

**September  
2015  
Number 113**

# The Eider



Oystercatcher and chick, Machrihanish Seabird Observatory, 13 June ©Eddie Maguire

**Recent bird sightings, pages 11-16**  
**Nearctic waders on Tiree, pages 17-21**  
**Grizzly Bears in Alaska, pages 22-23**

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## Editorial

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Argyll Bird Club, and we hope that as many members as possible will help to celebrate this event by booking for the dinner that follows the autumn meeting on 14 November at the Cairnbaan Hotel (details on next page). We are very fortunate in having Professor Des Thompson as the after dinner speaker. In addition to his official role, Des and his family have had a lifetime interest in the ecological diversity of Scotland. His late father, Desmond Nethersole-Thompson, was a pioneer in the study of several of Scotland's iconic birds. Some of his major contributions included monographs on *The Greenshank* (Collins 1951), *The Snow Bunting* (Oliver & Boyd 1966), *The Dotteral* (Collins 1973) and *Pine Crossbills: a Scottish Contribution* (Poyser 1975), as well as many other books and papers on the natural history of Scotland. Des continued and expanded these interests, writing many papers and books on waders, but also becoming profoundly involved in many aspects of montane and alpine ecology and conservation, not only in Scotland but throughout Europe.

It's good to reflect on what the club has achieved over the last thirty years. We have a fairly constant and active membership of around 300 (see the Membership Secretary's report in the last *Eider*). The indoor meetings are very popular, thanks to committee members (mainly Bob Furness and Nigel Scriven) who provide a never-ending stream of excellent speakers. The monthly field trips are an added bonus for members, although it would be good to see more folks turn out for these. Publication of the *Argyll Bird Report* is back on track after being derailed a little during the preparation of the *Birds of Argyll*. The latter was a major achievement for the club, and with very few copies left to be sold, it's good to reflect on where we go from here. This is already being

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discussed by the committee. It's also worth noting that this is issue 113 of the *Eider*. Thus, much has been achieved and it's interesting to ponder on what the next 30 years hold in store for the club!

Coming back to the *Eider*, it would be great to see more members contributing articles for future issues. I was struggling to fill this issue until the last moment. Many of you will have had some fascinating experiences during the summer, which other members would be interested to read about. Contributions don't have to be on birds. Any aspect of natural history is of interest (see Gordon Holm's article on pages 22-23). So, please try and help the *Eider* to continue to be a success. The deadline for articles for the next issue is the 24 November. Thank you.

## Acknowledgements

Very many thanks to the following for their contributions to this issue—Ross Ahmed, John Bowler, Neil Brown, Jim Dickson, Bob Furness (including photocopying & dispatch), Mike Harrison, Gordon Holm, Mike Hordley, Keith Gillon, David Jardine, Eddie Maguire, David Palmar, Mike Peacock, Linda Petty (proof reading), Nigel Scriven, Margaret Staley, Rachel Theaker and Morgan Vaughan

## Club News

### FIELD TRIPS 2015

If there is a chance that adverse weather might lead to the cancellation of a fieldtrip, please check the club's website or contact the organiser the night before or prior to setting off.

**Saturday 26 September. Loch Laich and Port Appin.** Led by Mike Harrison (E-mail [jmhar-rison@iee.org](mailto:jmhar-rison@iee.org) Phone 01631 710656). Meet at the Appin Hall car-park (grid ref. NM938459) on the A828 at 10.30hrs.

**Saturday 31 October. Sound of Gigha.** Led by Jim Dickson (contact details: phone 01546 603967: e-mail [meg@jdickson5.plus.com](mailto:meg@jdickson5.plus.com)). Meet at Ronachan Point Car Park on the A83 (NR741548) at 10.00hrs. Lunch should be available at the Gigha Hotel, or you could bring your own.

**Sunday 15 November. Loch Gilp and the Add Estuary.** Led by Jim Dickson (contact details: phone 01546 603967: e-mail [meg@jdickson5.plus.com](mailto:meg@jdickson5.plus.com)). Meet at 10.00hrs in Lochgilphead at the Corran Car Park, opposite the caravan park, on the A83, close to the roundabout (A83/A816) at the western end of the town. This field trip is on the day after the autumn meeting/ anniversary dinner (see below), to allow those staying overnight to attend.

### INDOOR MEETINGS 2015/2016

**Autumn meeting. Saturday 14 November at the Cairnbaan Hotel** (<http://www.cairnbaan.com/>), near Lochgilphead (Tel: 01546 603668). The programme is given below.

<b>Programme for the ABC's Autumn Meeting</b> <b>Saturday 14 November at the Cairnbaan Hotel, near Lochgilphead, Argyll</b>	
Time	Session
0930	Doors open, coffee and tea
0950-1000	Welcome and introduction— <i>Mike Harrison</i> , Chairman of the Argyll Bird Club
1000-1030	Recent bird sightings and photographs— <i>Jim Dickson</i> , Argyll Bird Recorder
1030-1050	House Martin survey now and next— <i>Ben Darvill</i> , BTO Scotland
1050-1055	News 2016— <i>Ben Darvill</i> , BTO Scotland
1055-1120	Coffee/tea
1120-1150	Birding in Costa Rica— <i>Ron Forrester</i>
1150-1220	Eider up and Eider down— <i>Chris Waltho</i>
1220-1350	Lunch (available in the hotel, if required)
1350-1430	AGM
1430-1500	Loch Lomond RSPB Reserve— <i>Paula Baker</i> , RSPB
1500-1530	Orkney, London Airport and the Palace— <i>David Palmar</i>
1530-1550	Tea/coffee
1550-1620	Migrants on Tiree through the year— <i>John Bowler</i> , RSPB
1620-1640	Raffle and closing remarks

**Annual General Meeting.** This will be held after lunch during the autumn meeting (see above). Minutes of the last AGM and the agenda for this AGM are given on pages 24-27. The Treasurer's Report and Membership Secretary's Report appeared in the June *Eider*. The club is looking for a secretary and at least two new committee members. So, if you are interested, or know of someone else who is, please contact our chairman, Mike Harrison (who has been doubling up as chairman and secretary for the past year and would prefer not to in the future).

