

Overwintering Blackcaps

While many birdwatchers think of the Blackcap as a summer visitor, for garden birdwatchers the species is more commonly encountered in winter. In fact, numbers using gardens in winter are rising rapidly, both reflecting and fuelling a profound change in the migratory habits of this bird. Elegant, feisty and with a liking for town and city life, the Blackcap is a visitor not to be missed.

A growing number of blackcaps that breed in Central Europe are coming to our shores to spend the winter instead of travelling to the Mediterranean, where they normally go. In Britain, food provided in gardens, coupled with our warming winter climate is helping Blackcaps to survive. The reward for enduring harsher winter conditions here than in the Mediterranean is that our Blackcaps have a shorter journey back to Central Europe in the spring, meaning that they can stake early claim for the best territories. Central European breeding Blackcaps that winter with us have been found to lay more eggs and fledge more chicks than those that winter further south.

Gardens in the west of Britain including Scotland are particularly favoured by these Blackcaps during winter, owing to the milder conditions in this area. Mildest of all is the south west of England, where Blackcap visitations exceed those of any other region. Despite the south-western bias to their wintering range, householders just about anywhere can look out for Blackcaps.

Richard Wesley—Lorn Natural History Group
New LNHG website—www.lnhg.org.uk

HALL NEWS AND LOTTERY RESULTS

FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
£50 Rollover	£50 Rollover	£100 Christine Cox
£10 Duar Fleming	£10 Sarah Wilson	£10 Paul Anfield
£10 Rhona Munro	£10 Richard Wesley	£10 William Munro
£10 Irene Fleming	£10 Kathleen Gordon	£10 Tom Pearson

COMMUNITY EMAIL DISTRIBUTION LIST

Just a reminder that if you want to be included in this you should email seilandhall@gmail.com indicating whether you want your email address to be shown or not..

PROPOSED HALL EXTENSION

26 people were present at the open meeting held on 28th February—thanks to all who attended and shared their views. Overall, a phased approach seemed favoured, with the only clear agreement being that more storage is needed. To help the Hall Committee get as complete response as possible, please complete the attached questionnaire and return to the collection box in Balvicar Stores by Monday 23rd May.

The Isle of Seil Golf Club Open Day -

16th April 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

This fun event is open to everyone in the community and a warm welcome is assured

Members will be on hand to assist with:

- putting and chipping competitions and
- a short 5-hole pitch and putt course.

Refreshments will be available between 12.00 p.m. and 2.00 p.m.

A grand prize raffle will also be held.

The Club is also offering, this year only, a special introductory half-price membership fee of £80 to encourage people to take up golf who have not played before. Included in the fee will be:

- 2 Taster Sessions run by Mary Phillips and
- 6 one-hour lessons with Bob Collinson, a professional coach.

SEIL DRAMA GROUP

We are putting together a short history of the former theatre group on Seil Island in the old hall. If anyone has any personal recollections or photographs, please contact Wendy Dugdale at the shop, or John Colston on 300076.

COASTAL ROWING

The club hosted a very successful training weekend in March for 16 novice coxes from the Isle of Mull, Mid Argyll, Isles of Luing and Seil. Thanks to all those who provided beds for our visitors and to Nick Hunter for allowing us to use his shore for launching the visiting skiffs. In addition, four members became qualified in VHF short range radio use.

New rowers and coxes are always welcome. Now that the days are longer, there are regular evening sessions as well as social rows at weekends, and on weekdays. Some of us hope to compete in the World championships in Northern Ireland in July.

And a date for your diaries—Saturday 11th June, Regatta Ceilidh in Seil Hall - 1900. Buffet by Fisarakah's Occasions with a pay bar. Live music by Seil Sound and The Brothers. Tickets on sale soon—all welcome. "Rowing machines with scenery".

Sign up on www.seilskiff.org.uk or phone Sue on 545

HALL LOTTERY

Memberships for the Hall Lottery are now due for renewal for April 2016 to March 2017. Existing members will be contacted by a collector so need take no action. For anyone who would like to support our Hall by joining the Hall Lottery, this is how it works:

Cost - £12 a year per number, which entitles you to be entered in each monthly draw. If you join late in the year, you only pay £1 a draw for each draw remaining that year. The Lottery is drawn at the monthly meeting of the Hall Committee, held on the first Sunday of each month.

Prizes – one of £50 and three of £10.

If the first number drawn is unallocated there is a rollover and the first prize the next month is £75. If the first number drawn the next month is again unallocated there is a further rollover to £100. At the next meeting numbers are drawn until the £100 is won.

The three £10 prizes are won every month.

