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May 12th - 16th ; Ayre District, cont?

Curlew ; 4 eggs, just hatching ^{on 15th}, near the Tongue road, opposite L. Buidhe.

Golden Plover ; 4 eggs, fresh, found by h.g., on moors north of L. Eileanach; birds fairly plentiful on the "flows" in this district especially.

Wild Duck ; nest on one of the islands on L. Eileanach, May 12th.

Red Grouse ; nest, 7 eggs, n^r L. Bad na Gallraig.

Greenshank ; a pair of birds were seen on several occasions feeding in a loch, near Bad na Gallraig ;
h.g. found nest in direction of L. Laoghal with 3 eggs on 13th, which contained 4 on 15th ;
On 16th, h.g. found a nest, 4 eggs, near the Tongue road.

The preliminaries to finding the nest of the Greenshank appear to be to find suitable stony ground, fairly high up, in the vicinity a good feeding loch, before the birds have commenced to sit, say May 9th. If the birds are seen in the vicinity, the search commences, the bird sometimes rising at sight, sometimes sitting very closely. (h.g. & chance)

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May 20th - June 3rd ; Orkney

May 20th, 30th, June 3rd ; Carness & Quanterness

Rock Pipit

C.S.M.

Twite

Hooded Crow

Dunlin

Snipe

Lapwing

Oyster-Catcher

Rock Pipit; birds common on the low rocks by the sea along the Head of Holland, Head of Work, Carness, and Quanterness; on May 30th I found nest, 5 eggs, nearly fresh, wedged in a crevice of rock on Carness, and two nests with young in grass on the sea slopes along Carness; on June 4th, nest and young, on the ledge of a low rock on Quanterness. Several other pairs obviously had young.

Twite; common on Carness, where I found a nest with 5 young on May 30th.

Hooded Crow; nest of the year, which had been robbed, on a low rock, some 10 ft. high, opposite the telegraph shed on Carness.

Dunlin; a fair number of odd pairs distributed over the patches of short heather; nest, 4 eggs, well incubated, May 30th, Carness.

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May 20th, 30th, June 3rd; Carness & Quanterness
cont?

Snipe; several pairs seen above the Head of Holland in a large field of short heather and rushes; tenanted also by numerous Redshank and Plover, and a few Dunlin; nest 3 eggs, well incubated, May 20th.

Oyster-Catcher; a few pairs seen along the shore between the Head of Holland and Kirkwall, but laying did not seem general on May 20th; nest, 4 eggs, fresh, on a ridge of sea-weed, Head of Holland, May 20th.

Golden Plover; several odd pairs in heathery patches, Head of Work and Head of Holland, but the finding of their nests proved too much for me.

Redshank; an abundant pest everywhere except on the hills, and a positive nuisance with their cry.

Great Skua; one seen off the Head of Holland, darting from time to time after Terns; it flew off in the direction of Skapinsay.

Kestrel; seen off the Head of Holland.

Sheldrake; do. do.

Eider Duck; seen on Quanterness and the Head of Holland.

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May 21st - June 3rd; L. Harray and
the low country. C.M.

Dunlin

Common Sandpiper

Redshank

Lapwing

Common Gull

Black-headed Gull

Dunlin; a good colony on L. Harray side, on both sides of the boundary dividing Harray & Stenness parishes; accompanied by George Coghill for an hour or so from time to time, we found 15 nests, chiefly fairly fresh, including 6 nests on May 24th, and 5 nests on May 26th.

The nesting birds generally rose about 70 yds. away, flying off low, silently, and in a straight line for some distance - the nests were small grassy structures, with a deep cup, in all cases in short heather. The birds which were not nesting flew less straight, uttering a few notes sometimes, and sometimes alighting again at a short distance. Off two nests, where incubation was more advanced, the birds fluttered ~~off~~ at our feet.

Common Sandpiper; nest, 3 eggs, in short heather, L. Harray side, June 1st.

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May 21st - June 3rd; L. Harray and the
low country, cont?

Redshank; abundant in the low meadows along the road from Kirkwall to L. Harray; from Finstown to Evie; L. Harray side etc.; quite one of the commonest birds in Orkney; found 3 nests while looking for Dunlin by L. Harray.

Common Gull; small colony on islands near the shore of L. Harray, which can all be waded to; water only about 4 ft. deep between all of them, and the mainland.

Black-headed Gull; small colony on the same islands.

Red-breasted Merganser; seen in the bay of Frith, one pair being constantly near the same spot, off the Holm of Grimbister. George Coghill found a nest, 2 eggs, on one of the islands of L. Harray, mentioned above, but nearly every egg off them of all kinds are regularly taken for eating, and these shared the same fate.

Eider Duck - common off Quaterners.

Hen-Harrier - male bird seen hunting along L. Harray side on June 1st.

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May 21st - June 3rd; L. Hurray and
the low country, cont^d.

Great Northern Diver; a pair
regularly swimming near the
harbour in Kirkwall Bay.

