



Skomer Island

Andy Davies Photography
Workshops

Participant's Portfolio 2015

Kevin Williams

Skomer Island Photography Workshop Portfolio 2015

The season on Skomer was delayed by five days due to strong northerly winds and the first workshop went over on the 5th April when the island opened for the 2015 season. We were greeted with high numbers of Atlantic grey seals hauled out on North Haven beach. The puffins, razorbills and guillemots had all come back on time and were in pristine breeding condition.

The numbers of guillemots and razorbills on the ledges by the steps are going up year on year with more chicks being raised. This location is an excellent spot to capture these two species of auks in flight. The rocky outcrops just up the track from the warden's meeting were frequently occupied, something I haven't seen before that allowed a different point of view to be taken from underneath.

The bluebells were in flower for the workshop on the 13th May with the southern cliff slopes painted pink with the most extensive coverage of thrift ever seen. This was probably a consequence of the winter storms of 2014 drenching these areas in salt spray which favours the growth of salt-loving plants such as thrift and sea campion.

The puffins were bringing in sandeels to feed their chicks for the workshop on the 30th May and the bluebells and sea campion were still in flower making for a memorable day on the island. The unsettled weather during June meant that the windy conditions often provided great opportunities for puffin in-flight shots as they were forced to hang in the wind when attempting to land. Some just took off, hovered, and then returned back to the cliff edge at the Wick.

Many participants managed to capture the Holy Grail image of a puffin in-flight with a beak full of sandeels and the quality of the photography that is produced as witnessed by the galleries on the website always amazes me. It was also a record breaking year for sightings of puffins at the entrance to their burrows in July. The sea mayweed at the Wick comes into flower later on at the end of June and in July making a lovely backdrop for the puffins. It is increasing in its coverage, again as a consequence of the 2014 winter storms dousing this area in salt.

The season was capped off with the seals returning to the island at the end of August to have their pups and 2015 has been another record year for numbers born.



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