

Thoughts After Three Days Spent Birding On Broughton Island

© Alan Stuart
September 2012

Alongside Esmeralda Cove
The crystal waters where I dove,
I'm enjoying the quiet spell.
And it's time to pen my thoughts on
What it's like to be on Broughton,
And about its birdlife as well.

There are gentle hills and steep ones,
Shallow ocean pools and deep ones,
And with rocks and reefs all around.
The plant life's truly astounding,
Grasses, brackens, ferns abounding,
All clinging closely to the ground.

Land birds feature less than twenty
'Though in numbers some are plenty,
And raptors hunt everywhere.
On sandy beaches and on rocks,
Are oystercatchers, some in flocks,
Their constant "pipping" fills the air.

Cormorants are fishing in the sea,
Silver gulls squawk in front of me
While in the cove a stingray swims.
Brown quails are bursting from the ground
Or uttering their high-pitch'd sound,
And sometimes allowing a glimpse.





Tawny grassbirds are displaying
In their territory, saying
To all their rivals, Keep Away.
There are thirty pairs, perhaps more
From the hilltops down towards shore
They just keep going all the day.

There are some who find it galling,
So many shearwaters calling;
Eerie wails puncturing the night,
But their ghostly sounds excite me,
Their babyish cries delight me,
It lasts until dawn's breaking light.

Golden-headed cisticolas,
They really are vociferous;
Males calling loudly from their perch.
They are a very common bird,
Their song is nearly always heard;
There is no need to have to search.

Lewin's Rails call at dusk and dawn
What better way to greet the morn?
'Though it would be nice to see one!
No other birds will I mention
As I bring to your attention
That birding on Broughton is fun!

But the feature I enjoy best
Is all the mutton-birds at nest
In their burrows throughout the Park.
Although some birds call in daylight,
Many more arrive at twilight;
Most of the action's after dark.

This visit has been made in Spring
When birds are more inclined to sing
From every hilltop and grove.
But regardless of the season,
I shall always find a reason
To once more sit beside this cove.

