

# SCOTLAND and NORTHERN ENGLAND

## - Cetaceans and Butterflies



*View of Morecambe Bay from Arnside Knott.*

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**28/7/14**

# Scotland and Northern England: Cetaceans and Butterflies

## 1 Introduction

The main objective of this trip was to try for cetaceans along the north-west coast of Scotland. Minke Whale was my principal target, though in these highly cetaceous waters there would always be the possibility of more exotic species such as Orca or Humpback Whale. Common and Bottle-nosed Dolphins were obviously on the menu as well and I was hopeful of Risso's Dolphin and possibly even White-beaked or Atlantic White-sided Dolphins. The main sites were to be Ardnamurchan (where I had two full day pelagic trips booked), Gairloch (another half day pelagic booked) and Ullapool (where I intended to try the Ullapool-Stornoway ferry). I also had sea-watching sites in mind at Ardnamurchan Point and Red Point (Gairloch).

I planned to break the long drive up to Scotland from Berkshire by stopping overnight at Carlisle. Here, weather conditions and time permitting, I could try for Leisler's Bat in Penninghame Forest in Dumfries and Large Heath butterfly at Bowness Common just to the west of Carlisle.

I also had several other species of butterfly on my radar. I planned to spend a day at Ben Lawers on Loch Tay looking for the elusive Mountain Ringlet as well as the somewhat easier Dark Green Fritillary and to stop off at Arnside Knott in Cumbria on the way home for Scotch Argus and possibly High Brown Fritillary.

## 2 Logistics

I booked accommodation as follows:

- Carlisle, Southwaite Travelodge: reasonable value for £43/night.
- Ardnamurchan, Kilchoan campsite: a very good site and only £8/night.
- Ardnamurchan, Sonachan Hotel Bunkhouse: excellent value at £25/night.
- Gairloch, Campsite: excellent facilities and good value at £8/night.
- Ullapool, Forest Way Bunkhouse: reasonable facilities at £17/night.

When staying at the Kilchoan campsite and encountering torrential rain, the nearby Sonachan Hotel is an outstanding retreat for the faint hearted!

My pelagic trips were booked with Ardnamurchan Charters in Glenborrodale and with Hebridean Whale Cruises in Gairloch.

The first of these charge around £75 for a full day's whale-watching although quite a bit of time is spent getting in and out of Loch Sunart. You will see Harbour Porpoise here (and maybe Otter) but it exerts a big overhead and limits the time you can spend in the open sea looking for Minkes. The itinerary also includes a one hour stop on Muck which, to me at least, just seemed like a waste of time. I have to say as well that the crew didn't seem

especially motivated, spending a lot of time chatting to each other rather than scanning the sea. At times I felt like I was the only one actually looking. I'm not sure I would bother with Ardnamurchan Charters again in future.

I was even less impressed with Hebridean Whale Cruises. I had booked a four hour pelagic trip which was canned at the last minute due to "bad weather". In fact, the weather was OK, but the proprietor didn't have a full boat and didn't feel like going out and working late - so my booking, made two months in advance, was summarily cancelled. I was fuming. The proprietor, a distinctly unlikeable individual, seemed to be forever whinging about working late, spending money on fuel when cetaceans were further out than he would like and all manner of other normal day-to-day issues. At £45 for a two and a half hour cruise, the value they offer is questionable. I did two short cruises, biting my tongue all the while, but I won't be using them again.

Finally, let me sing the praises of Caledonian MacBrayne, the commercial ferry operator with its big network of routes around Skye, Mull, Lewis and so on. The "Isle of Lewis" which operates between Ullapool and Stornoway is a superb platform from which to search the Northern Minch. There is plenty of room and it chugs along at a sedate fifteen knots or so, (meaning that if you spot something you've got quite a lot of time before it disappears to the stern). And at £18 for a return passenger ticket and five hours at sea, you can't lose! In future I will be making the most of these "platforms of opportunity" in preference to the capricious and expensive commercial charter boats. I've since discovered other interesting routes such as Tarbert-Uig, Glenboisdale-Oban and Scrabster-Stromness and Stromness-Lerwick, the last two being Northlink routes.

