

Treshnish Isles Auk Ringing Group

Report for 2025



Puffin (Andrew G. Carter)

Compiled by
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Introduction

Since 1971, the Treshnish Isles Auk Ringing Group (TIARG) has monitored the breeding seabird populations of the Treshnish Isles, Argyll (Figure 1), through ringing and census work. A summary of the early expeditions is given in *Birds on the Treshnish Isles 1971–1995* (Walker & Cooper 1996). Annual reports have been produced since 1996 (<http://tiarg.org>). This report summarises the results of the group's 49th expedition to the Treshnish Isles, during 15th – 29th June 2025.

The Treshnish Isles are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for the colony of breeding seabirds; as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for internationally important populations of breeding Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus* and wintering Greenland Barnacle Geese *Branta leucopsis* and as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for breeding Atlantic Grey Seal *Halichoerus grypus* and reefs. The Treshnish Isles also lie within the Inner Hebrides and the Minches SAC, designated for Harbour Porpoise *Phocoena phocoena* and the Sea of the Hebrides Marine Protected Area (MPA), designated for oceanic fronts, Northern Minke Whale *Balaenoptera acutorostrata* and Basking Shark *Cetorhinus maximus*.

Survey methods

The 2025 expedition took place over an extended 16-day period, from 14th to 29th June. TIARG's usual fieldwork activities – the seabird census and systematic seabird ringing – were confined to the second week of this period (21st–29th), consistent with the monitoring schedule in previous years. Time on the Treshnish Isles during the latter period was extended to eight days instead of the planned seven, due to adverse sea conditions on the intended departure date (28th June). Seven extra days, preceding the census expedition, were added in 2025 to facilitate the deployment and retrieval of seabird tracking devices for the Aukestra and SEATRACK projects, to assist with these projects' wider studies into the movement and behaviour of seabirds (see section 'Seabird Tracking' on page 14).

As in previous years, the expedition was based around the village ruins at the northern end of Lunga. The majority of the expedition's fieldwork was centred upon Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil where the annual full seabird census and ringing of specific seabird colonies was carried out. On 25 June, with support from Turus Mara, a landing was made on Sgeir a' Chaisteil to undertake the annual seabird census, while access to a vessel also enabled seabird census coverage of the islands between Lunga and Fladda. The latter boat-based counts were made of Sgeir an Eirionnaich, Sgeirean na Giusaich, Sgeir na h-Iolaire, Sgeir an Fheòir, and the seaward faces of Harp Rock. Incidental observations were also made possible for some of the seabirds breeding on Fladda. The islands of Bac Mòr, Bac Beag, Cairn na Burgh Beag and Cairn na Burgh Mòr were not visited in 2025. All seabird species were censused apart from Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus* and Storm Petrel, which are not surveyed annually. All counts were conducted in accordance with standard breeding seabird survey methods outlined in Walsh *et al.* (1995).

All TIARG census and ringing data are submitted to two national monitoring programmes, the Seabird Monitoring Programme (BTO & JNCC; <https://app.bto.org/seabirds/public/about.jsp>) and the National Ringing Database (BTO). The data supplied are currently the sole means of monitoring the seabirds that breed on the Treshnish Isles and offer a long-term perspective of local population change dating back to 1994. Methods for the annual seabird census on Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil has followed the standard survey methods outlined in Walsh *et al.* (1995) to ensure compatibility with the Seabird Monitoring Programme (SMP) and three previous national seabird censuses e.g. Seabirds Count (Burnell *et al.* 2023). Counts are conducted for each of 15 count sectors of Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil (Figure 2). It should be noted that the survey timings do not overlap with the preferred survey periods stated in Walsh *et al.* (1995) for all species, since TIARG usually only visit the islands for one week per year. Storm Petrels and Manx Shearwaters are not surveyed as part of TIARG's annual census.

TIARG have continued Retrapping Adults for Survival (RAS) studies on Shags *Gulosus aristotelis* and Storm Petrels. The Shag RAS study involves colour-ringing adults and has run since 2006. It is one of three active Shag RAS studies in the UK that provide valuable data on Shag survival and demography by generating a long-term resighting dataset. TIARG's two Storm Petrel RAS studies involve metal-ringing only and take place on Lunga: one around the village ruins, the other on the boulder beach at the northern end of Lunga (Figure 2). Unlike other recent expeditions, conditions allowed an adequate number of mist-netting sessions to be conducted at both sites in 2025.

Other sightings of birds, mammals and invertebrates were recorded incidentally and are reported from page 15.



Seabird Census and Ringing Team members (listed from left to right): Luke Nelson, Tim Frayling, Tony Gibson, Bob Tridgett, Robin Ward, Molly Brown, Jacki Gittens and Andrew Carter (Andrew Carter)

Acknowledgements

Thank you to TIARG members, past and present, for the time and effort they have spent collecting data over the last 50+ years. TIARG is grateful to the National Trust for Scotland (www.nts.org.uk) for their support and assistance, and to the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology for funding to support the additional time spent on the islands for logger deployment.

The expedition is made possible by the support and cooperation of Iain Morrison, Colin Morrison, Fergus Reade, and all other staff at Turus Mara (<http://www.turusmara.com/>), whom TIARG thank for providing their time, advice and assistance, as well as transportation to and around the islands.

