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"THE OYSTERCATCHER"

The Isle of Mull Bird Club Newsletter

www.mullbirdclub.org.uk

NOVEMBER 2009

HUMMING BIRD HAWK MOTH

A Hummingbird Hawk-moth was seen on Mull. This appeared on the 14th September and showed in both Salen and Craignure. The moth is named after its resemblance to a hummingbird, with its rapid hovering motion as it feeds on the nectar of flowers. They are abundant in Mediterranean countries, Asia and Japan. In the British Isles they can be spotted every summer from June to September and have been recorded as far as the Orkney and Shetland Islands.



Picture taken by Dia Roberts

They cannot survive the winter months and so migrate to southern parts of Europe. They are day fliers, preferring bright sunlight, but may also be seen at dawn and dusk and rarely at night. They are strongly attracted to flowers with a plentiful supply of nectar such as petunias, honeysuckle and buddleia. Studies have noted that they have a remarkable memory and return to the same flowerbeds at the same time everyday. They cannot survive the winter months and so migrate to southern parts of Europe. They breed regularly in the UK. Moths locate their mates by scent, with sight playing a small part. Hummingbird hawk-moths have been seen to demonstrate aerial courtship chases, with the male and female engaging in rapid pursuits low over the

ground, or spiral upwards together. They are an immigrant species, which sometimes occur in large numbers. A large influx occurred in Summer 2000, when moths were observed in parks and gardens all over Britain.

Alan Spellman

RARITIES FOR MULL

Photo Steven Round



A detailed description and report of a Lesser Whitethroat at Loch Buie on 23rd June 2009, is a first for Mull. It was found by Ashley Saunders who is the leader of a group of bird watchers with 'Oriole Adventures', enjoying a few days on our island. There is a previous report of a bird on Iona in 1965 (34 years ago)

Status and Description.

It is a scarce summer visitor to the UK, rarely getting as far north as Scotland. It is a small migrant warbler, smaller than the similar whitethroat, and the dark cheek feathers contrast with the white throat giving it a 'masked' look. It is quite skulking and difficult to find, often only noticed when it gives its rattling song, or 'tacking' call. When it flits from cover it shows white outer tail feathers.

Lesser Whitethroat are found in England, Wales and South Scotland, but absent from upland areas. It is a fairly secretive warbler which lives in areas of scrub and hedges and is best located by its song and calls. As with many of our warblers, it arrives back in the UK in April and May and males sing as soon as they arrive. They leave again in August and September. They feed on Insects, and berries in the autumn.



Yet another first record for Mull. Andrew and Helen Mortley (of Nuthatch fame) reported seeing a Hawfinch in their garden at Calgary on 15th June 2009. The Hawfinch is the UK's largest finch, it has a massive and powerful bill. It is always shy and difficult to see, the Hawfinch has become even more enigmatic in recent years with the decline in many of its traditional breeding areas. Numbers are hard to determine, however, as Hawfinches are easily overlooked, especially in summer. Hawfinches are now mostly restricted to England in the UK, and have declined in many areas. Parts of western England near the Welsh Borders, the Home Counties and the south-east from Hampshire to Kent remain the most likely places to find them. So to find one on Mull is especially rewarding. They can occasionally be seen at RSPB nature reserves such as Nagshead, Gloucestershire and Blean Woods, Kent. Hawfinches often perch high in trees, but also feed on the ground and much more inconspicuously among

the foliage. They are a resident species and can be seen all year round; usually more easily seen outside the breeding season when trees are leafless and hawfinches feed more regularly on the ground. Like other finches they feed mainly on Seeds, buds and shoots. There are about 3,000 to 6,000 breeding pairs in the UK and numbers can increase to as many as 10,000 over the winter in the UK.

It's common name is Scarlet Rosefinch Status: very rare summer visitor

Previously only six records in Argyll, making this the first record for Mull, previously one was on Iona on 14th June 1989. On 16th June 2009, in the garden, by the feeder at Kellan Mill on the north shore of Loch na Keal Reported by Ben Dickinson from Merseyside, who was on holiday at the time.

