

have caused death. Possibly the only way to be absolutely certain would be to check the PCB levels of healthy, breeding guillemots collected from Ailsa Craig next year. This is a distasteful prospect, which I don't much relish doing, but if necessary it may have to be done. Perhaps we will never be completely certain, but when all the evidence is collected I suspect it will point to a combination of natural factors, probably with a contamination overlay. The 1969 Clyde wreck appears to have been a relatively small affair compared to the enormous disasters of last century, but in view of our greatly reduced auk populations nowadays it may prove to be of considerable importance. Information about this 1969 wreck is being gathered and a catalogue of the results will be published in due course. The purpose of this account is not to discuss the 1969 wreck in detail, but rather to let its place in local seabird history be seen in its true perspective.

In summary, it seems to me that, quite apart from the effects of oiling, there has been an 'event' of varying severity, involving the death or absence of auks in the West of Scotland (and sometimes other parts of the country), every 25-30 years for as far back as records have been kept, and that emaciated birds, presumably but not necessarily due to starvation, have been a fairly common feature. It may be that these large and sometimes enormous disasters have always been part of the natural history of our seabird populations, and as such were acceptable, until the additional effect of man-made pollution made its impact. It would now seem, however, that this combined attack is too much for our present auk population to sustain, and I greatly fear that auks will disappear from Ailsa Craig in my own life-time unless this additional hazard of man-made pollution can be removed.

It would be most unwise to read too much into history, and to assume that there is something 'cyclical' about these incidents, but it would be equally unwise to ignore the lesson of history altogether. I would not go so far as to say I expect to see another seabird disaster towards the end of this century, but if one does happen, and I am still around to see it, I shall not be unduly surprised. If man-made pollution continues on its present scale, however, any such forecast becomes entirely academic, since I cannot see sufficient seabirds being left for any wreck to be formed. Time will tell.

ADDITIONAL MAMMAL NOTES FROM THE ISLAND OF ARRAN

By J. A. GIBSON

These additional notes on the mammals of the Island of Arran are supplementary to my paper in the last volume of the *Transactions of the Buteshire Natural History Society*, volume XVII, pages 59-68, 1969.

Order INSECTIVORA

HEDGEHOG *Erinaceus europaeus* L.

There is a printing error in the Arran paper (page 61), but fortunately it is fairly obvious — 1930 instead of 1900. Hedgehogs were introduced to Arran about the turn of the century, and the earliest published reference that I can find occurs in the *Scottish Naturalist* for 1912, page 259.

Order CARNIVORA

FERRET *Mustela putorius furo* L.

Mr. Ronald MacDonald has kindly informed me that ferrets are now breeding in the wild state fairly extensively over the south of the Island of Arran, and further recent information indicates that this is also the case in other parts of the island.

AMERICAN MINK *Mustela vison* Schreber

Mink are now breeding in the wild state in Arran with considerable success. Many have been seen, several have been shot or trapped, and it looks as if they will soon be well established throughout the island.

Order PINNIPEDIA

GREY SEAL *Halichoerus grypus* (Fabricius)

Two adult female grey seals were seen along the shore west of Kildonan in early September 1969, and one was present in late July and early August 1970.

Order ARTIODACTYLA

URUS *Bos primigenius* Bojanus

CELTIC SHORTHORN *Bos longifrons* Owen

'Bones of the ox' were obtained when excavating the mound at Tor Castle (*Antiquities of Arran*, by John McArthur, 1861, page 81), and from cairns excavated by Dr. E. Duncan and Prof. T. H. Bryce

at Torlin and Clachaig, Arran, between 1896 and 1904 (*Trans. Nat. Hist. Soc. Glasg.*, 7NS: 185), but in all these cases the evidence was insufficient to show whether the species was the urus *Bos primigenius* or celtic shorthorn *Bos longifrons*. For this reason I omitted these records from my paper on the mammals of Arran, but in view of recent suggestions that the bones found belonged to the urus it is as well to state that I know of no additional evidence that this is so.

WILD GOAT *Capra hircus* L.

I am grateful to Mr. Duncan Colville for drawing my attention to the following paragraph in the *Campbeltown Courier* for 5th May 1934: "The Duke of Montrose has introduced into Arran a pair of Himalayan goats, which he bought from the London Zoo. He intends to try them out on the slopes of the Arran Hills". So far I have been unable to find any additional details in support of this statement.

A statement by Cameron and Parnell that they had examined the internal parasites of a wild goat from Arran (*Proc. Roy. Physical Soc. Ed.*, 22: 141, 1933) was taken by Hugh Boyd Watt to mean that this goat was from the main island (*J. Anim. Ecol.*, 6: 19, 1937). I think this is an unwarranted assumption. Cameron and Parnell were concerned in their paper with parasites, and not with the niceties of whether their material came from Arran or Holy Island. As I stated in the original Arran paper, all the evidence indicates that the last Arran goats had been removed to Holy Island by the time of the first world war, and the statement in the *Campbeltown Courier*, quoted above, would appear to support this view. It is unlikely that anyone would consider introducing another species of goat to an area where wild ones were already in existence.

Order LAGOMORPHA

MOUNTAIN HARE *Lepus timidus* L.

In a recently published book (*The Island of Arran*, by Robert McLellan, 1970) the author suggests that an attempt was made to introduce mountain hares to Arran early in the present century. So far, however, I have been quite unable to find any supporting evidence for this statement, and suspect that it may be a repetition of the original erroneous statement by Barrett-Hamilton and Hinton. I am glad to say, however, that mountain hares have recently been introduced to the Dougrie estate and it remains to be seen what success comes of this experiment.

Order RODENTIA

BANK-VOLE *Clethrionomys glareolus* (Schreber)

Recent trapping results on Arran now show that the bank-vole is very nearly as common as the field-vole.

Order CETACEA

BOTTLE-NOSED WHALE *Hyperoodon ampullatus* (Forster)

Although this whale occurs so regularly in the Clyde, and has been stranded more often than any other species, the only positive stranding I can trace for Arran is still the old Lochranza record, where a young male was stranded in October 1883. This stranding was very well documented, and the skull and some other bones are still in the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh (*Proc. Roy. Physical Soc. Ed.*, 9: 24, 1896).