

CITATION

TRESHNISH ISLES
SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST
Argyll and Bute

Site code: 1562

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: Cairn na Burgh More/Beg: NM 306449
Fladda: NM 298438
Lunga: NM 278418
Bac Mor/Beag: NM 241385

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 47 & 48
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 374

AREA: 240.67 hectares

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

Geological: Quaternary geology and geomorphology: Quaternary of Scotland

Biological: Coastlands: Maritime cliff

: **Birds : Seabird colony, breeding**

: **Birds : Greenland barnacle goose (*Branta leucopsis*), non-breeding**

: **Mammals : Grey seal (*Halichoerus grypus*)**

DESCRIPTION

The Treshnish Isles Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is an archipelago of remote, uninhabited, volcanic islands and skerries extending for a distance of 11 km. The archipelago is situated between the islands of Coll and Mull in the Inner Hebrides, with the islands at the northern end of the chain lying 3 km west of Mull. The larger Treshnish islands are Cairn na Burgh Beg, Fladda, Lunga, Bac Mòr (Dutchman's Cap) and Bac Beag, along with numerous other smaller islands, many characterised by low cliffs and steep rocky shores.

The islands support a wealth of wildlife and geomorphological interest, most notably coastal habitats, seabird colonies, wintering geese and a breeding seal colony.

The SSSI demonstrates a nationally important high-level shore platform. In places the platform is ice-moulded and till-covered, and at least in part pre-dates the Devensian period. The platform is particularly striking on the island of Bac Mor.

The maritime cliff slope and cliff top habitat support species-rich maritime grassland, coastal heath and peatland plant communities, including species such as thrift *Armeria maritima*, sea campion *Silene uniflora*, common dog-violet *Viola riviniana*, common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, spring squill *Scilla verna*, wild thyme *Thymus polytrichus* and ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*. The plant communities vary from island to island.

The islands also support the largest breeding seabird colony in the Mull, Coll and Tiree area, including a population of storm petrels *Hydrobates pelagicus* representing 1% of the EC, and 3% of the British, breeding populations. Other breeding seabird species include manx shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*, puffin *Fratercula arctica*, razorbill *Alca torda*, guillemot *Uria aalge*, kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*, fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis* and shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*.

The largest breeding colony of grey seals in the Mull, Coll and Tiree area is also a feature of the Treshnish Isles. The low-lying rock platform and beach at the north end of Lunga and on Sgeir a'Chasteil are key breeding sites for the seals.

In addition, the Treshnish provide an important refuge and feeding site for Greenland barnacle geese during their winter migration to the west coast of Scotland.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1949 Act: 1962

Re-notified under the 1981 Act: 4 August 1986

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 17 March 2011

REMARKS

Boundary unmodified

Measured area of site corrected (from 208.0 ha)

Part of the Treshnish Isles SSSI is part of the Treshnish Isles Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is designated for the European habitat and species listed below, and is also designated as Treshnish Isles Special Protection Area (SPA), which is designated for the birds listed below.

Habitats : Reef
Species : Grey Seal *Halichoerus grypus*
Birds : Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*
: Greenland Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*