A full report detailed has been sent to the Argyll Rare birds Committee, (available from Alan upon request)

Description:

The adult male is quite unmistakable with his rich red head and breast but in other plumages Rosefinch can just look streaky-brown. Their bodies and especially their bills are too big for them to be confused with Redpolls; in fact they look more like sparrows or buntings but they have a unique combination of streaky under parts, a staring eye in a plain face and two narrow pale wing bars.

Habitat and food

This species breeds across much of northern Asia and parts of eastern and central Europe and migrates south-east in winter. undertaking long-distance migrations at night to winter from Iran to China. First-year birds tend to disperse further than adults which explains why colonising birds are almost always dull-plumaged (young) males.

In the UK they have bred sporadically.

Breeds in scrubby areas, often near water, with 0-4 breeding pairs in the UK (estimate)

They feed on seeds, buds and small invertebrates. In the UK they are more often recorded between May to September. They are more often found on the east coast area of the UK, so our bird here on Mull, on this occasion has travelled much further west.



On May 9th 2009 two visitors, Sandra & Alison (I am sorry but I don't have other names) were staying in their camper van at the Sheillings camp site in Craignure when they spotted a small bird busy feeding on the shore line. It looked 'different' and both having a keen interest in birds and Mull's wildlife, took some photographs of this obliging little bird. The bird was an Ortolan Bunting, it breeds in Europe and Asia and is a very scarce migrant to Britain. A native of most European countries, (except the British Isles), and western Asia the Ortolan Bunting migrates in autumn to tropical Africa, returning at the end of April or beginning of May. Its distribution throughout its breeding range seems to be very local. It reaches as far north as Scandinavia and beyond the Arctic Circle, frequenting corn fields and their open country side. It is an uncommon vagrant in spring and particularly in autumn to the British isles.

The Ortolan Bunting is 16 cm in length and weighs 20 to 25 grams. In appearance and habits much resemble that of the Yellowhammer. It nests on or near the ground, and feeds on seeds, beetles and other insects are eaten when feeding young. It is an attractive bird and diagnostic are its pink bill and eye ring and it shows the 'moustache' and characteristics of other buntings.

This is the first record of this bird in Mull and Argyll. This little bird has had a hard time: For centuries, a rite of passage for French gourmets has been the eating of the Ortolan Bunting. These tiny birds—captured alive, force fed, then drowned in Armagnac were roasted whole and eaten that way, bones and all, while the diner draped his head with a linen napkin to preserve the precious aromas and, some believe, to hide from God. (It is now against the law to sell them in France - but not to eat them)



SUMMER FLOWER WALK

By Norma Dowling

Our summer Flower Walk to Ardalanish is becoming a tradition and once again it proved to be a delightful occasion. The weather was kind; the company excellent; the scenery spectacular and of course the flowers were breathtaking and also held a surprise for us!

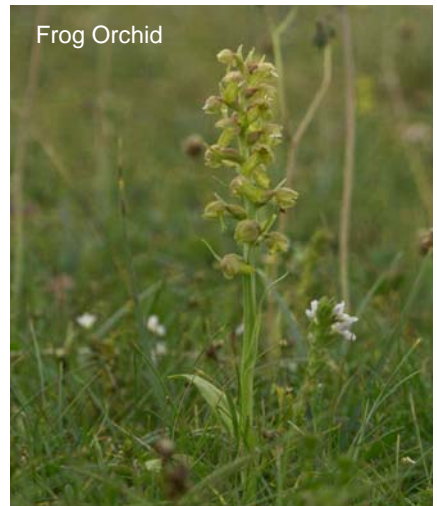
It was lovely to be able to welcome three of our off-island members: Felicity, Jenny and Chris. I'm sure we will be seeing them again! Our group of fifteen set off along the path from the beach car park armed with Carol's colour coded list of likely sightings. This proved very useful and people had fun ticking off many of the 90 odd possibilities as they identified them! These included such treasures as Lesser Meadow-Rue, Fairy Flax, Germander Speedwell, Devil's-bit Scabious, Milkwort, Eyebright and Red Bartsia just to name a few of those that took my fancy.

