



# Isles of Scilly Seabird Recovery Project Education Guide



*Schools can take a boat trip to see puffins and other seabirds. Photo by Trina Davies.*

## Welcome

The Isles of Scilly Seabird Recovery Project is excited to be able to offer free educational sessions during your time on Scilly. The islands are beautiful place to visit and an excellent resource for learning outside the classroom.

Children and young people are critical to conservation, for the contributions they can make now and in the future. The experiences we can provide together should equip them with the knowledge, skills and attitude required to sustain nature conservation into their adult lives.

We aim to provide a learning experience that inspires young people about the wonders of the natural world. To spark an interest that can be developed on their own, with their families and through their studies.

This pack gives you information to organise a visit to the islands and what activities you can take part in when you are on the islands. You can find more information at [www.ios-seabirds.org](http://www.ios-seabirds.org)



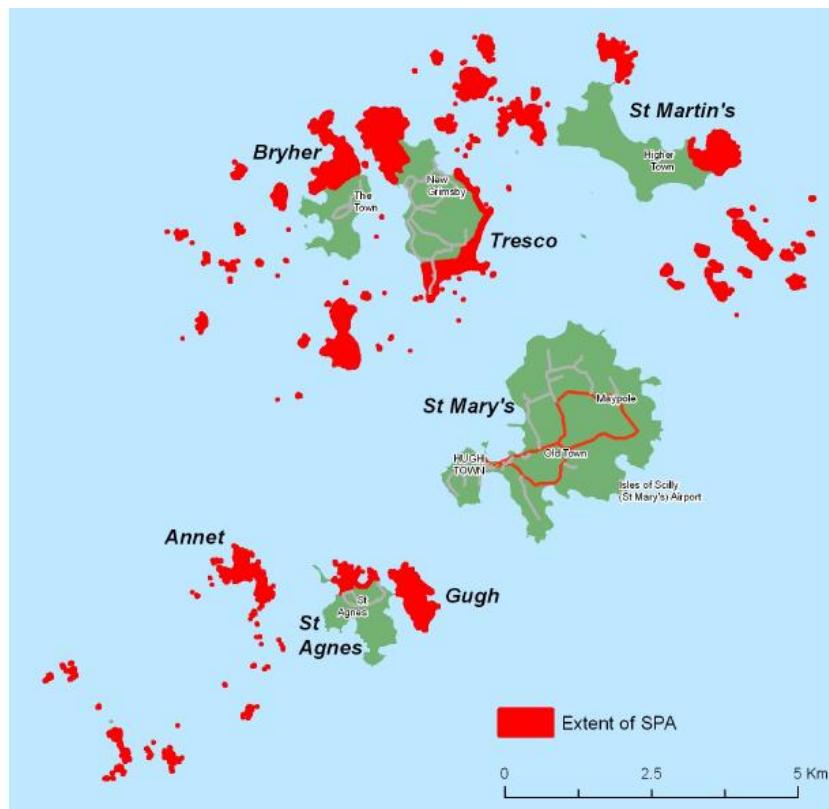
*St Just School takes part in 'Coastal Creatures' activity on the beach.*

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## SECTION 1: About the Isles of Scilly and the Isles of Scilly Seabird Recovery Project.

The Isles of Scilly is magical place to visit at any time of year. The islands consist of five inhabited islands and many more uninhabited islands, many of which are protected for breeding seabirds. The map below shows the islands and the red areas are 'special protection areas' for wildlife.



The Isles of Scilly Seabird Recovery Project aims to safeguard the seabirds of Scilly for future generations. Rats eat Manx shearwater and storm petrel eggs and chicks, in 2013 the rats were removed from St Agnes and Gugh.

There are 14 species of breeding seabirds found in Scilly, with many other species of coastal wildlife.

Storm petrels are tiny seabirds which feed out at sea. You can see them on special pelagic boat trips. They have started to breed on St Agnes and Gugh since the removal of rats. In 2015 we had our first records of storm petrels breeding again on St Agnes and Gugh.

