Spruce, while an Orange-tip along the canal helped boost the tiny butterfly list for the trip. But by this point our stomachs were eager for us to open the M&S bags with our food in!

So next, a short hop to Knapdale and a walk to see the impact of a 15-year old beaver introduction project. As we settled on the viewing platform to finally enjoy our lunch (and some gluten-free birthday cake), a Golden Eagle appeared over the ridge above us, causing a further delay to our sustenance! The impressive flight silhouettes clearly showed the differences in tail length and wing-shape that distinguish this from the White-tailed Eagle which we'd seen earlier in the week. Excitingly, this bird got our week's bird list to 100, and we still hadn't finished!

A local naturalist was surveying the Greater Tussock Sedge swamp in the shallows around the loch and kindly showed us some of her spoils: a male Palmate Newt (with a pointy tail) and the nymph of a Four-spotted Chaser dragonfly.

The walk back to the van offered the chance to distinguish Wild and Barren Strawberries; and the abundance of Bugle and Sweet Woodruff along the ride-edge illustrated the recovery that this woodland had made since its days as a conifer plantation.

As the afternoon wore on, we finally headed back to Oban, picking up a pair of Goosanders on the same roadside loch which had produced our earlier Mute Swans. Once in Oban, we all said our farewells and headed home, though several of the group stopped off on the way to watch Red Squirrels at the Shap Wells Hotel in Cumbria. Amazing views were had, apparently, but came far too late to be added to the trip list!

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Species lists

Birds (H = Heard only)

G=Glasdrum only, K=Kilmartin and Knapdale only		April - May 2024							
Common name	**Scientific name**	**29**	**30**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Canada Goose	*Branta canadensis*		G	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Greylag Goose	*Anser anser*		G	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Pink-footed Goose	*Anser brachyrhynchus*				✓	✓			
Mute Swan	*Cygnus olor*								K
Whooper Swan	*Cygnus cygnus*							✓	
Shelduck	*Tadorna tadorna*				✓	✓			
Mallard	*Anas platyrhynchos*		G	✓	✓		✓	✓	K
Teal	*Anas crecca*			✓					
Eider	*Somateria mollissima*			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Goosander	*Mergus merganser*								K
Red-breasted Merganser	*Mergus serrator*		G	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Cuckoo	*Cuculus canorus*		G	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Rock Dove	*Columba livia livia*			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Feral Pigeon	*Columba livia domestica*								K
Woodpigeon	*Columba palumbus*		G			✓			K
Collared Dove	*Streptopelia decaocto*		G	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Corncrake	*Crex crex*				✓		✓		
Moorhen	*Gallinula chloropus*			✓					K
Little Grebe	*Tachybaptus ruficollis*			✓					
Oystercatcher	*Haematopus ostralegus*		G	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Lapwing	*Vanellus vanellus*		G	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Golden Plover	*Pluvialis apricaria*			✓	✓	✓		✓	
Ringed Plover	*Charadrius hiaticula*			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Whimbrel	*Numenius phaeopus*				✓	✓	✓	✓	
Curlew	*Numenius arquata*		G				✓		

G=Glasdrum only, K=Kilmartin and Knapdale only		April - May 2024							
Common name	**Scientific name**	**29**	**30**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Sanderling	*Calidris alba*						✓	✓	
Dunlin	*Calidris alpina*			✓			✓	✓	
Purple Sandpiper	*Calidris marítima*			✓					
Snipe	*Gallinago gallinago*				✓		✓		
Common Sandpiper	*Actitis hypoleucos*		G	✓					
Redshank	*Tringa totanus*		G	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Greenshank	*Tringa nebularia*		G						
Kittiwake	*Rissa tridactyla*		✓	✓				✓	
Black-headed Gull	*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*		✓	✓			✓	✓	
Common Gull	*Larus canus*		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Great Black-backed Gull	*Larus marinus*		G	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Herring Gull	*Larus argentatus*		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Lesser Black-backed Gull	*Larus fuscus*			✓	✓			✓	K
Little Tern	*Sternula albifrons*			✓	✓		✓	✓	
Common Tern	*Sterna hirundo*			✓		✓	✓	✓	
Arctic Tern	*Sterna paradisaea*			✓				✓	
Great Skua	*Stercorarius skua*			✓				✓	
Arctic Skua	*Stercorarius parasiticus*				✓				
Common Guillemot	*Uria aalge*			✓				✓	
Razorbill	*Alca torda*			✓				✓	
Black Guillemot	*Cepphus grylle*		✓	✓				✓	
Puffin	*Fratercula arctica*		✓	✓					
Red-throated Diver	*Gavia stellata*			✓			✓	✓	
Great Northern Diver	*Gavia immer*			✓	✓		✓	✓	
Fulmar	*Fulmarus glacialis*			✓					
Manx Shearwater	*Puffinus puffinus*		✓	✓				✓	
Gannet	*Morus bassanus*			✓			✓	✓	
Cormorant	*Phalacrocorax carbo*								Oban
Shag	*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Grey Heron	*Ardea cinerea*		G	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Golden Eagle	*Aquila chrysaetos*								K
Sparrowhawk	*Accipiter nisus*		G						
Hen Harrier	*Circus cyaneus*			✓	✓		✓	✓	
White-tailed Eagle	*Haliaeetus albicilla*					✓			
Buzzard	*Buteo buteo*				✓	✓	✓		K
Kestrel	*Falco tinnunculus*				✓				
Short-eared Owl	*Asio flammeus*						✓		
Hooded Crow	*Corvus cornix*		G	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Raven	*Corvus corax*		G	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Coal Tit	*Periparus ater*		G						
Blue Tit	*Cyanistes caeruleus*		G			✓			K
Great Tit	*Parus major*		G						
Skylark	*Alauda arvensis*		G	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Sand Martin	*Riparia riparia*			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Swallow	*Hirundo rustica*		G	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K

