

FAIR ISLE TIMES

VOLUME 48 ISSUE 26

PUBLISHED SINCE 1978

13th SEPTEMBER 2024

News from Fair Isle Primary School this week:



Baking with Pat

Pat has kindly volunteered to come into school and do baking with the children this term which they are thoroughly enjoying! They have developed maths skills by measuring ingredients to make cupcakes. They shaped dough in different ways to make delicious focaccia bread. This week they had lots of fun creating funny faces with vegetables and herbs from our school garden and Pat's garden.



ERIC Time

We are focusing on reading for enjoyment this term and have purchased some new books for our school library. We have ERIC (everyone reading in class) time each day after morning break for 10mins. The children find this a relaxing and enjoyable part of their day.



Visit to Bunes

The children visited Bunes to speak to the archaeologists about their work on the isle this week. It was fascinating to think about the Bronze Age and how life compared between now and then. We discussed the ways people may have lived off the land and survived on Fair Isle 3000 years ago! The children loved climbing on top of the giant rock that ended up on Fair Isle following the ice-age!



Visit to See Marie's Studio

We recently watched Ruth Aisling's documentary about Fair Isle and discussed how special our isle is. We have an incredible history and amazing talent and expertise across our community. We decided to visit Marie's knitting studio last week and planned an interview to find out more about her work as a textile designer. This is what we found out!



Ander - Why did you leave France to come to Fair Isle?

I fell in love with the knitting and the idea of island life and being part of a small community. I wanted to be a knitwear designer and thought knitting would be a way of making a living in a remote place. I studied Art and Design in High School and then Textile Design at university (2 years of which were knitting). Then I came to Fair Isle on an Internship with Mati.

Harris - How long did it take you to learn to knit Fair Isle style?

It took a few months but you are always learning without even noticing. It took a good few years to learn Fair Isle knitting and now I am teaching, so I am learning how to teach now.

Harris - How long does it take to knit a jumper?

Simple ones, with a few colours are quicker. The more colours there are, the more difficult it is. It takes about 10 hours to knit a jumper and then another 10 hours to sew it together.

Luca - What do you enjoy about knitting?

I love that it is so creative and it is different every time. I like making something that people will care about and love. And I really like that I get to meet the people who are making the jumpers with me or who are buying them.

Luca - When did you build your knitting studio and why?

I built it in 2021. There was not enough room at my house to teach people to knit as you need two machines set up and lots of wool. It also means I have a dedicated space to go to work and I am not always living where I work.

Ander - What do you enjoy best about your job?

I love putting colours together. I like designing new shapes, using new colours and different patterns - basically anything creative.

Harris - What is the hardest part of your job?

Running the business side of things, like administration, legal stuff, paperwork, logistics, accounting, bookkeeping etc. I wish I had listened better at school!

Luca - What do you like the most about living and working on Fair Isle?

I like that I do something different every day. In one day I might be a fire fighter, work on my croft, do something creative and be social with my guests - it is so varied.

Luca - What do you find challenging about living and working on Fair Isle?

Being away from family and friends is hard. Also finding other people to do things I don't have time to do, like social media, emails etc and finding people to work with you.

After the interview, Marie showed us how a knitting machine works by demonstrating on a small child-size machine. It was incredible to see how much time is saved (compared to when we knit a row by hand at peerie makkers). Marie has an impressive range of yarn colours.



We each picked out our favourite colours for a Fair Isle garment:



The children also enjoyed a cup of hot chocolate and a biscuit while taking in the fabulous view from the studio. We are lucky that Marie has come to Fair Isle to live, work and carry on the knitting tradition. Thank you for our visit Marie - it was super!



Fair Isle Demonstration and Research MPA - Benthic survey update

Last week UHI Shetland and the Moder Dy research vessel were conducting hydro-acoustic and drop-down video surveys of the seabed along the east coast of the island. Survey areas included North Haven, South Haven and da biht o hesswalls. The survey locations were limited to more sheltered bay areas due to challenges with swell which makes it difficult to get clear video footage of the seabed. The hydro-acoustic surveys also had to be suspended multiple times due to several observations of Risso's dolphins, including a mother and a calf, to prevent disturbance. Despite the various challenges, the team managed to cover a lot of ground in the short time they were in.

Surveys were performed in some areas where flapper skate have been seen during the inshore fish surveys, and where GPS tracks of shags show may be important foraging areas, so we hope the results of this survey may tell us a bit more about why certain areas are important for certain species. This drop-down video footage and hydro-acoustic data will now be analysed to create benthic (seabed) habitat maps for these areas, building on existing predicted habitat models determined earlier this year. We hope to be

able to share more of these findings soon. Thank you to everyone who helped the team during their trip and to Ian for the plums!



