

The variety of Corncrake calls recorded on Waternish to date, 2026.

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Like most birds Corncrakes can make a variety of calls. The loud male 'broadcast call' which is heard for long periods in summer nights is familiar to many people (Peake *et al.* 1998). There is another quieter call made which is referred to in the literature as a 'soft call' and there are probably many other calls (Rek & Osiejuk 2011, Rek 2013).

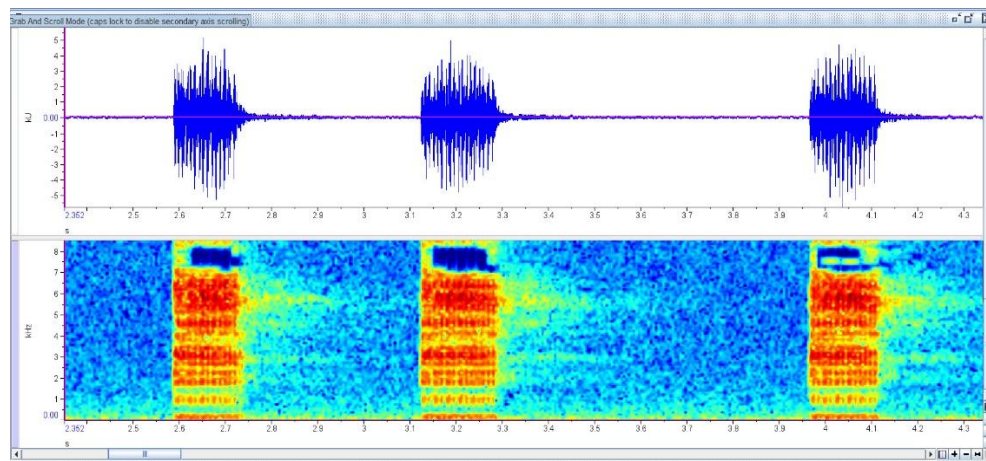
The parental call is used to gather chicks and is described as sounding like 'oo-oo-oo'. Females lead them with a cheeping call (Cramp & Simmons 1980).

Females can also make a 'broadcast' call if they are attempting to attract a mate, however this is fairly rare (Ottvall 1999).

Male broadcast call

Click link to play

<http://www.robertarnold.co.uk/crex/male%20broadcast%20call.wav>

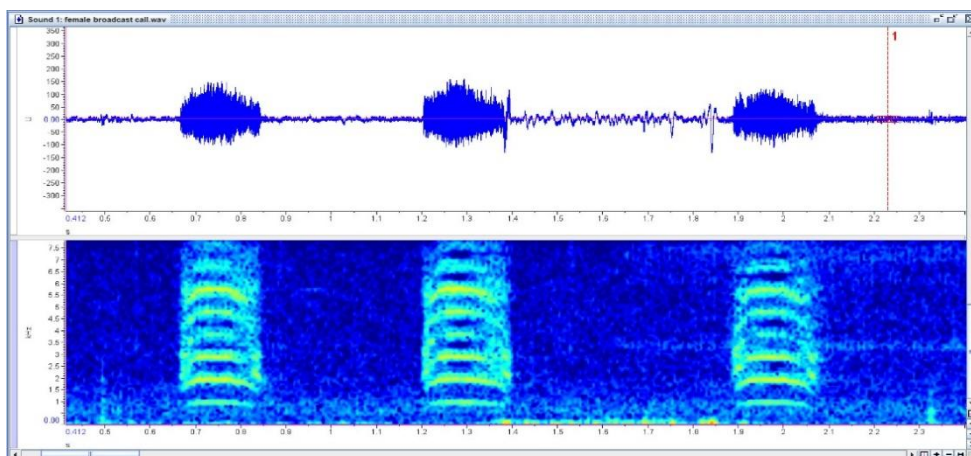


Spectrogram

Female broadcast call (MacGillivray 2020)