**ABC's 30th Anniversary Dinner.** A dinner to celebrate the club's 30th anniversary has been arranged to follow the autumn meeting (above) on 14 November. Professor Des Thomson, Principal Advisor on Biodiversity for Scottish Natural Heritage and founder chairman of the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme has kindly agreed to attend and to speak at the dinner. The menu and booking form were included as the last page of the June *Eider* together with information on accommodation near the Cairnbaan Hotel. The booking form can also be downloaded and printed from the ABC website (under 'News'). **If still haven't booked your place, please ensure you do so quickly. Your completed booking form and cheque (£25.50 per person, payable to the Argyll Bird Club) should be with Mike Harrison no later than 30 September.**

**Spring meeting. Saturday 5 March 2016 in the Seil Island Community Hall, Ellena-beich, Seil.** The programme and further details will appear in the December *Eider*.

**Raffle prizes.** Donations of raffle prizes for indoor meetings are always welcome.



## ARGYLL BIRD REPORT 25 (2013)

This report was published in March. If anyone would like to purchase additional copies, these can be obtained from Bob Furness (address on back page). The cost is £8.00 plus £1.50 for post and package. Please make your cheque payable to the Argyll Bird Club. Previous years' copies of the bird report can also be purchased from Bob.

## ARGYLL BIRD REPORT 26 (2014)

Plans are well underway for the next bird report. It is hoped the text will be completed by the end of this year, with the report being available in time for the spring meeting.

## USE OF THE MEMBERSHIP EMAIL LIST

At the last ABC committee meeting there was a discussion on the use of the email list of the club members and the committee would welcome your views. Until recently the email list has been used only for club business (distributing the *e-Eider*, reminders about field trips etc.). The Committee recognise that the email list should not be used for any form of commercial advertising, but occasionally other events or matters come up which may deserve circulation to members before the next *Eider*. There are a number of possible ways forward:

1. Use the membership email list to circulate items (other than club business), which the committee agrees should be circulated.
2. Create a new email list of members who have requested the circulation of items of interest (other than club business), with the use of the full membership email list restricted to club business
3. Restrict use of the membership email list to club business only, with other items being posted on the 'news' section of the club's website.

Please let the committee know your views. This subject will be discussed at the AGM in November.

## THE ARGYLL BIRD CLUB'S WEBSITE ([www.argyllbirdclub.org](http://www.argyllbirdclub.org))

Do visit our website to find out about up-to-date arrangements for meetings, recent sightings and photographs of birds, and lots more.

View from Three Lochs car park, Glen More, ©David Palmar [www.photoscot.co.uk](http://www.photoscot.co.uk)



## ABC weekend trip to Mull—29-31 May

**The cool and showery spring weather was still with us as we drove to Oban on Friday 29 May for the field weekend on Mull.**

Tysties in Oban Bay were first to go on the weekend species list, followed by Gannets fishing in the Firth of Lorn. A few Kittiwakes were seen as the mid-morning ferry carrying four club members approached the island of Mull. Having met up with two more members in Craignure, where a Blackcap was singing loudly in the sunshine, we set off to visit the Mull Eagle Watch site in Glenn Seilisdeir. As we were not due there until early afternoon we had time to visit several other sites on the way, beginning with Loch Don. Swallows were swooping round the cottages as we drove round the head of the loch to a vantage point on the northeast side. Whitethroat, Dunnock and Willow Warbler were amongst the species singing in the bushes nearby as we looked across the mudflats of Loch Don. Mute Swans, Greylag Geese and Oystercatchers could be seen along with Common and Herring Gulls, but nothing very exciting so far. After further scrutiny from a point closer to the mouth of the loch (where we were told we had just missed an Osprey) we returned to the main road and drove past the head of Loch Spelve, up the valley of the Lussa River and into Glen More, stopping for lunch in the car park overlooking the three Lochs, an Eilean, an Ellen

and Airdeglais. With the map showing 'Craig na h-Iolaire' on both sides of the valley we had high hopes of an eagle sighting but Hooded Crows and Meadow Pipits were all that could be seen as a sharp shower passed over. Eventually a speck was seen soaring over the ridge to the west of the lochs but it was lost from view behind the hill before it could be positively identified.

On through Glen More and down to Kinloch in another heavy shower. A Grey Wagtail and some House Martins were at Killiemore on Loch Scridain and then we were in Glenn Seilisdeir with a White-tailed Eagle flying up the glen above the forest to our right. The eagle's nest is a good distance from the Eagle Watch viewpoint this year so the view of the birds in and on the nest is somewhat limited. However, we had good views of the adults flying around and of a Golden Eagle which obligingly flew alongside a White-tailed Eagle so that we could learn how to separate the two species. Meanwhile Siskins and Coal Tits were visiting the feeders, a Sparrowhawk flashed overhead and Swallows and Sand Martins were hawking for insects between the trees.

Two members took their leave at this point to return to Oban. Four of us continued through the glen, where Pied Wagtail and Wheatear were feeding on the sheep-grazed turf, down to the Gribun and along the shore of Loch na Keal to Traigh Doire Dhubhaig. Two Kittiwakes were seen here, along with Herring and Great Black-backed

Gull, Meadow Pipit, Common Sandpiper and three Golden Plover. After a quick brew it was time to curtail the birding and head for Tobermory where, later, we spent a convivial evening with four more members.

