



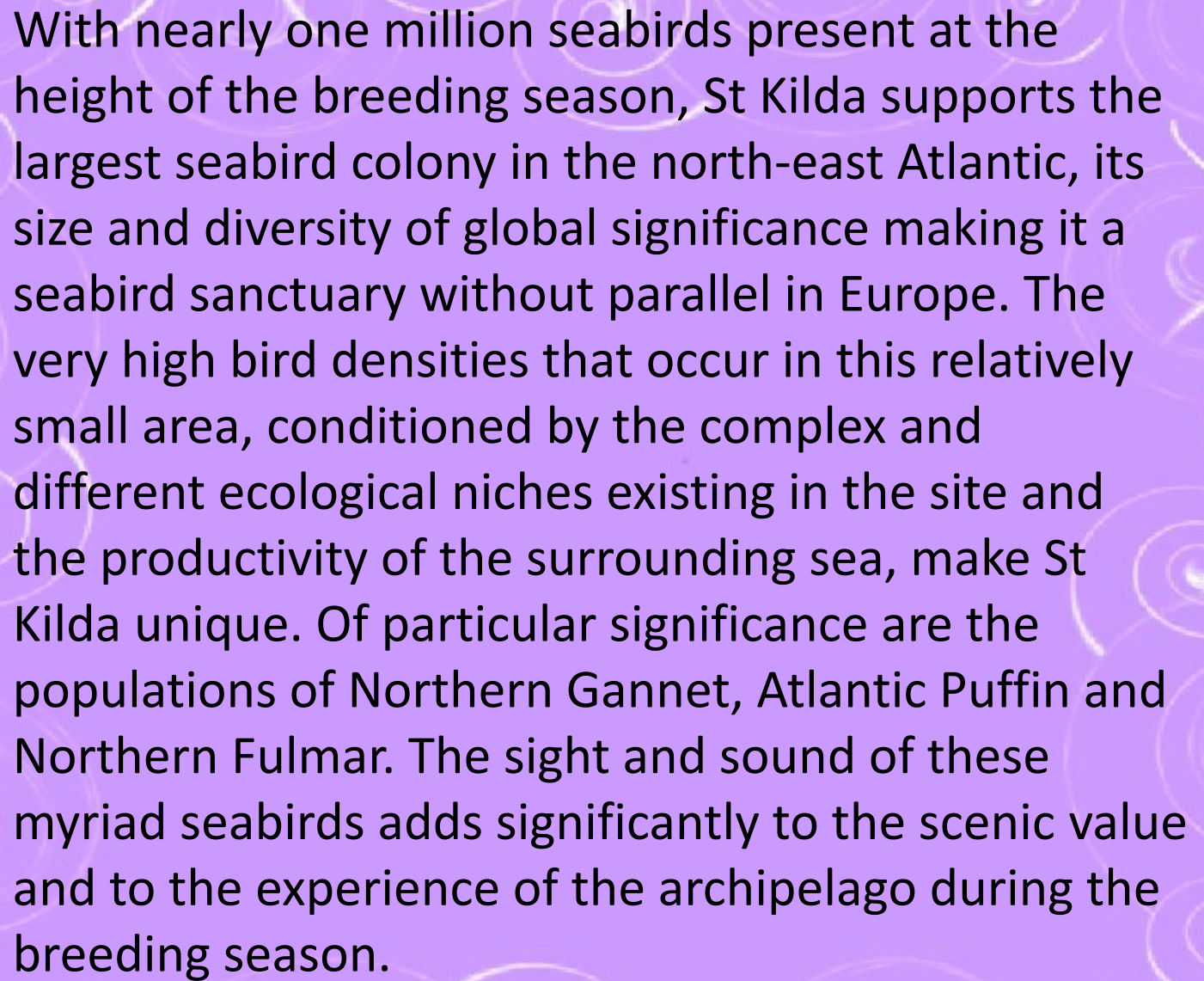
The archipelago of St Kilda, the remotest part of the British Isles, lies 41 miles (66 kilometres) west of Benbecula in Scotland's Outer Hebrides.

Its islands with their exceptional cliffs and sea stacs form the most important seabird breeding station in north-west Europe.

Today, three organisations, The National Trust for Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage and the MoD, work in partnership to further a continuing programme of conservation and research on the islands to ensure the care and protection of this World Heritage Site.








With nearly one million seabirds present at the height of the breeding season, St Kilda supports the largest seabird colony in the north-east Atlantic, its size and diversity of global significance making it a seabird sanctuary without parallel in Europe. The very high bird densities that occur in this relatively small area, conditioned by the complex and different ecological niches existing in the site and the productivity of the surrounding sea, make St Kilda unique. Of particular significance are the populations of Northern Gannet, Atlantic Puffin and Northern Fulmar. The sight and sound of these myriad seabirds adds significantly to the scenic value and to the experience of the archipelago during the breeding season.





St Kilda was inscribed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 1986 in recognition of its Natural Heritage; for its exceptional natural beauty and for the significant natural habitats that it supports.

