

Hen harriers breed on the peatland. When the male catches prey, he transfers it to the female in a spectacular mid-air food-pass. She takes it back to the nest to feed their chicks.

Jan Smith '18



Red grouse and whinchat both nest on the hill. In May, marsh fritillary butterflies lay their eggs on their caterpillars' food plant, devil's bit scabious.

Joe Smith '18



When the sun appears,
so might adders, to
bask in the heat. The
male is grey and the
female brown.

Heblich '18



Winter rain is held back by sluice gates, so our flooded fields can be used by ducks such as wigeon and pintail. Hares also feed on the rich grassland, which in spring is covered in daisies, buttercups and marsh marigolds.

As the weather warms, these damp fields become full of insects. Nesting waders, like lapwing, find plenty of food for their chicks. Roe deer graze here and may be chased by territorial birds.



John Smith '18



Cattle manure is spread on the middle of the field to make a corncrake corridor. Corncrakes rely on this shelter when they return from Africa in April. Breeding snipe use the fence posts to survey their territory.

John Smith '18



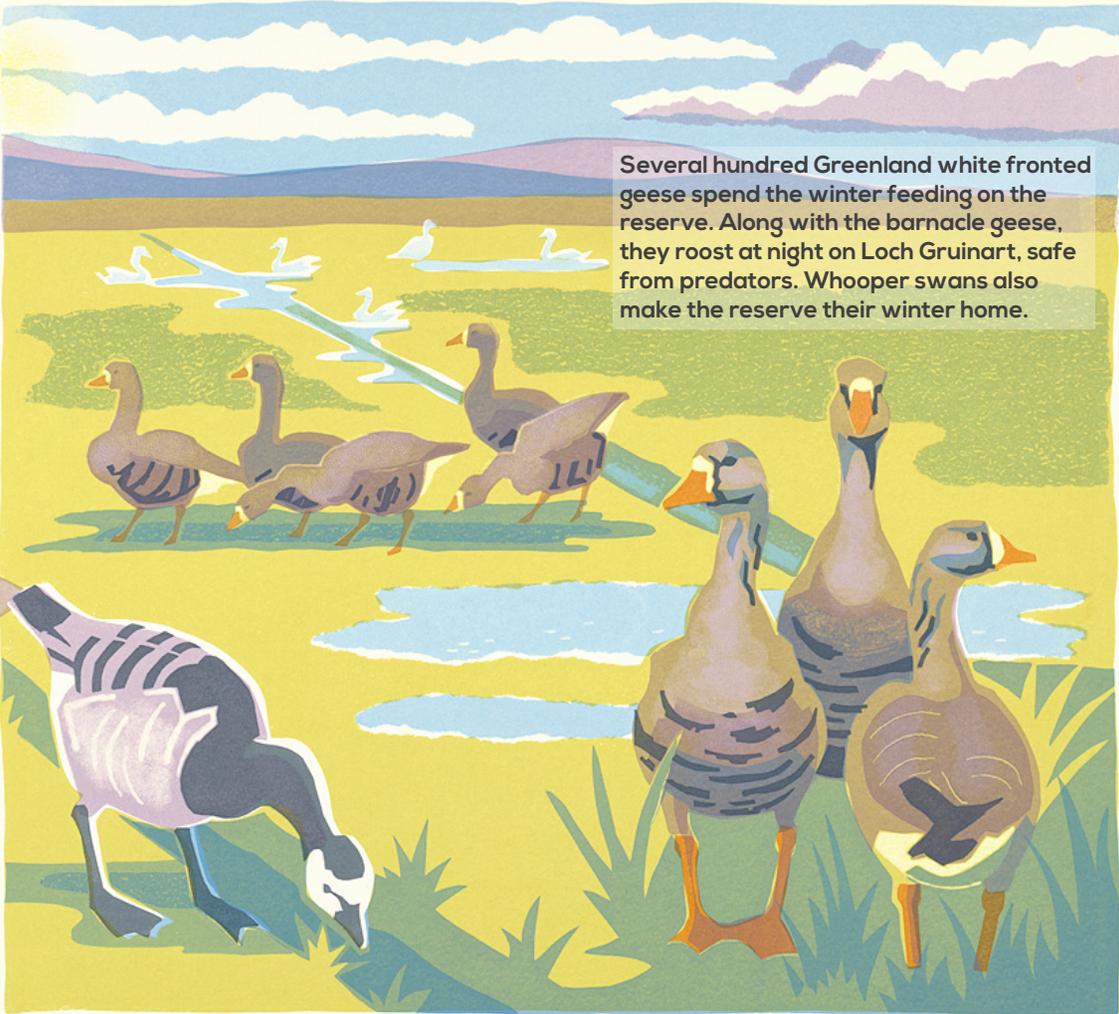
In late summer, once the corncrakes have fledged, we cut the fields for silage. Starlings feed in the stubbles. Our cattle graze any rough vegetation in preparation for our winter visitors.

The Smith '18



In October many thousands of barnacle geese arrive from their breeding grounds in Greenland. Our mild, damp climate means that the grass grows throughout the winter. The geese can graze here,

the bird '18



Several hundred Greenland white fronted geese spend the winter feeding on the reserve. Along with the barnacle geese, they roost at night on Loch Gruinart, safe from predators. Whooper swans also make the reserve their winter home.

theSmith '18

Curlew are becoming rare and the peatland provides a safe place for them to nest.



John Smith '16



Dunlin often breed further north on the Tundra, so it is a treat to see these waders displaying and breeding here.

John Smith '18



Four-spotted chaser dragonflies patrol the peaty pools. Certain plants are a real signature of this landscape, like bog bean or the star-shaped butterwort. Carnivorous sundew plants also grow here and are covered with sticky sap to catch insects.

Joe Smith '18