Clockwise: Skipper conducting acoustic survey, crew ready to deploy drop-down video camera, all crew at stations during drop-down video camera drifts

ISLE NOTICES

Sunday Service – we will meet at Utra rather than the Chapel this week, all very welcome to join at Utra at 11am.

Nurse – Margaret Cooper will be visiting the isle again on Monday, you can call along the surgery after the morning plane or call the surgery on 01595 760242

Norse Saga visit – please see advert below

Fair Isle's Viking Roots



Join us for a community event and activity with place-names, saga-stories and other remains from the Isle's Norse past



**Community Hall: Tuesday the 17th September, 09.15-10.30. Free Entry and Refreshments.
Suitable for all ages.**

Ragna's Islands is an exciting research project built around a new annotated translation of *The Saga of the Earls of Orkney (Orkneyinga Saga)* by Judith Jesch, due for publication in 2025. In the build up to publication we are researching place-names which will concentrate on the saga place-names but will additionally focus on the three islands of Fair Isle, Papay and North Ronaldsay. These three islands are linked in various ways in the saga, which tells us of a formidable woman called Ragna who has given her name to this project.

All place-names contain meaning and were given because they helped to describe a place in a meaningful or recognisable way. Sometimes we can unlock that meaning, sometimes it remains a mystery. Shetland and Orkney place-names have been coined using a number of languages including Pictish, Norse, Norn, and Scots with a good sprinkling of English on top. This often means that their meanings can be lost to us and the names themselves are uttered without any understanding of what they were meant to convey. Place-names can also be rationalised, 'Scottified' for example, so that they make sense again, and this is an interesting phenomenon in itself. The study of place-names relies, as you might expect, on early spellings and pronunciation and we can often trace these by looking at how they were spelled in historical archives. Older spellings provide the building blocks for examining and

unlocking the original meanings in place-names, many of which on Fair Isle date back to the Norse period, the age of the Vikings.

We would also really like to meet up with you to talk about the project and about how you understand and pronounce the place-names around you. Have pronunciations changed? Are there new place-names? Are there any lost names? We will be visiting Fair Isle from the 14th-21st September 2024, with an event planned for the 17th September (see separate poster for details). We'll be looking at place-names, saga-stories and more from the Isle's Norse past, and we'll be around all week!

If you are interested in getting involved or have ideas about how this project might support other funding bids or projects, then do contact us via email: matthew.blake@nottingham.ac.uk

Thanks to Dave at Field for the following:

We've certainly seen our share of rain and wind this week!

In the 24 hours from 0600UTC Tuesday 10th to 0600UTC Wednesday morning Fair Isle we recorded the greatest 24-hour rainfall total in the UK with 57.0mm Lerwick was not far behind with 51.0mm. The heaviest rain fell along a quite narrow band as Baltasound received 24.0mm and Kirkwall only 9.0mm! The centre of the depression that brought Tuesday's rainfall tracked east between Fair Isle and Sumburgh. As it did so its frontal system and band of heavy rain wrapped around the remained relatively stationary across much of Shetland.

As an official rainfall day runs from 0900UTC to 0900UTC the next day the 24-hour rainfall totals 0900UTC 10/09 – 0900UTC 11/09 are:

Fair Isle wettest in UK 47.7 mm

Lerwick 44.4 mm

Baltasound 23.8 mm

Kirkwall 9.0 mm

Looking back through my records Tuesday's 24 hour rainfall total is the wettest September day in a record stretching back to 1974, easily surpassing the previous highest of 35.7mm of 25 September 2007.

The wettest September day in half a century and the third wettest day I have recorded here on Fair Isle. However, it falls well short of the two wetter days: 101.2mm on 10th August 2008 and the wettest 132.6mm on the 9th August 2014 (*Editor – remembered here by most folk as Inness and Karen's wedding monsoon*)



A NW gale was recorded Tuesday afternoon with gusts to 52kn (60mph). At least this was not a surprise as Fair Isle often sees its first gale of autumn around the mid-September period.