Click link to play

<http://www.robertarnold.co.uk/crex/female%20broadcast%20callx24.wav>



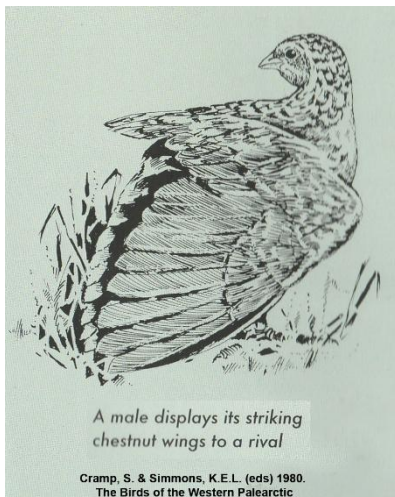
Spectrogram

Soft call

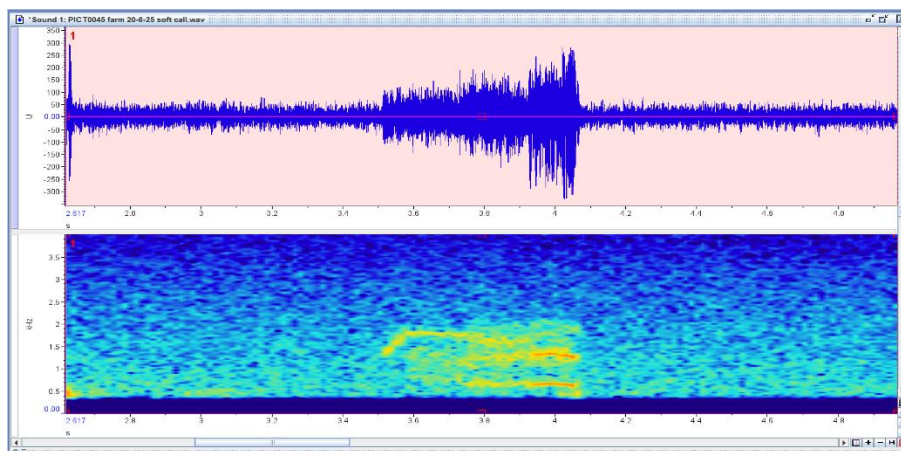
Click link to play

<http://www.robertarnold.co.uk/crex/soft%20callx4.wav>

Corncrake making 'soft calls' from the Waternish farm trap camera. 20th June 2025.
(Robert Montgomery)



(Green & Riley 1999)
(Cramp & Simmons 1980)



Spectrogram

Soft call and parental calls between two adults

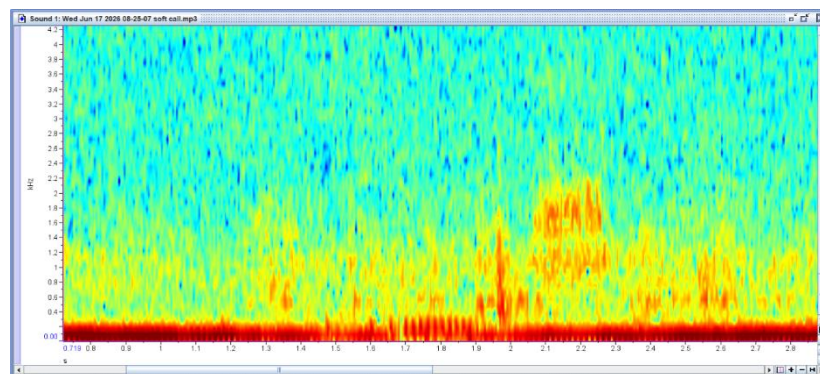
Two adult Corncrakes together, probably pairing, making a 'soft call' and 'parental call' from the Ardmore trap camera, 17th June 2026. (Shelagh Parlane)



Soft call (low note just before the main noise)

Click link to play

[adult soft call](#)