G=Glasdrum only, K=Kilmartin and Knapdale only		April - May 2024							
Common name	**Scientific name**	**29**	**30**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
House Martin	*Delichon urbicum*								K
Willow Warbler	*Phylloscopus trochilus*		G	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Common Chiffchaff	*Phylloscopus collybita*			✓					K
Sedge Warbler	*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*				✓		✓	✓	K
Grasshopper Warbler	*Locustella naevia*						✓		K
Blackcap	*Sylvia atricapilla*		G		✓	✓			K
Whitethroat	*Curruca communis*						✓		
Goldcrest	*Regulus regulus*					✓			K
Wren	*Troglodytes troglodytes*		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Nuthatch	*Sitta europaea*		G						
Treecreeper	*Certhia familiaris*		G						
Starling	*Sturnus vulgaris*			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Song Thrush	*Turdus philomelos*		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Mistle Thrush	*Turdus viscivorus*								K
Blackbird	*Turdus merula*		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Robin	*Erithacus rubecula*			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Stonechat	*Saxicola rubicola*			✓	✓	✓	✓		K
Wheatear	*Oenanthe oenanthe*			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
House Sparrow	*Passer domesticus*		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Dunnock	*Prunella modularis*					✓	✓		
White Wagtail	*Motacilla alba alba*					✓			
Pied Wagtail	*Motacilla alba yarrellii*			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Meadow Pipit	*Anthus pratensis*			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Rock Pipit	*Anthus petrosus*			✓				✓	
Chaffinch	*Fringilla coelebs*		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Greenfinch	*Chloris chloris*				✓	✓			
Twite	*Linaria flavirostris*			✓					
Linnet	*Linaria cannabina*				✓	✓	✓		K
Lesser Redpoll	*Acanthis cabaret*					✓	✓		K
Goldfinch	*Carduelis carduelis*				✓	✓	✓	✓	K
Siskin	*Spinus spinus*								K
Reed Bunting	*Emberiza schoeniclus*				✓	✓	✓		K

Other vertebrates (P = Prints, D = Dead)

K = Krinan			April - May 2024						
Common name	**Scientific name**	**29**	**30**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Mammals									
Red Deer	*Cervus elaphus*		✓						
Brown Hare	*Lepus europaeus*			✓	✓	✓	✓		
Rabbit	*Oryctolagus cuniculus*			✓					
Harbour Porpoise	*Phocoena phocoena*			✓				✓	
Harbour Seal/Common Seal	*Phoca vitulina*		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Minke Whale	*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*							✓	
Grey Seal	*Halichoerus grypus*			✓			✓		

Otter	*Lutra lutra*				P			P	
Feral Cat	*Felis catus*				✓				
Pygmy Shrew	*Sorex minutus*						D		
Reptiles									
Slow Worm	*Anguis fragilis*								K
Common Lizard	*Zootoca vivipara*					✓			K