Photo left of the Vaadal burn crossing the road near the plantation (to the right of the photo). Thanks to David Parnaby for the photo



Above: Gilsetter flooding into the Finniquoy trap. Below: The Vaadal burn flowing into the trap. Photos J Fisk

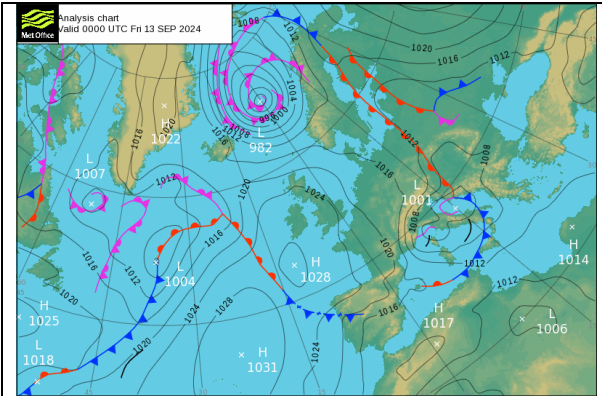


On a completely different note I have attached a photo from last week of some Slime Mould that had appeared overnight on the grass just in front of Field kitchen window. This was the second time it had appeared. The previous morning I had seen it and, thinking it was something the cat had left I went with a dog-poop bag to remove it – it was very ‘squishy’!! The second occasion – exactly the same place I photographed it. I showed the photo to Nick who and he identified it, commonly known as **scrambled egg slime mould**. He said that it had been recorded on Fair Isle once before.

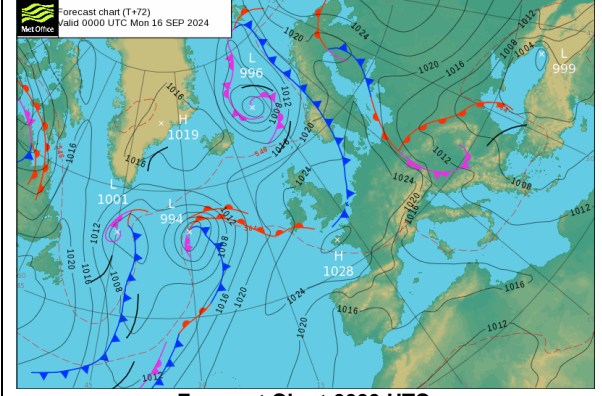


[Slime Moulds / RHS Gardening](#)

FAIR ISLE WEATHER FORECAST



Analysis Chart 0000 UTC Friday 13th September 2024



Forecast Chart 0000 UTC Monday 16th September 2024

GENERAL SITUATION Friday 13th September 2024

As the low in the Norwegian Sea fills and a ridge pushes north to the west of the British Isles the cool showery airflow across Shetland will be replaced by a milder and lighter southerly airflow. This strengthens on Saturday as a depression south of Iceland drives a frontal system northeast. Fronts clear Shetland overnight, leaving a showery south-westerly for Sunday. Winds ease overnight before strengthening during Monday as further Atlantic fronts arrive. By Tuesday current forecasts suggest a Scandinavian anticyclone building over the British Isles bringing mainly settled conditions with moderate south-westerly winds across the north of Scotland.

OUTLOOK FOR THE WEEKEND

Cool on today at around 11° during the day, 8° overnight. The weekend 13° by day 9° overnight.

FRIDAY 13th: Chance of a few early showers then dry with sunny spells and F3 W winds backing SW. Cloudy overnight with rain as S winds increase F6.

Sea State: Moderate or rough with a 2 to 3 metre NW wind swell.

SATURDAY 14th: A cloudy milder day with outbreaks of rain or drizzle. F5-6 S winds veering SW F6-7. Staying cloudy though mainly dry through the evening and night with F5-6 SW winds.

Sea State: Mostly moderate with a 2 metre S wind swell.

SUNDAY 15th: A brighter day with sunny spells and a few showers. F5-6 WSW winds easing F4-5 and backing SW.

Sea State: Mostly rough with a 3 metre SW wind swell, slight or moderate at 1 to 2 metre east of Shetland.

FORECAST FOR NEXT WEEK Temperatures 13° or 14° during

the day, around 10° overnight.

MONDAY 16th: Mainly dry and bright with sunny spells. Moderate WSW winds backing S and strengthening with outbreaks of rain possible by evening and overnight.. **Sea State:** Mostly moderate with a 2 metre W wind swell, slight or moderate at 1 to 2 metre east of Shetland.

TUESDAY 17th: Any overnight rain clears then a cloudy day though staying mostly dry with a moderate or fresh S breeze. **Sea State:** Mostly moderate with a 2 metre S wind swell.

WEDNESDAY 18th – SUNDAY 22nd: Mainly dry with some sunny or clear spells and mostly light S winds. Rain perhaps spreading from the west later in the weekend as winds freshen. **Sea State Wednesday:** Mostly moderate with a 2 metre WSW wind swell. Slight east of Shetland

Dave Wheeler