### **3 Day-by-day Log**

Sunday 13th July

A leisurely drive from Berkshire to Carlisle. The weather gradually worsened throughout the day and by early evening it was drizzling. I had intended to spend the evening trying for Leisler's Bat at Penninghame Forest in Dumfries but it was getting late, the weather was dodgy and I was somewhat tired. So I cut the bats out of the itinerary and watched the World Cup Final on television instead.

Monday 14th July

The plan was to spend the morning at Bowness Common (ten miles west of Carlisle) looking for the rare Large Heath butterfly. (Bowness is one of their few strongholds). I set , out in bright sunshine but by the time I reached Bowness it had clouded over again and a blustery wind had sprung up. Then it started raining. So much for the Large Heath! I did stumble across a Brown Hare and a couple of Roe Deer, hardly much compensation for the star butterfly I'd been hoping for.

And so I resigned myself to abandoning Bowness and heading north on the M74. I was booked in at the Kilchoan campsite for four nights and thus the remote hamlet of Kilchoan, right at the end of the Ardnamurchan Peninsular, was my target for the remainder of the day. I stopped at the Ardery-Garbh Eileann hide on the Peninsular (near Salen) to check for Otter but found only twenty or so Common Seals lounging about on the rocks. By the time I reached Kilchoan there were threatening clouds overhead and drizzle was once again in the air. I quickly set up camp before the forecast deluge arrived and then phoned Ardnamurchan Charters to check that the pelagic trip I'd booked for the following day was still on. To my horror, they had no record of my booking (despite having taken a deposit two months previously!). Then, having eventually resolved that administrative foul-up, I was told that they wouldn't be going out the next day anyway due to the strong winds that were being forecast. In fact, the forecast was no worse than Force five - not ideal, but not really a show-stopper. I realised that Ardnamurchan Charters were using the "bad weather" as an excuse for not going out with insufficient punters, something which I suspect is commonplace among these operators.

Tuesday 15th July

It would have to be a day sea-watching from the lighthouse at Ardnamurchan Point. The lighthouse offers a superb vantage point from which to scan the sea and the previous year I saw Minke Whale and Harbour Porpoise from here. To one's left, in the distance, is Coll and the northern tip of Mull while, to one's right, lie Muck and Rhum. In between, you have a panoramic view of some very cetaceous water and Orca, Humpback Whale and various unusual Dolphins have all been seen from the lighthouse in the past. The sea was around sea state three or four, not fantastic but good enough. I gazed out wistfully at the very waters that my pre-booked charter trip should have been taking me to that morning.

I stuck at it from 11.00 to around 19.30 before eventually giving in to the freshening wind and drizzle. I failed to find a single cetacean, not even a Harbour Porpoise. Several Common Seals popped their heads up close inshore and the usual cast of sea birds flew past - Gannet, Razorbill, Guillemot, Manx Shearwater and so on. And a couple of Rock Pipits appeared several times on the rocks below me. But it was a big effort for little reward.

On the way back I stopped on the shoreline for one last scan and found two Deer on the hillside. For a moment it seemed that they were Fallow Deer, but closer inspection revealed their true identity, namely Sika Deer. After a very wholesome feast at the Sonachan Hotel, (en-route between the lighthouse and Kilchoan), I took a late evening stroll along the coast road and found four Purple Sandpipers on the shore.

Wednesday 16th July

There was a downpour overnight and I awoke to find that my tent wasn't quite as watertight as I'd expected. The sky was black with rain clouds and a north-westerly wind was blowing white-capped waves across Loch Sunart. The rain paused for long enough to have breakfast but with the forecast looking bleak the question was how to use the forthcoming day productively.

I decided to head for the "Otter hide" at Ardery/Garbh Eileann, mainly because it had a covered roof rather than because of any real hope of seeing Otter. The Common Seals were hauled out on the rocks as usual and had been joined by several Atlantic Grey Seals. Six Grey Herons sat in a group, drenched in rain, their shoulders miserably hunched. A raft of Eider came past and a flock of Common Terns appeared. The drizzle eased for a few minutes and the sun briefly peeped through the clouds. To my surprise, a Harbour Porpoise surfaced twice out in the loch. Then, the rain returned and visibility was drastically reduced to the point where further observation was more or less impossible. A freezing gale was blowing directly in my face through the observation slits in the hide and so I gave up and retreated to the warm, dry sanctuary of my van.