The rich and varied habitats in this area ensure plenty of interest. It is difficult to pick out a few from the many! The damp meadow to our right on the way down was full of Purple Loosestrife and Meadowsweet; there were a few Field Gentians along the path, also Marsh Woundwort, lots of Yellow Rattle and several members of the Pea family. On or near the beach we saw Sea Campion, Sea Mayweed, Biting Stonecrop, Roseroot, Sea Rocket, Sea Radish and Seaside Centuary. On the way back the damp meadow on the right was spotted with the big white saucers of Grass-of-Parnassus. And of course there were the orchids! Later, with the help of Alan Spellman and Jenny, we realised that in the excitement of it all we had stumbled across a rarity for Mull. It was a single plant of Pyramidal Orchid, *Anacamptis pyramidalis*, in full bloom! Records show this is the only plant reported on the island since 1978. For this reason it is important that we preserve the site as best we can. Our visit concluded with a peep in the Weaving shop. I wanted to check on the results of the vegetable dyeing. Madder, *Rubium tinctorum* is now being used to produce a pinkish yarn. This is a non-native plant in the same family as the Bed-straws. Woad, *Isatis tinctoria*, is being used too. A member of the cabbage family, it is grown in Britain to produce a blue dye. It had become almost obsolete, overtaken by the use of indigo but is now experiencing a revival. We were then welcomed at Ardachy Hotel where our healthy appetites did justice to the lovely tea provided. So another Flower Walk came to an end. My thanks for their help to Carol and Alan and to all who joined us.

Pyramidal Or-



Frog Orchid



MY PATCH

By
Jenny Buckley

If you find yourself on migration through the Midlands, welcome to my patch, Brandon Marsh, OS Sheet 140; SP 386 761. Headquarters of the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, it's just 3 miles south-east of Coventry, totally man-made and man-managed, based on old gravel extraction pits. With Nature's hand and an impressive team of management and volunteers, nearly all townsfolk, it's become a gem of a reserve, with pools, reed beds, marsh, woodland and grassland, recording over 230 bird species, with some stunning rarities and county firsts, Barred Warbler, Great Reed Warbler, Bee Eater, Lesser Scaup and Ring-necked Duck. Easy tracks lead to six hides and there's always someone to help with ID or location. "Which one is the Green Sandpiper then?" Some of my best experiences have been when I've taken first-time visitors round. Two of my Upper Sixth students had brilliant views of the very rare Bittern. A friend, new to bird-watching, saw a pair of Garganey (rare here, and my best ever views). The Coot helped. They were on its patch and it repeatedly moved them off from behind the reeds into open water. Another friend, who always wanted to see a Kingfisher, saw two of them at once from the newest hide. Busy feeding young, they perched on the purposely placed poles, showing chestnut front and metallic blue back, frequently diving for fish. Other birders share their skills and patience. Without them, I'd have missed two Long-Eared Owls roosting in willows near the track, so beautifully camouflaged they were virtually invisible. I'll not forget the Swift in the hand (not mine) when I was out with the ringing group. I was amazed by the huge tick it was carrying and got close enough to be clutched by a Swift claw - they don't readily let go; it drew blood! And then, the Water Rail, a breeding resident, but most often skulking in reed beds. Someone alerted us to its pig-like squeal just before it darted across open mud between islands of reedy cover. As a breeding habitat, Brandon Marsh is thriving, with about 60 breeding species. There are several pairs of Cetti's Warbler (another county first). Their explosive, fluty outburst always comes well before you reach them. How do they sense your presence that early? Common Terns are up to about 20 pairs. There are two pairs of Kingfisher, and this year, two pairs of Barn Owl. They've been seen well at dusk, hunting with their young. Specials apart, it's still a joy to watch Great Crested Grebe courtship and later count their chicks peeping from a swimming adult's back, or spot the powder puff Little Grebe before it dives. Redshanks have a haven here now that tidier farms have lost them favoured boggy places. Try to spot the Snipe. I've seen ten Buzzards at one time over the reserve. They're now making a welcome come-back in the county. And don't forget the excitement of "They're all up - where's the raptor?" Hard work by the ringing team is producing fascinating new information. A Garden Warbler was recovered in Ghana, the first from here found south of the Sahara. They've had a Black Headed Gull, originally ringed in Poland. A singing Savi's Warbler was re-trapped only ten days later singing again in Tring. It's thought that they try a potential breeding spot, moving on if they have no luck. A Swift ringed here was recovered nine years later in Flamborough by a certain Mr. Swallow (no kidding). Long-Eared Owls are hunting in the Reed Bunting roosts and moving to a small but similar reserve nearby to do the same. Ringing is showing that there are more individuals than first thought. You might think that with a city, motorways and a small airport nearby, Brandon Marsh must be an isolated oasis, but looking at the bigger picture, you'll see it's on an important flyway. Birds using the Severn may route along the Ouse and the Wash or take the Avon valley and it's the River Avon which skirts the southern edge of the reserve. There are also many other important reserves nearby. We lack the splendour of scenic wilderness, but these cherished areas are of immense value in this well-populated part of the country, and the birds know it. We're even waiting for Otters now. There have been sightings and, sadly, road-kill recoveries in Warwickshire, including that of a pregnant female. We all hope it's just a matter of time before they too find the reserve. So, do come when you're passing through. Here's wishing you first-time visitor luck, and don't forget the natural history library and home-baking in the tea room.