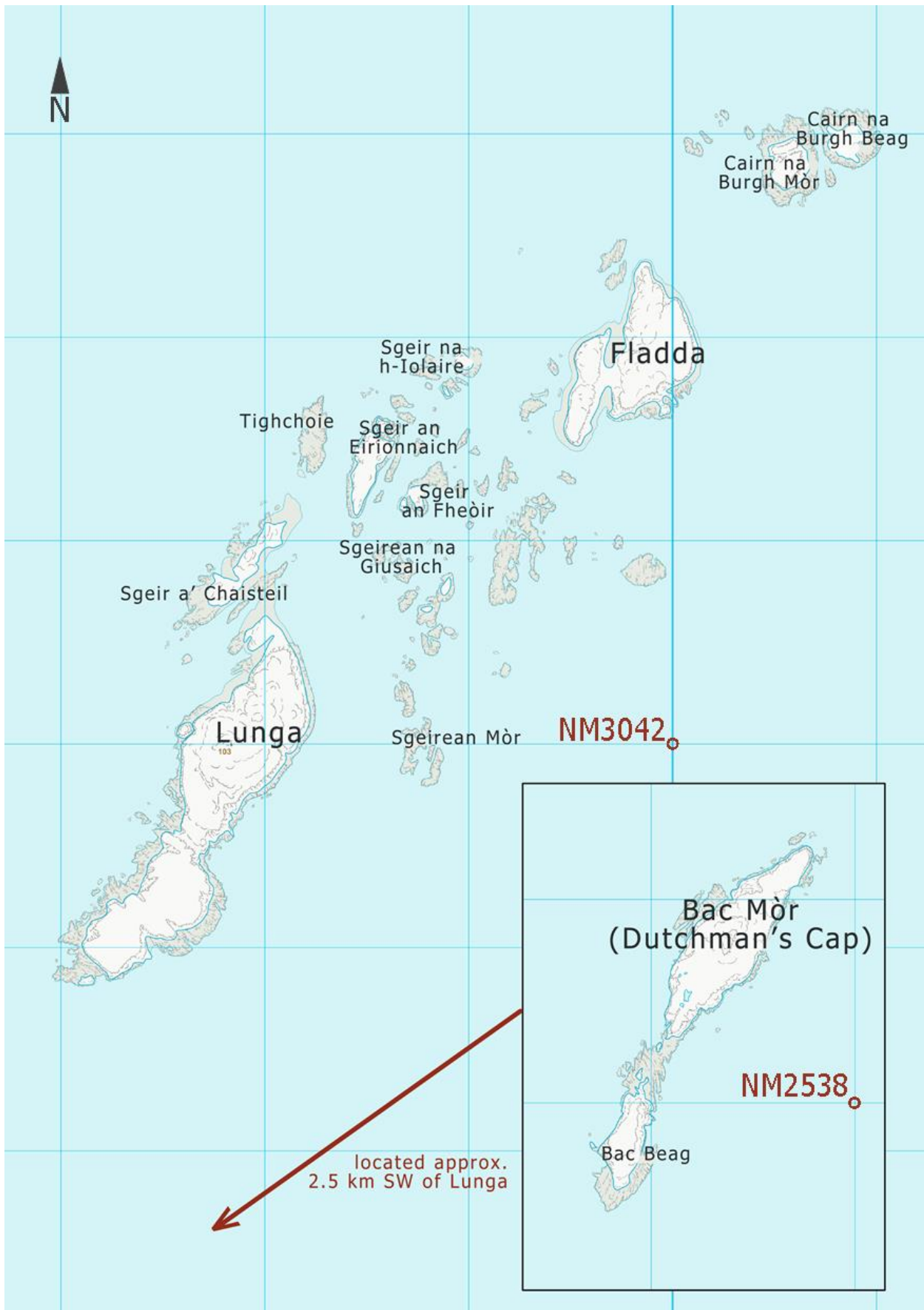


Figure 1. Map of the Treshnish Isles. (Grid squares = 1x1 km).

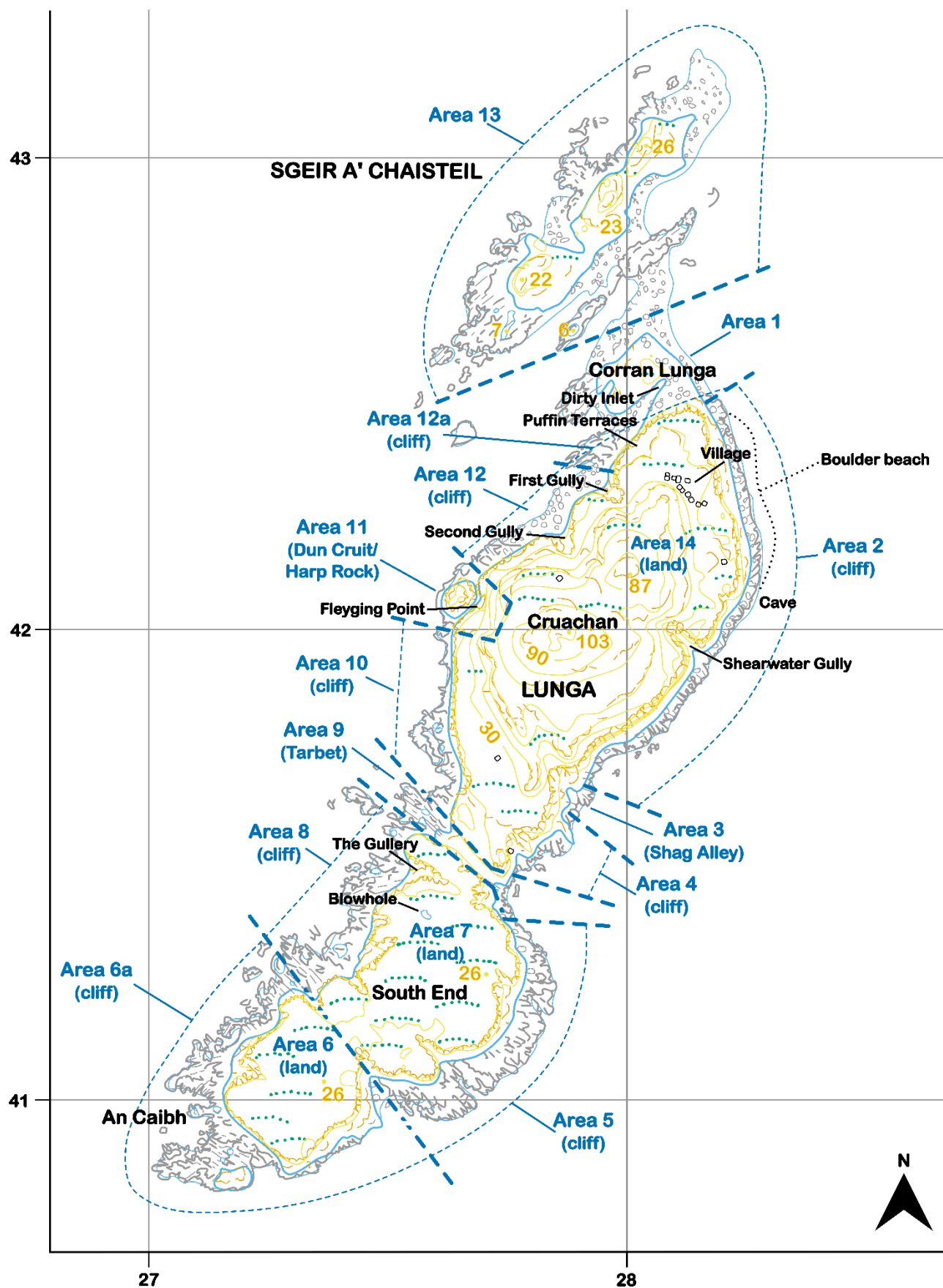


Figure 2. Map of census zones and locations referred to in the text on Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil. Axes denote grid cells of 1 km according to the Ordnance Survey National Grid and are located within the NM grid cell (see Figure 1).