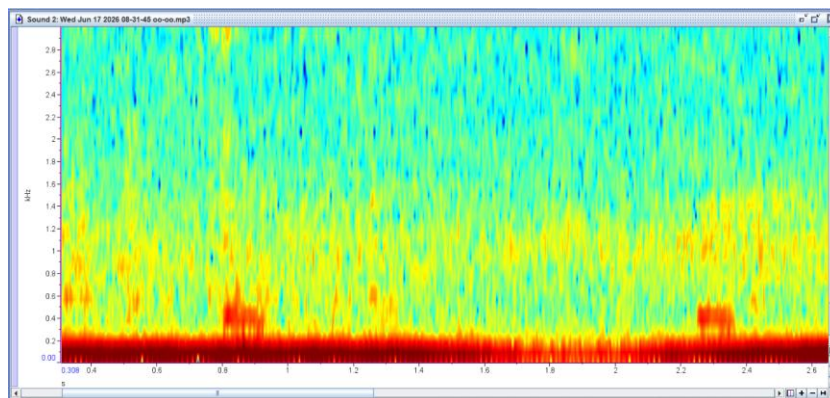


Spectrogram

Parental call

Click link to play

[Adult parental call](#)



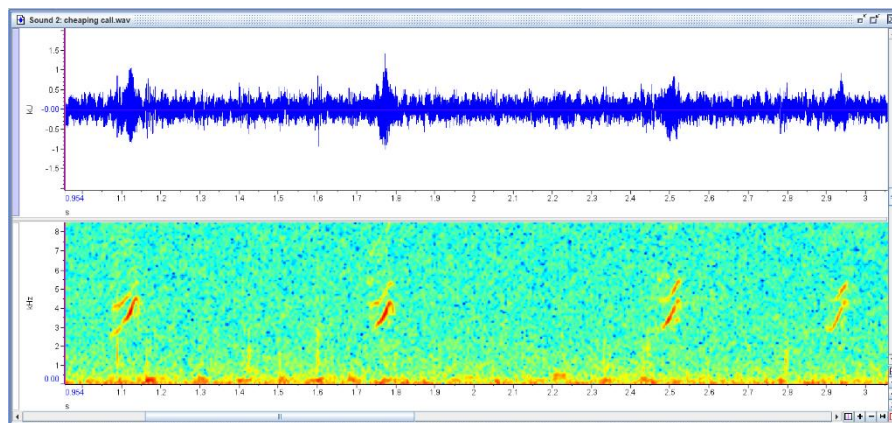
Spectrogram

Cheeping call

Click link to play

<http://www.robertarnold.co.uk/crex/cheeping%20callx6.wav>

Female Corncrake from the Ardmore trap camera. 2nd July 2025.
(Shelagh Parlane)

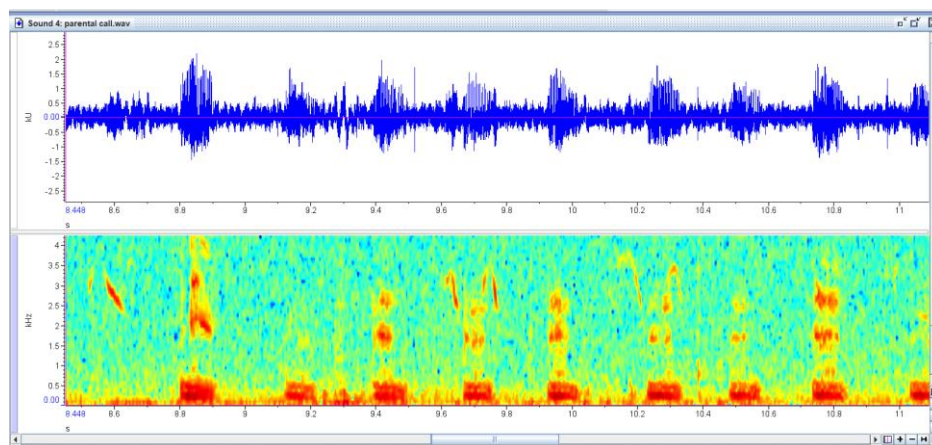


Spectrogram

Parental call

Click link to play

<http://www.robertarnold.co.uk/crex/parental%20call.wav>



Spectrogram

Two Corncrake chicks from the Ardmore trap camera. 2nd July 2025.
(Shelagh Parlane)



References

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Ottvall, R. 1999. Female Corncrake (*Crex crex*) singing in the wild. *Journal of Ornithology*. 140: 453-456.

Rek, P. & Osiejuk, T.S. 2011. Nonpasserine bird produces soft calls and pays retaliation cost. *Behavioural Ecology*. 22:657–662

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