ONE TO WATCH

"CROSSBILL"

Few birds have the ability to excite local birdwatchers more than the Crossbill. Enigmatic and elusive, the appearance of these 'small parrots' in any of Mull's conifer plantations is a thrilling find, irrespective of the time of year. Common Crossbills live in conifer woods, although they do turn up in other habitats when on migration, particularly on tree-less islands in the Outer Hebrides and the Northern Isles. Numbers of these fascinating finches are highly unpredictable, being widespread one year, yet seemingly absent the next. The Common Crossbill's diet relies heavily on the seeds of Norway and Sitka Spruce, although those of Scots Pine and European Larch are taken. Common Crossbills are often found in the younger plantations of introduced conifers, and have benefited greatly from such afforestation in recent decades. Such conifers only seed regularly when mature and cone crops can show considerable annual variation, thus the population of this chunky finch tends to be erratic, with highly-mobile flocks always on the look-out for new feeding areas. SG

ONE TO WATCH "Snowflake"

The Snow Bunting is a rare breeding bird in the Scottish mountains, whose presence is under threat from climatic amelioration caused by global warming. Their specialised mountain habitat, where snow cover remains in Summer, may change with rising temperatures, meaning that the species can no longer breed there. On its Arctic breeding grounds, the Snow Bunting holds the distinction of being able to breed farther north than any other small bird. Less than 100 pairs of this Arctic bunting nest annually in the boulder screes of Scottish hillsides, although many more may be encountered in Britain in Winter, as flocks of this charismatic little bird arrive from Iceland and Northern Europe (up to 15,000 birds). In the West Highlands, an increase has previously been noted in the hills to the north and east of Oban, suggesting that birds are breeding in the corries and boulder fields of the Ben Nevis and Ben Cruachan ranges. These local birds exist at the southern edge of the Snow Bunting's breeding distribution, and will, no doubt, prove to be reliable and sensitive barometers of any future climatic or man-induced change in their upland environment. The Scottish breeding population shows plumage characteristics of the Icelandic race, *P. n. insulæ*, as does the immigrant population that winter in this country, although birds that over-winter on the east coast may have a Norwegian origin. The breeding success of Scottish birds is believed to be high, as is this species' survival rate, fuelling hopes that an increasing native population would be able to sustain itself. Breeding success, in such an unforgiving landscape as the Scottish mountains, can be fraught with difficulty. Summer snow showers or heavy rainfall may cause the hen bunting to desert early clutches. The nest of the Snow Bunting is well-hidden among boulders and may be lined with the feathers of Ptarmigan, another mountain specialist that it shares its upland home with. Despite the vagaries of a harsh montane climate, Snow Buntings in Scotland often raise two broods, something which is impossible during the shorter Arctic Summer. However, second broods tend to be smaller and parent birds often have to rely on a greatly diminished supply of insects on which to feed these extra youngsters. These 'snow flakes', as I have heard them referred, are probably annual visitors to Mull in small numbers during the Autumn - Spring period. The sight of any number of these delightful little birds would be enough to brighten even the gloomiest day on the island for local birdwatchers. However, their choice of habitat, even in the depths of Winter, may result in these highly attractive visitors being overlooked while they temporarily reside on the island. Few local birdwatchers wander the Mull hills during the Winter months and, consequently, miss out on the prospect of encountering these hardy, yet charming birds on their travels.