Manx shearwaters' burrows can be seen on the inhabited islands. They flock at sea before sunset, flying to their burrows at night to avoid predation by Great black-backed gulls. You may hear their nocturnal calls overhead. In 2014 we had our first records of Manx shearwaters breeding again on St Agnes and Gugh.

In summer puffins can bee seen from boats out at sea, as the nest in burrows on uninhabited islands.

*Manx shearwaters rafting.*

*Ed Marshall*



## Section 2: Learning outside the classroom

Visits to our islands and to coastal habitats to see wildlife are designed to encourage curiosity and the process of discovery among pupils through safe, hands on activities that tie in with learning objectives set in the National Curriculum.

### PROVISIONAL OPPORTUNITIES: LAND USE AND HABITATS KS1&2

#### Discovering seabirds on the Isles of Scilly

Children are encouraged to look around them during their visit and see if they can identify seabirds and why the habitats on Scilly are so important for breeding seabirds. At the end of the session children will be asked what conclusions they can make.

Activity options: the specific nature of the activities will depend on what is about at the time of year that you visit and the age of the children. Options for activities we can offer are;

##### Seabirds on land and sea

###### Learning objectives

- Using the seabird leaflet learn to identify up to 14 species of seabird.
- Learn which seabird species nest in which coastal marine environment.
- Learn how not to disturb nesting seabirds.
- Learn why the Isles of Scilly are important for breeding seabirds, and why they are a 'Special Protection Area'.

##### Coastal creatures

###### Learning objectives

- How to identify up to six species of seabirds or waders
- How to identify up to six species of wildlife living in rock pools and seaweed
- Learn which species live in rock pools and learn how they feed when the tide is in and how they survive when the tide goes out
- Learn which species on the shore form food chains
- How can we help protect our seabirds

##### Wildlife bingo

###### Learning objectives

- Learn how to identify species of seabirds and other wildlife which may be easily seen on the island you are visiting
- Listen to bird song and understand there is a difference between species
- Learn that nature holds all the colours of the rainbow and the reasons why species are different colours

##### Lets go on a shrew hunt!

###### Learning objectives

- Learn how to identify signs of birds, shrews and other animals.
- Learn how to collect, record and present tracking data.
- Have fun learning a new tracking skill
- How even small actions can help to protect our seabirds
- How to encourage wildlife into your own gardens.

##### Willow wildlife

###### Learning Objectives

- Learn about your coastal environment and which species you can see in winter time – fish and seabirds are here all year round!
- Learn how to shape willow into creative wildlife shapes
- Learn how to make a living structure which can grow in your garden
- Have fun learning a new skills and sharing creative ideas.

##### SAFETY

All activities are risk assessed. We operate an RSPB education staff: child ratio of 1:15.

##### CLOTHING

Appropriate outdoor clothing, waterproof jacket, wellies or stout shoes, sun cream and hat in summer, long trousers and tops are also advised in summer.

##### BEHAVIOUR

Teachers and group leaders are responsible for their pupils behaviour

##### EQUIPMENT

All necessary equipment and worksheets are provided.

##### ICT

It would be useful if you brought a digital camera to record the day's activities, evidence found and creatures seen.

##### HANDY HINTS

During the summer months, pollen levels can be high. Sun protection cream is recommended. Plenty of water should be brought in hot weather.

There are plenty of activities you can do yourself on the beach to supplement a visit to the reserve eg natural art, sorting activities (natural materials vs manmade) and sea animal evidence.

##### PRIOR LEARNING

Useful Vocabulary:  
*Manx shearwater, storm petrel, life cycle, reproduce, habitat, predator, prey, food chain, invasive species, migration.*

##### FUTURE LEARNING

Habitat identification in the school grounds and at home, identifying plants and animals in those habitats  
Constructing food chains  
Land use around the school environment – compare with the visit location

## FURTHER LINKS

### Literacy

Introduction to new words – for example invasive, endemic, predator and prey, migration and plant and animal names

### Citizenship & PSHE

- How and why we look after internationally important seabirds
- Sense of responsibility for their surrounding environment

### Geography

- Planning and making a journey
- What is the weather like here
- Caring for environments

### SEAL/ECM

- Every individual to have a sense of achievement and enjoyment
- Each pupil to make a positive contribution to the day
- Increased confidence in ability and knowledge
- Every child to explore and discover in a safe and encouraging environment
- Every individual to be aware of how the environment and their actions contribute to their health and well-being
- Activities which vary in delivery for example individual and group work, discussions, thought and reflection time, games

## Section 3: Booking a field trip with Isles of Scilly Seabird Recovery Project during your stay.

The project offers a number of free activities to visiting schools, local schools and youth groups. The project has a small team; these activities are booked on a first-come-first-served-basis so get in touch through the website!

