

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

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Eòin na Droch Shìde

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 fios@learngaelic.scot. This is Litir 1,188. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 884 corresponds to Litir 1,188.

Ciamar a tha fios agaibh **gu bheil uisge air an rathad** – gum bi i fliuch an ceann ùine ghoirid? Tha fhios a’ m ... bidh sibh a’ coimhead air ro-shealladh air an aimsir air a’ fòn-làimhe no coimpiutair agaibh! Ach ciamar a bhiodh ar sinnsearan a’ dèanamh an aon rud? Tha cuimhne agam air bràthair mo sheanmhar air a’ Chomraich – fear a bha na iasgair. Bhuineadh e don àite agus bha e làn Gàidhlig. Bhiodh esan a’ coimhead air na sgòthan agus air an àirde às an robh a’ ghaoth a’ tighinn. Mar a bu trice, bha an ro-shealladh aigesan ceart.

Gu tric, ge-tà, a rèir beul-aithris, bhiodh na seann Ghàidheil a’ coimhead air na h-eòin. Mar eisimpleir, ann an sgìre Gheàrrloch bhite ag ràdh *Nuair a chì thu breac an t-sìl, chì thu ’n t-uisg*. ’S e *Breac an t-Sìl* eun beag brèagha, dubh-is-geal – le earball fada – air a bheil *ped wagtail* ann am Beurla. Saoil am bi e a’ tighinn nas dlùithe ri taighean nuair a tha uisge air an rathad?

Tha am *Breacan-baintighearna* càirdeach do bhreac an t-sìl. Tha e a’ giùlan an ainm *grey wagtail* ann am Beurla. Nam biodh e ri fhaicinn faisg air doras an taighe no am measg nan cearc, bhiodh daoine dhen bheachd gun leanadh droch shìde. Bhiodh a’ *Bhrù-gheal* no *wheatear* cuideachd ag innse do dhaoine gun robh droch shìde anns an amharc. Nam biodh cuideigin a’ faicinn an eòin seo na sheasamh air clach, mar chiad shealladh dheth san latha, cha bhiodh stoirm fad-às.

Bha beachd na bu mhiosa air eun beag eile – a tha car coltach ris a’ Bhrù-gheal – ris an canar an *Clacharan* no *stonechat*. Ged as e deagh rud a bhiodh ann a leithid fhaicinn air sgèith, ’s ann olc a bhitheadh e nam biodh an t-eun na sheasamh air clach. Tha abairt ann: *Chunnaic mi clacharan air clach lom, ’s dh’aithnich mi nach d’ rachadh a’ bhliadhna leam*. Bhiodh barrachd na droch shìde a’ feitheamh ribh!

Chlàir an sgoilear Cuimreach, Eideard Lhuyd (1660-1709), cleachdaidhean is beul-aithris nan Gàidheal Albannach anns an t-seachdamh linn deug. Am measg sin, bha gum biodh beachd aca air an aimsir le bhith a’ dèanamh coimeas, anns a’ mhadainn, eadar dà eun mhòr dhubh. Sin am fitheach agus an fheannag. Nam biodh am fitheach a’ gairm ron fheannaig sa mhadainn, bhiodh deagh latha ann. Nam biodh an fheannag a’ gairm an toiseach, bhiodh droch shìde ann.

Bha ar sinnsearan cuideachd dhen bheachd gun innseadh a’ *Chomhachag* nuair a bhiodh uisge mòr a’ tighinn. Chanadh iad *Tha a’ chomhachag ri bròn, thig tuiltean oirnn*. Agus tha daoine dhen bheachd, ma chluinneas iad an *Lon-dubh* a’ seinn gu h-àrd agus gu snasail, nach fhada gum bi an t-uisge ann.

An coimeas ri sin, bidh seinn a' *Bhrù-dheirg* ag innse dhuinn co-dhiù 's e deagh aimsir no droch aimsir a tha romhainn. Nuair a bhios brù-dearg na shuidhe ann am preas no callaid, agus e a' gairm le guth beag, bidh droch shìde ann. Ach air feasgar samhraidh, eadhon ged a bhios e sgòthach, bagairteach, bidh seinn sunndach an eòin ag innse dhuinn gum bi deagh latha ann air an làrna-mhàireach.

Agus dè mu dheidhinn fear de na h-eòin as fheàrr leam – an *Uiseag*? Ma sheinneas *uiseag* air latha fliuch, **chan fhada gum bi i na turadh.**

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Faclan na Litreach: sinnsearan: *ancestors*; càirdeach: *related*; olc: *bad*; Cuimreach: *Welsh*; brù-dearg: *robin*; preas: *bush*; callaid: *hedge*.

Abairtean na Litreach: gum bi i fliuch an ceann ùine ghoirid: *that it will be wet in a short time*; a' coimhead air ro-shealladh air an aimsir air a' fòn-làimhe no coimpiutair agaibh: *looking at the weather forecast on your mobile phone or computer*; bràthair mo sheanmhar air a' Chomraich: *my grandmother's brother in Applecross*; bhuineadh e don àite agus bha e làn Gàidhlig: *he belonged to the place and he was full of Gaelic [i.e. fluent]*; an àirde às an robh a' ghaoth a' tighinn: *the direction the wind was coming from*; ann an sgìre Gheàrrloch bhite ag ràdh: *in the Gairloch area it would be said*; nuair a chì thu breac an t-sìl, chì thu 'n t-uisg': *when you can see the pied wagtail, you'll see rain*; nam biodh e ri fhaicinn faisg air doras an taighe no am measg nan cearc: *if it would be seen close to the house door or among the hens*; nam biodh cuideigin a' faicinn an eòin seo na sheasamh air clach: *if somebody was seeing this bird standing on a stone*; cha bhiodh stoirm fad-às: *a storm would not be far away*; chunnaic mi clacharan air clach lom, 's dh'aithnich mi nach d' rachadh a' bhliadhna leam: *I saw a stonechat on a bare stone, and I recognised the year would not go [well] with me*; le bhith a' dèanamh coimeas eadar dà eun mhòr dhubh: *by comparing two large black birds*; nam biodh am fitheach a' gairm ron fheannaig: *if the raven called before the hoodie crow*; tha a' chomhachag ri bròn, thig tuiltean oirnn: *the barn owl is calling sadly, there will be floods*; ma chluinneas iad an *Lon-dubh* a' seinn gu h-àrd agus gu snasail: *if they hear the blackbird singing strongly and sweetly*; ag innse dhuinn co-dhiù 's e deagh aimsir no droch aimsir a tha romhainn: *telling us whether [or not] it's good weather or bad weather that is in prospect*; eadhon ged a bhios e sgòthach, bagairteach: *even though it is cloudy and threatening*; gum bi deagh latha ann air an làrna-mhàireach: *that it would be a good day the next day*; ma sheinneas *uiseag* air latha fliuch: *if a skylark sings on a wet day*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: **chan fhada gum bi i na turadh:** *it's not long until there will be a break in the rain/a spell of dry weather. If weather to you is feminine (and the nouns sìde and aimsir are both feminine) you would use the feminine singular pronoun 'i' when discussing it. Thus, in this construction, turadh is not lenited [we are saying literally 'in her dry spell'. However, if you are more comfortable making it masculine [saying tha e blàth rather than tha i blàth], you would say tha e na thuradh [lit. it's in his dry spell']. If you wish to avoid that choice, just say gus am bi turadh ann. Tha turadh ann an-dràsta 'it's dry at the moment'.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: **gu bheil uisge air an rathad:** *that rain is on the way.*

Tha “*Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh*” air a maoineachadh le MG ALBA