Small parties of Snow Buntings could, of course, appear on the Mull coast, where they may be found feeding on sandhoppers along the strandline and on saltmarshes. The machair beaches at Calgary and Fidden, or the foothills of Glen More, may reward those hardy souls willing to battle against the Winter's chill, in order to search for a small bird that is capable of withstanding the harshest environments. When feeding, sometimes in the company of Twite, Snow Buntings can appear inconspicuous, yet they can explode in a flurry of white when disturbed. Numbers of this starkly handsome bunting arrive on Hebridean shores from their Arctic breeding haunts in October, when birds may be spotted at coastal

watchpoints anywhere on Mull, e.g. Caliach Point. When Autumn weather is severe and Winter arrives early in Iceland, larger numbers of Snow Buntings may forsake their homeland for milder climes. They are seldom seen and reported, but it is recognised that Mull may be home to a small number of these most resilient of passerines in Winter. Stuart Gibson

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Despite being the 'closed season' for the Bird Club we've seen quite a bit of action already since I became Chairman in April. Funny thought; I wasn't at the AGM, but still became Chairman!

You will, no doubt, remember the trauma faced by Sue & Richard Dewar earlier in the year when they learned that they had to vacate their home at short notice. Not just their home, of course, but the home of many many birds of prey they had looked after for nearly ten years. By a process of returning to owners and removing to temporary accommodation Sue & Richard have secured (at least in the short term) homes for all concerned. Some temporary accommodation has been set up on Crannich Farm with the help of many volunteers and Sue & Richard themselves are now staying in Salen. Thanks to all those who helped with the move. There are plans to reinvent 'Wings Over Mull' at a more permanent site in Aros Park near Tobermory in 2010 if the money can be raised. My first duty as Chairman was to oversee the Bird Club's commitment to various events during 'Wild Isles Week'. The Club's Committee had already laid the groundwork for evening talks from two off-island speakers, in the belief that Club Members were somewhat tired of Committee Members' holiday slides! Another off-island speaker was arranged by John Cable (he was in charge of organising the 'week') making a total of three really good speakers. Attendance at all three evenings was good and cash was raised at the door (Craignure Village Hall) for the various island charities. Personally I was disappointed that more Club Members were not able to be present. I do hope we, as a Committee, are correctly interpreting members' wishes in paying for off-island speakers; we have several more (high profile) speakers arranged for the Winter Season! The flower walk at Ardanish in July was well attended; many thanks to Carol and Norma for organising this and to the girls at Ardachy for such a splendid 'tea'; again! Hot on the heels of this event (indeed the seeds of the idea were planted on that day) a boat trip was arranged for a visit to the isle of Lunga for some 'Puffin Therapy'. Martin Keivers, of Salen, has a new venture in boat trips and this was the first to be arranged by the Club. More are planned; keep your eyes on our website (www.mullbirdclub.org.uk). Still in July; we held the Bird Club annual BBQ. It rained, of course, so cunningly we arranged to hold the event indoors! Hosted by Pam & Arthur Brown at Adrioch Farm with Pete Hall 'on the range' helping with the excellent cooking. I don't need to remind the assembled hoards what a splendid time we all had. If you missed the event I'm very sorry for you! In September there was a very definite 'Autumnal' feeling in the air; appropriately Roger Johns arranged a Fungus Foray in Aros Park. Just five Club Members and one visitor (James Hilder) were able to attend but this made for a very friendly, intimate, group. James collected several edible species and cooked them on a handy stove, brought for the purpose. The full list of species seen is published on the Club website at the moment (end of September 2009). And finally, sighs of relief!, Craignure Village Hall have installed a 3 metre