What next? I decided to mosey over to the lighthouse in the forlorn hope that conditions might improve in the hour or so it would take me to get there. They didn't. I arrived to find a very angry sea throwing huge waves at the rocky shoreline and rain lashing down. I drank tea in the little cafe next to the lighthouse and eventually the rain eased enough to persuade me to go out and try a bit of sea-watching. But of course it was useless. Short of a breaching rorqual I wasn't going to see anything. The sea state was around six or seven and the wind near gale force. Worse, the pelagic trip I'd got booked for the following day now looked doomed as well. I phoned Ardnamurchan Charters and braced myself for the inevitable bad news. But no, incredibly, the forecast was for the storm to subside overnight and so the trip was still on.

With the camp at Kilchoan wet and bedraggled I decided to book a night of comfort and luxury at the Sonachan bunkhouse. Outside, the wind howled and the rain was still bucketing down.

Thursday 17th July

When I looked out of the window at seven o'clock the next morning I couldn't believe my eyes. The sky was more or less clear and there wasn't a breath of wind. The forecast, unlikely as it had seemed the night before, had proved accurate.

On board the *Laurenca*, we set out from the jetty in Glenborrodale with Loch Sunart almost flat calm. The forecast was for light winds of five to ten knots out at sea, conditions that twelve hours previously would have seemed impossible.



A harbour Porpoise presented itself almost immediately and others soon followed as well as the odd Common Seal. We crossed over to Coll without finding anything particularly interesting and stopped for lunch on a rocky islet to the extreme east of the island. Seals of both species were here in force and a few yards away two Rock Pipits were calling.



*Grey Seal colony off Coll.*

The main chance of seeing Minke Whale would be out in the open sea between Coll and Muck and after lunch we cruised slowly across. The sea state was around three to four, not perfect but good enough for spotting Minkes. However, only a few more Harbour Porpoise came our way and we pulled up at the jetty on Muck empty-handed. I would have preferred us to push on slightly further north to continue the search but the itinerary had us scheduled for a sixty minute break on Muck and so we disembarked. I wasn't interested in either the gift shop or the tea room and decided to explore the island. I walked about half a mile before reaching a high point from which I could scan the sea loch on the far side of the island. The waters here were quite sheltered and I quickly spotted something moving. It was a long way off, perhaps a mile, but there was a tiny dome-shaped dot moving steadily across the surface. Then, it was gone, followed almost instantly by a second momentary dark dot just behind where the first had been. I knew straight away what it was: an Otter. The first dot was the top of the head, the second the hind quarters and tail. The animal had gently rolled forward and submerged. I scanned for a long time but it didn't re-appear.

I was still hopeful of a Minke on the return, but it wasn't to be and we re-entered Loch Sunart, passing Ardnamurchan Point where the previous day I had stood, by the lighthouse, watching a raging sea. Yet more Harbour Porpoise awaited us inshore, as well as seven Red Deer up on the hillsides between Kilchoan and Glenborrodale. At least we had finally got out to sea though I reflected on the fact that in a nine hour day at sea we had only spent two hours in the "Minke zone".

Friday 18th July

The weather really seemed to be improving now and the drive from Kilchoan to Gairloch saw blue skies and soaring temperatures. I took the scenic route around the north side of the Ardnamurchan Peninsular, via Loch Ailort and Glenfinnan and then inland via Spean Bridge, Strathcarron and Achnasheen. It was a much quicker journey than I had expected and I arrived at the campsite in Gairloch in mid-afternoon. With time on my side for once I was off to do a bit of early evening sea-watching.

I had heard about a lighthouse north of Gairloch and Melvaig which promised panoramic sea views and where cetaceans were often seen. This was good enough for me. However, anyone following in my footsteps should be aware that the last mile or so is a private road and has a few "interesting" features - like a disconcertingly tottery bridge over a narrow ravine and a couple of extremely steep climbs with blind summits. A great deal of caution is needed on this single track road where you are more than likely to round a blind corner and find sheep or deer suddenly confronting you. (I won't dwell on the potholes!). I was astonished to reach the lighthouse and find that it had been turned into a rather swish guest house!