Annual breeding seabird census

This section presents the results of the annual breeding seabird census. Summarised census data are provided in Tables 1 and 2, with recent abundance trends for Lunga provided in Figure 3. Other seabirds, such as Storm Petrel and Manx Shearwater, which are not comprehensively surveyed as part of the annual census, feature in the systematic species list from page 15.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

A regular breeding species. Seabirds Count (2015–2021) estimated that the Treshnish Isles supported 0.4% of Britain's population.

During 2025, 1,029 apparently occupied nests were counted on Lunga, where the main colony is located at Harp Rock (Table 1). Recent trends indicate that the number of Kittiwakes breeding on Lunga declined between 2004 and 2013, following an increase between 1998 and 2002 (Figure 3a). Between 2013 and 2022, numbers increased again to approximately the level counted in 2002–2004 (Figure 3a). The number of nests then saw a sharp decrease between 2022 and 2023 but has now returned to 2022 levels. In addition to breeding birds, up to 100 adults were observed resting on Sgeir an Eirionnaich on 21st June.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Regularly breeding on Fladda in small numbers.

As in previous years, there were no records of breeding on Lunga or Sgeir a' Chaisteil in 2025. Common Gulls were frequently seen foraging around Lunga, with up to four adults at any one time at Harp Rock, and three at the Puffin Terraces.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

A regular breeding species. Seabirds Count (2015–2021) estimated that the Treshnish Isles supported 1.0% of Britain's population.

Five apparently occupied Great Black-backed Gull territories were counted on Lunga in 2025 (Table 1). The low numbers of Great Black-backed Gulls observed breeding on Lunga follows a marked decline in population since the early 2000s (Figure 3b). Elsewhere, breeding was confirmed on Sgeir an Eirionnaich (27 adults and eight broods of 1-2 chicks seen) and Fladda (15 adults and two broods), and Sgeir an Fheòir (5 apparently occupied territories, including 4 broods; Table 2).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

A regular breeding species. Seabirds Count (2015–2021) estimated that the Treshnish Isles supported 0.01% of Britain's population.

Five apparently occupied territories were counted on Lunga and five on Sgeir a' Chaisteil (Table 1). The low numbers now breeding on Lunga follow a marked decline in population since the early 2000s (Figure 3c). Elsewhere, at least five apparently occupied territories could be seen on Fladda and two on two Sgeir an Eirionnaich where one brood was seen (Table 2).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Previously a regular breeding species.

No breeding records on Lunga or Sgeir a' Chaisteil but visiting individuals were recorded on two dates. Five adults, probably breeding, were seen on Fladda on 25th June (Table 2).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Irregular breeding species. Seabirds Count (2015–2021) estimated the Treshnish Isles supported 0.3% of Britain's population.

See below.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

A regular breeding species, but intermittently absent. Seabirds Count (2015–2021) estimated that the Treshnish Isles supported 1.2% of Britain's population.

An estimated 80 adults of Arctic and Common Terns were counted when a mixed ternery on Sgeir an Eirionnaich was seen flushed (Table 2).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Regularly breeding since 1998.

Three apparently occupied territories were recorded on Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil in 2025 (Table 1). Breeding was confirmed in Area 10, where a nest containing two eggs was found, while the behaviour of an adult pair on territory in Area 6 to human intruders suggested the presence of chicks near an empty nest. Breeding was confirmed on Sgeir a' Chaisteil, where a nest with two eggs were found on 25th June,

One apparently occupied territory was recorded on Fladda.

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Seabirds Count (2015–2021) estimated that the Treshnish Isles supported 1.1% of Britain's population.

A total of 14,884 adult Guillemots were counted on Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil in 2025 (Table 1). This figure is comparable with the past three years, during which the peak count was 15,266 in 2022; however, before that, numbers had steadily increased since around 2015 (Figure 3d). The breeding season was comparable to previous years, following what was a significantly later breeding season in 2024, with most adults brooding large chicks.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

Common breeding species. Seabirds Count (2015–2021) estimated that the Treshnish Isles supported 0.4% of Britain's population.

A total of 938 adult Razorbills were counted on Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil in 2025 (Table 1). Recent trends indicate that Razorbill numbers decreased suddenly between 2008 and 2009, but have been increasing relatively steadily since then (Figure 3e). The breeding season was comparable to previous years, following what was a significantly later breeding season in 2024, with most adults brooding large chicks.

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle*

Regular breeding species in small numbers. Seabirds Count (2015–2021) estimated that the Treshnish Isles supported 0.2% of Britain's population.

Seven adults were observed on the water surrounding Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil in 2025 (Table 1), and elsewhere no greater than an exceptionally low peak count of six individuals was observed off Fladda on 25th June (Table 2).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

Common breeding species. Seabirds Count (2015–2021) estimated that the Treshnish Isles supported 1.1% of Britain's population.

A total of 5,606 apparently occupied burrows and 7 individuals (where burrows could not be observed) were counted on Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil in 2025 (Table 1). Recent trends indicate that this species has been increasing since the early 2000s, and is now around six times greater than the lowest count recorded in 2003 (Figure 3f).

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

A regular breeding species. Seabirds Count (2015–2021) estimated that the Treshnish Isles supported 0.1% of Britain's population.

A total of 221 apparently occupied sites were counted on Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil. Recent trends indicate that the numbers of Fulmars breeding on the Treshnish Isles has been declining since the early 1990s (Figure 3g) in line with the UK trend.

Shag *Gulosus aristotelis*

A regular breeding species. Seabirds Count (2015–2021) estimated that the Treshnish Isles supported 6.8% of Britain's population.

A total of 371 apparently occupied nests were counted on Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil in 2025, which returns the breeding population to within the range of that of recent years following a two-thirds reduction in 2024 (Figure 3h). Breeding was confirmed on Sgeir an Eirionnaich and Fladda, but the population on Fladda was not counted during 2025. In addition, 53 colour-ringed individuals were re-sighted, contributing to the long-term RAS dataset (Table 3).



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Table 1. Breeding seabird numbers for each census area of Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil in 2025. Key to count units: AON/AOT/AOB/AOS = apparently occupied nest/territory/burrow/site, ind. = individuals. For the locations of census areas refer to Figure 2.