wide projection screen. No more danger of our wobbly old 'do it yourself' screen collapsing and falling off the stage. I look forward to seeing you at our indoor meetings. Andrew Oldacre.

BIRD ATLAS 2007—2011

The Bird Atlas Project organised jointly by the British Trust for Ornithology, The Scottish Ornithologists Club and Bird Watch Ireland is a massive undertaking aimed at mapping the abundance and distribution of all species occurring in the United Kingdom and the Irish Republic. Atlases provide vital information for bird conservation in the future and take place approximately every 20 years. The last one in the late 1980's highlighted the widespread range contraction of farmland birds, which led to detailed research into the causes. Will the new survey highlight the plight of another group of birds? The first 2 year's records have already been completed, both for the winter period (November – February) and the breeding season (April – July). Those records taken from 2007 – 2009 have highlighted the range expansion of several species including Common Buzzard, Common Raven and Common Stonechat while migrant breeding species such as spotted flycatcher and wood warbler have contracted. Two methods are used to make records. Timed visits of one or two hours are made to 2km X 2km Ordinance Survey grid squares (called tetrads) and further records are made on a roving or opportunist basis and these can be made at any time during the winter or breeding periods. In North Argyll which includes the Isle of Mull, Iona, Morvern, Coll and Tiree 113 (55% of the minimum) tetrads have been surveyed during the 2 winter periods by a dedicated band of volunteers and approximately 158 species have been recorded. During the 2 breeding seasons approximately 90 tetrads have been covered and approximately 191 species were seen. These records were augmented by a huge number of roving records which were made by both residents and visitors to the area and I am most grateful to all those who gave their time to the project. The breeding seasons have seen five new species added to the Mull list – nuthatch, white-billed Diver, Ortolan bunting, rose-coloured starling and quail, however some of these records are still being scrutinised. To date approximately 22600 records have been received from 128 observers. This is a massive achievement and includes timed tetrad visits and roving records, but unfortunately only a relatively small number of these have been made by residents of Mull.

The third period of winter recording for 2009-10 is fast approaching and I am very keen to attract additional observers to cover tetrads which have so far not been surveyed especially in the southern half of the island and yet more roving records. Hopefully those volunteers who have already taken part will be able to do more recording. Any input from mainland members of the Bird Club and anyone visiting the area in either of the recording periods (winter or breeding) would be most welcome. Further details can be obtained from myself including instructions and recording forms at bluehouse@sky.com or tel:- 01444247439 or online at www.birdatlas.net where you can register to submit your records electronically. Alternatively you may contact the Scottish Organiser Bob Swann at bob.swann@bto.org.

Shaun McCullagh

BTO Regional Organiser for Bird Atlas for Isle of Mull & Morvern

“Commando Toad”

This Toad was spotted, glowing just as it was getting dark by Mike Wagemakers, now you see me, now you don't?