Saturday was the main focus of the trip and, thankfully, the showers had died away overnight and the forecast was good. Eight members met by the harbour in Tobermory and Blackcap, Collared Dove, Grey Heron and Shag were soon noted in the book, followed by a Pied Wagtail carrying food. Blackbird, Robin and Starling were seen as we drove out of Tobermory towards the Mishnish Lochs. Parking beside Loch Meadhoin we immediately heard a Cuckoo calling in the woods and a Willow Warbler singing in a roadside bush. Dabchick and Mallard were on the loch and a Reed Bunting was found nearby. At ten o'clock, as a comment was made about raptors only appearing at ten o'clock when the thermals got established, a Buzzard was seen soaring in the distance, followed by a Sparrowhawk.

Dervaig and the head of Loch Chumhainn was the next stop after a drive over the hills with good views across to Coll from the summit of the road. Common, Herring and Lesser Black-backed Gulls were around the head of the loch, along with Redshank, Common Sandpiper, Oystercatcher and Grey Heron. Shelduck and Red-breasted Merganser could be seen out on the water. A noisy nest of Starlings was in the roof of a nearby house, while Greenfinch and Coal Tit were visiting some garden birdfeeders. Swallow and Sand Martin were hawking for insects over the reed bed in Loch na Cuilce as our last two members arrived to join the party.

We moved on from sea loch and salt marsh to rough moorland by taking the hill road from Dervaig towards Torluisk and stopped just short of the summit of the road. The views were good, north to Ardnamurchan, and the Small Isles, south to Ulva and Iona, but the birding was slow. A brief snatch of song from a Skylark and a few Meadow Pipits were all we could manage. Most excitement was caused by the discovery of a Green Hairstreak butterfly on a yellow flower (photo at top of page).

So we moved on down to Loch Tuath, past the road to Ulva Ferry and on to Kellan Woods near the head of Loch na Keal, noting more species along the way. Swallows were widespread wherever there was any livestock, as were Pied Wag-

Green Hairstreak Butterfly ©David Palmar  
[www.photoscot.co.uk](http://www.photoscot.co.uk)



tails. Willow Warblers could be heard singing all along the road; Canada Geese were on the shore of Loch Tuath, a Kestrel was seen near Ulva Ferry, Goldfinches could be heard in the woods along the road near Eas Fors and the white rumps of Wheatears were seen flitting across the road from time to time.

The parking place near the head of Loch na Keal had been chosen as the lunch stop because of the views across the loch—it turned out to have much more than that. Grey Heron and Common Sandpiper were seen along the shore of the loch and Mallard at the mouth of the river. Buzzards soared over the nearby forest and Linnet and Whitethroat were found in the scrub by the road. A boat appeared further down the loch. A White-tailed Eagle appeared from amongst the trees of the nearby forest, made straight for the boat and circled a couple of times before diving down to retrieve a fish from near the boat before flying back to its hitherto unseen nest in the trees. That was more than we had planned for. The eagle flew out again a short while later, picked up another fish and returned to the nest which, by now, we could see from a vantage point a short distance along the road. After that, looking and listening for Redstart and Wood Warbler in Kellan Woods was a bit of an anti-climax; especially as we didn't find any.

And so to Knock. Parking at the end of the track we walked through coniferous woodland and rough pasture as we made our way to Loch Ba. Willow Warblers were again to the fore, with Robin, Chaffinch, Wren and Blue Tit also in the trees; Meadow Pipit, Blackbird, Song Thrush and Mistle Thrush were on the pasture. Water birds were in short supply, only Mallard and Greylag Goose could

be seen on the loch although Swallow, Sand Martin and a few House Martins were feeding on insects over the water. Scanning the steep slopes and mountain ridges yielded Hooded Crow and Raven but no eagles as we retraced our steps to Knock. A quick look over the river bridge revealed a Spotted Flycatcher feeding amongst the overhanging trees.

From freshwater at Loch Ba we returned to the sea at Scarisdale Point on the south shore of Loch na Keal and to perhaps the strangest encounter of the day. Not the Great Northern Diver in breeding plumage which was seen offshore but a Skylark which came to bathe in the patch of dust and gravel where cars run off the tarmac on to the grassy foreshore, even continuing to sing while it bathed (photo opposite). Oystercatcher, Wheatear and Pied Wagtail were also present, but the Skylark was the star of this particular show.

Sheltered Salen Bay on the Sound of Mull contrasted nicely with exposed, west-facing Loch na Keal. Grey Heron were fishing the shoreline and Mute Swan and Goosander were seen in the bay close to the village while Common Sandpiper could be heard calling on the shore. A Pheasant barked in the woods across the road, and our first Eiders of the day were spotted near the estuary at Aros before we headed back to Tobermory for a very enjoyable dinner at the Western Isles Hotel.

Sunday started wet, very wet, and very windy but the forecast was for the worst of the rain to clear by mid-morning. Of various options available, a walk in the shelter of the woodland of Aros Park was the most appealing. So, after noting the Sand Martins feeding at the mouth of the burn by the distillery in Tobermory we mustered in Aros Park. Sure enough the rain was clearing to showers and we managed the obligatory group photograph (photo top of page) before members' travel plans began to reduce the size of the group. A gentle walk round Loch Ghurrabain revealed a variety of common woodland species, culminating in a family of Treecreepers. After another departure and with

Group photo ©David Palmar [www.photoscot.co.uk](http://www.photoscot.co.uk)



Dust-bathing Skylark ©David Palmar [www.photoscot.co.uk](http://www.photoscot.co.uk)

the weather brightening the remaining six members set off for Grass Point. Two Curlews were in a field by the road to Salen and Gannets could be seen fishing in the Sound of Mull. A short stop at Scallastle Bay revealed Ringed Plover and Common Tern on the shingle banks. A Cuckoo was heard calling as we turned off the main road towards Grass Point. Greylag Geese were on the saltmarsh and a Goosander was on the river to the south of the bridge. The mix of habitats along the road yielded a good variety of species, with Whinchat, Merlin, Bullfinch and Great Spotted Woodpecker being added to the list for the weekend.

