

TO BE CONTINUED...



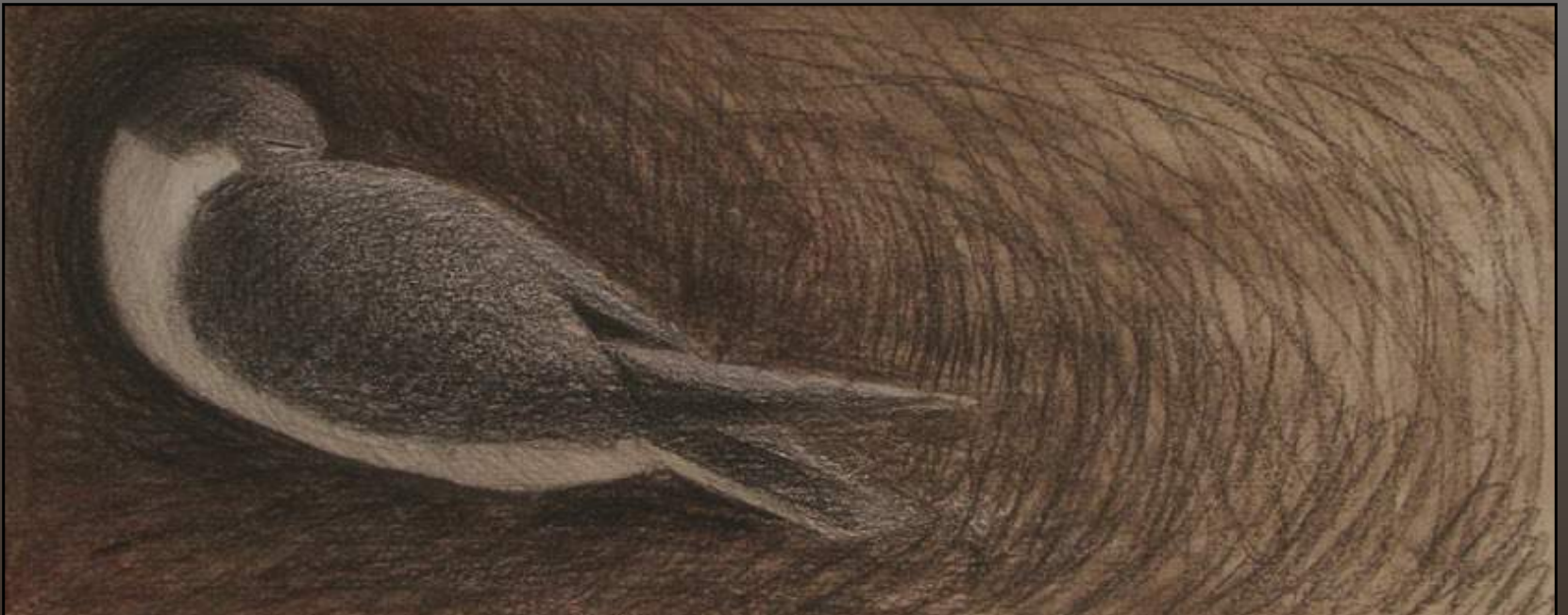
ADELE
POUND

By day we strolled in the sunshine enjoying the vibrant colours of campion and bluebells, grey, green and yellow lichen, and the blue of the sea. The island was tranquil and wrens sang from every bush. There was no clue to what we had been told, that beneath our feet one half of 4000 pairs of manx shearwaters waited patiently and silently in their burrows for their mates to return with food.

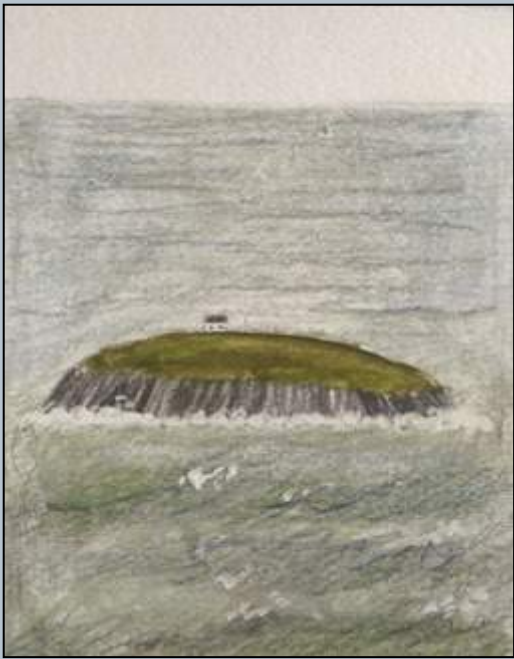
As night fell, however, all this changed. Gradually eerie calls started up, rising to a crescendo as the darkness deepened. Soon the air was full with half seen, half heard apparitions hurtling on rattling wings this way and that about our heads. Then manx shearwaters, most elegant of birds by day, were thumping to the ground around us and, barely able to lift their bodies their feet are so far back on their bodies, were scrabbling and slithering urgently away through the bracken and campion to their burrows.

A couple of these birds were caught and ringed allowing us an insight into the work of the Copeland Bird Observatory and a rare chance for a close up experience with these endearing creatures.

**Adele Pound
May 2016**













This story is to be continued. For me, for I hope to visit the island many more times to learn, be inspired and make work. And also for the birds.

When we twelve artists visited in May there were probably eggs in the burrows. By now there are fat fluffy chicks as big as their parents. Soon the adults will disappear on them without so much as a cheerio or, as far as we can tell, leaving any instructions as to what a new shearwater should do next.

For a while the chicks will emerge after dark, stare at the ocean and contemplate the night. Then one night they will launch themselves from the Copelands and miraculously, having only known the inside of a rabbit burrow on a tiny island off Donaghadee, will follow their parents 6,000 miles south to the waters off South America. Here they will stay, elegantly skimming the waves of the southern ocean, for about four years until they reach breeding age.

They will then return north for the summer, very likely to the island where they were born, to find a mate and a burrow. And the story will continue.

**Adele Pound
July 2016**