The sea-watching prospects looked fantastic. From the nearby hillside I could scan for more than one hundred and eighty degrees at a good level of elevation and evidently I was looking out over deep water. The sea state was around three and visibility was fine, not that it did me any good. In three hours of intense watching I scored two Common Seal and a Great Skua. Twice, Water Voles scampered past, but these creatures weren't what I'd come for. Try as I might I couldn't conjure up a cetacean. However, at least when I phoned Hebridean Whale Cruises about the planned pelagic trip the following day, they assured me that all was well and that we would definitely be going out.

Saturday 19th July

The pelagic trip, all four hours of it, wouldn't start until 17.30 and so I resolved to spend the morning and early afternoon sea-watching from another highly regarded site at Red Point, this time to the south-west of Gairloch. Conditions were fine. There was virtually no wind and as I took up my station on the hillside a sea state of two awaited me. I was positioned directly opposite Skye, with Staffin more or less in front of me. To the left were the islands of Rona and Raasay and to the right the open expanses of The Minch.

Initially things were quiet but soon enough I found some Harbour Porpoise, their stubby black dorsal fins easy to spot against the calm blue surface. Then, quite a long way out, just off Rona, something much more spectacular appeared. A big, long and sleek black slowly broke the surface and a very falcate dorsal rose up and then subsided. A Minke at last! I immediately got the scope lined up on where I thought it would surface next and, to my delight, it came up right in the middle of my telescopic field of view. For more than ninety minutes I watched it hunting. At times it made four or five shallow surfaces in quick succession. At others it arched its back up, (a marvellous sight!), and dived for five minutes or more. But each time it went on a deep dive I managed to re-locate it quite easily.

By lunch time I had had superb and prolonged views of the Minke and about thirteen Harbour Porpoises and a Black-throated Diver. I drove back into Gairloch feeling triumphant, a state which lasted until about four o'clock, when I reported to the Hebridean Whale Cruises office at Gairloch Pier.

Bad news. Apparently we weren't going out after all due to "bad weather". It had, it was true, clouded over and a little very faint drizzle was in the air. But the wind was still very light and the sea state offshore looked no worse than three. I politely but pointedly questioned just how bad the weather really was and eventually got to the truth of the matter. We didn't have a full boat, (only nine on a boat with capacity for twelve!), and the skipper didn't feel like working late into the evening without the bounty of maximum revenue. No matter that I had booked two months in advance and driven six hundred miles, nor that I had been assured of a certain departure only the day before. I was fuming. But there was nothing to be done and, reluctantly, I had to accept the promise of a shorter two and a half hour trip the next day. In a black mood, I drove back out to Red Point to try to salvage the afternoon with some more sea-watching.

The Minke, (the same one I assume), was still hunting out by Rona Bank and Harbour Porpoise, (another sixteen of them), were still patrolling close offshore. But by early evening the midges were becoming intolerable and I gave up.

Sunday 20th July

We went out at about nine o'clock in conditions marginally less favourable than those previously deemed to be "bad". There was rain in the air and the wind had freshened, producing a sea state of four. Our boat was a RIB, (Rigid Inflatable Boat), a design which has the advantage of speed but which offers a "worm's eye" view of the sea. Neither are RIBs designed for comfort - I have heard people describe riding a RIB into the wind as being like "riding a bicycle down a flight of stairs". The air temperature was in the twenties but the skipper assured us that, out at sea and with the RIB racing along at thirty knots, we would freeze unless we were adequately clad in thermally-lined waterproof salopettes and jackets. Thus he had us massively over-dressed, (I already had four layers on), and before long I was virtually asphyxiating.



We found a Minke off Rona Bank in approximately the area where I had spotted mine the day before; so I surmised therefore that it was probably the same animal. And we found a couple of Sooty Shearwaters and a few European Storm Petrels. After a couple of hours I was desperate to shed some of the excess clobber.