And from Grass Point it was back to Craignure for the ferry home after a very enjoyable weekend.

**Mike Harrison**

Loch-na Keal. Mull ©David Palmar [www.photoscot.co.uk](http://www.photoscot.co.uk)





**ABC field trip to Loch Gilp, the Add Estuary and Taynish NNR on 25 July**

**A good turnout of twelve members met at the small car park by the Corran roundabout at Loch Gilp and we were most fortunate to find a day when the sun was actually shining!**

We set out towards the front green of Lochgilphead to see what was out on the mud. However, the falling tide line was more distant than ideal for spotting waders. The large waders, namely Curlews and Oystercatchers were easily picked out, but anything smaller was going to be tricky! Various gull species now had some juveniles with them and Black-headed and Common were seen close by on the river along with four species of corvid, with a further two species (Jay and Raven) added later in the trip. The recently found Ring-billed Gull at Loch Gilp was relocated. Other than appearing a bit heavier/bulkier and paler grey than a Common Gull it was just a bit too distant for us to enjoy this North American gull properly! Common Redshank, Mallard and House Sparrow were added to our list before sorting out car sharing. We then headed to Ardrishaig to check out Loch Fyne.

The loch was about as quiet as it gets bird-wise. However, a few Red-throated Divers were spotted quite far out, along with Shags and a small number of Common Terns. We decided to head for the Add Estuary. The folks who were first to arrive quickly had views of Whinchat and Wheatear. Some Linnets were flying about and good numbers of Canada Geese were out on the estuary

with a high proportion of well-grown young. Tom Callan had just mentioned he hadn't seen an Osprey here for ages when, as if by magic, one appeared over the estuary in front of us, hovered a few times, and then flew towards Loch Crinan. Bird of the day was spotted by Errol Crutchfield when he picked out a small brown bird creeping about in the long grass some 150m away. Through the scopes we could just make out its small rounded head and short bill, just enough to identify it as a Golden Plover in juvenile plumage and quite unusual at the Add. We then travelled round to Crinan Ferry via the Moine Mhor and en route the group collectively added Sedge Warbler, Common Whitethroat, Stonechat, Whinchat and Spotted Flycatcher. By now it was getting quite warm and there was a heat haze across the estuary mud. Some very distant waders could just be made out and included Redshanks, a couple of Dunlin and four Common Sandpipers with the latter being identified by their bobbing rear ends! Generally the estuary was very quiet and was in keeping with this 'slack' time of year between migrations. A few local breeding species were seen including some Eiders and Red-breasted Mergansers with young.

Next we set off for Tayvallich and Taynish NNR in the hope of seeing some woodland species, but as suspected, mid-day in mid-summer was not the best time to see very much and this proved to be the case. We ate our packed lunches on a newly



created section of board walk seating on the reserve (photo above) and our attention was drawn more to the damselflies (photo opposite) and dragonflies than to birds. Eventually we did see Willow Warbler, Robin, Buzzard, Woodpigeon, Coal Tit, Chaffinch and a nice Little Grebe in breeding plumage out on Loch Taynish.

Our next stop was the Ulva Lagoons followed by a short walk at Keills to view the sound of Jura. The 'puddle' was extremely quiet but we added Shelduck and Sand Martin and Morag did well to find the lone Whooper Swan that has been hanging out in the long grass for several weeks. A large flock of Linnet appeared and we counted just under a hundred. Also in the area we saw our first Meadow Pipits, more House Martins, a family of Wheatears, lots of Goldfinches, Greylags with young and out on the Sound of Jura small groups of Kittiwakes, an auk sp., several Cormorants in flight and some Gannets. On our walk back to the car park we got nice views of two juvenile Reed Buntings (photo opposite), and on the drive back to Lochgilphead, a very brief view of a Jay. The group total came to at least 63 species which was actually not bad considering everywhere seemed to be very quiet.

**Jim Dickson**



Large Red Damselfly (above) and juvenile Reed Bunting (below). Both photos ©Jim Dickson



### The decline of breeding gulls on Colonsay

Last autumn John Bowler asked me about changes in the number of seabirds on Colonsay and Oronsay, to allow comparison with the population changes on Tiree for a paper he published in *Seabird* (Bowler, 2014). While population trends are available for many of the seabirds on Colonsay and Oronsay, there was a gap in our knowledge about the numbers of gulls (other than Kittiwakes) in recent years.

As the last full count of gulls was undertaken during Seabird 2000, I resolved to try to count the gulls in 2015, partly to compare with trends on Tiree and partly in readiness of a full seabird survey, which demands a greater effort for a full count of the cliff-nesting species. So with the help of Morgan Vaughan, Luke Wake (RSPB Oronsay) and Nina O'Hanlon a full count of the nesting gulls on Colonsay and Oronsay was carried out from mid-May to June. Morgan, Luke and

Total number of apparently occupied nests of gulls (excluding Kittiwake) on Colonsay and Oronsay. A comparison between the Seabird 2000 count and 2015

Species	Seabird 2000 count	2015 count	% change
Black-headed Gull	8	0	-100
Common Gull	82	79	-4
Lesser Black-backed Gull	226	10	-96
Herring Gull	1121	191	-83
Great Black-backed Gull	76	29	-62

Nina covered Oronsay and its offshore islands and I covered Colonsay.

There were similarities with the trends on Tiree (Bowler 2014), where over the same period, Lesser Black-backed Gulls and Herring Gulls have undergone large declines, and Greater Black-backed Gulls to a lesser extent. Common Gulls increased on Tiree unlike on Colonsay, where the population is stable. On Tiree the number of Black-headed Gulls has remained stable, but the small breeding population on Colonsay has been lost, and the current trend indicates Lesser Black-backed Gulls may also cease to breed on Colonsay in

the near future, returning it to the same status as in the 1930s when it was a non-breeding summer visitor (Loder 1935).

