KORTE BIJDRAGEN

SUCCESSFUL REHABILITATION OF OILED GUILLEMOTS *URIA AALGE*

SUCCESVOLLE UITZETTINGEN VAN ZEEKOETEN NA REHABILITATIE

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Op Isle of May, voor de Schotse oostkust, wordt al jaren uitgebreid onderzoek verricht naar de daar broedende Zeekoeten. Sinds 1988 werd daarbij in de kolonie intensief gezocht naar geringde vogels om te zien hoeveel kuikens naar hun geboortegrond waren teruggekeerd, of hoeveel vogels van elders in de kolonie terechtkwamen. Bij dit onderzoek werd getracht met behulp van een telescoop de ringnummers af te lezen. Behalve dat hierbij 1000 'eigen vogels' werden opgespoord, werden zo ook 76 exemplaren afkomstig van andere kolonies aangetroffen. Hieronder bevonden zich vier exemplaren die niet op de Britse Eilanden geringd waren. Drie van deze dieren bleken uitgezette, schoongemaakte olieslachtoffers te zijn, twee afkomstig van Huisduinen in Nederland en een derde van Helgoland. Het vierde exemplaar droeg eveneens een aluminium ring van niet-Britse oorsprong en ofschoon hierbij het ringnummer niet kon worden afgelezen, wordt verondersteld dat het hierbij eveneens om een uitgezet olieslachtoffer ging. Uit ringonderzoek is gebleken dat de Zeekoeten die worden gevonden op de stranden van de oostelijke Noordzee vooral afkomstig zijn van kolonies in Schotland en Engeland. Van de ongeveer 1 miljoen Zeekoeten die broeden op de Schotse en Engelse oostkust (inclusief de Orkney en Shetland Eilanden) broedt ongeveer 2% op Isle of May. Op grond hiervan zou mogen worden aangenomen dat op alle kolonies samen misschien wel 100 uitgezette Zeekoeten leven en zelfs broeden. Helaas bestaat er onvoldoende inzicht in de totaal aantallen uitgezette olieslachtoffers (in Nederland meer dan 1600 gedurende de hier beschreven onderzoeksperiode), zodat de overleving van deze dieren nog steeds niet goed ingeschat kan worden.

There can be little doubt that a high proportion of oiled, cleaned and released Guillemots *Uria aalge* die soon after being returned to the sea (Sharp 1996). A few ringed individuals are reported dead by the general public a month or two after release but the question remains as to whether any rehabilitated birds rejoin the wild population. Only by extremely thorough searching of Guillemot colonies can we hope to find proof that any individuals survive to breed. Our population study of Guillemots at the colony of 15-25 000 birds on the Isle of May (Firth of Forth, east Scotland; 56°11'N, 2°33'W) has provided an opportunity for such a search.

Since 1988 we have systematically and thoroughly searched through the colony for Guillemots which we might have ringed as chicks, or which might

have been ringed elsewhere, and attempted to read ring numbers using the best available optics (Halley & Harris 1993, Harris *et al.* 1992). As well as over 1000 of our own chicks, we found 72 individuals ringed at other British colonies and four individuals ringed outside Britain. These latter birds were easily identifiable by their different ring types; two of the four bred and two were non-breeders when found, but they could well have moved later into the crowded main breeding areas where ringed birds are much harder to find. Three of these four had been oiled, cleaned and released; the origin of the other is unknown, but as it was starting to moult the feathers of the chin at the most unusual time of late April, it too could well have been recently released from care. The four non-British birds found were:

(1) Arnhem 6068104
+ Released 21 April 1990 Dijk Huisduinen, after being rehabilitated
+ Found 7 May 1990 Non-breeder
- 1991 Present as Non-breeder in same area on 17 May

(2) Arnhem 6070878
+ Released 27 January 1991 Dijk Huisduinen, Noord-Holland (52°58'N, 4°44'E), after being rehabilitated
+ Found 27 April 1991 Present at the edge of a breeding colony until 16 July. Seen to be mated but no sign of breeding
+ 1992 Present from at least 9 April, laid an egg, hatched a chick (did not fledge)
+ 1993 Reared a chick
+ 1994 Reared a chick

