

Price: £9.99

ISBN: ISBN 978 | 841 | 4 619 5

Format: Paperback, 204 pages,

148×210mm,

including colour plate section

& over 50 black and white sketches

Imprint: Halsgrove

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Mary E. Gillham

Eew of us have not dreampt of living on an island, away from it all, and sovereign over our own land. Yet few of us ever realise our dream, even for a few days, despite the wealth of opportunities a mere boat trip away from our shore. This Island Life takes the reader on a journey to a variety of Britain's islands, some well-known, others less frequented, and explores through words and pictures the flora and fauna, and human occupation found there. From precipitous crags to coastal sand bars, from acid bogs to limestone pavements and from clamorous sea-bird colonies to bleak heather moors, each island has its own unique quality. On some the islanders scratch a living from tiny walled fields in a land of more rocks than grass, while on another an Italian garden has been conjured from the rockscape, by courtesy of the Gulf Stream.

Each of these unique eco-systems, each with their own special wildlife, provide scientists with a barometer of change and, as a professional ecologist, the author studies the fragile balance of nature, now under threat from global warming.

Dr Mary E. Gillham was born in 1921. The pressing of flowers and writing of nature diaries loomed large in her formative years, and she worked through the war years in the Women's Land Army. After training as a professional botanist specialising in island ecology, she became a lecturer, principally in the University of Wales at Cardiff, but for shorter periods in Universities at Exeter, Melbourne, Palmerston North (New Zealand) and Kano (Nigeria).

Field work was an important part of her lecturing years and she conducted parties (of undergraduates and interested adults) on eco tours at home and abroad. Her 'guided walks' ranged from regenerating coal tips to the Seychelles – her island research studies from the sub-Antarctic to the Tropics. In retirement she lives on the lower slopes of amountain near Cardiff.



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Feature Chapters:

- I. Skokholm, Pembrokeshire An Island Revisited
- 2. Cape Clear, Co. Cork **An Island Bird Observatory**
- 3. The Skelligs, Co. Kerry Island mountains
- 4. Garinish Island, Co. Cork An Island Garden
- 5. The Aran Islands, Co. Clare A Sea-girt Limestone Reef
- 6. Inishbofin and Achill Island, Connemara Moorland, Wild and Tamed
- 7. Manx The Isle of Man A Little Bit of Everything
- 8. Walney Island, Cumbria Sand Spit, Dune and Saltmarsh



O'Driscoll's Castle, used by gulls and Hooded Crows



Bloody Cranesbill, most colourful of

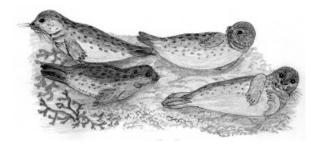




Skokholm Neck, view to Skomer and Middleholm



grike colonisers



Harbour Seals

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centre of the bland. One of my enlightning exclosures exceed in the least and been studed on a considerable stead plat of health. The bashow is did remained intent while these inhibited by gooding entitle become excellent remained intent while those inhibited by gooding entitle become excellented by brackers. Now the whole community had been guested to entitled. With off the why the Soury sheep had been nearwork, and if so, the controllers while the why the Soury sheep had been nearwork, and if so,

when? Certifiely there was no sign of the segmentation of young plotts, or four searchy would look by May if there were any left to spreat. On Storner and few words have, I matted the searce platemateries. A large collassion of the words have, I matted and the searce of a bodity stend of bodites but have been remarked contribute. Storner plants of fewers on the red campion and greenal is you would as the blanched. A few losses collabolation, that which would not be proposed to the contribute of the plants of the collabolation.

was not not at prime except on inaccossible cliff faces, where flow e danger of being nilibbel off. See mayweed and rock spurrey and a little colour and large areas simulating bure sell supported to be opposed that are most maintant to the pressures which included the sea storlobill and buck's horn plantain

After hands I located for one of the fow parts of the island effecting a structured or contributed statisfied for small woodland brink. This two the new companes, I fillipland bett they not the appearance of the proposal to the Neck. Robbits could still enter the bload end of the model wise netting hands, it is two next understoot there and not many were brapping. In the absence of larger barbivones which are not always to got larger barbivones which are not always to got larger barbivones which are not always to got true, toget got and bullanges of the including a low woodly species. Fellow that you got the form the contribution of the nation cover not be mandy, a breached for the nation cover not be mandy, a breached for the next.

the frame cover on the matter, as reclaim that our to one.

As conditions improved for trapping and ringing passerines, however, blocks were no longer trapped, this by request of the island's owner, themlock relater direptorch that licensonial apace alongside the linious. This species is polisonous to most grazors, but little had ventured outside the justial protection of the netling. The sallow becoming specimens, but a synamor was straight. The nounded red bud scales not yet pushed off resembled berries from a distance.

A whitefrom bud islem up temperary residence and ignored my approach, the safter scrattly little song continuing unabated, it occurred to me first this was become

the direct stable refetchment habitat, quart from the entitley growth aircord the buildings (Fad. 18. Bitterbeat and building symmetry aircord aircord the buildings (Fad. 18. Bitterbeat and building symmetry aircord the breast presents or a reconstruct) conclusive to useful vogotation in which to skall. Arother which conversated across the stretch of the Home Mendous between those two long sunctuaries was a wildow warder, which consecutions approach consider any window in the early marriage, in the trip this forecast the disease consecution approach consider any window in the early marriage, in the trip this forecast the disease consecution appears and contract of opposite provided across they have windowling agond contract of opposits, were being bevieved across of the windowling agond contract.

ser ground, where old Bovista petition, self-centaining a good content oponies, never being bovised anough by the wind. Vegetation books for stream desirable for every bargoning the teach Vegetation books for stream of the content of the stream of the stream of the stream as rands as bother. Whate freques to ex-not and lesser spearword pushed rough, the soft of boround pondivered leaves, while water starword men worse among the green fidelity-toke of rands by pengyword bovors.