For visiting schools the two activities designed to get you out into the stunning coastal environment are;

**'Coastal creatures'** – we lead an activity at a local beach looking for seabirds and other wildlife.

And

**'Seabirds on land and sea'** – there are many return interisland boating providers on Scilly. You will need to book and pay for boating and an IOSSRP Field teacher can lead an activity. Part one is spotting seabirds at sea from the boat and part two investigates seabird nesting habitats on the island you are visiting.

The sessions can suit your needs, they are a minimum of two hours long and we will try to fit in with your schedule and boating times during your stay. We offer a range of other activities which you may prefer, these are designed for local school and youth groups but you may decide these other activities suit you needs better. You can find the session plans and resources for these activities below.

If we are fully booked and cannot offer you an IOSSRP Field teacher then use the resources on the website to lead the activity and support your visit. Also if you see any of the IOSSRP team out and about doing field work (wearing a bright orange hat with the project logo!) come and say hello. We will happily tell you what surveys we are doing and what seabirds you may see.

### Contact details

Contact person: Jaclyn Pearson, Project Manager  
Email: [jaclyn.pearson@rspb.org.uk](mailto:jaclyn.pearson@rspb.org.uk)



*'Coastal Creatures' activity – we may even see whales and dolphins as we watch from the headland. Photo Lydia Titterton*

## **Details on visiting Scilly**

### **Getting to Scilly**

There is an airport on St Mary's with scheduled fixed wing flights from various South West destinations. The Scillonian III foot passenger ferry sails from Penzance to St Mary's spring to autumn giving you an exciting opportunity to view some of the islands' special seabirds, whales, dolphins, porpoises, sunfish, or basking sharks. Travel details are available on [www.islesofscilly-travel.co.uk](http://www.islesofscilly-travel.co.uk)

### **Staying on Scilly**

There is accommodation on five of the islands (St Mary's, St Agnes, Bryher, Tresco and St Martin's) to suit all needs, ranging from campsites to hotels.

Details are available on [www.simplyscilly.co.uk](http://www.simplyscilly.co.uk) Or Tourist Information Centre (TIC) 01720 424031



*Council of the Isles of Scilly Holiday Club seabirds on land and sea activity. Photo Helen McGuiness*

## Getting Around

The islands are well serviced by a range of scheduled boat services and chartering is also an option. Details are available on the quays or notice boards.

For people staying on St Mary's

- St Mary's Boat Association runs scheduled trips to St Agnes, Bryher, Tresco and St Martins during spring to autumn.
- Private charters are also available.

For People staying on St Agnes

- St Agnes Boating runs a scheduled service including connections with the Scillonian
- Private charters are also available.

For people staying on Bryher, Tresco and St Martins

- Tresco boats runs a scheduled service including connections with the Scillonian.
- Private charters are also available.

There is a bus service and taxi services on St Mary's.

Details are available on [www.simplyscilly.co.uk](http://www.simplyscilly.co.uk) or Tourist Information Centre (TIC) 01720 424031.

