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Egilsay Walks

Two easy walks from the pier: St Magnus Church and Cenotaph – 2.3 km (return)
RSPB Reserve – 3.7 km (return)



Ragged Robin

Walking on Egilsay it is easy to enjoy the wildlife and wild flowers – they are all around you! Orchids, ragged robin and lady's smock are just a few of the flowers that cover the island in the summer. The wetland areas are noisy with the calls of lapwing, curlew and the strange 'drumming' of snipe. The RSPB manage their Egilsay reserve to try and increase the number of breeding corncrakes on the island. This bird is hard to see but you may hear the males calling – though only if you stay overnight, they usually sing in the darkest hours!



Lady's Smock

This small island is well known through the Orkneyinga Saga, which tells the story of how in 1116 Earl Magnus met his cousin Earl Hakon on Egilsay to discuss peace terms. However, Hakon had other ideas and he had Magnus murdered. After his death a church was built in his memory and it is a good example of the distinctive Viking round-towered churches. In 1938 a cenotaph was erected to mark the site of Magnus's murder.

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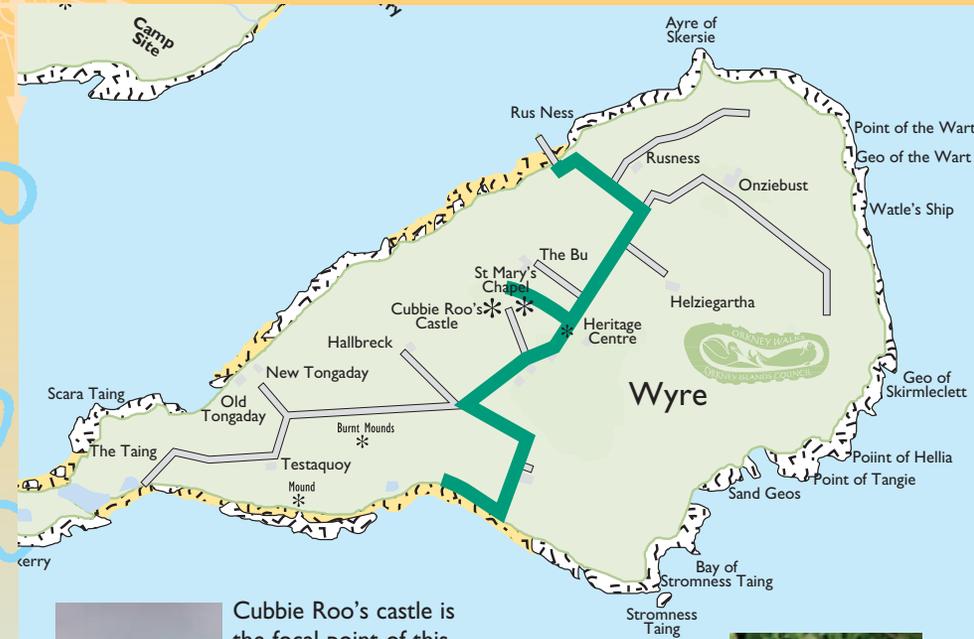
Northern Marsh Orchid



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Walking on Wyre

Two easy walks from the pier: Cubbie Roo's Castle – 2.4 km (return)
& Cavit – 4.2 km (return)



Black Guillemot

Cubbie Roo's castle is the focal point of this tiny island. This castle was a stone built, fortified tower, built by the powerful Viking chieftain Kolbein Hruga. It dates from the mid

12th century and is the oldest documented square keep castle in Scotland. The name Cubbie Roo refers to a giant in Orkney folklore who tried to build bridges between the islands. No-one is quite sure why the castle is named after him, unless the large size and presence of Hruga allowed him to become confused with the giant of lore.

Near by is the well preserved St Mary's Chapel which was founded either by Kolbein or his son Bjarni Kolbeinson who was the Bishop of Orkney.

The western end of the island, called the Taing, is a good place for viewing grey and common seals. They haul out on the rocks around the shore and on the Wyre Skerries.



Sea Campion



Arctic Tern feeding chick

Look out for arctic skuas, arctic terns and black guillemots while exploring Wyre.



Common Seal

Rousay, Egilsay & Wyre

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