

## Bird names from childhood in South Uist

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### Bird names from childhood in South Uist

This is my own recollection and may not be 100% accurate. It may have been influenced by the period I attended SMO in Skye but I'm sure that had little influence. The majority of birds are those near the waterline or on the sea. The lack of differentiation between species is because of the lack of diversity, e.g. *Iolairadh* was the only eagle I remember from childhood so there was no need to differentiate it with a description (*Iolairadh bhuidhe*). I was also aware that the gaidhlig equivalent of LBJ [little brown job] was "*Glaisean*" so don't expect anything else.

Brù-dhearg. Robin

Bunna- bhuachailadh. (The first "h" silences the preceding b so is effectively

Bunna'chailadh.

Cailleach-oidhche. Owl usually short eared but generic Calman. Pigeon Cearc-fhraoich.

Grouse Cearc-uisge. Moorhen

Clamhan. Buzzard

Clacharan.

Corra-ghrithreach Heron (Grey)

Crà-ghèadh Shellduck

Cuthag. Cuckoo

Currachgag (not curracag) Plover or lapwing

Dreathan-donn. Wren

Drilleachan. Turnstone

Druid. Starling

Eala. Mute swan or sometimes generic for any swan.

Eala-bhàn. Mute swan but usually in song or poetry.

Eun bàn a' sgradainn seldom used for Gannet Eun dubh a' sgradainn. Guillemot (Razorbill was less common)

Faoileag. Any of the gulls.

Farspag. Great black-backed gull

Faoileag a' sgradainn. Herring gull

Faoileag bheag. Any of the smaller gulls Feadag. Golden plover.

Feannag. Common crow

Fitheach. Raven

Fulmair. Fulmar ( Not so sure about this one, smugaid was a vague recollection, which is Gaidhlig for spit so may have been part of the name) Geadh-Glas. Greylag

Gille-Brìghde or more commonly Brìghdean Oystercatcher

Giùran. Barnacle goose but reminded of the goose barnacles on long floating logs.

Glaisean. LBJs, usually house sparrow.

Gobhlan-gaoithe. Swallow

Gòchcan (not Gocan). Meadow Pipit

Guilbneach. Curlew, ( again a delicacy but not easy to shoot)

Iolairadh. Golden eagle ( no other eagle in area)

Lachadh. Any wild duck but mallard and eider were the most common.

Lachadh - mhòr. Eider ( a delicacy especially good for soup)

Lachadh - riabhach. Mallard

Learg. Used for a black throated diver but Sìolta was more common Lon-dubh. Blackbird

Lon-uisge. Dipper or any dark small bird that dipped its beak Luatharan Sandpiper

Naosg. Snipe

Seabhag. More commonly hawk but sometimes other birds of prey

Sgarbh. Shag. ( staple diet of anyone with a boat)

Sgarbh-mòr. Cormorant ( less popular eating to shag)

Siolta. Black throated diver

Siolta-dhearg Merganser, usually on hill lochs Smeòrach. Thrush Steàrnan. Common tern

Sùlairadh. Gannet Traon. Corncrake Trilleachan. Less common for Oystercatcher, probably from school books.

Tunnag. Any tame domesticated duck

Uiseag. Lark

The spelling may be slightly different in most Gaidhlig dictionaries but my recollection is of additional "adh" at the end of some names I.e. Lachadh rather than lach., remember that the names were by word of mouth, not confirmed by spelling. The other difference is a some of the names like Gòchgan are usually spelt Gocan in most books but again it is my opinion that my spelling is true to my recollection.