Back at the office I was told of a slim possibility of a longer four hour trip that afternoon, possibly departing at two o'clock. It was becoming evident to me by then that the pre-bookings were redundant and that they simply made it up as they went along. A bit later that four hour trip had evolved into another two and half hour one. Well, in for a penny, in for a pound. I decided to take what was on offer and signed up for it. This trip produced two more sightings of Minke Whale, both definitely new animals. The second, at about two hundred and fifty metres, was brief but spectacular. With blue skies and bright sunshine it was now even more pressing to get the heavy weather gear off and I was quite glad to be back on shore and finally rid of it. I had got my close up view of Minke but it had been hard work and I promised myself that I wouldn't be using HWC for future pelagic trips.

I had to be in Ullapool that evening and so, without further ado, set off northwards via Loch Ewe and Little Loch Broom. But I couldn't resist stopping at Gruinard Bay and Loch Ewe to scan the inshore waters and, at the latter, I found Ringlet and Dark Green Fritillary butterflies by the roadside and a raft of Eider out in the loch.

Monday 21st July

I stopped overnight at the Forest Way Bunkhouse about ten miles south of Ullapool itself at the inland end of Loch Broom. The proprietor, who seemed quite interested in my plans, was surprised to hear that I intended to take the Ullapool-Stornoway ferry out and back with a view to spotting cetaceans. "I speak to the crews from time to time" he said. "And they say they hardly ever see anything". How very encouraging! Nevertheless, I knew that the ferry route, across The Minch, went straight through some very cetaceous water and I remained very confident of success, particularly given the extremely fine weather conditions now prevailing.

And the "Isle of Lewis" ferry proved to be a superb platform for observation. There was plenty of room to see in all directions, (except absolutely dead ahead), and with its steady speed of fifteen knots or so it gave the observer every opportunity to study at leisure whatever turned up before it eventually disappeared to stern. I was very pleased as well to find that the return fare was a meagre £18 for foot passengers.

I found Harbour Porpoise almost immediately as we left the quay and headed out of Loch Broom. The sea state was scarcely one and, in these marvellous conditions, I actually found a Porpoise "logging", (that is to say resting on the surface). The first Dolphins came about forty-five minutes out to sea, a fast-moving group of ten or more Common Dolphin no more than thirty metres from my side of the ferry. Twenty minutes later, I found more Dolphins.

This time it was at some distance and I was unable to clinch the ID. They breached, spun and tail-walked in exuberant fashion, somewhat reminiscently of Spinner Dolphins, (which of course these weren't). They were probably Commons, though I couldn't make out any sign of their characteristic "hourglass" pattern on the flanks. White-beaked or White-sided perhaps? I shall never know.

A short while later six Dolphins came racing towards the bows, this time definitely Commons, their "hourglasses" easily visible as they porpoised along. They struggled to keep up with us and soon gave up the chase but at forty metres or so they gave brief but splendid views. Then, incredibly, yet more Dolphins, this time very close to Stornoway. They looked heavy and powerful but were keeping quite low in the water. I couldn't be absolutely sure but my money would be on Bottle-nosed Dolphin. There seemed to be about a dozen of them.

At Stornoway I had to disembark briefly, giving me ten minutes to enjoy my first taste of Lewis. Then, we foot passengers were herded back on board and I resumed my position on the top deck. We departed at just after 14.30 and for forty-five minutes everything was very quiet. Where had all the cetaceans gone? Then, the Harbour Porpoises re-appeared, in groups of two three and four at a time. The breeze, which had freshened a tad at Stornoway, eased once more and the sea's surface was as flat and smooth as glass. The sea state was between zero and one, practically the calmest I have ever seen an open sea.

I scanned eagerly right out to the northern horizon; in these conditions I was seeing Harbour Porpoise at over a thousand metres and so anything bigger would be unmistakable and unmissable. I was hoping for Orca but was still very pleased when a long, black back surfaced, slowly and majestically, revealing the falcate dorsal of another Minke. It was around 800-1000 metres away but still a fine object in binoculars. At the second surface I made out the head very clearly and for a minute or so it "logged" on the surface. Then it came to life again and, as it began to fall behind us, it started "lunge feeding". What a show!