Species	Count unit	Census area														Total
		2	3	4	5	6	6a	7	8	9	10	11	12	12a	13	
Kittiwake	AON	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	126	709	194	-	-	1,029
Herring Gull	AOT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	5	10
Great Black-backed Gull	AOT	-	-	-	-	2	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Great Skua	AOT	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	4
Puffin	AOB	392	89	356	9	-	-	-	-	-	307	740	1,760	1,230	723	5,606
	ind.	-	-	-	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Black Guillemot	ind.	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Razorbill	ind.	141	39	15	51	-	25	-	14	-	97	262	251	28	15	938
Guillemot	ind.	-	-	-	106	-	3	-	-	-	452	14,017	134	80	92	14,884
Fulmar	AOS	40	7	4	17	-	4	-	17	2	6	5	84	6	29	221
Shag	AON	64	89	12	44	-	3	-	21	-	36	18	65	4	15	371

Table 2. Breeding seabird census data for the Lunga, Sgeir a' Chaisteil and islets in 2025. Key to count units: AON/AOT/AOB/AOS = apparently occupied nest/territory/burrow/site, ind. = individuals. In 2025, Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil were landed on, with counts for the remaining islands conducted from sea or Lunga. The 'nc' abbreviation is used for species/locations where no count was completed.

Species	Count unit	Island							Total
		Lunga	Sgeir a' Chaisteil	Sgeirean na Guisaich	Sgeir an Fheòir	Sgeir an Eirionnaich	Sgeir na h-Iolaire	Fladda	
Common/Arctic Tern	ind	-	-	-	-	80	-	-	80
Kittiwake	AON	1,029	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,029
Herring Gull	AOT	5	5	-	-	2	-	5	17
Great Black-backed Gull	AOT	5	-	-	5	-	1	-	11
	ind.	-	-	-	-	27	-	14	41
Lesser Black-backed Gull	ind.	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	5
Great Skua	AOT	3	1	-	-	-	-	1	5
Puffin	AOB	4,883	723	-	-	-	-	nc	5,606
Black Guillemot	ind.	7	-	-	-	-	-	6	13
Razorbill	ind.	923	15	-	-	-	-	nc	938
Guillemot	ind.	14,792	92	-	-	-	-	nc	14,884
Fulmar	AOS	198	29	-	-	-	-	nc	227
Shag	AON	356	15	-	-	1	nc	nc	372

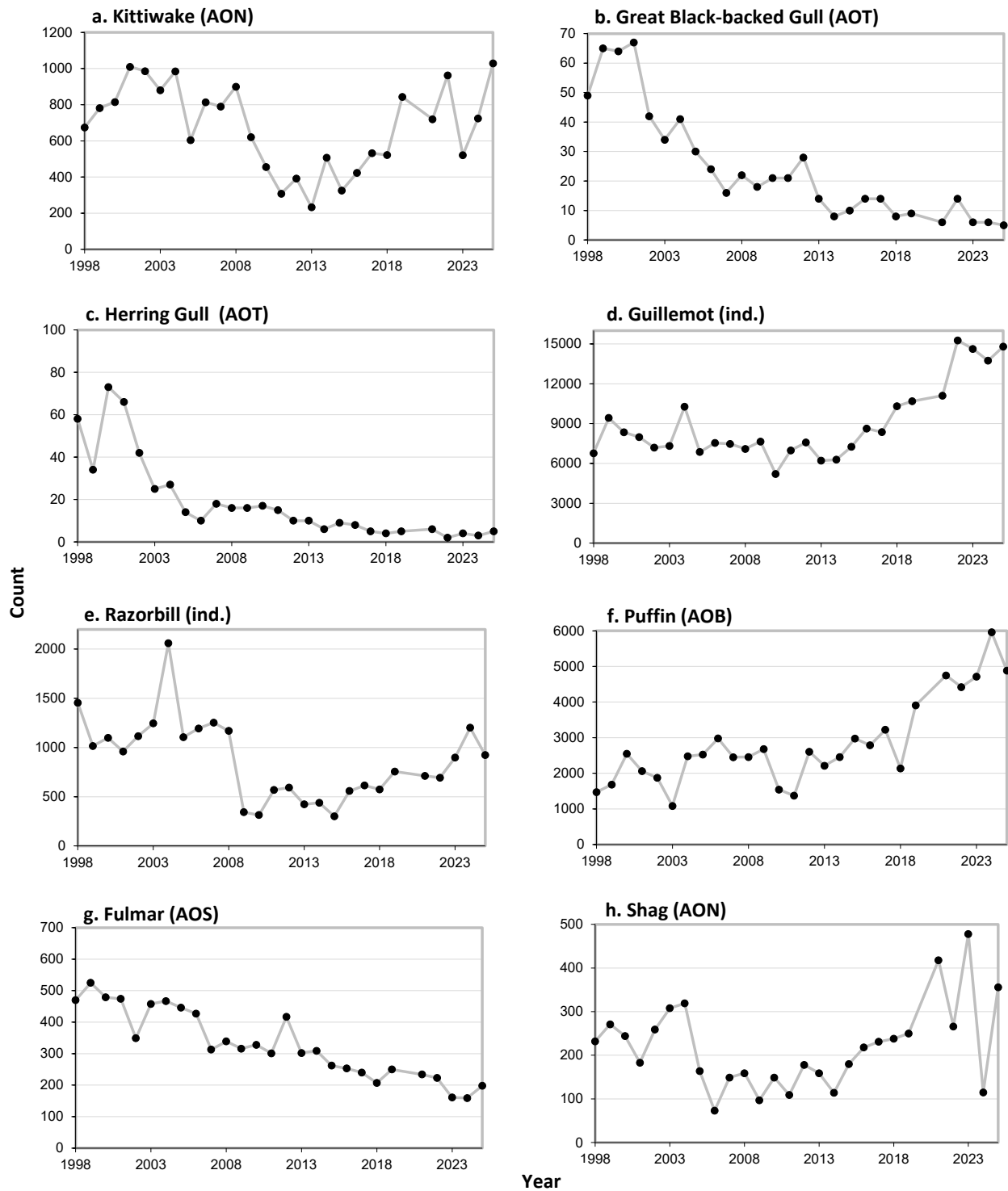


Figure 3. Counts for seabird species breeding on Lunga 1998–2025. Key to count units: AON/AOT/AOB/AOS = apparently occupied nest/territory/burrow/site; ind. = individual.

Table 3. Annual total number of Shag re-sightings/retraps since the start of the RAS study in 2006.

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
No. of re-encounters		32	12	80	14	56	54	81	59	62

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
No. of re-encounters	92	103	80	85	32	84	26	46	41	53

Table 4. Treshnish ringing totals for 15th–29th June 2025.

Site	Species	New birds			Recaptures	Total
		adult	Juv.	Pulli.		
Lunga	Kittiwake	20			8	28
	Razorbill	20			25	45
	Guillemot	241			41	282
	Puffin	48			2	50
	Storm Petrel	180			65	245
	Manx Shearwater	15			5	20
	Shag	35		54	60	149
	Wren		1			1
		559	1	54	205	820



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Table 5. The total number of new birds ringed by TIARG, by species. Annual totals for expeditions prior to 2000 are given in TIARG's 2019 report. Totals are not provided for 2020 or 2022 as no ringing was conducted. Species names follow the convention of five-letter BTO codes.

