



What did you do at the Lighthouse ?

Way back in 1992, I had been in Peru doing a behavioural study of male South American fur seals and was hoping to do an MSc. Prof Paul Racey at Aberdeen University swiftly put me in touch with Paul Thompson – his bright young protégé who was doing ground-breaking research on Moray Firth seals. How lucky was I ! Until 1995, I spent my time between Peru and Cromarty so along with gaining a PhD, I met the incredible Lighthouse team, helped with seal catching, dolphin surveys, collected scats, radio tracking among many other things.

What are you doing now ?

Through Paul and the Lighthouse I learned the value of top quality, applied research to inform everything from development to conservation and a natural next step was to the RSPB. After various research contracts, a move to the Isle of Skye led to my job as RSPB Corncrake Project Officer. A lowly title perhaps but work on this rare bird is extremely rewarding, challenging and diverse; agriculture and biodiversity; working with farmers and crofters; cattle handling; driving tractors and farm machinery; communicating the corncrake story... and there's space for a little bit of research on corncrake calls and bio-acoustics.

What was your best experience at the Lighthouse ?

For me, doing a PhD was an emotional roller coaster i.e. extremely stressful! But there was so much laughter and fun at the Lighthouse, that is what I remember best and am so thankful I experienced – such great folk - it's always about the people!! Oh and the delicious coffee turned me into a lifelong aficionado...



Dr Shelagh Parlane

PhD • 1992 - 1997