Ten minutes later there were more Dolphins, about fifteen Commons in fast swimming mode. Then, yet more, though this time not so easily identifiable. The last in the pod breached not forty metres away. The pale flanks ruled out Bottle-nosed but equally I wasn't totally convinced that they were Commons. After a lot of deliberation I came to the reluctant conclusion that Commons they probably were, though there is still something even now that makes me question it.

There was still time for one last Dolphin sighting, a group of at least twenty animals powering their way along at speed, most of them quite low in the water but a few porpoising to reveal their plain grey flanks. They were at distance but I could tell that they were definitely Bottle-nosed Dolphins. This was the seventh Dolphin sighting in less than five hours. Incredible!

There were a lot more Harbour Porpoise as we chugged back into Loch Broom; in total I counted 52, though by the end I had given up seriously trying. If I had kept up my concentration I could probably have doubled that number. It had been the most fantastic day and in conditions so perfect that the whole thing seemed surreal. On shore in Ullapool, I celebrated with fish and chips in "The Chippy", an establishment which has won national awards for the excellence of its food. I can tell you that, after extensive field testing, these accolades are entirely deserved!

Tuesday 22nd July

I awoke to find more fine weather, prompting me to decide to head for Ben Lawers to try for Mountain Ringlet butterfly. I had to go south anyway, this being my last day in Scotland. The only question being whether to stop off somewhere along the coast for more sea-watching or whether to try for the elusive Mountain Ringlet. The promise of uninterrupted sunshine all day clinched it in favour of the butterfly.



*Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary at Ben Lawers.*

Ben Lawers lies on the north side of Loch Tay and it took me about three and a half hours from Ullapool, going via Inverness, Dunkeld and Aberfeldy. I was surprised to see quite a few people there, though nearly all of them were intent on walking up the track to the top

of Ben Lawers whereas my interest lay only in the first mile and a half where the Mountain Ringlets were supposed to be present on south-facing grassy slopes.

Well, nobody had told the Mountain Ringlets. I searched each and every south-facing grassy slope I could find and, having run out of south-facing grassy slopes, went off on a different track to try to find more. It was no use. I found no end of Common Ringlets, Small Heath, Meadow Brown, Dark Green Fritillary and, even, Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary and Holly Blue. But no Mountain Ringlet. At four o'clock I gave up and headed south to Carlisle, my overnight stop before heading home the next day.

Wednesday 23rd July

I still had a couple of aces up my sleeve. The first was to try again for Large Heath butterfly at Bowness Common where a week earlier bad weather had stymied my first attempt. This time it was warm and sunny although there was a slightly irritating breeze. But again, there were no Large Heaths, at least not in the areas I tried. I found several Peacocks, a few Ringlets and about a million Meadow Browns.



*Gatekeeper at Arnside Knott.*

My last throw of the dice was to be Arnside Knott near Morecambe Bay, in the hope of Scotch Argus and, if I got really lucky, High Brown Fritillary. As I scaled the steep path up to the Knott I met another butterfly enthusiast. He looked dejected and assured me that, having spoken to one of the wardens, the Scotch Argus wouldn't be emerging for another

week. Neither had he found Gatekeeper which also, he claimed, was yet to emerge. Undaunted by this gloomy prognosis I pressed on. Well, at least it was a nice day for a walk.

In fact, I disproved both of these pessimistic claims within thirty minutes. I quickly found Gatekeeper along a sheltered ride between trees. Then, a Scotch Argus came fluttering along and settled three feet in front of me, conveniently opening its wings to reveal its diagnostic black spots with tiny white centres. I went on to find five or six more Scotch Argus as well as innumerable Gatekeepers, Graylings, Small Heath and Meadow Brown. A very pleasant way to finish what, in the end, had been a successful trip.