**David C Jardine**

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### References

Bowler J (2014) The status of breeding seabirds on the Isle of Tiree, Argyll, 2004-13. *Seabird* 27: 72-86

Loder, J de V (1935) *Colonsay & Oronsay in the Isles of Argyll: their history, flora, fauna and topography*. Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh and London.



Herring Gull—one of the gull species to have shown the greatest decline on Colonsay ©David C Jardine

Red-necked Phalaropes, Strath Farm, Kintyre, 26 May ©Jim Dickson



## Recent bird sightings

### May—July 2015

Presented here are records of a wide range of rare and unusual species as well as counts and movements of more common species in Argyll. Many thanks to everyone who sent in records and apologies for any errors or omissions. More detailed sightings can be found on the ABC website under 'recent reports' and Paul Daw has compiled a 'spring migrants' table which gives a more complete list of sightings. Ideally records should be submitted using the Argyll bird recording system or by using the BTO BirdTrack system. Please email: [abc recorder@outlook.com](mailto:abc recorder@outlook.com) for more details.

(Note: MSBO=Machrihanish Seabird Observatory, Kintyre, ABRC=Argyll Bird Records Committee, SBRC=Scottish Bird Records Committee and BBRC=British Birds Rarities Committee ).

### Swans, ducks, geese & gamebirds

**WHOOPER SWAN.** One was at the Ulva Lagoon near Keills, Mid-Argyll from 4 Jun until end of Jul, and up to four remained on Tiree during the summer.

**PINK-FOOTED GOOSE.** Late birds included one at Ruaig, Tiree on 6 May and one near Machir Bay, Islay on 20 May.

**GREENLAND WHITE FRONTED GOOSE.** A late individual was at Balevullin, Tiree on 17 and 23

May.

**EGYPTIAN GOOSE.** An adult was found on a grass-land flood by Strath Farm, the Laggan on 22 May (Eddie Maguire) and will be the first confirmed record for Argyll if accepted by the SBRC (photo below).

**MANDARIN.** Three were seen on a small pool in Glen Strae, North Argyll on 15 Jul.

**GADWALL.** Away from the islands, two flew past MSBO, Kintyre on 5 May with two there on 4 Jul.

**SHOVELER.** Outwith Tiree and Islay, two males were at Westport Marsh, Kintyre on 26 May, two

Egyptian Goose, Strath Farm, Kintyre ©Eddie Maguire



fresh female-types were at Strath Farm west pool, Kintyre on 22 to 26 Jul and then five female-types were there on 27 Jul.

**GARGANEY.** A drake was at RSPB Gruinart reserve, Islay on 14 May. A male was on Oronsay, Colonsay on 28 May. A pair was on a pool at Kilmoluaig, Tiree on 9 Jun with the male there on 11th and a male nearby at Loch Bhasapol on 10-12 and 15 Jun.

**GREATER SCAUP.** A male was with Tufted Ducks at Loch Bhasapol on 4-13 May and a fine drake was at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree on 5-9 Jun.

**COMMON SCOTER:** A high count of 276 birds (mostly males) were in the Sound of Gigha on 10 Jul.

**VELVET SCOTER.** One was reported from Killiechronan, Mull on 1 May (per BirdTrack).

**SURF SCOTER.** A male was at Loch na Keal, west of Eorsa, Mull on 13 May (Martin Keivers *et al.*) and an adult male was in the Sound of Gigha, Kintyre from 10 Jul (Jim Dickson *et al.*).

### Seabirds (divers, grebes, shearwaters, petrels also egrets & herons)

**BLACK-THROATED DIVER.** Outwith the mainland coastal areas and breeding sites, there was a summer plumaged adult at Gott Bay, Tiree on 24 Jun, which was unusual for there.

**MANX SHEARWATER.** Large numbers were seen offshore and from the Tiree ferry including a massive feeding raft off Aird, Tiree with some 8,000 birds on 7 May. On 10 Jun huge rafts were noted from Ardmøre lighthouse out into the open sea between the Isle of Mull and Coll, with at least 5,000 birds in the area, and 2,650 were off Hynish, Tiree on 1 Jun.

**SOOTY SHEARWATER.** A single was seen off Gunna sound, Tiree on 31 Jul.

**STORM PETREL.** Sixteen were seen north of Tiree from the Barra ferry



Corncrakes, Oronsay on 14 May ©Mike Peacock

on 21 May. A total of 14 moved S past MSBO, Kintyre on 13 Jul. Eight headed past Hynish, Tiree on 17 Jul.

**LITTLE EGRET.** One was at Balvicar, Seil Island, Mid-Argyll on 5 May and one was at Kennacraig, West Loch Tarbert, Kintyre on 10-13 Jun.

**GREAT WHITE EGRET.** One was at RSPB Gruinart reserve, Islay on 24 Jun (Louise Muir, Peter Roberts *et al.*). This follows an earlier report of one there in Apr this year.

### Raptors to rails

**MARSH HARRIER.** One was reported from Islay on 11 May (per BirdTrack). A female was at Moss, Tiree on 14 May. A female headed west at Vaul, Tiree on 10 Jun and a female was seen between Craigens and Coullabus, Islay on 26 Jun.

**RED KITE.** One was at West Hynish, Tiree on 26 May.

**GOSHAWK.** A female was observed being chased by a female Sparrowhawk in Scammadale, Mid-Argyll on 6 Jul (Rob Lightfoot).

**HOBBY.** One was seen at the Add Estuary, Mid-Argyll on 1 Jul (John Halliday) and there was one briefly at Salen, Mull on 2 Jul (David Sexton).