(3) Helgoland 3098916
+ Released 18 May 1989 Westerland, Sylt, Germany (54°54'N, 8°18'E,) after being oiled, cleaned and released
+ Found 15 June 1990 Non-breeder visiting several ledges throughout the season
+ 1991 Present as non-breeder in same area 13 May until 7 July
+ 1992 Seen to enter a dense group of breeding birds 23 May 1992; probably bred as present until the end of the season
+ 1993 Present in same group 28 April 1993 and until the end of the season; presumed to have bred

(4) Unknown scheme and ring number; aluminium ring of a type not used in the UK
+ Found 30 April 1993 Non-breeder, going into feather moult around chin; body feathers worn. This bird could have been recently cleaned and released.

Ringing recoveries indicate that many Isle of May Guillemots winter in the south-eastern North Sea and that substantial numbers get oiled (Harris *et al.* 1997). Therefore these 'returns' of rehabilitated birds to the Isle of May are not unexpected, although they are very interesting and show that some rehabilitated birds do survive to breed. In an analysis of ringing returns resulting from Guillemots ringed in Scotland, Baillie *et al.* (1994) found that

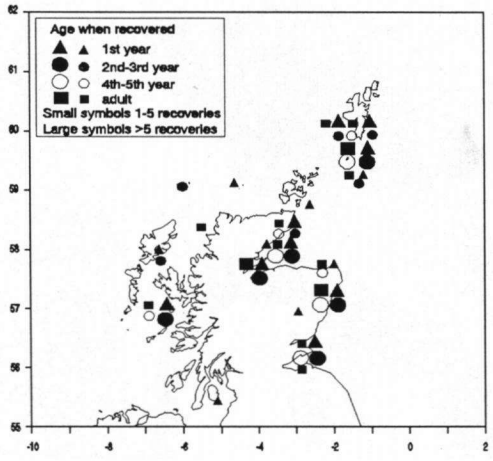


Figure 1. Scottish ringing locations of Guillemots recovered in the SE North Sea, 1970-92. These totals are not corrected for numbers ringed at each colony. Redrawn from Baillie et al. *(1994).*

Figuur 1. Kolonies waarvan in de oostelijke Noordzee gevonden Zeekoeten afkomstig bleken te zijn, 1970-92. Niet gecorrigeerd voor het totaal aantal geringde exemplaren op elke kolonie.

birds recovered on the coasts of the North Sea between Denmark and Belgium came from colonies dispersed throughout Scotland (figure 1) and, we can assume, also eastern England. Scotland and north-eastern England have about 1 million Guillemots, with about 80% of these being in Shetland, Orkney and north-eastern England. Only 2% of these Guillemots occur on the Isle of May (Lloyd *et al.* 1991) so it is safe to assume that more rehabilitated birds, perhaps even as many as a hundred, are alive elsewhere. Unfortunately, it has proved difficult to obtain information on the total numbers of rehabilitated birds which were ringed and released, but nearly 1700 such individuals were released in the Netherlands during the period covered by our records (Camphuysen *et al.* 1997), so we cannot assess further the survival rates of such birds.

Baillie S.R., Dudley C. & Harris M.P. 1994. Atlas of recoveries of Guillemots *Uria aalge* ringed in Scotland. Report to Scottish Natural Heritage.

Camphuysen C.J., Duiven P., Harris M.P. & Leopold M.F. 1997. Terugmeldingen van in Nederland geringde Zeekoeten *Uria aalge*: de overleving van gerehabiliteerde olieslachtoffers. Sula 11: 157-174.