	1971-79	1980-89	1990-99	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
EIDER								1					
ROCDO													
CORNC									1				
OYSTE	1	7	2		1						4		
RINPL									1		1		
COMSA			1							1	1	1	
KITTI		7	135	13	11	3	2	21	15	14	16	3	4
COMGU			4	5	11	11	6		16	8			
LBBGU												1	
HERGU	21	145	215	15	11	11	8	11	8	1	11	7	20
GBBGU	25	93	145	2	27	5	21	18	12	3	4	13	12
COMTE										1			
ARCTE													
GRESK			1			1	1		1			2	4
GUILLE	132	1433	2744	892	312	425	261	800	141	172	123	1	51
RAZOR	342	974	663	133	31	110	56	147	37	33	34	5	6
BLAGU			1		1								
PUFFI	742	924	1948	389	214	351	244	226	151	272	195	327	32
STOPE	277	1697	4934	414	1030	15	360	83	491	962	21	118	403
FULMA	35	81	138	12	25	22	25	47	14	15	8		
MANSH	19	13	17	4			2		1	1	2		4
SHAG	201	330	524	59	37	97	99	200	77	35	141	124	53
BUZZA		3											
HOOCR											1		
WILWA			1										
WHITE													
SEDWA													
WREN			3		1			2	4	2		2	1
STARL											3		
SONTH													
STONE										2		1	
WHEAT	12	4	88	50	24	2	2	2	7	1	2	4	2
DUNNO													
PIEWA			6								4		
MEAPI			5	12	1	4	1	3	5	1		4	
ROCPI		6	14	1	2	2	2	2		3	21	10	1
TWITE			2			1					1	1	1
TOTAL	1807	5717	11591	2001	1739	1060	1090	1563	982	1527	593	624	594

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2021	2023	2024	2025	Total
EIDER															1
ROCDO									3						3
CORNC		2													3
OYSTE		2	2	1	2	1	4		1		2				30
RINPL									1			1			3
COMSA								1							5
KITTI	3	8			16	12	14	22	13	25	22	11	15	20	425
COMGU					4	1	1								67
LBBGU	2	2				4	1								10
HERGU	11	8	7	3	4	3	8	4	2		12		5		551
GBBGU	15	10	4	1	2	15	11	16	2	17	8		12		493
COMTE															1
ARCTE					44	104	16		11				11		186
GRESK		2			2			2	1		1				18
GULL	53	169	46	8	145	154	161	230	329	375	395	60	149	241	10,002
RAZOR	7	8	2	2	32	23	17	40	76	40	40	19	50	20	2,947
BLAGU															2
PUFFI	38	68	301	71	128	239	260	214	337	96	69	57	147	48	8,088
STOPE	293	202	212	191	448	978	258	289	476	486	614	114	372	180	15,918
FULMA				1		1		1	9	1					435
MANSH	9	3	18	3	13	13	5	8	2	6	9	9	10	15	186
SHAG	116	67	120	115	90	148	165	200	236	99	199	135	24	89	3,645
BUZZA															3
HOOGR															1
WILWA		1							1						3
WHITE		1									1				2
SEDWA		2													2
WREN	1	2	6		2	1	3		16		3	7	6	1	63
STARL						1									4
SONTH											4				4
STONE															3
WHEAT	4	5	10	4	7	11	3	3	5						252
DUNNO		1		1	1		2								5
PIEWA		3	1			4									18
MEAPI	1	2	15	3	1	5		1	3		4	3			74
ROCPI	2	4	3	1	2	11	1	4	7		1				100
TWITE		3	1						16		3	2	2		31
TOTAL	555	575	748	405	943	1729	930	1035	1547	1145	1387	418	803	614	43,584

Seabird tracking

Since 2018, TIARG have deployed tracking devices on various seabird species, to assist with various research projects and under licence from the BTO. The tracking devices TIARG have deployed have all been leg-mounted on coloured plastic rings, and have been designed to gather data throughout the annual cycle, with some models having the potential to last 5 years following deployment. The tracking devices are 'archival', meaning they need to be retrieved in order to access the stored data, so in subsequent breeding seasons, TIARG make a concerted effort to resight and retrieve the devices.

The devices that TIARG have deployed most frequently have been geolocation-immersion loggers ('geolocators'), which record light, salt-water immersion and immersed temperature. From these data, relatively low-resolution locations and activity budgets can be estimated. TIARG have also deployed time-depth recorders (TDRs), which measure temperature and pressure and thus provide more detailed information of foraging behaviour for species of seabird that dive for their food, such as auks. More recently, TIARG have deployed integrated geolocator-TDRs, which are a single device measuring light, salt-water immersion, temperature, and pressure. Finally, TIARG have also been involved in a trial of leg-mounted GPS devices that can last a full year, with the aim to provide a single high-resolution location per day.

During 2025, devices were deployed for the Aukestra project (managed by UKCEH and funded by the Scottish Government's Marine Directorate) and SEATRACK. A total of 15 integrated geolocator-TDRs were retrieved from Razorbills, and new devices were subsequently deployed on 13 of the same birds plus an additional bird (Aukestra). Ten integrated geolocator-TDRs were retrieved from Guillemots (Aukestra and SEATRACK). During deployments, feathers were also sampled for DNA and stable isotope analyses. In addition, 3 GPS devices and 2 geolocators were retrieved respectively from Shags and Puffins, with 7 geolocators deployed on additional Puffins (SEATRACK).

Very little is known about the at-sea behaviour of Manx Shearwaters *Puffinus puffinus* breeding on the Treshnish Isles, as no tracking work has yet been undertaken at this site. The National Trust for Scotland (NTS) invited ScottishPower Renewables (SPR) who are developing the MachairWind project (located Northwest of Islay and West of Colonsay), to consider supporting a research project to fill this information gap. SPR provided the funding to purchase remote download GPS tags for the first tracking study of Manx Shearwater on Lunga, during the 2025 breeding season. The tracking fieldwork was carried out by NTS senior seabird officer, Ellie Owen, with participation from the Treshnish Isles Auk ringing group between 15th and 26th June 2025. Eleven birds were tagged on Lunga between 16th - 17th June during incubation. Owen & Morgan (2026) provide a full account of their study and its findings.

