

An Litir Bheag

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Litir Bheag is a shortened and simplified version of Ruairidh's Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh (also available on the BBC website), designed for those who are at an earlier stage of learning Gaelic. The topic each week is the same as Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh so that, once the Litir Bheag is mastered, a student of the language might wish to try the full Litir. This is Litir Bheag 797 (which corresponds to Litir 1,101). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleam@bbc.co.uk.

We're still looking at the Gaelic vocabulary for sounds. In English, ducks say, 'quack, quack'. In Gaelic, they say fà-ug, fà-ug. Fà-ug, fà-ug. Hens say gog gog in Gaelic, rather than cluck cluck. Gog gog. And a cockerel crows Gog-a-Ghuidh-Ghaoith, instead of Cock-a-doodle-do. Gog-a-Ghuidh-Ghaoith.

Hoodie and carrion crows say gàg gàg. Gàg gàg. Ravens say gròg gròg. Gròg gròg. In English, the cuckoo says cuckoo, cuckoo. But in Gaelic it says gug-gùg, gug-gùg. And the golden eagle says glì-ug, glì-ug. It's not often we hear a golden eagle, however.

When a stone falls into water, what noise does it make? That's a plub. Plub. If a series of stones fall quickly into water, that is plubraich. Plubraich.

What about noises that are not so common? How do we say 'sizzle' in Gaelic? There is drùiseadh. Drùiseadh. There is also dearrasan. Or dearrasanaich. That includes crackling, and the noise of a flag on a windy day. And there is

Tha sinn fhathast a' toirt sùil air a' bhriathrachas Ghàidhlig airson fuaimean. 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 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.

Nuair a thuiteas clach a dh'uisge, dè am fuaim a tha i a' dèanamh? 'S e sin plub. Plub. Ma tha sreath chlachan a' tuiteam a dh'uisge gu sgiobalta, 's e sin plubraich. 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. For ràstal, Dwelly's dictionary says 'sizzling sound, as of flesh being fried'. A good word for a barbecue, perhaps!

How do we say 'hiss' in Gaelic? Well, we can use the word fead sometimes. Fead – a whistle or hiss. Fead an aonaich – that's the noise the wind makes in heather on a mountain, or aonach. Fead an aonaich.

There is also siosarnaich. Hissing. Siosarnaich. And sèidrich. Hissing, snorting. That's also the noise that whales make when they exhale. Sèidrich. It's different from sitrich. Sitrich is the noise of a horse. Bha na h-eich a' sitrich 'the horses were neighing'.

I'd like to finish my account with lapan or slapan. That's the noise a person makes if his wellies are full of water and he is walking in them. Lapan. Cheerio just now.

ràstal ann. Airson ràstal, tha faclair Dwelly ag ràdh *sizzling sound, as of flesh being fried*. Facal math airson barbaiciù, 's dòcha!

Ciamar a chanas sinn *hiss* ann an Gàidhlig? Uill, bidh sinn a' cleachdadh an fhacail *fead* 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. Agus *sèidrich*. *Hissing, snorting*. Sin cuideachd am fuaim a bhios mucan-mara a' dèanamh nuair a leigeas iad èadhar a-mach. Sèidrich. Tha e eadar-dhealaichte bho *sitrich*. 'S e *sitrich* am fuaim aig each. Bha na h-eich a' *sitrich* 'the horses were neighing'.

Bu mhath leam crìoch a chur air mo chunntas le *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.