Terns; Common, Arctic, and ^{a few} Lesser
Terns feeding in some numbers
behind the Temperance Ayre Hotel,
Kirkwall, and behind the
Post Office at Finstown; laying
not commenced.

Corn-crake; heard commonly.

Corn Bunting; do.

Rook; a rookery in low wind swept
trees in a garden at Finstown.

Cuckoo; never seen or heard in
Orkney.

May 21st - June 3rd; the hills, Mainland. C.M.

Twite

Short-eared Owl

Merlin

Red Grouse
Meadow Pipit

Twite; plentiful on the E-astern slope
of Ward Hill, where the heather
grows long; nest 3 eggs, well
incubated, May 21st; and on same
date, nest 3 eggs, fresh, which had
apparently forsaken when revisited
on 24th, both on Ward Hill. In both
cases on 21st, the birds were sitting.

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May 21st - June 3rd; The hills, Mainland, cont^d

Twite, cont^d; Also nest, 5 eggs, fresh, on the slopes of Milldoe Hill, about half way up, North of Liod. Both birds flew nervously round, alighting constantly on the heather, and in 5 min. the female had again settled on the nest.

When the female is sitting, the male keeps in close proximity to the nest, and the bird once seen, there is little difficulty in finding the nest.

Linnets are abundant in the low lying parts, and range sparingly well up the hills, a few nests being found at a considerable height.

Short-eared-Owl; pair seen on Ward Hill, on the Eastern slope, which is covered with long heather and patches of rushes; one of the birds, presumably the male - and viewing a pair at very close quarters on Milldoe hill, I could discern no difference between the sexes - wheeled around in large circles, soaring at times to a great height, making a weird and penetrating "Who-o-o-o", sounding like some aerial vibration, distinctly audible when the bird was nearly invisible. cont^d

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May 21st - June 3rd; The hills, Mainland, cont^d.

Short-eared Owl, cont^d; the other bird flew much nearer the surface on the whole, and I saw it take two voles. The nest I did not discover, though Mr Heatley Noble told me later that there was a nest with young on the Eastern slope, at the north end; the above took place, May 21st.

On Milldoe Hill, May 23rd, found nest, with 3 young, well-grown, the female sitting very closely, giving vent to a few sharp "snaps" when watched sitting. The male did not enter upon the scene until the female had been disturbed, when both flew close overhead, making but little sound. An excellent view of the birds was obtained. When revisited on 29th, there was only one young bird in the nest, & the female sitting; presumably the others, being quite large and strong enough, had made their way into the adjoining heather. The nest, simply some worn and flattened heather, open to the sky, amid long heather, some 3 ft. high, on the side of the upper reaches of the "Grid Brook",

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May 21st - June 3rd; The hills, Mainland, cont?
Short-eared Owl, cont?;

being a mere ditch, flowing down the centre of a wide valley facing N.W., some 2 miles over the hills N. of Liod, but bordered by some thick patches of long heather, of no great size.

On 29th, I saw one bird soaring on the Ward of Redland, just south of the road at Liod, but after a thorough beat of the hillside, made no headway, and saw no more of it.

On May 31st, spent some 2 hrs. until dark, with a wildly excited Owl, on the Eastern slope of Milldoe Hill, a fine stretch, very similar to Ward Hill, covered with long heather and rushes in places; the Owl employed its time making fierce swoops, feigning broken limbs, rolling helplessly on the ground, assuming fierce attitudes with ruffled feathers and glaring eyes, and the more attention paid to it personally, the better it was pleased; when disregarded, its best antics were employed to attract attention. There must have been young near by, which had just left the nest.

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May 21st - June 3rd; the hills, Mainland, cont^d.

Short-eared Owl, cont^d;

From conversations with M^r Noble and others, the Owl, when it has eggs, is seldom seen or heard, until driven off the nest; all long heather shd. be thoroughly well beaten out, and a clue may often be obtained by a few feathers on the long heather around the nest, which were present around the nest on Milldoe Hill

Merlin; on May 23rd two pairs were located in the valley of the "Grid Brook", running N.W. from Milldoe Hill, of which both nests were found when revisited on 29th; the first was placed at the top of a short sharp slope of heather, at the very head of the valley, just over the hill from Liod, slightly sheltered by a small piece of heather; the birds swept around screaming when disturbed on 23rd, and when found on 29th contained 4 lovely eggs, very richly marked, fresh.

The second nest was some two miles further down the same valley, on the hill side facing south, rank straggling heather

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May 21st - June 3rd; the hills, Mainland, cont^d
Merlin, cont^d;

covering a large portion of the hill-side; on May 23rd, after one short scream, the bird departed over the hill. On 29th, the male kept very quiet until the immediate vicinity was approached, the female not rising from the nest until clapped off at some 20 yds. distance - she had one egg. Revisited again on June 3rd, she had 4 eggs.

No other Merlins were seen on Mainland, though many other likely spots were visited. Meadow Pipit; nest and eggs on Ward Hill, May 21st.