Systematic species lists

Birds

The following systematic list describes all other bird species not counted as part of the annual seabird census, incidental sightings of which were recorded throughout the period 15th–29th June 2025. Species' statuses are based on the number of breeding records/sightings recorded in the last 25 years. Based on the Rare Birds Breeding Panel definitions, regularly breeding species are those for which breeding was confirmed or strongly suspected in any five consecutive years since 2001. For non-breeders, species are considered a regular visitor if recorded in 15 or more years since 2001, and an occasional visitor if recorded in five or more. If fewer than five records, a species is considered a rare visitor and the years of previous records are stated.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

An occasional visitor with previous breeding records in 2018, 2023 and 2024. No sightings between 1999 and 2016.

The species was not confirmed to have bred on the Treshnish Isles in 2025. A maximum adult count of six birds was seen on Sgeir an Eirionnaich on 28th June, and 10 birds were seen in North Haven, Fladda on 25th June.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

A regularly occurring species, with occasional breeding records. Confirmed breeding records in 12 years between 1999–2023.

The species was not confirmed to have bred on the Treshnish Isles in 2025. The moult flock centred north of Lunga had built up to at least 198 birds by 25th June, typically most were around the islands of Sgeir an Eirionnaich, Fladda, Sgeir an Fheòir and Sgeir na h-Iolaire. Tabulated below (Table 6) are the annual peak counts of the moult flock occurring on the Treshnish Isles.

Table 6. Greylag Goose counts on the Treshnish Isles 1998–2025.

Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Peak count	25	160	240	268	79	101	316	90	164	77	80	225	160	140

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Peak count	50	140	196	272	70	98	198	200+	202	50	135	57	198

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

An occasional breeding species.

A pair were seen on occasions around Corran Lunga, joined by a third bird on the 25th June. This single bird may have been the same individual seen that day at Fladda and Sgeir an Fheòir.

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

A regularly breeding species.

A maximum of four breeding females with 10 ducklings of two or more broods, were seen in Dirty Inlet, Corran Lunga (Figure 2; Table 7). In addition, a female with one duckling was seen at Sgeir an Eirionnaich. Moulting drakes were seen regularly during the trip, including 14 off the Boulder Beach (Area 2) on the 24th June.

Table 7. Adult eider counts on the Treshnish Isles 1998–2025.

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Peak count	23	11	112	26	54	42	80	8	52	13	80	35	14

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Peak count	7	11	9	6	2	21	6	na	17	16	19	7	18

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

A regular breeding species.

Regular counts of one to three individuals were made regularly through both weeks, from localities widespread across Lunga. Rock Doves were also seen on Sgeir a' Chaisteil (two pairs) and Fladda (one) on the 25th June.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Regularly occurring since 2014, no records before this.

Up to two males and a female were heard calling around the village most days, with a single male heard at Shearwater Gully on the 22nd June. On the same date, breeding was confirmed by two young chicks seen at the Village. A female was also heard calling to chicks on the Boulder Beach on the 24th June.

Corncrake *Crex crex*

A regularly occurring species (absent in only two of the last 25 years). Probably a regular breeder but difficult to confirm.

Single male Corncrake were heard on occasions in and around the Village, south side of the First Gully (Area 12) and beside the Boulder Beach Well (Area 1). On one occasion, a female was heard at the Village.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

A regular breeding species.

On Lunga's beaches and rocky outcrops, at least eight pairs (two pairs at Corran Lunga, Area 8 and Area 6a, and one or more pairs in Areas 5 and 9) were behaving as though on breeding territory, alarming at human intruders and performing displays on the appearance of other Oystercatchers. Confirmed breeding record was of a single pair with chicks at Corran Lunga (Area 1).

Additionally, there were five pairs, apparently on breeding territories, on Sgeir a' Chaisteil. Oystercatchers were also present on Sgeir an Fheòir (two pairs) and Fladda (two pairs). A non-breeding flock of up to 15 individuals was seen on the boulder beach/Corran Lunga on high tides.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

A regular breeding species.

Typically, the only breeding pair on Lunga was confined to Corran Lunga, where adults behaved as though on breeding territory, alarming at human intruders.

One bird was seen during a brief visit to Sgeir a' Chaisteil on 25th June.

Curlew *Numenius arquatus*

A regular visitor, records in 20 of the last 25 years.

A Curlew was seen on Fladda on 25th June.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

A regular breeding species.

Although usually encountered regularly throughout the expedition week, definitive evidence of breeding is usually limited to the display behaviour of adult Snipe in suitable habitat. In 2025, however, up to two recently fledged juveniles were seen on three consecutive days in the Village. Otherwise, drumming, chipping and occasional flushed birds suggest Snipe are widespread, at least across the northern half of Lunga. One adult was heard to call over the southern slope of Cruachan on Lunga.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

A regular breeding species.

At least three pairs were encountered across the northern end of Lunga, including two pairs with chicks and a third incubating a clutch of four eggs. Elsewhere, one pair with a single chick was seen during the brief visit to Sgeir a' Chaisteil on the 25th June.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

An irregular visitor

No records in 2025.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Regularly occurring, offshore individuals likely originating from breeding grounds on Coll.

No records in 2025.

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

A regularly breeding species. The Treshnish Isles supported 27% of Britain's population and between 1.9–2.3% of the Atlantic (north-eastern) H. p. pelagicus population as estimated by Seabirds Count (2015–2021).

As usual, Storm Petrels were present as a breeding species on Lunga, but were not censused during the 2025 expedition. For the most recent assessments of Storm Petrel abundance on the Treshnish Isles, see the results of species-specific Storm Petrel survey completed in 2018–2019 (Ward 2019), available at: <http://www.tiarg.org/reports.htm>. For Storm Petrel ringing totals, see Table 4. In 2025, two nights of mist-netting were initiated across the two RAS sites before rain ceased operations on both occasions on Lunga, at the Village and the Boulder Beach. On the Boulder Beach, one of the two traditionally ringed localities near the Well on a single night, provided a catch of 163 birds using two 12 m (for an hour and 20 minutes). At the Village, 78 birds were caught using three 18 m nets over two nights (for 3 hours 55 mins period in total).

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

A regularly breeding species. The Treshnish Isles supported 0.3% of Britain's population as estimated by Seabirds Count (2015–2021).

Manx Shearwaters were heard returning to their breeding burrows most nights, and nine individuals were incidentally caught during Storm Petrel mist-netting sessions.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

A regularly occurring species, offshore.

Adult Gannets were seen offshore throughout the trip, but only ever in small numbers, with up to 14 birds in any one day.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

An occasional visitor.

On 27th June, an adult Cormorant was seen perched on the rocks in the company of Shags in Area 4.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

An occasional visitor.

On 25th June, a single bird was seen flying south off Harp Rock, Lunga.

White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*

A rare visitor, with four previous records since 1998 (2016, 2021, 2022, 2024). Reintroduced to Rum in 1975 and breeding on Mull since 1985.

No records in 2025.

Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

An occasionally breeding and regularly occurring species.

There was no indication of breeding on the Treshnish Isles in 2025, with no sightings.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

A regularly occurring species, with three previous records of breeding associated with Bac Mòr and one on Lunga (2022).

A single bird was seen over the Village on 24th June.

Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*

A regular breeding species.

Up to four individuals were seen throughout the two-week expedition at various locations around Lunga. These sightings included at least one juvenile, as seen with two adults at the south end of Lunga (Area 8) on 23rd June.

Elsewhere, up to two birds were seen on Sgeir an Eirionnaich and five birds on Sgeir a' Chaisteil.

Raven *Corvus corax*

A regular breeding species

Up to six individuals were occasionally seen at various locations around Lunga. At least two birds were moulting adults that were accompanied at times by what were thought to be two juveniles due to the absence of wing moult or abraded flight feathers.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

A regular breeding species.

Up to three Skylarks were heard singing simultaneously between the southern slope of Cruachan and South End. A single bird was heard on occasion singing adjacent to the Village.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

An occasionally occurring species, with breeding confirmed/highly likely in 2006, 2010, 2018.

No records in 2025.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

An occasionally occurring species.

No records in 2025.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A regular breeding species.

Territories were present across all seabird census areas of Lunga. As in previous years, the species was most abundant in the northern half of Lunga, predominantly on the boulder scree and bracken-covered slopes from Cruachan down to the sea. Recently fledged young, confirmed breeding on Lunga, with sightings at the Village and in the First Gully (Area 12).

A single male was heard singing during the brief visit to Sgeir a' Chaisteil on the 25th June.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

A regular breeding species.

Small flocks of up to 37 birds were noted daily on Lunga, comprising mostly juveniles. Elsewhere, during brief visits to the other islands, the species was recorded on Sgeir a' Chaisteil (19 birds)

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

An occasionally occurring species, with breeding recorded in 2021.

No records in 2025.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

An occasionally occurring species, that has in the last five years become a regular breeder, as confirmed in 2008, 2021, 2022, 2023 and possibly in 2024.

Single breeding pairs at the Village and Second Gully (Area 12), Lunga, both raised two or more young to fledging. No other birds were noted elsewhere.

Stonechat *Saxicola rubicola*

A rare visitor, with breeding recorded on both occurrences in 2006 and 2007.

A juvenile bird was seen between the Village and Shearwater Gully, Lunga, on 28th June.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

A regular breeding species.

Wheatears were recorded across Lunga and only on three dates, with the only sightings of juvenile birds at the South End (Area 5) and on Corran Lunga, suggestive of breeding. Notably, no birds were seen from the Village, Lunga, this, with all observations cumulatively supporting a significant reduction in the numbers of breeding birds since the 11 confirmed and two probable breeding pairs in the northern half of Lunga recorded in 2000 (Offer 2000).

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

An occasionally breeding species (previous breeding records in seven of the last 25 years).

No records in 2025.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

A regular breeding species.

Individual adult male birds were seen around the Village, the Puffin Terraces (Area 12) and along the west coast to Harp Rock, but definitive signs of breeding (fledglings or feeding adults) were not seen in 2025.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

A regular breeding species.

Widespread breeding species on Lunga, with no estimate of territories made. Food-carrying, faecal sac-carrying, and recently fledged young, confirmed breeding on Lunga.

During a brief visit to Sgeir a' Chaisteil on 25th June, at least one breeding territory was estimated, with a pair and a single individual seen.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

A regular breeding species.

Breeding birds were common along the coast of Lunga, present in all count sectors, and on Sgeir a' Chaisteil. Food carrying, alarms and recently fledged young, confirmed breeding by several pairs on Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil. Elsewhere, eight birds were seen during a brief visit to Fladda on 25th June.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

A rare visitor.

One male was seen at the Village, Lunga, on 22nd June, to then be heard singing the following day. This is the first record of this species by TIARG.

Twite *Linaria flavirostris*

A regular breeding species.

Small parties of up to 14 birds, including adults with juveniles, were noted daily around the northern half of Lunga. Elsewhere during brief visits to some of the other islands, the species was recorded on Sgeir a' Chaisteil where a single bird seen at the north end.



Early morning, looking north from Lunga (Andrew Carter)

Mammals

Otter *Lutra lutra*

Evidence of presence regularly noted.

Fresh tracks of one animal were found in a cave on the west coast, south of the Village, Lunga.

American Mink *Neovison vison*

No known occurrences.

No records in 2025.

House Mouse *Mus musculus*

Resident, population size unknown.

Sightings of House Mouse in and around the village buildings confirm their continued presence on Lunga, but no formal monitoring using wax 'chewsticks' was conducted in 2025.

Brown Rat *Rattus norvegicus*

No known occurrences.

No records in 2025.

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*

Resident, population size unknown.

A single sighting of a grey individual was reported from near the Village, Lunga. No fresh droppings were noted, with only some dried ones found on Lunga.

Grey Seal *Halichoerus grypus*

A regular breeding species, contributing just under 3% of the annual UK pup production. Numbers are regularly monitored by the Sea Mammal Research Unit (NERC, St Andrews). The conservation importance of these islands as a breeding colony is recognised by their designation by the UK Government as a Special Area of Conservation.

A maximum of 67 animals were visible from Lunga hauled out on intertidal reefs to the north and east at low tide, as on 25th June.

Common Dolphin *Delphinus delphis*

A pod of up to 40 individuals were foraging between Lunga and Mull on the 21st June, with the only other sighting being of 10 or more animals of northeast Lunga on the 25th June.

Other notable records**Oyster Plant *Mertensia maritima***

Localised species on Lunga.

This red-listed and declining plant remains established at Tarbet (west), with at least 26 plants noted.

Butterflies and moths

Table 8. Butterflies and moths recorded on the Treshnish Isles during the 2025 expedition

Common name	Scientific name	Notes
Six-spot Burnet	<i>Zygaena filipendulae</i>	A minimum of 4 adults on 3 dates across the north end of Lunga.
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	Two were recorded at Tarbet on 23 rd June, and a single above the Village, Lunga, on 28 th June.
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	A minimum of 11 adults on 5 dates across the north end of Lunga.
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	Singles were recorded in Area 2 on two dates.
Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>	A minimum of 21 adults on 7 dates between Tarbet and Area 1 on Lunga.
Emperor Moth	<i>Saturnia pavonia</i>	One caterpillar in Area 5, Lunga, on 24 th June.
Magpie	<i>Abraxas grossulariata</i>	One adult at the Village, Lunga, on 23 rd June.
Garden Tiger	<i>Arctia caja</i>	One adult at Tarbet, Lunga, on 26 th June, where there was also a caterpillar, and at Shag Alley on 22 nd June.

