

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Briathrachas Fhuaimean (3)

A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, designed for Gaelic learners who already have some knowledge of the language. A short vocabulary and comments on points of grammar and figures of speech are included with the text. If you have comments, Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 1,101. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 797 corresponds to Litir 1,101.

An t-seachdain sa chaidh thug mi am facal *sgùcan* dhuibh. Fuaim na circe-fraoich. 'S e *gog* no *gogadaich* a chanas sinn ri gairm a' choilich-fhraoich. A bheil sibh eòlach air an fhacal *cànran*? Tha e a' ciallachadh a bhith a' dèanamh gearan no pròndal – *grumbling, muttering*. Sin am fuaim a bhios geòidh a' dèanamh. Cànran nan gèadh.

Ann am Beurla, bidh tunnagan ag ràdh, '*quack, quack*'. Ann an Gàidhlig, bidh iad ag ràdh *fà-ug, fà-ug. Fà-ug, fà-ug*. Bidh cearcan ag ràdh *gog gog* ann an Gàidhlig seach *cluck cluck*. Gog gog. Agus bidh coileach a' gairm *Gog-a-Ghuidh-Ghaoith*, an àite *Cock-a-doodle-do*. Gog-a-Ghuidh-Ghaoith.

'S e *gàg gàg* a bhios aig feannagan is starragan. *Gàg gàg*. Bidh iad ri *gràcan*. Bidh fithich ag ràdh *gròg gròg*. *Gròg gròg*. Ann am Beurla, canaidh a' chuthag *cuckoo, cuckoo*. Ach, ann an Gàidhlig, bidh i ag ràdh *gug-gùg, gug-gùg*. Agus bidh an iolaire-bhuidhe ag ràdh *glì-ug, glì-ug*. Chan ann tric a chluinneas sinn iolaire-bhuidhe, ge-tà.

An robh sibh riamh ann an uamh far am bi ur guth iongantach mòr, fad-às is domhainn? Le beagan de mhac-talla ann. Tha e mar gu bheil am fuaim a' tighinn bho shaoghal eile. 'S e sin *mòthar* ann an Gàidhlig. *A deep unearthly sound*. Mòthar.

Nan cluinneadh sibh clach a' tuiteam a dh'uisge, dè am fuaim a bhiodh ann? 'S e sin *plub*. *Plub*. Nam biodh sreath chlachan a' tuiteam a dh'uisge, tè an dèidh a chèile gu sgiobalta, 's e *plubraich* a bhiodh ann. *Plubraich*.

Dè mu dheidhinn fuaimean nach eil cho cumanta? Ciamar a chanas sinn *sizzle* ann an Gàidhlig? Tha *drùiseadh* ann. *Drùiseadh*. Tha *dearrasan* ann cuideachd. No *dearrasanaich*. Tha sin a' gabhail a-steach *crackling*, agus fuaim brataich air latha gaothach. Agus tha *ràstal* ann. Airson *ràstal*, tha faclair Dwelly ag ràdh *sizzling sound, as of flesh being fried*. Facal math airson barbaiciù, 's dòcha!

Agus *hiss*? Ciamar a chanas sinn *hiss* ann an Gàidhlig? Uill, bidh sinn a' cleachdadh an fhacail *fead* airson sin uaireannan. **Fead** – *a whistle or hiss*. *Fead an aonaich* – 's e sin am fuaim a nì a' ghaoth ann am fraoch air beinn, no aonach. **Fead an aonaich**.

Tha *siosarnaich* ann cuideachd. *Hissing*. Siosarnaich. Ma bhios nathair a' siosarnaich, nì i *fais*. *Fais!* – *hiss!* Agus *sèidrich*. *Hissing, snorting*. Sèidrich. Sin cuideachd am fuaim a bhios mucan-mara agus leumadairean a' dèanamh nuair a leigeas iad èadhar a-mach. Sèidrich. Tha e eadar-dhealaichte bho *sitrich* no *sitir*. 'S e

sin am fuaim aig each. Rinn an t-each sitir *'the horse neighed'*. Bha na h-eich a' sitrich *'the horses were neighing'*.

Bu mhath leam crìoch a chur air mo chunntas de bhriathrachas nam fuaimean le seo – *lapan no slapan*. 'S e sin am fuaim a bhios duine a' dèanamh ma bhios na bòtannan aige làn uisge, agus e a' coiseachd annta. Lapan. Mar sin leibh.

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Faclan na Litreach: gràcan: *cawing of a crow*; fithich: *ravens*; cuthag: *cuckoo*; mac-talla: *echo*; plub: *the sound of a stone falling into water*; bòtannan: *[welly] boots*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Fuaim na circe-fraoich: *the sound of the female red grouse*; gairm a' choilich-fhraoich: *the call of the male red grouse*; am fuaim a bhios geòidh a' dèanamh: *the noise that geese make*; cànrann nan gèadh: *the call of the geese*; 's e gàg gàg a bhios aig feannagan is starragan: *hoodie crows and common crows say gàg gàg*; chan ann tric a chluinneas sinn iolair-bhuidhe, ge-tà: *it's not often we hear a golden eagle, however*; an robh sibh riamh ann an uamh?: *were you ever in a cave?*; far am bi ur guth iongantach mòr, fad-às is domhainn: *where your voice is amazingly large, distant and deep*; mar gu bheil am fuaim a' tighinn bho shaoghal eile: *as if the sound were coming from another world*; nan cluinneadh sibh clach a' tuiteam a dh'uisge: *if you heard a stone falling into water*; nam biodh sreath chlachan a' tuiteam a dh'uisge: *if a series of stones were falling into water*; fuaim brataich air latha gaohach: *the sound of a flag on a windy day*; am fuaim a nì a' ghaoth ann am fraoch air beinn: *the sound that wind makes in heather on a mountain*; ma bhios nathair a' siosarnaich: *if a snake hisses*; am fuaim a bhios mucan-mara agus leumadairean a' dèanamh nuair a leigeas iad èadhar a-mach: *the sound that whales and dolphins make when they exhale*; bu mhath leam crìoch a chur air mo chunntas: *I'd like to finish my account*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: If *fead* means 'whistle' or 'hiss', have you ever wondered why the Gaelic children's game, which is an equivalent to hide-and-peek, is generally called *falach-fead*? Whereas in English, the seeker generally counts to an agreed number before he or she starts seeking, and then shouts out that they are 'coming, ready or not', the Gaelic version traditionally allowed the hiders to find their hiding places, at which point one of them would give a loud whistle (a sound whose source is not easy to locate). An alternative name for the game is *falach-gìog*, which really means the same as the English.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: **Fead an aonaich:** *the hissing sound of the wind in heather on a mountainside*.

Tha "Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh" air a maoinachadh le MG ALBA