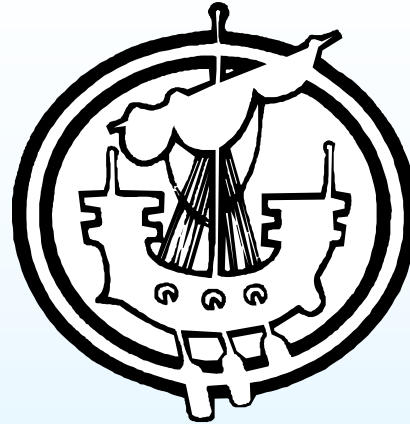


Further Advice

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 it is illegal to capture, injure or destroy any wild bird or interfere with its nest or eggs. Penalties can be severe however the law provides a licensing system which allows property owners to take action against gulls nesting on buildings. **This can only be used for the purpose of preserving public health, public safety and preventing the spread of disease** and is specifically for the control of herring, black-backed and lesser black backed gulls. More information is available on Scottish Natural Heritage's website www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/species-licensing/bird-licensing/general/



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Survivor's Guide to Living With Urban Gulls



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GULLS

The two types of gulls nesting in the Western Isles are the Herring Gull and the Lesser Black Backed Gull. The larger Herring Gull is most common in the area.

Herring Gull—Large birds standing about 55cm in height. They have silver, grey wings, black wing tips and pink legs.



Lesser Black Backed Gull—slightly smaller than the Herring Gull and have dark grey/black back and wings, and yellow legs.



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FEEDING HABITS

The main sources of food for the gulls in the Western Isles are around the sea inlets and surrounding crofting land. However, gulls are opportunists and will scavenge in the town finding meals in waste bins and taking food when it is dropped on the ground.

A reduction in food the gulls scavenge on around the town will discourage the birds from foraging in the area.

WHY ARE GULLS A NUISANCE?

- Swooping and dive bombing
- Food Stealing
- Noise
- Mess

Swooping and dive bombing are often associated with the hatching or presence of a chick in the nest. The swooping is the adults natural way of defending their young.

Over time gulls have developed to expect food around humans. If they are not readily offered food they often try to intimidate people into giving them something to eat, often hovering in front of people in an attempt to steal their food.

Gulls do not worry about who they target when it comes to stealing food and it can be quite frightening for the victim.

Mess on cars is also common around town, as is the noise from them squawking and squabbling.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

- *DISPOSE OF YOUR LITTER PROPERLY*
- *PLEASE DO NOT FEED THE GULLS*
- *DO NOT THROW ANY FOOD WASTE ON THE GROUND AS THIS ENCOURAGES GULLS TO BE AROUND YOUR PROPERTY*

ONLY AN OWNER OR OCCUPIER OF A BUILDING CAN TAKE ACTION AGAINST SEAGULLS NESTING ON BUILDINGS, BUT THEY CAN GIVE SOMEONE ELSE PERMISSION TO ACT ON THEIR BEHALF.



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