#### 4 List of Mammals Recorded

Species	Latin Name	Notes
Minke Whale	Balaenoptera acutorostrata	Six sightings of at least four different animals.
Harbour Porpoise	Phocoena phocoena	101 animals recorded.
Common Dolphin	Delphinus delphis	Four sightings of 40+ animals.
Bottle-nosed Dolphin	Tursiops truncatus	One sighting of 25+ animals.
Unidentified Dolphin Sp		Two sightings of 20+ animals.
Common Seal	Phoca vitulina	At least 20 at Ardery; singletons elsewhere.
Atlantic Grey Seal	Halichoerus grypus	Two at Ardery; 30+ off Coll; others elsewhere.
Eurasian Otter	Lutra lutra	One very distant sighting on Muck.
Red Deer	Cervus elephas	Seven on hills near Kilchoan.
Sika Deer	Cervus nippon	Two at lighthouse, Ardnamurchan Point.
Roe Deer	Capreolus capreolus	Several at Bowness Common, Cumbria.
Brown Hare	Lepus europaeus	One at Bowness Common.
European Rabbit	Oryctolagus cuniculus	Several at Gairloch campsite.
Northern Water Vole	Arvicola terrestris	Several at Kilchoan and Gairloch.
<b>Total Species</b>		<b>13</b>

#### 5 List of Butterflies Recorded

Species	Latin Name	Notes
Large White	Pieris brassicae	Common.
Green-veined White	Pieris napi	Common.
Peacock	Inachis io	Gairloch campsite, Arnside Knott.
Red Admiral	Vanessa atalanta	Arnside Knott.
Small Heath	Coenonympha pamphilus	Common.
Gatekeeper	Pyronia tithonus	Arnside Knott.
Meadow Brown	Maniola jurtina	Common, esp Bowness Common.
Grayling	Hipparchia semele	Abundant at Arnside Knott.
Dark Green Fritillary	Argynnis aglaja	Loch Ewe, Ben Lawers.

Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary	<i>Boloria selene</i>	Ben Lawers.
Ringlet	<i>Aphantopus hyperantus</i>	Common.
Scotch Argus	<i>Erebia aethiops</i>	Arnside Knott.
Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Glais urticae</i>	Common.
Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>	Arnside Knott.
Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>	Arnside Knott.
<b>Total Species</b>		<b>15</b>

## 6 List of Birds Recorded

Birds were not the focus of attention on this trip but here is an incidental list of those recorded.

Species	Latin Name	Notes
Red-throated Diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>	Sunart and Gairloch.
Black-throated Diver	<i>Gavia arctica</i>	Red Point.
European Storm Petrel	<i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>	Gairloch.
Manx Shearwater	<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>	Common everywhere.
Sooty Shearwater	<i>Puffinus griseus</i>	Two off Gairloch.
Atlantic Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	Gairloch
Northern Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	Common everywhere.
Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>	Common.
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	Common.
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Common.
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	Bowness Common.
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	Gairloch (Shieldaig).
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Common.
Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	Widespread in small numbers.
Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	One in Gairloch Harbour.
Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	Several around Gairloch.
Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	One near Glenborrodale.
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	Common.
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Common.
Ring-necked Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	A few around Ardnamurchan.
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	Common.
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	Two at Gairloch.
Purple Sandpiper	<i>Calidris maritima</i>	Four at Kilchoan.
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	One at Gairloch.
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	Six in flight at sea off Gairloch.
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	Gairloch Harbour.
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Common.
Common Gull	<i>Larus Canus</i>	Common.
Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	Common.
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	Common.



Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	A few offshore.
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Common.
Razorbill	<i>Alca torda</i>	Fairly common.
Common Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>	Fairly Common.
Black Guillemot	<i>Cepphus grylle</i>	Several Gairloch, Ullapool.
Puffin	<i>Fratercula arctica</i>	Fairly common.
Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaoto</i>	Common in towns.
Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	Common.
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	Bowness, Ullapool.
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>	Ardnamurchan.
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Common.
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	Abundant on open ground.
Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>	Several Ardnamurchan Point.
Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	Common.
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	One at Kilchoan.
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>	Bowness Common.
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	Fairly common.
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Common.
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Kilchoan.
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	Kilchoan.
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Bowness Common.
Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>	Arnside Knott.
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Bowness Common.
Carrion/Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus Corone</i>	Common
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	Common.
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	Common.
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Kilchoan.
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Common in towns.
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Muck.
Twite	<i>Acanthis flavirostris</i>	Kilchoan.
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Kilchoan.
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Bowness Common.
<b>Total Species</b>		<b>62</b>