Hen Harrier; pair seen in valley of Grid Brook, running N.W. down Milldoe Hill, and watched for about 1½ hrs. ^{on May 23rd} after which they vanished completely, and not seen again on subsequent visits. Apparently they were feeding, ranging the valley between the sites of the two Merlin's nests mentioned above, alighting for 5 min. at a time at various spots, at times near by, offering a splendid view ~~from~~ ^{through} 8 diam. binoculars.

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May 21st - June 3rd; The hills, Mainland, cont^d

Raven; three birds seen flying together over Milldoe Hills, May 29th.

Golden Plover; fairly plentiful, but no time was spent over them.

The hills between Finstown and Liod proved very barren, the heather being mostly very short - the slope facing Liod has some long patches, suitable for Short-eared Owl.

The hills between Kirkwall and Finstown I did not visit, John Gunn contending them completely - Mr Noble, with John Gunn, found 2 nests of Harrier, 2 or 3 Owls with young, and a Merlin or two on them.

Ward Hill; apparently the best locality for large clutches of Owl, Harrier, & Merlin numerically, on account of the number of voles - nest of Owl; Harrier, 1st & 2nd clutches; and Merlin eggs, taken from this hill in the season, at least.

Milldoe Hill; a fine valley running N.W., see under Owl & Merlin above, and a likely spot for Harrier; also a fine slope facing the Bay of Isbister on the East, see under Owl, with excellent accommodation among the rushes for Harrier.

The hills S. West of Eriv were not visited.

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May 22nd and June 2nd; Housay. C.M.

Sheldrake

Golden Plover

Twite

Sheldrake; nest, 11 eggs, nearly fresh, on June 2nd, - above L. Knitchie; situated in a disused rabbit hole, short, and with two entrances, so that the sitting Duck could be observed from either end. The whole slope was covered with heather, which partially covered both entrances. A few tufts of "down" were easily visible on the heather near the entrances.

Golden Plover; nest, 4 eggs, nearly fresh, on the high slopes to the south of Muckle Water, June 2nd. Several other pairs were seen in the same part on May 22nd.

Twite; nest, 5 eggs, nearly fresh, on May 22nd, in short heather on high ground south of Muckle Water - I only observed one other pair on Housay.

The time spent on Housay - only about 9 hrs. altogether, - was quite inadequate to meet the situation, the journey to and from Kirkwall, via Evie, taking sometime. Three full days,

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May 22nd and June 2nd; Rousay, cont^d.

staying on the island, might be profitably spent. M^r William Logie, gamekeeper, Rousay, accompanied me on June 2nd, and proved both useful and interesting. Other birds of interest on the island are as follows:-

Hen Harrier; an attempted nest, which came to nothing, seen on Blotchnie Field among heather and rushes - M^r Logie states that they try to take up their quarters annually on the island, but he shoots all he can to protect the Grouse.

Merlin; male seen to the East of Muckle Water - now seldom breeding, due to persecution.

Short-eared Owl; two birds seen on May 22nd, both on the slopes to the south of Muckle Water - both birds were undemonstrative. Logie took cl. 7 about end April.

Fulmar; two eggs taken by Logie on June 10th from the cliffs near the Lobust of Rousay, one of which was forwarded in a very broken condition - the only two nests on Rousay, so far as he knew - the 2nd year of breeding on the island.

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May 22nd and June 2nd; Rousay, cont^d.

In addition, Logie has taken eggs of the following:-

Rock Dove ; Hooded Crow
Merganser ; Mallard
Black Guillemot ; Guillemot
Razorbill ; Puffin
Oyster Catcher ; Kestrel.

I had no time myself to visit the cliffs or the shore.

June 2nd; Eynhallow. C.A.M.

Black Guillemot
Eider Duck
Oyster Catcher.

Black Guillemot; two large colonies, some 30 pairs in each, under large flags of stones; both colonies, quite near each other, on N.W. corner of the island. On June 2nd, found 6 lots of 2 eggs, and a one, all quite fresh, incubation being scarcely general. On June 6th, Logie revisited the colony for me, and took 6 lots of 2 each. The eggs are easily found here, when sought on hands and knees.

Eider Duck; abundant; many nests, not exceeding 4 eggs each, in short grass.

Terns; abundant - both Common and Arctic, I think - laying not commenced.

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May 26th - 28th ; Holm of E-day. C.M.

Rock Dove.

Eider Duck

Greater Black Backed Gull

Lesser do. do.

Herring Gull

Cormorant

Skag

Oyster Catcher

Snipe

Guillemot

Razorbill

Rock Dove; nest, 2 eggs, nearly fresh, on May 27th, at the extreme end of a cave near S.E. corner, on a small ledge in outer darkness. Another new nest near the entrance of the same cave, on a ledge near the top, with no eggs. Several other birds' left other caves and crevices, all inaccessible.

Eider Duck; many nests found, two nests containing 5, the remainder 4 eggs and under. The Ducks are close sitters, and very tame. At sundown, the numerous birds, which swim in the straits between the Holm and E-day, keep up an unceasing "oo-hoo", a most doleful note.

These eggs, and those of the gulls, are collected freely off the Holm by the inhabitants for eating.