**COOT.** One was on East Loch Fada, Colonsay on 16-17 May.

**QUAIL.** Single birds were heard calling at Balephuill, Tiree on 11-12 Jun, 16-30 Jun and 5 Jul, on Iona, Mull on 18 Jun and at Coullabus, Islay on 3 Jul.

**CORNCRAKE.** The final island total of calling males on Tiree was 333.

### Waders

**GOLDEN PLOVER.** Outwith Tiree and Islay a juvenile was



Upper photo: Dotterel, Oronsay, 7 May ©Morgan Vaughan

Lower photo: Pectoral Sandpiper, Strath Farm, Kintyre, 19 July ©Eddie Maguire



seen at the Add Estuary, Mid-Argyll on 22 and 25 Jul, an unusual date.

**GREY PLOVER.** Singles were at Croig, Mull on 7 May and at Killinallan Point, Islay on 14 May.

**DOTTEREL.** On Tiree, two were at The Reef on 5 May, six at Hough on 5 May and four at Loch a' Phuill on 6 May. One was at The Oa, Islay on 4 May. Four were at Oronsay, Colonsay on 7 May with probably two more the next day (photo above).

**RED KNOT.** At Loch Indaal, Islay, 23 were seen on 11 May. Returning birds included: the first at MSBO, Kintyre on 13 Jul and 28 there on 17 Jul. At the Add Estuary, Mid-Argyll there were 42 on 17 Jul and 13 at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree also on 17 Jul.

**SANDERLING.** Most spring birds were on Tiree in May where the max. single site count was 650 at Gott Bay on 6 May. At MSBO, Kintyre the max. count was 50 on 31 May and 23 were at the Add Estuary, Mid-Argyll on 25 May.

**PURPLE SANDPIPER.** Late birds included five at Gott Bay, Tiree on 6 May and two at MSBO, Kintyre on 25 May.

**CURLEW SANDPIPER.** On Tiree a non-breeding plumaged bird was at Loch a' Phuill on 3 May and summer-plumaged adults were at Vaul Bay on 14 May and on a pool near Heylpol Church on 14 and 17 Jun. Two were at Loch Craignish, Mid-Argyll on 12 Jun. A summer adult was at Strath Farm east pool, Kintyre on 17 Jul.

**DUNLIN.** High counts on Islay included 2,000 at Loch Gruinart on 2 May and 1,700 there on 14 May. A record 462 were at the Add Estuary, Mid-Argyll on 25 May. Returning birds included 160 at MSBO, Kintyre on 28 Jul and 150 at Gartbreck, Islay on 27 Jul.

**PECTORAL SANDPIPER.** Single adults were at An Fhaodhail, Tiree on 10 Jul (John Bowler) and at Strath Farm east pool, Kintyre on 19 Jul (photo opposite), reappearing on 22 Jul, then, remarkably, two were found at the pool on 27 Jul (Eddie Maguire, Rab Morton).

**RUFF.** A moulting male was at Oronsay, Colonsay on 14 May. A female was at The Reef, Tiree on 18 May and one was at RSPB Gruinart Reserve, Islay on 18 Jun. Four juveniles were together at Loch Crinan, Mid-Argyll on 31 Jul.

**BLACK-TAILED GODWIT.** A max. count of 34 was at RSPB Gruinart Reserve, Islay on 1 May. Returning birds included: a flock of 36 adults at Strath Farm east pool, Kintyre on 17 Jul and 11 flying past MSBO, Kintyre on 27 Jul. On Tiree there were 99 at Loch a' Phuill and 38 at Loch an Eilein on 18 Jul with smaller numbers noted elsewhere in Argyll.

**BAR-TAILED GODWIT.** One in summer plumage was at Loch Caithlim (Seil), Mid-Argyll on 5 May and non-breeding plumaged birds were noted elsewhere but mainly on Islay. Returning birds included 63 at Loch Indaal, Islay on 26 Jul.

**WHIMBREL.** Max. counts on Islay of 90+ at Uiskentuie Strand and 50 at Ardnave on 1 May. Passage peaks at MSBO, Kintyre were 33 on 7th and 22 on 13 May. At Langamull, Mull there were 21 on 7 May. Returning birds included four at Gartbreck, Islay on 21 Jul.

**GREEN SANDPIPER.** One arrived during heavy rain at Balephuill, Tiree on 3 May.

**GREENSHANK.** One or two birds were noted at several sites in Argyll, however a max. of six were at Loch Tulla, North Argyll on 14 Jun and three at Arinagour, Coll on 3 Jul.

**GREY PHALAROPE.** A summer plumaged female was seen on the sea from the Gigha Ferry, Kintyre on 21 May (Rob and Niall Lightfoot). Spring birds are very rare in Argyll.

**RED-NECKED PHALAROPE.** One, possibly a female, was seen on the sea off Easdale Island, Mid-Argyll during a boat trip (Anthony MacLean). Two males were found on a grassland flood by Strath Farm, The Laggan, Kintyre on 26 May (Eddie Maguire, Jim Dickson: photo on page 11).

## Skuas, Gulls, Terns & Auk

**POMARINE SKUA.** On Tiree four adults were off Scarinish on 7 May, three adults were off West Hynish on 16 May and one was off there on 21 May. Sixteen were seen from the ferry between Mull and Tiree on 18 May and 17 were seen from the Tiree ferry off Lismore on 20 May. Two adults were north of Tiree from the Barra ferry on 21 May. At MSBO, Kintyre a pale adult flew past on 29 May. Off north Mull there were singles on 10th, 18th and 20 May.

**ARCTIC SKUA.** Several sightings of one-two birds reported with max. counts of eight at Loch na Keal, Mull on 7 May and five past MSBO, Kintyre on 8 May.