BIRD CLUB BBQ

Our summer barbecue took place on 31st July at the home of Arthur and Pam Brown. You would think holding a barbecue at the end of July, you would be pretty safe and expect the weather to be half decent – wrong! It rained all day – not just drizzle but good old straight down stair rods! But that didn't put us off! Over 30 people turned up with a huge selection of food. The Cooking was aptly applied by Pam Brown (as it was her kitchen) and Pete Hall. Sadly, we couldn't hold our event outside but we all managed to fit inside Pam's kitchen and everyone helped out to ensure the evening was a great success. Highlight of the evening was Mike and Belinda Hale entertaining us on the guitar – a good old sing a long had by one and all. A big thank you to Pam and Arthur for their hospitality.



Now come on Pete, this is NOT Mas-

“Note from the Treasurer”

I am sorry to mention this but there are a few members who have not yet paid their subs for this year. Would you please be kind enough to let me have your subs which will save me writing to you. It is still only £5 per member.
Thank you

Peter T Hall A.C.I.B
Treasurer
01680 812441
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HAPPY RETIREMENT

After many years of being in the Police Force, Finlay Christine retired earlier this year. As the Wildlife Officer for the island, he was very much involved with Eagle Watch. So have a happy retirement Finlay, we will miss you. Pictured below are photographs, the first one is from his official retirement from the Police Force and the second one is a presentation that was made to Finlay from the Bird club.



© Pete Hall

INDOOR AND OUTDOOR FIELD MEETINGS

Friday 11th December

Indoor meeting at Craignure Village Hall 19.30 hrs. Our annual Christmas Party comes early this year [normally held after the event, in January!!] Please bring a plate of food. There will be a slide show and a quiz.

Tuesday 15th December

Field meeting to Loch na Keal. Meet at Killichronan @ 9.30am and end at 3.30 at the Kinloch for Tea. Leader will be Arthur Brown. If you are interested in going on this trip, we need numbers for catering, please contact Pete Hall on 01680 812441 or email pete@dee-emm.co.uk

9th January 2010

Field Meeting BIRD RACE We are doing another Bird Race and it will start at 9.30 and finish at 4.00pm at The Isle of Mull Hotel. You start from whatever area you are. We will need numbers for the Hotel, so if you are interested, names to Pete Hall 01680 812441 or pete@dee-emm.co.uk

15th January 2010

Indoor meeting at Craignure Village Hall 7.30 start. “David Lindo the Urban Birder” will be giving a talk. Do not miss this very interesting man.

12th February 2010

Indoor meeting at Craignure Village Hall at 7.30. Philip Price will give a talk on his subject “Wildlife Photography”

13th February 2010

Field Trip to Fidden and the Ross of Mull. Meet at The Kinloch Hotel at 9.30. If you would like to go on this trip, the co-ordinator is Pete Hall, please contact for catering purposes. Tel. 01680 812441 or pete@dee-emm.co.uk.

12th March 2010

Indoor Meeting 7.30 at Craignure Village Hall. Erika Hearn will be talking about The Treshnish Isles.

9th April 2010. This is an extra meeting which will be open to all bird club members as well as the general public. “an evening with Roy Dennis” not sure what the

talk will be on yet but it promises to be a very good evening. He will be bringing his book with him to sell at the event. There will also be a special raffle.

16th April 2010

Indoor Meeting It will be AGM night which should not take long and then we will continue with a normal club evening.

We are also planning an off-island week-end trip to Aviemore during January/February. Please keep an eye on the website for updates.

A TRIBUTE TO MIKE MADDERS

Mike Madders was the author of two books, *Where to Watch Birds in Scotland* (1989) and *The Birds of Mull* (1990). Tall, wiry and always immensely fit, Mike had never lost his appetite for the fell running that had nurtured his youth. This could make him a formidable proposition to keep up with in the field. Apart from being respected for his razor-sharp mind, he was greatly liked for his companionable wit and sense of humour.

Mike Madders, ornithologist and conservationist, was born on July 12, 1957. He died in a canoeing accident on July 23, 2009, aged 52

