

Introduction

The increasing numbers of birders visiting Shetland, especially in the spring and autumn has inevitably led to a few problems in recent years. These often occur when large crowds gather at rarities. In some instances problems can arise simply due to other people's perceptions and worries concerning gatherings of birders. Shetland folk are very sociable and are used to everyone talking to each other. If visitors do not say hello or ignore them, this can cause offence.

Here are a few suggestions to help your birding go smoothly

When birding around gardens:

Never go into a garden without asking permission.

Avoid giving the impression that you may be looking in windows

Most importantly, speak to any residents you see and be polite.

If you are asked to leave an area adjacent to a garden, please do so.

When gathering at a "twitch":

Explain to local people what is happening, they are most likely to be interested.

When parking a car, avoid obstructing roads and access to property.

When birding in the countryside:

Use gates and stiles when available. Open and close gates if possible, rather than climbing over them. If there is no alternative cross at the hinge end.

Please do not climb on fences. Be prepared to retrace your route to avoid doing this

Walk around crops, not through them. Remember grass when grown for hay or silage is also a crop.

Avoid disturbing livestock whenever possible, especially when young animals are present.

Avoid farmsteads and farmyards. These areas can be very sensitive during outbreaks of disease e.g. the blue tongue virus and foot and mouth. Agricultural outbuildings are not toilets!

Breeding Birds & the Law

Birders should avoid unnecessary disturbance to all breeding birds. The welfare of birds must always come first. Schedule 1 breeding birds are protected by law, which means you need a licence to disturb or photograph them at or near the nest, or when with dependent young.

Schedule 1 species which have bred in Shetland include:-

Black-Tailed Godwit, Corncrake, Fieldfare, Greenshank, Leach's Petrel, Merlin, Peregrine, Red-Backed Shrike, Red-Necked Phalarope, Red-Throated Diver, Redwing, Spotted Crake, Whimbrel & Whooper Swan.

Records

Visitors are especially encouraged to submit their records as soon as possible after their visit. This can be done by email (preferably) to:

Mark Chapman - Shetland County Recorder
msc.1@btinternet.com

or

administrator@nature-shetland.co.uk

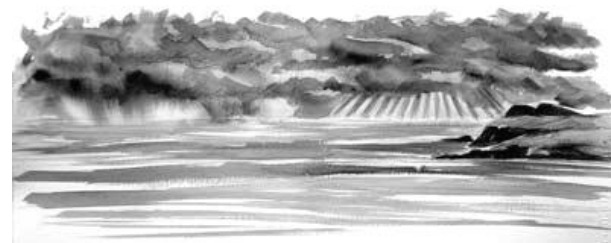
You should record:

Species, Number, Age & Sex, Locality, Date, Recorder(s) and any Notes.

Written descriptions & postal records should be submitted to the County Recorder

Mark Chapman, 55 Leaside, Firth, Mossbank, Shetland ZE2 9TF

For more information about recording, checklists and so on visit:
www.nature-shetland.co.uk/birdclub



**Shetland Bird Club
was founded in 1973 to
promote, study, conserve and record
the bird life of Shetland.**

The Aims of the Club

to study and record bird life in Shetland
to co-operate with local and national
bodies in ornithological enquiries
to produce an annual report, to be
known as the '*Shetland Bird Report*'
to promote and develop interest in
ornithology in Shetland
the conservation of Shetland's bird life

Membership and Subscription

Membership provides the annual
Shetland Bird Report, giving details of all
species seen in the county each year;
regular newsletters full of news of
interest to the Shetland birdwatcher,
details of forthcoming meetings,
ornithological enquiries and Club
projects; help, advice and information
from the officers of the Club; regular
meetings and illustrated talks, films and
lectures on birds and other wildlife
subjects.

Ordinary membership—£10
Family membership - £12
Under 16 membership - £5

Treasurer and Membership Secretary
Russ Haywood
Lamnaberg, Wester Quarff,
Shetland, ZE2 9EZ
Tel: (01950) 477471
Email: haywood712@btinternet.com

The Shetland Bird Report is available
from a variety of retail outlets in
Shetland. For back orders, please
contact Martin Heubeck,
Sumburgh Head Lighthouse,
martinheubeck@btinternet.com

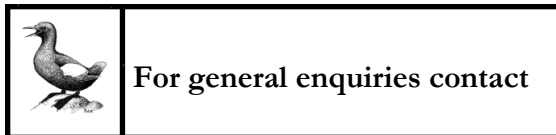
To find out more about the group
go to
www.nature-shetland.co.uk/birdclub

Useful websites

www.outdooraccess-scotland.com
www.nature-shetland.co.uk
www.visitshetland.com



Art work by Howard Towll



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Shetland Bird Club

**Code for
Birders in Shetland**



Shetland has traditionally
had a relaxed attitude towards
access to the countryside.
Recent changes in legislation have
now given everyone the right of
responsible access to the
countryside in Scotland, providing
they follow the:

**Scottish Outdoor Access Code
and the
Birdwatchers'
Code of Conduct**