

NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE

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St Abb's Head hosts species champions

A group of MSPs visited the National Trust for Scotland's St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve this week, to show support for Scotland's wildlife.

The visit was organised by Scottish Environment LINK as part of their Species Champion programme which partners MSPs with important or at-risk Scottish species. Amongst the attendees was Christina McKelvie MSP who is the champion for the white-beaked dolphin – a marine mammal that can be spotted from the cliffs at St Abb's head.

She was joined by her parliamentary colleagues, Michelle Ballantyne, Paul Wheelhouse and Rachael Hamilton for a tour of the conservation charity's Berwickshire site. MSPs were joined by LINK members NTS, RSPB Scotland and MCS, as well as Mario Ray, a representative from the nearby St. Abbs and Eyemouth Voluntary Marine Reserve.

The visit took place at the height of the seabird breeding season. St Abb's Head is one of the most accessible places to see seabirds in mainland Scotland and is an important site for kittiwakes, guillemots and razorbills. The site also overlooks the St Abbs and Eyemouth Voluntary Marine Nature Reserve and the northern part of the larger cross-border Berwickshire and North Northumberland Special Area of Conservation (SAC), as well as part of the area covered by the Firth of Forth Banks Complex nature conservation MPA.

National Trust for Scotland's senior ranger naturalist at St Abb's Head Liza Cole said: "It's great to be able to share the natural treasures that can be found at St Abb's Head and the work the National Trust for Scotland does, day in, day out to protect Scotland's heritage now and for future generations."

Calum Duncan, Convenor of the LINK Marine Group and Head of Conservation Scotland at the Marine Conservation Society said:

“As part of the LINK Species Champion 100 day Challenge, we were delighted to be joined by MSPs to celebrate Scotland’s incredible marine life at the St Abbs Head seabird colony above Scotland's original and trailblazing voluntary marine nature reserve, still going strong after more than 30 years.”

Scottish Environment Link is running a Species Champion 100 Day Challenge. MSPs are being encouraged over the 100-day period (and beyond) to support their species. Follow what’s happening on twitter @SpeciesChampion or the hashtag #Species100

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Editor’s Notes:

Images: <https://www.flickr.com/gp/133918740@N04/LcNz74>