**LONG-TAILED SKUA.** Four flew past Keillmore (Sound of Jura), Mid-Argyll on 8 May (Alan Lauder). An adult flew west across Hynish Bay towards Sorobaidh Bay on 18 May (John Bowler), and four were north of Mull on 20 May (Ewan Miles).

**SABINE'S GULL.** An adult was at Salum Bay, Tiree on 23 May (Christian Verstraat) and presumably the same bird was photographed at Soa, Tiree on 27 May and at Loch a' Phuill



Mediterranean Gull, Ardrishaig, 27 July ©Jim Dickson

on 2 Jun (John Bowler).

**LITTLE GULL.** One reported from Islay on 9 May (per BirdTrack). A second-summer bird was at Loch na Keal, Mull on 15 May and a first-summer bird at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree on 20 Jun.

**MEDITERRANEAN GULL.** An adult flew past MSBO, Kintyre on 30 Jun, the first Jun record. An un-ringed adult was seen at Loch Gilp, Mid-Argyll from 17 Jul onwards (photo above).

**RING-BILLED GULL.** A first-summer bird was found at Loch Gilp, Mid-Argyll on 22 July and seen on a few dates to the end of the month (Jim Dickson *et al.*).

**LAUGHING GULL.** A bird in second-summer plumage was identified by John Armitage at Portnahaven, Islay on 21 Jul. This bird (when un-identified) had been around the area during the previous month (Ian Turner).

**CASPIAN GULL.** The first-winter bird that arrived at Loch Gilp, Mid-Argyll in mid-Jan was seen again on a few dates in May, Jun and Jul by which time it was in first-summer plumage and had replaced its tail and some wing feathers (Jim Dickson).

**GLAUCOUS GULL.** Single 2nd-calendar-year (2CY) birds (first-summer) were reported from Tiree, Mull, Oronsay and Mid-Argyll in May with reports from Tiree into Jun and Jul.

**ICELAND GULL.** Single 2CY birds (first summer) were reported from several sites on Tiree during the summer. A well reported bird was on a west coast beach on Iona, Mull during Jun and Jul (photo top of page 15) and a 2CY bird was at Campbeltown, Kintyre



**Left Photo:** First-summer Iceland Gull, Iona, 15 June ©Rachel Theaker

**Right photo:** Bee-eaters, The Oa, Islay, 2 July ©Mike Hordley

on 29 May.

**SANDWICH TERN.** Peak counts at MSBO, Kintyre were 24 on 7 May, 27 flew past the next day and 35 on 17 May. Smaller numbers were noted elsewhere.

## Doves, Cuckoos, Owls, Swifts, Kingfishers & Woodpeckers

**TURTLE DOVE.** One was at Treshnish Farm, Mull on 8 Jul (Anand Prasad).

**CUCKOO.** A juvenile seen at Balephuill, Tiree on 20 Jul was unusual for there.

**LONG-EARED OWL.** Reports of birds from Colonsay, Coll and Mull.

**COMMON SWIFT.** First report was of two at Kil-michael Glen, Mid-Argyll on 7 May.

**BEE-EATER.** Three were seen near Wester Ellister, Islay on 22 Jun (Alan Filmer *et al.*), and four (possibly same group of birds?) were seen near Upper Cragabus, The Oa, Islay on 1 Jul (Mike Hordley, Elisabeth Morrison: photo above).

**GREEN WOODPECKER.** One was seen in flight at Aros Park, Mull on 15 Jul (Ryan Deal).

## Passerines (Larks to Buntings)

**SWALLOW.** Obvious coastal passage at MSBO, Kintyre on 8 May with 160 flying N in 3hrs and many others over the sea.

**REED WARBLER.** One was seen at Balephuill, Tiree on 15 May. What appeared to be an adult of this species was caught by Neil Brown at his constant effort ringing site at Aros Moss, Kintyre on 9 Jul (photo next

page). However, some feedback from folk at the SBRC & BBRC suggests the plumage and leg and toe nail colour indicates a Marsh Warbler.

**RING OUZEL.** A male was seen near Eredine, Mid-Argyll on 1 May.

**MISTLE THRUSH.** There was a high count of 47 birds at Drimvore, Mid-Argyll on 31 Jul.

**SPOTTED FLYCATCHER.** Generally birds were slow to arrive this year. Migrants on Tiree included a max. of three at Balephuill, Tiree on 14 May and three at Carnan Mor on 8 Jun.

**PIED FLYCATCHER.** A male was seen flying across the main road to Oban, just south of Kilninver, Mid-Argyll on 20 May.

**COMMON REDSTART.** Migrant: a female was at Balephuill, Tiree on 6 May.

**NUTHATCH.** One was in a garden at Pennyghael, Mull for several days in early Jul, and one was at a garden in Carsaig, Mid-Argyll on 26 Jul.

**TREE SPARROW.** Many more records than usual with up to five at Balephuill, Tiree in May and up to 10 at Milton, Tiree also in May. One was at Tiroran, Mull on 1 May and three were at Treshnish farm, Mull on 30 May. One was at feeders at RSPB offices, Gruinart Islay on 6 May and four were at Coullabus, Gruinart on 29 Jul.

**WHITE WAGTAIL.** Max. counts: 25 were at Crossapol, Tiree on 1 May and at least 20



**Left photo:** Reed Warbler, Aros Moss, Kintyre, 9 July (but see text) ©Neil Brown

**Right photo:** Cedar Waxwing, Scarinish, Tiree, 10 June ©Keith Gillon



were at MSBO, Kintyre on 4 May.

**TREE PIPIT.** Migrant: one was calling in flight over Balephuill, Tiree on 9 May.

**CEDAR WAXWING.** An adult bird was viewed for a few minutes at The Glebe, Scarnish, Tiree on 10 Jun (Keith Gillon: photo above), and will be only the third for Scotland following the last bird on Tiree in Sep 2013. There have been four records in the UK this spring of this species, which is increasing in North America.