## Local Attractions to add to your visit

The islands are a great place to explore and here are some of their many attractions:

- **Take a boat trip** to enjoy the seabird colonies on Annet, Western Rocks, Norrard Rocks or Eastern Isles. You are sure to see seals as well.
- **Take a 'shearwater special'** or pelagic trip to see Manx shearwater and storm petrel. You may be lucky enough to encounter sharks and dolphins too.
- **Listen out for the "eerie" calls** of Manx shearwater overhead at night from the comfort of your tent on St Agnes or Bryher.
- **See some of Britain's largest rafts of shags**, they can be seen from the inter-island tripper boats, along with the occasional razorbill or guillemot.
- **Take a guided walk** around the islands or go to a natural history talk where experts can tell you more about the islands' seabirds.
- **The Scillonian III provides an ideal introduction** to this special area for seabirds, whales and dolphins. Check the Steamship Company's website for sailings when wildlife guides are on board.
- **Evening talks** about the natural history on the islands are available on St Mary's.
- **Find out where birds have been seen** at the IOSBG information board outside the rear entrance to the Pilots Gig, St Mary's.
- **Visit the Isles of Scilly Museum** on St Mary's. It has an amazing bird collection where you can learn more about the islands seabirds and the work to conserve them.
- **Visit Tresco Abbey Gardens**, which is home to a unique collection of plants. Check the calendar for special walks and talks run by the RSPB at the gardens every year when you can learn more about islands seabirds and the work to conserve them here.
- **Visit the various craft shops and galleries** where unique works of birdlife on the islands can be found.



*St Agnes School 'Apple Day' activity. Photo Lydia Titterton*

You can learn more about islands' seabirds and the work to conserve them from the following providers:

- Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust [www.ios-wildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.ios-wildlifetrust.org.uk)
- Isles of Scilly Museum [www.iosmuseum.org/](http://www.iosmuseum.org/)
- Tresco Abbey Gardens [www.tresco.co.uk/what-to-do/abbey-garden](http://www.tresco.co.uk/what-to-do/abbey-garden)
- St Agnes boating wildlife trips <http://www.stagnesboating.co.uk/>
- Will Wagstaff tours. [www.islandwildlifetours.co.uk](http://www.islandwildlifetours.co.uk)
- Scillonian III <http://www.islesofscilly-travel.co.uk/wildlife.asp>



*Bishop Stopford School 'Let's go on a shrew hunt activity'.*



*Exeter university Zoology BSC Field trip 'seabirds on land and sea activity'*

## **Feedback**

Activities are provided to you free of charge but in order to claim payment from funders for your field teacher, we are required to submit an evaluation form for each visiting group. Jaclyn will give you and the young people evaluation forms for completion before you leave.

We want to provide schools with the best educational visits possible and we aim to update our activities based on the feedback we receive from visiting groups. To help us do this we will contact you shortly after your visit for any comments or recommendations you have.

## **Complaints procedure**

If you have any concerns regarding the activities please contact us so that we can improve our service.

## **Health & safety**

During your visit it is important that you comply with advice from your Local Education Authority on the appropriate ratio of supervisors to pupils. We will work with a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 18 young people in any one group. Please note sessions will not go ahead if there are either less than 6 or more than 18 pupils in your group.

## **Risk assessment**

We hold risk assessments for all activities, but we recommend that you carry out your own risk assessment for all activities. Please contact Jaclyn Pearson if you have any queries.

**In the event of an emergency** – Call 999. During site visits, pre-plan areas where you have mobile signal. Each inhabited island has medical responders, and there is a Medical Centre and hospital on St Marys.

## **Behaviour**

Teachers/group leaders are responsible for the children's behaviour throughout the visit. Children should be aware of the Countryside Code <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code> and understand how it helps members of the public respect, protect and enjoy the countryside. Additionally, we would also ask that the group:

- keep to maintained paths so you do not disturb nesting seabirds
- stay behind the guide at all times
- do not run unless part of the activity
- do not climb on walls
- do not enter sanctuary areas
- listen carefully and follow instructions
- do not pick plants or flowers
- stay a safe distance from any water
- Understand that the quieter you are, the more you are likely to see!

We encourage inquisitive learning so if you have any questions about anything you see or are told, please do not be afraid to ask.

We look forward to seeing you soon, or if you are using any of the resources whilst on your stay or at your own school please get in touch and give us feedback on how your activity went. We would love to hear from you.

Kind regards,

**Jaclyn Pearson**  
Isles of Scilly Seabird Project Manager



*'Coastal Creatures' activity. Photo Irina Mereniu.*