

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

## Gille agus Ghillie (1)

Each week the West Highland Free Press publishes the text for Ruairidh's "Letter to Gaelic Learners" on BBC Radio nan Gàidheal (103.5-105 FM). Broadcasts are as follows: 2:55pm on Sunday as part of BBC Radio nan Gàidheal's hour-long learning zone, following the Gaelic Learners' programme 'SpeakGaelic Extra', with a repeat at 10.30 pm on Wednesday. This is Litir 1,335. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 1,031 corresponds to Litir 1,335. The Litir is also available at [www.bbc.co.uk/litir](http://www.bbc.co.uk/litir) and [www.learnghaelic.scot/litir](http://www.learnghaelic.scot/litir). Ruairidh can be contacted at [fios@learnghaelic.scot](mailto:fios@learnghaelic.scot).

Tha am facal *gille* gu math inntinneach, nach eil? Tha Faclair Dwelly ag innse dhuinn gu bheil e a' ciallachadh 'boy, lad, youth, manservant, ploughman ...' Chuirinn mac no 'son' ris an liosta, oir bidh daoine ag ràdh 'seo an gille agam' airson 'seo mo mhac'. Canaidh sinn *gille a' mhansa* ri mac ministear.

Gu math tric, bidh am facal *gille air a chur ri* eileamaid eile airson facal-fillte a dhèanamh. Mar eisimpleir – *gille-stàbaill* 'a stableboy' no *gille-turais* 'an errand boy'. Anns an t-seann aimsir, bhiodh na h-uaislean a' cumail ghillean, agus dreuchdan sònraichte aca – mar eisimpleir *gille-cupa* 'a cup-bearer' no *gille-frithealaidh* 'a page or servant'. Bhiodh *gille-airm* a' cumail armachd airson a mhaighstir agus b' e *gille-ruith* 'a courier or runner'.

Bha eadhon *gillean cas-fhliuch* aig feadhainn de na h-uaislean. 'S e sin gille a bhiodh a' togail ceann-cinnidh no uachdaran air a dhruim airson a thoirt tarsainn allt no abhainn. Bhiodh an gille a' faighinn a chasan fliuch ach bhiodh casan a mhaighstir air an gleidheadh tioram!

Tha am facal *gille* feumail cuideachd ann an co-cheangal ri nàdar. Tha ainmhidhean ann, agus 'gille' anns an ainm aca. Seo agaibh eisimpleirean: *Gille-Bride* 'oystercatcher'. Tha an t-eun seo co-cheangailte ri Naomh Brìde. *Gille-cràigein* 'a toad'; *gille-feadaig* 'dunlin'; agus *gille-fionn* no *gille-fionndrain* – 's e sin 'dogwhelk' – maorach bàn a gheibhear air creagan is clachan air a' chladach. 'S e *gille-màrtainn* seann ainm airson sionnach no madadh-ruadh. Bha ceangal ann, a rèir choltais, eadar an sionnach agus Clann Mhàrtainn.

Agus tha ainmean lusan againn anns a bheil am facal *gille*. Canaidh sinn *gille-mu-lunn* ri feamainn le toinntean fada caola. Bidh an fheamainn sin a' dol timcheall an luinn – am pìos ann am meadhain ràimh – nuair a thathar ag iomradh geòla. 'S ann **agams' a tha fios air sin**, agus mi a' feuchainn ri iomradh gu tric ann an acarsaidean fàsach air taobh an iar na Gàidhealtachd!

'S e *gille-gorm* no *gille-guirmein* a th' againn air 'cornflower' ann an Gàidhlig, agus 's e ainm eile a th' air *ròs an t-solais* no 'round-leaved sundew' – *gille-driùchd*. Gu litreachail, tha *gille-driùchd* a' ciallachadh 'lad or son of [the] dew'. Bidh boinneagan lionna a' nochdadh air na duilleagan agus tha iad a' coimhead coltach ri boinneagan driùchd.

Bidh sibh a' tuigsinn gun robh am facal *gille* air a chleachdadh uiread air an t-seann Ghàidhealtachd 's gun do ghabh muinntir na Beurla ris mar fhacal feumail. Tha e air a dhol a-steach don Bheurla mar '*gillie*' no '*ghillie*' – le, no às aonais 'h' an dèidh an 'g'. Tha na faclairan Beurla ag innse dhuinn gun deach *gille* a-null don Bheurla anns an t-siathamh linn deug. Ann am Beurla, tha e a' ciallachadh '*a man or boy who attends someone on a hunting or fishing expedition*' agus cuideachd, gu h-eachdraidheil, '*a Highland chief's attendant*'.

Tha na faclairan eadhon ag innse dhuinn gun tàinig *gille-cas-fhliuch* a-steach don Bheurla mar *gilliewetfoot*. Bha na Goill ga chleachdadh mar fhacal tàireil airson Gàidheil a bha dileas do cheann-cinnidh.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** dreuchdan sònraichte: *special occupations*; sionnach no madadh-ruadh: *two words for a fox*; Clann Mhàrtainn: *Clan Martin*; meadhain ràimh: *middle of an oar*; acarsaidean fasgach: *sheltered anchorages*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** Chuirinn *X* ris an liosta: *I would add X to the list*; canaidh sinn *gille a' mhansa* ri mac ministear: *we call a minister's son the son of the manse*; a' cumail armachd airson a mhaighstir: *keeping arms for his master*; bha eadhon *X* aig feadhainn de na h-uaislean: *some of the gentry even had X*; feumail cuideachd ann an co-cheangal ri nàdar: *also useful in connection with nature*; tha an t-eun seo co-cheangailte ri Naomh Bhrìde: *this bird is connected to St Bride*; maorach bàn a gheibhear air creagan is clachan air a' chladach: *a white shellfish that is found on rocks and stones on the seashore*; nàdar de dh'iasg: *a type of fish*; canaidh sinn *gille-mu-lunn* ri feamainn le toinntean fada caola: *we call a seaweed with long narrow filaments 'lad about the middle part of an oar' (the species is Chorda filum)*; nuair a thathar ag iomradh geòla: *when a dinghy is being rowed*; bidh boinneagan lionna a' nochdadh air na duilleagan: *little drops of liquid appear on the leaves*; tha iad a' coimhead coltach ri boinneagan driùchd: *they look like little drops of dew*; gun do ghabh muinntir na Beurla ris mar fhacal feumail: *English-speakers adopted it as a useful word*; anns an t-siathamh linn deug: *in the sixteenth century*; bha na Goill ga chleachdadh mar fhacal tàireil airson Gàidheil a bha dileas do cheann-cinnidh: *[the] Lowlanders were using it as a contemptuous word for Gaels who were loyal to a clan chief*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** 'S ann agams' a tha fios air sin: *I well know that myself. I might have said 'Tha fios agam fhèin air sin' but remember that a good idiomatic way of starting a sentence like this, which requires emphasis, is with 'S ann'.* 'S ann orrasan a bha an t-eagal '*they were extremely frightened*'; 's ann glas a bha a h-aodann, agus tinneas na mara oirre '*her face was grey-green with sea-sickness*'.

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** bidh am facal *gille air a chur ri* eileamaid eile airson facal-fillte a dhèanamh: *the word gille can [will] be added to another element to make a compound word*.

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