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Appendix 1. Ring recoveries, controls and re-sightings since the previous TIARG report

Table A1.1. Recoveries and re-sightings, made between June 2024–June 2025, of birds that TIARG originally ringed on the Treshnish Isles. Ages are coded according to EURING age codes (Redfern & Clark 2001)¹.

Species	Ring number	Ringling date	Age at ringling ¹	Finding date	Finding location	Distance (km)	Finding circumstance
Guillemot	R24456	24/06/2002	6	15/07/2024	Arderly, Highland, Scotland	49	Found dead, not fresh
Guillemot	R24802	22/06/2003	6	01/07/2024	Isle of Canna, Highland, Scotland	63	Re-caught by a ringer
Guillemot	R65854	24/06/2007	6	10/04/2025	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Found dead, not fresh
Guillemot	Y32511	01/07/2021	6	23/05/2025	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Field sighting (ring read)
Razorbill	M72710	29/06/1997	6	01/05/2025	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Field sighting (ring read)
Razorbill	M85746	24/06/2000	4	09/07/2024	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Field sighting (ring read)
Razorbill	M85746	24/06/2000	4	02/05/2025	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Field sighting (ring read)
Razorbill	M92586	22/06/2004	6	17/06/2025	Calgary, Isle of Mull, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	13	Found freshly dead
Razorbill	K10874	30/06/2014	6	09/07/2024	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Field sighting (ring read)
Razorbill	K10977	26/06/2018	6	29/05/2024	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Field sighting (ring read)
Razorbill	M92692	26/06/2018	6	06/06/2025	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Field sighting (ring read)
Razorbill	M92692	26/06/2018	6	13/07/2024	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Field sighting (ring read)
Razorbill	M92693	26/06/2018	6	27/05/2025	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Field sighting (ring read)
Razorbill	K10915	01/07/2021	8	23/05/2025	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Field sighting (ring read)
Razorbill	K13138	22/06/2024	6	10/04/2025	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Field sighting (ring read)
Razorbill	K13139	22/06/2024	6	02/05/2024	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Field sighting (ring read)
Razorbill	K13139	22/06/2024	6	15/07/2024	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Field sighting (ring read)
Razorbill	K10935	28/06/2024	6	06/06/2025	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Field sighting (ring read)
Razorbill	K13147	28/06/2024	6	23/05/2025	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Field sighting (ring read)
Razorbill	K13148	28/06/2024	6	06/06/2025	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Field sighting (ring read)
Razorbill	K13148	28/06/2024	6	23/06/2025	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Field sighting (ring read)
Razorbill	K13150	28/06/2024	6	23/05/2025	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Field sighting (ring read)
Puffin	EG61055	25/06/2001	6	19/05/2025	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	0	Found freshly predated
Puffin	EX12552	28/06/2012	6	20/05/2025	Iona, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	17	Found freshly dead

Species	Ring number	Ringing date	Age at ringing ¹	Finding date	Finding location	Distance (km)	Finding circumstance
Storm Petrel	2444510	27/06/1994	4	25/06/2024	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	2	Re-caught by a ringer
Storm Petrel	2538213	26/06/2000	4	25/06/2025	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	1	Re-caught by a ringer
Storm Petrel	2624021	30/06/2010	6	29/07/2024	Illlauntannig / Oileánt Seanaigh, Kerry, Ireland	518	Re-caught by a ringer
Shag	1701862	26/06/2019	1	16/07/2024	Balemartine, Isle of Tiree, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	30	Found freshly dead
Twite	Z155057	24/06/2024	3	22/09/2024	Baugh, Isle of Tiree, Argyll and Bute, Scotland	26	Re-caught by a ringer

¹Age at ringing:

- 1 - Pullus
- 3 - Juvenile, hatched this calendar year
- 4 - Hatched before this calendar year, exact year unknown
- 6 - Hatched before previous calendar year, exact year unknown
- 8 - Hatched more than two calendar years before year of ringing

Table A1.2. Captures and recoveries, made between June 2024–June 2025, by TIARG on the Treshnish Isles of birds that were originally ringed elsewhere. Ages are coded according to EURING age codes (Redfern & Clark 2001).

Species	Ring number	Ringling date	Age at ringling	Finding date	Ringling location	Distance (km)	Finding circumstance
Guillemot	Y15926	27/06/2018	1	25/06/2024	Isle of Canna, Highland, Scotland	64	Re-caught by a ringer
Guillemot	Y19259	27/06/2017	6	19/06/2025	Isle of Canna, Highland, Scotland	64	Re-caught by a ringer
Storm Petrel	2291864	16/08/2006	4	25/06/2024	Ailsa Craig, South Ayrshire, Scotland	161	Re-caught by a ringer
Storm Petrel	2514250	07/08/2019	4	26/06/2024	Inish Murray, Sligo, Ireland	269	Re-caught by a ringer
Storm Petrel	2619758	30/07/2021	4	26/06/2024	Copeland Bird Observatory, Down, Northern Ireland	208	Re-caught by a ringer
Storm Petrel	2622604	09/07/2021	4	26/06/2024	Aird-mhicheil, South Uist, Western Isles, Scotland	106	Re-caught by a ringer
Storm Petrel	2661155	02/08/2014	4	25/06/2025	Eyemouth, Scottish Borders, Scotland	277	Re-caught by a ringer
Storm Petrel	2678391	14/08/2013	4	25/06/2024	Tullagh Point, Donegal, Ireland	149	Re-caught by a ringer
Storm Petrel	2718091	22/07/2018	4	25/06/2024	Calf of Man, Isle of Man	291	Re-caught by a ringer
Storm Petrel	2726743	25/07/2017	4	26/06/2024	Eilean nan Ron, Highland, Scotland	260	Re-caught by a ringer
Storm Petrel	2726930	12/08/2018	4	26/06/2024	Eilean nan Ron, Highland, Scotland	260	Re-caught by a ringer
Storm Petrel	2759344	06/08/2023	4	23/06/2024	North Ronaldsay, Orkney, Scotland	297	Re-caught by a ringer
Storm Petrel	2761650	27/07/2021	4	22/06/2025	Score, Highland, Scotland	130	Re-caught by a ringer
Storm Petrel	2761824	25/06/2024	6	25/06/2024	Score, Highland, Scotland	130	Re-caught by a ringer
Storm Petrel	2781898	16/07/2024	6	25/06/2025	Mangarstadh, Western Isles, Scotland	193	Re-caught by a ringer
Oystercatcher	FV07403	08/08/1998	8	27/06/2006	Waterfoot, Annan, Dumfries & Galloway, Scotland	261	Found dead