



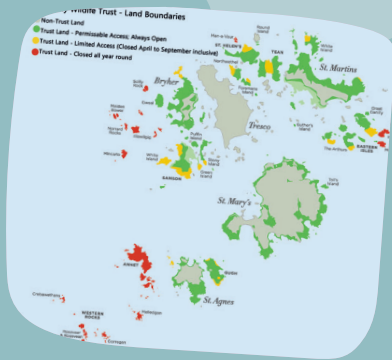
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) outstanding scilly

nature access beauty heritage

Seabird Conservation in Scilly...

By Nikki Banfield, Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust Communications Officer

The Isles of Scilly support nationally and internationally important populations of seabirds. The important land areas for seabirds are accordingly designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Protection Area and Ramsar Site. Seabirds have been recognised as a priority for conservation and various actions have been carried out over a number of years, including surveys, monitoring and predator control.



The 2018-2023 Seabird Conservation Strategy reviews previous strategies and progress achieved; bringing them up to date with revised objectives and outcomes whilst also detailing a 5 year work programme. This was made possible thanks to Isles of Scilly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Funding and many local and mainland organisations working in partnership.

Produced by staff from the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust, RSPB, Natural England and Isles of Scilly IFCA and endorsed by the IoS AONB Partnership including: Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust, RSPB, Duchy of Cornwall Estate, Islands Partnership, Council of the Isles of Scilly, Isles of Scilly IFCA & Isles of Scilly Bird Group.

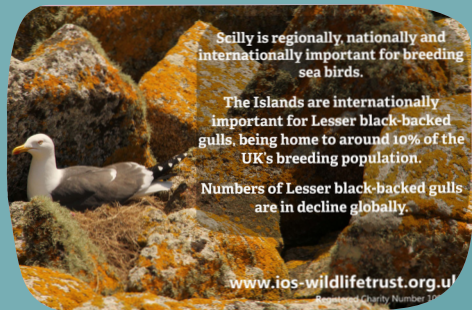
Declines & Successes in Seabird Numbers.

The latest all-island seabird survey completed in 2015/16 and the ongoing monitoring during the previous strategy period continues to document an overall picture of decline in the seabird assemblage on the islands and the dramatic decline in some species, although there are some notable exceptions.

In the 2015/16 survey a total of 8,266 territories of 13 species of seabird were recorded from 55 rocks and islands, achieving complete coverage of all islands.

Worryingly five species of seabirds across all the islands have declined in numbers by more than 20% in just the last nine years; Lesser black-backed gull (-26%), Herring gull (-22%), Shag (-21%), Common tern (-85%) and Kittiwake (-72%). In particular Kittiwake and Common tern are now in danger of being lost as breeding species in Scilly.

However, there is also some good news! Since 2006 there has been a marked increase in the numbers of both Razorbill and Guillemot across the islands, whilst Puffin numbers have remained relatively stable.



One of the greatest changes for seabirds in Scilly over the last nine years has been the removal of rats from St. Agnes and Gugh during 2013/14; resulting in successful breeding of Manx shearwaters on these islands. Numbers have steadily grown from 10 stargazing chicks recorded in 2014 to 48 stargazing chicks being recorded this year!

What can you do to help...?

The Strategy details proposed actions for agencies and partners across the Islands (many of which are already being carried out and have been for a number of years now) but there are also things that you can do as individuals too to support our breeding seabird populations:



Restricted Access: Take note of the restricted areas across the Islands (as identified on our website and in the Birds of Scilly Leaflet, available to pick up at many places across the Islands). Access restrictions are in place for all or part of the year to ensure that our seabirds have a safe space to breed in;

Be WiSe (Wildlife Safe): Be aware of the signs of disturbance (both for our seabirds and our other marine wildlife) and ensure that you observe from safe distances whether on land or on the water. Guidelines regarding signs of disturbance for seabirds can be found in our "Birds of Scilly" leaflet and information regarding interactions with our other marine wildlife can be found on the Access page of the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust website;

Beach Cleans: Research shows that seabirds are ingesting plastics and other man-made marine debris which they mistake for food. This is dangerous for them on a number of levels. By taking part in a #2MinuteBeachClean or joining the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust on one of their organised cleans you can help to reduce the amount of marine debris in our seas and on our beaches.

Support Conservation in Scilly: By making a donation to the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust you are supporting nature conservation across the Islands. You can do this in a number of ways including: attending our events and activities, dropping your spare change in one of our donation pots or posts, join us on a Wildlife Safari with St Agnes Boating, signing up for our e-newsletter and clicking on the donate button to name but a few.

If you would like to take a look at the full Seabird Conservation Strategy (2018 - 2023) it can be viewed on the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust Website. Just head for the News section

<http://www.ios-wildlifetrust.org.uk/news>



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