



2020VISION
TECHNOLOGY

CASE STUDY CLOSE UP COQUET ISLAND

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Coquet Island is one of the RSPB's smallest nature reserves and during the spring and summer every square metre is packed with nesting seabirds. It is not possible for visitors to land on the island because of the number of nesting birds, so RSPB decided to employ the latest in remote monitoring technology to take the birds to the people.

The main aim of the project was to enable viewing of the nesting areas on the island (which lies one mile out in the North Sea) beaming live pictures of nesting seabirds to a screen in the Tourist Information Centre in nearby Amble.

Key RSPB objectives included producing an environmentally friendly and efficient system, which would disrupt the birds as little as possible, handle the harsh demanding weather encountered on the North East coast. Or leave any significant damage to the island during installation and maintenance periods.

THE SOLUTION

This project marked a new direction for 2020 Vision who are more used to monitoring city-life than wildlife. The RSPB's objectives alone presented both a technical challenge with unusual specifications for 2020's specialist team to overcome. And logistical problems associated with working offshore.

Using the latest generation and technology 2020 Vision Systems designed and installed a solar – powered camera system that sends real time images across the water on a wireless network.

In keeping with the RSPB's aims, the system was designed to be environmentally friendly and as energy efficient as possible. The camera now on the island is powered by energy from the sun collected from solar panels installed by specialist company Solar Century.

The surveillance equipment was installed on Coquet Island back in April to ensure all the gear was in place before the seabirds arrive at the start of the breeding season.

At the end of the season, 2020 Vision will remove the camera and carry out preventative maintenance in preparation for reinstalling at the start of the next season.

KEY FEATURES:

A discreet unobtrusive system with minimal impact on the environment

Environmentally friendly through use of solar power

The unique ball shape construction of the camera with an integral wash/wipe system enables the lens to stay clean and record accurate images.

All Equipment in marine finish

FLOCK OFF – a system designed to prevent birds landing on the camera

Whilst not the main objective, birds in flight can also be followed as the camera has a 25 frames per second frame rate, a 300 degree per second traverse speed and the images are in real time

KEY FEATURES:

The project went live in June, and throughout the summer visitors to the *CoquetWatch* control centre in Amble are now able to enjoy close-up views of the Island's breeding seabirds.

The colourful puffins are the stars of *CoquetWatch*, but visitors also have unique views one of Europe's rarest seabirds, the roseate tern. Coquet Island is the only place in the UK where roseate terns regularly nest and 91 pairs nested there last year.

This is the first time that cameras have followed the private life of these rare seabirds and the RSPB hopes that the camera will reveal previously unrecorded behaviour. Views of this normally inaccessible island have been opened up to the local population and tourists, whilst the island, and more importantly the birds remain virtually untouched and unspoiled.