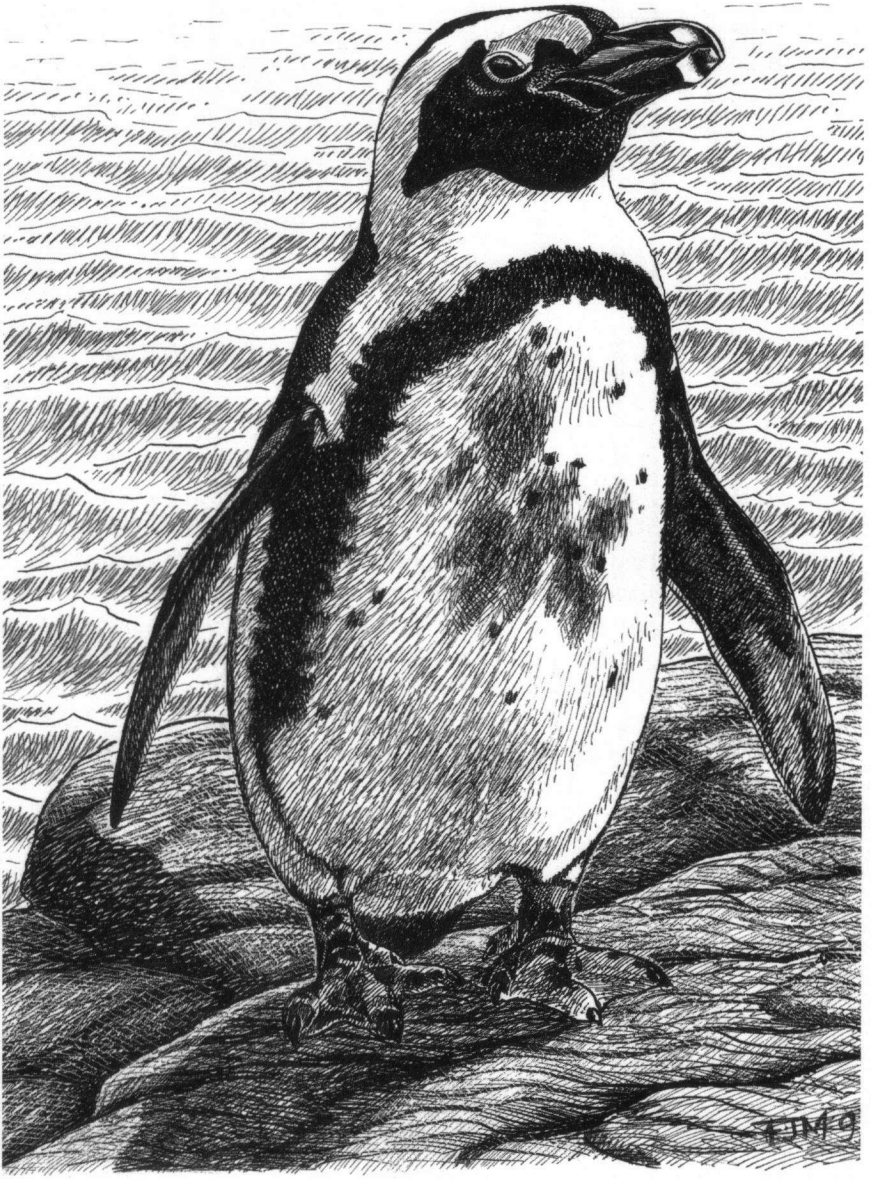
Halley D.J. & Harris M.P. 1993. Intercolony movement and behaviour of immature Guillemots *Uria aalge*. Ibis 135: 264-270.

Harris M.P., Baillie S.R. & Dudley C. 1997. Ringing recoveries and colony attendance of Isle of May Guillemots. Seabird 19: 31-39.

Harris M.P., Halley D.J. & Wanless S. 1992. The post-fledgling survival of young Guillemots *Uria aalge* in relation to hatching date and growth. Ibis 134: 335-339.

Lloyd C.S., Tasker M.L. & Partridge K. 1991. The status of seabirds in Britain and Ireland. T. & A.D. Poyser, London.

Sharp B.E. 1996. Post-release survival of oiled, cleaned seabirds in North America. Ibis 138: 222-228. □



Zwartvoetpinguïn *Spheniscus demersus* / *African Penguin* (F.J. Maas)