If you would like to join the lottery for the first time and have not yet been contacted by a collector, you can call Janet Scott on 300483 or John Colston on 300076. Income from the lottery provides a substantial proportion of the cost of running the Hall, and helps keep our rental rates low. The Hall Committee is very grateful to all who support the hall in this way.

KILBRANDON CHURCH OFFICE—HELP NEEDED

The Kilbrandon Church Office staffed by Jim Cunningham and Maureen McLellan provides a variety of services to the wider community, including the production of calendars, magazines, posters, etc, as well as to the local congregation. Maureen has now retired, and Jim needs someone else to help him. The job involves being at the office nominally on a Friday morning from 10am till noon, and includes proof reading, helping with other secretarial tasks, and also looking after the church office money—some book keeping experience would be helpful here. If anyone is interested in taking this on, or would like further information, please contact Jim Cunningham (300344) or Martin Waddell, the Kilbrandon Session Clerk (300011).

SEILEACHAN

SEIL AND EASDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Vol. 20 No2

April 16

EDITORIAL

A bit tight for space on this issue, so any attempt at wise words held over to next time.

SECC REPORT FOR SEILEACHAN MARCH 2016

20 members of the public joined Cllr Elaine Robertson and Seil & Easdale Community Councillors at the public meeting held on 22nd March in Seil Island Hall.

Affordable housing needs: ACHA had not received any significant number of queries as a result of the posters left after Iona MacPhail's very informative presentation at the January meeting.

Argyll Sea Kayak trail Work on the Interpretation Panel was expected to start week beginning 28th March.

Scottish Water: New Waste Water Proposals for Seil

The CC has sent its response to the letter which was received from Scottish Water on the evening of the previous meeting (copy available on request from ferrisjef@aol.com). You should all have received a letter from SW giving an update on plans, including their intention to set up a community stakeholder group. The CC will engage fully with this, in the hope that we can now move forward to a satisfactory conclusion.

Roads

Charles continues to work closely with the Roads Department to address local concerns. Issues raised recently were safety of the drainage offlets on the B844, the need for a reflective bollard to mark the turnoff from the A816, the consistency of gritting, and ongoing problems of potholes and drainage.

Health

The Surgery had alerted the CC to difficulties with care package provision. Dr Hannah reported a deterioration of service, with a lack of flexibility and responsiveness. Cllr Robertson would look into the situation and report back.

Planning

New applications since last meeting – for full details see the Argyll & Bute website

1. Installation of telecommunications cabinet. Land Opposite Public Toilets, Ellenabeich
Status: application refused

2 Non Material Amendment to Planning Permission Alterations to entrance gate, position of petrol storage tank and size of safety shed. Installation of short hose, crash/safety post and ventilation holes. Status: Pending consideration

3. Erection of dwelling house. Plot 2 Cnoc Fennaig Balvicar
Status: Pending decision

4. Non material amendment for change of roof covering relative to shed 20 Easdale Island
Status: Application permitted

5 Erection of 1 interpretation panel. Land opposite Art Gallery, Ellenabeich
Status: Pending decision

6. Renewal of planning permission in principle (Site for the erection of dwellinghouse and installation of septic tank) Land South East of Ardmaddy House
Status: Pending consideration

Vodafone Rural Open Sure Signal (ROSS)

John Gordon had passed feedback on reception to Vodafone and awaits their response.

Parking in Oban

Cllr Robertson confirmed that A&B Council would be alerting the community to a 28 day consultation on proposals resulting from the recent request for suggestions. This affects us all – make your views known.

Easdale Island Ferry Access

Thanks to A&B Council for this successful project, with the channel cleared and both slips repaired.

Council Budget

Cllr Robertson explained that there had been a good response to the public consultation, which had helped establish the community's priorities to be protected as far as possible. The CC is very pleased that funding for the Voluntary Car Scheme has been preserved, and thanked Cllr Robertson for her efforts in protecting this vital community service.

Forward Planning for our Community

Anne Marie Robin will be working with Alan MacFadyen and Chris Dugdale to revisit a "forward planning approach" to address issues affecting the community. All input welcome...

Timing of Community Council Meetings

It was agreed to trial a change in timing to enable residents of Easdale Island to attend CC meetings. The next meeting would therefore start at 6.30pm rather than 7pm.

Local Directory

John Gordon was thanked for all his work in the administration of our local directory. John is now stepping down from this role, so if anyone would be interested in taking over this task any member of the CC would be delighted to hear from them.

Date and time of next meeting (starting with the AGM)

Tuesday 24th May 2016 **6.30pm**, Seil Island Hall

Footnote

It was great to see such a good turnout for the SWI's open meeting on Mary's Meals. Thanks to the generosity of those who attended -we raised £130 for this inspirational locally based charity—Oh, and we hope a few more people have discovered what a friendly interesting group the SWI is here on Seil.