In July 2004 this was extended to include the surrounding marine environment.

In July 2005 further recognition for the islands cultural heritage was awarded making it one of only a few places in the world with Dual World Heritage Status for both its natural and cultural significance.

In order to achieve this additional World Heritage Status, the Scottish Executive presented a revised nomination to UNESCO in February 2003 seeking further inscription under the Natural Heritage and Cultural Landscapes categories in recognition of the outstanding heritage in the waters surrounding the islands and the unique example of Scottish history and culture that the islands represent.

St Kilda is a breeding ground for many important seabird species. One of the world's largest colonies of northern gannets, totalling 30,000 pairs, amount to 24 percent of the global population.



Северный
Ганнет

There are 49,000 breeding pairs of Leach's petrels, up to 90 percent of the European population; 136,000 pairs of Atlantic puffins, about 30 percent of the UK total breeding population, and 67,000 northern fulmar pairs, about 13 percent of the UK total.



Буревестник лича



Атлантический пухфин



Северный фульмар

Dùn is home to the largest colony of fulmars in Britain. Prior to 1828, St Kilda was their only UK breeding ground, but they have since spread and established colonies elsewhere, such as Fowlsheugh.




Глупыш

Бескрылая
гагарка

The last great auk
(*Pinguinus impennis*)
seen in Britain was
killed on Stac an
Armin in July 1840.

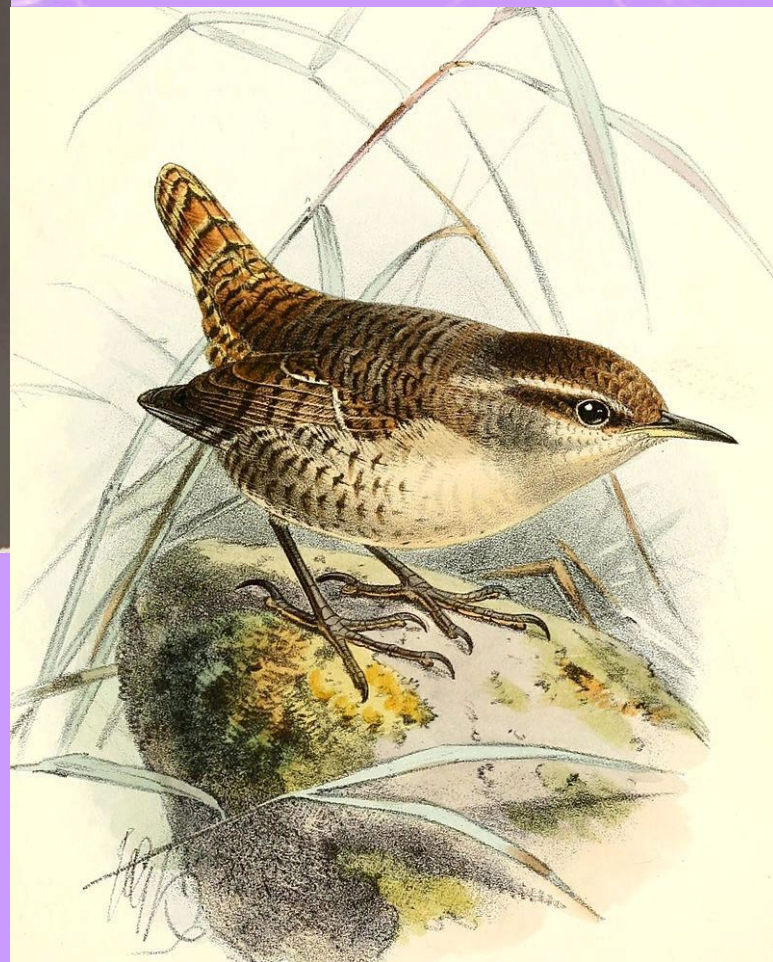




Two wild animal taxa are unique to St Kilda: the St Kilda wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes hirtensis*), which is a subspecies of the Eurasian wren, and a subspecies of wood mouse known as the St Kilda field mouse (*Apodemus sylvaticus hirtensis*). A third taxon endemic to St Kilda, a subspecies of house mouse known as the St Kilda house mouse (*Mus musculus muralis*), vanished completely after the departure of human inhabitants, as it was strictly associated with settlements and buildings. It had a number of traits in common with a sub-species (*Mus musculus mykinessiensis*) found on Mykines island in the Faroe Islands. The grey seal (*Halichoerus grypus*) now breeds on Hirta but did not do so before the 1930 evacuation.



Евразийский
РЕН



Сент-Килда-
РЕН



Лесная
мышь



Серый
тюлень

The St Kilda dandelion (*Taraxacum pankhurstianum*) is an endemic species of dandelion, identified in 2012





On the inaccessible island of Soay are sheep of a unique type, which lived as feral animals and belonged to the owner of the islands, not to the islanders. These Soay sheep are believed to be remnants of the earliest sheep kept in Europe in the Neolithic Era.







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