Invertebrates

Common name	**Scientific name**
Hymenoptera	
Red-tailed Bumblebee	*Bombus lapidarius*
White-tailed Bumblebee	*Bombus lucorum agg*
Heath Bumblebee	*Bombus jonellus*
Moss Carder Bee	*Bombus muscorum*
Lepidoptera	
Butterflies	
Green Hairstreak	*Callophrys rubi*
Peacock	*Aglais io*
Green-veined White	*Pieris napi*
Orange-tip	*Anthocharis cardamines*
Moths	
Clouded Border	*Lomaspilis marginata*
Puss Moth	*Cerura vinula*
Drinker (larva)	*Euthrix potatoria*
Common Heath	*Ematurga atomaria*
Emperor	*Saturnia pavonia*
Hebrew Character	*Xestia c-nigrum*
Clouded Drab	*Orthosia incerta*
Powdered Quaker	*Orthosia gracilis*
Early Grey	*Xylocampa areola*
Red Chestnut	*Cerastris rubicosa*
Knotgrass	*Acronicta rumicis*
Pebble Prominent	*Notodonta ziczac*
Spruce Carpet	*Thera britannica*
Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet	*Xanthorhoe ferrugata*
Garden Carpet	*Xanthorhoe fluctuata*

Common name	Scientific name
Flame Carpet	*Xanthorhoe designata*
Early Thorn	*Selenia dentaria*
Brown Silver-line	*Petrophora chlorosata*
Early Tooth-striped	*Trichopteryx carpinata*
Parsnip Moth	*Depressaria radiella*
Coleoptera	
(a click beetle)	*Agrypnus murinus*
Marram Weevil	*Philopedon plagiatum*
Black Sexton Beetle	*Nicrophorus humator*
Dor Beetle	*Geotrupes stercorarius*
Short-necked Oil-beetle	*Meloe brevicollis*
Black Snail Beetle	*Silpha atrata*
Odonata	
Large Red Damselfly	*Pyrrhosoma nymphula*
Four-spotted Chaser (larva)	*Libellula quadrimaculata*
Mollusca	
Heath Snail	*Helicella itala*
Brown Garden Snail	*Cornu aspersum*
Common Whelk (egg mass)	*Buccinum undatum*
Common Piddock (burrows)	*Pholas dactylus*
Painted Top-shell	*Calliostoma zizyphinum*
Grey Top-shell	*Steromphala cineraria*
Spotted Cowrie	*Trivia monacha*
Common Limpet	*Patella vulgata*
Flat Periwinkle	*Littorina obtusata*

Plants

		Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
Machair and Dunes				
	Wild Flowers			
	1	*Arabidopsis thaliana*	Thale Cress	Arinagour
	2	*Anthriscus sylvestris*	Cow Parsley	Kilmartin
	3	*Anthyllis vulneraria*	Kidney Vetch	Machair Mhòr
	4	*Arabis hirsuta*	Hairy Rock-cress	Machair Mhòr

		Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
	5	*Bellis perennis*	Daisy	Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol
	6	*Cardamine pratensis*	Cuckooflower	Arinagour, Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol
	7	*Cerastium diffusum*	Sea Mouse-ear	Crossapol
	8	*Cerastium glomeratum*	Sticky Mouse-ear	Machair Mhòr
	9	*Cerastium semidecandrum*	Small Mouse-ear	Crossapol
	10	*Daucus carota*	Wild Carrot	Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol
	11	*Erodium cicutarium*	Common Stork's-bill	Crossapol
	12	*Erophila verna*	Common Whitlow-grass	Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol
	13	*Ficaria verna*	Lesser Celandine/Pilewort	Glasdrum, Lunga, Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol, Oban
	14	*Galium verum*	Lady's Bedstraw	Machair Mhòr
	15	*Geranium molle*	Dove's-foot Cranesbill	Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol
	16	*Geranium sanguineum*	Bloody Cranesbill	Machair Mhòr, Crossapol
	17	*Hypochaeris radicata*	Common Cat's-ear	Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol
	18	*Lotus corniculatus*	Bird's-foot Trefoil	Machair Mhòr, Loch à Mhill Aird, Crossapol
	19	*Pilosella officinarum*	Mouse-ear Hawkweed	Machair Mhòr
	20	*Plantago coronopus*	Buck's-horn Plantain	Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol
	21	*Plantago lanceolata*	Ribwort Plantain	Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol
	22	*Polygala vulgaris*	Common Milkwort	Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol
	23	*Potentilla anserina*	Silverweed	Machair Mhòr
	24	*Ranunculus bulbosus*	Bulbous Buttercup	Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol
	25	*Rhinanthus minor*	Yellow-rattle	Arinagour
	26	*Rosa pimpinellifolia*	Burnet Rose	Machair Mhòr, Loch à Mhill Aird
	27	*Rumex acetosa*	Common Sorrel	Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol
	28	*Saxifraga hypnoides*	Mossy Saxifrage	Machair Mhòr
	29	*Saxifraga tridactylites*	Rue-leaved Saxifrage	Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol
	30	*Sedum acre*	Biting Stonecrop	Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol
	31	*Sherardia arvensis*	Field Madder	Killunaig
	32	*Taraxacum obliquum*	Many-lobed Dandelion	Killunaig, Crossapol and Cliad
	33	*Thalictrum minus*	Lesser Meadow-rue	Crossapol
	34	*Valerienella locusta*	Cornsalad	Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol
	35	*Veronica hederifolia*	Ivy-leaved Speedwell	Machair Mhòr
	36	*Veronica serpyllifolia*	Thyme-leaved Speedwell	Arinagour

		Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
	Grasses, Ferns, Mosses etc			
	37	*Agrocybe pediades*	Common Fieldcap	Crossapol
	38	*Ammophila arenaria*	Marram Grass	Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol
	39	*Bolbitius titubans*	Yellow Fieldcap	Crossapol
	40	*Carex arenaria*	Sand Sedge	Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol
	41	*Carex nigra*	Common Sedge	Machair Mhòr
	42	*Equisetum arvensis*	Field Horsetail	Arinagour
Moorland and Bog				
	Wild Flowers			
	43	*Angelica sylvestris*	Wild Angelica	Lunga
	44	*Antennaria dioica*	Mountain Everlasting	Loch à Mhill Aird
	45	*Calluna vulgaris*	Ling Heather	Loch à Mhill Aird, Crinan
	46	*Caltha palustris*	Marsh Marigold	Glasdrum, Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crinan, Kilmartin
	47	*Erica cinerea*	Bell Heather	Loch à Mhill Aird, Crinan
	48	*Erica tetralix*	Cross-leaved Heath	Loch à Mhill Aird, Crinan
	49	*Eriocaulon aquaticum*	Pipewort	Loch à Mhill Aird
	50	*Filipendula ulmaria*	Meadowsweet	Loch à Mhill Aird, Crinan
	51	*Iris pseudacorus*	Yellow Flag Iris	Loch à Mhill Aird, Arinagour, Crinan
	52	*Mentha aquatica*	Water Mint	Loch à Mhill Aird
	53	*Menyanthes trifoliata*	Bogbean	Loch Ballyhaugh, Knapdale
	54	*Myrica gale*	Bog Myrtle	Loch à Mhill Aird
	55	*Orchis mascula*	Early Purple Orchid	Crossapol
	56	*Pedicularis sylvatica*	Common Lousewort	Loch à Mhill Aird
	57	*Pinguicula vulgaris*	Common Butterwort	Loch à Mhill Aird
	58	*Polygala serpyllifolia*	Heath Milkwort	Loch à Mhill Aird
	59	*Potentilla erecta*	Tormentil	Loch à Mhill Aird
	60	*Potentilla palustris*	Marsh Cinquefoil	Loch Ballyhaugh
	61	*Salix repens*	Creeping Willow	Loch à Mhill Aird
	62	*Sedum anglicum*	English Stonecrop	Loch à Mhill Aird and Lunga
	63	*Thymus polytrichus*	Wild Thyme	Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol
	64	*Viola riviniana*	Common Dog Violet	Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Loch à Mhill Aird, Crossapol
	Grasses, Ferns,			

		Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
	Mosses etc			
	65	*Aira praecox*	Early Hair-grass	Loch à Mhill Aird, Crossapol
	66	*Anthoxanthum odoratum*	Sweet Vernal Grass	Glasdrum
	67	*Blechnum spicant*	Hard Fern	Glasdrum
	68			
	69	*Eriophorum vaginatum*	Hare's-tail Cotton-grass	Kilmartin
	70	*Huperzia selago*	Fir Club-moss	Loch à Mhill Aird
	71	*Phragmites australis*	Common Reed	Loch à Mhill Aird
	72	*Pteridium aquilinum*	Bracken	Loch à Mhill Aird
	73	*Rhizocarpon geographicum*	Map Lichen	Loch à Mhill Aird
	74	*Schoenus nigricans*	Black Bog-rush	Loch à Mhill Aird
	75	*Trichophorum cespitosum*	Deergrass	Loch à Mhill Aird
Woodland				
	Trees and Wild Flowers			
	76	*Acaena ovalifolia*	Two-spined Acaena	Kilmartin
	77	*Ajuga reptans*	Bugle	Knapdale
	78	*Allium ursinum*	Ramsons	Oban and Grissipoll
	79	*Alnus glutinosa*	Alder	Glasdrum, Arinagour, Kilmartin
	80	*Anemone nemorosa*	Wood Anemone	Glasdrum, Crinan
	81	*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*	Opposite-leaved Golden-saxifrage	Glasdrum, Oban
	82	*Conopodium majus*	Pignut	Glasdrum, Oban
	83	*Erinus alpinus*	Fairy Foxglove	Arinagour
	84	*Fagus sylvatica*	Beech	Arinagour, Oban
	85	*Fragaria vesca*	Wild Strawberry	Knapdale
	86	*Fragaria sterilis*	Barren Strawberry	Knapdale
	87	*Galium odoratum*	Sweet Woodruff	Knapdale
	88	*Geranium robertianum*	Herb Robert	Oban
	89	*Geum x intermedium*	Wood Avens x Water Avens	Crinan
	90	*Hedera helix*	Ivy	Oban, Killunaig
	91	*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*	Bluebell	Glasdrum, Lunga, Arinagour, Oban, Crinan, Kilmartin
	92	*Ilex aquifolium*	Holly	Kilmartin
	93	*Lonicera periclymenum*	Honeysuckle	Glasdrum, Arinagour
	94	*Meconopsis cambrica*	Welsh Poppy	Oban
	95	*Oxalis acetosella*	Wood Sorrel	Glasdrum, Arinagour, Oban, Kilmartin

		Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
	96	*Primula vulgaris*	Primrose	Glasdrum, Lunga, Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol, Oban, Crinan, Kilmartin
	97	*Quercus petraea*	Sessile Oak	Glasdrum
	98	*Salix aurita*	Eared Willow	Killunaig
	99	*Sambucus nigra*	Elder	Uig
	100	*Silene dioica*	Red Campion	Arinagour, Oban
	101	*Sorbus aucuparia*	Rowan	Glasdrum, Kilmartin
	102	*Stellaria holostea*	Greater Stitchwort	Glasdrum, Crinan
	103	*Ulex europaeus*	Gorse	Uig, Arinagour
	104	*Ulmus glabra*	Wych Elm	Oban
	105	*Vaccinium myrtillus*	Blaeberry/Bilberry	Kilmartin
	Grasses, Ferns, Mosses etc			
	106	*Asplenium scolopendrium*	Hart's-tongue Fern	Totronald
	107	*Athyrium felix-foemina*	Lady Fern	Oban
	108	*Carex paniculata*	Greater Tussock Sedge	Knapdale
	109	*Cladium mariscus*	Saw Sedge	Knapdale
	110	*Dryopteris affinis*	Scaly Male Fern	Glasdrum, Oban
	111	*Fomes fomentarius*	Hoof Fungus	Kilmartin
	112	*Lobaria pulmonaria*	Tree Lungwort	Glasdrum, Kilmartin
	113	*Luzula campestris*	Field Wood-rush	Glasdrum, Machair Mhòr, Killunaig, Crossapol, Oban
	114	*Luzula pilosa*	Hairy Wood-rush	Glasdrum
	115	*Luzula sylvatica*	Great Wood-rush	Glasdrum, Oban
	116	*Molinia purpurea*	Purple Moorgrass	Crinan
	117	*Peltigera sp*	Dog-lichen	Kilmartin
	118	*Polypodium vulgare*	Common Polypody	Glasdrum, Oban
	119	*Polytrichum juniperinum*	Juniper Haircap Moss	Kilmartin
Rocky Shores, Beaches, Saltmarsh and Streams				
	Wild Flowers			
	120	*Armeria maritima*	Thrift	Lunga
	121	*Cochlearia danica*	Danish Scurvygrass	Killunaig
	122	*Cochlearia officinalis*	Common Scurvygrass	Lunga
	123	*Honkenya peploides*	Sea Sandwort	Hogh Beach
	124	*Sedum rosea*	Roseroot	Lunga
	125	*Silene uniflora*	Sea Campion	Lunga
	126	*Tussilago farfara*	Coltsfoot	Machair Mhòr

		Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
	127	*Tripleurospermum maritimum*	Sea Mayweed	Lunga
	Grasses, Ferns, Mosses etc			
	128	Asplenium marinum	Sea Spleenwort	Lunga
	129	*Xanthoria sp*	(a crustose lichen on rocks)	Killunaig
	130	*Enteromorpha intestinalis*	Gutweed	Killunaig