**TREECREEPER.** One feeding on barn walls at Balephuill, Tiree on 29 Jun was most unexpected and only the fourth for the island.

**LINNET.** High counts of around 100 birds were noted in Jul at Bridgend, Dunamuck, Mid-Argyll and near Ulva Lagoon, Mid-Argyll.

**SISKIN.** A female was at Balephuill, Tiree on 16 May (unusual for there).

**CROSSBILL.** Max count reported: 10+ at Ardmore, Mull on 17 May.

**COMMON REDPOLL.** Birds were reported from Tiree, Coll, Colonsay and Mull with nesting suspected again on Tiree. Full descriptions, preferably with photographs, still required for this species.

**COMMON ROSEFINCH.** A male was reported from a garden at Achnabrech (Lochgilphead), Mid-Argyll on 13 Jun.

**HAWFINCH.** One was reported from a garden in Strachur, Cowal on 1 May (Paul Emery) and

one was on a lawn at Salen, Mull on 4 Jun (David Sexton).

**SNOW BUNTING.** One was at Kilmoluaig, Tiree on 20 May.

**LAPLAND BUNTING.** A female type was at Crossapol Point, Tiree on 1 May.

**Jim Dickson**

**Argyll Bird Recorder (contact details on back page)**

#### **STOP PRESS (Up to 24/8/15)**

**HOBBY.** A first-summer bird was photographed at Dervaig, Mull on 4 Aug (Ewan Miles)

**WOODCHAT SHRIKE.** A bird thought to be this species was seen briefly in a garden at Kirn, Dunoon on 7 Aug, but unfortunately it was not confirmed (Marie Duncan).

**GREAT WHITE EGRET.** One was seen from the Islay Ferry at Glas Eilean, Sound of Islay on 11 Aug (Alisdair Paterson).

**ROSE-COLOURED STARLING.** An adult was on Islay at Machir Bay and nearby areas from 20 Aug (Richard Scott).

**SPOTTED REDSHANK.** A juv. was at Sorobaidh Bay, Tiree on 24 Aug (John Bowler).

American Golden Plover, Sandaig, Tiree, 1 October 2009 ©Jim Dickson



## Vagrant nearctic waders on Tiree

Tiree is the outermost of the Inner Hebrides lying 4km SW of Coll and 55km SE of Barra in the Outer Hebrides. It is approximately 20km long and 5km wide, with a surface area of 78.34km<sup>2</sup>. The island is rather flat and low-lying with three isolated hills rising to 141m. It is a fertile island, with cattle and sheep-based crofting agriculture, which has created a rich mosaic of natural and semi-natural grasslands. Together with abundant wetlands, shallow lochs and seaweed-rich shores, these habitats have long been known to support nationally and internationally important numbers of breeding and wintering birds (e.g. Stroud 1989, Bowler & Hunter 2007, Bowler *et al.* 2008). More recently, the importance of Tiree as a migratory staging point has become better known, particularly in spring for waders breeding in Iceland, Greenland and NE arctic Canada (e.g. Bowler 2013). With increasing coverage by visiting and resident birders alike, especially at migration times, the island has gained an increasing reputation as a hotspot for scarce and rare migrants, including an annual autumn influx of vagrant nearctic waders.

### Methods

A thorough review of all records of vagrant nearctic waders on Tiree up to the end of 2006 was made by Bowler & Hunter (2007). More re-

cent records have been catalogued monthly and forwarded to the Argyll Bird Club and to the relevant rarities committees (see relevant *Argyll Bird Reports*). Only records that have been accepted by relevant rarities committees have been included, although interesting earlier unpublished records are mentioned where appropriate. Arrival dates were taken to be the first date on which an individual bird was seen and individuals within groups were treated separately because group size sometimes increased during their stay. Individual American Golden Plovers were possible to track around the island based on plumage characteristics but this was not possible for other species. In all cases numbers of individuals each year followed the ruling of the appropriate rarities committee.

### Results

The first vagrant Nearctic wader to be recorded on Tiree was a dowitcher sp. found at Loch a' Phuill by Craigie Tait on 6-8 October 1969. There were no further records until Roger Broad found two juvenile Pectoral Sandpipers at An Fhaodhail on 24-25 October 1983 and M. Hutcheson found a juvenile Buff-breasted Sandpiper at Gott Bay on 9 September 1989. Apart from a record of a wandering adult Wilson's Phalarope in August 1992, which was never formally submitted (Andy Knight *pers. comm.*), there was only one further record in the 1990s, that of two juvenile Buff-breasted Sandpipers near Hough on 6-13 September 1996

Table. Number of nearctic waders recorded on Tiree up to 2014 (&lt;04=number up to 2004)

Species	<04	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	Tot
American Golden Plover	1	1	0	1	1	3	3	0	1	1	4	1	17
Baird's Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	4
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	3	2	5	1	9	5	5	7	2	2	2	2	45
Pectoral Sandpiper	5	1	0	2	1	2	7	6	5	8	3	3	43
Semipalmated Sandpiper	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	5
White-rumped Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	4
Lesser Yellowlegs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Spotted Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Dowicher sp.	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	12	4	5	4	12	10	17	13	12	13	12	7	121

found by Mark Williamson. Steve Votier and Stuart Bearhop found Tiree's, and indeed Argyll's, first American Golden Plover, a juvenile at Greenhill on 4-9 October 2001, but it was not until 2004 that the island's potential for vagrant nearctic waders was truly realised. In that year, two Buff-breasted Sandpipers, a Pectoral Sandpiper and an American Golden Plover were all recorded, including Tiree's first spring record of Buff-breasted Sandpiper (Bowler 2009a). Coverage of the island has subsequently involved regular visits by dedicated birders at migration times, including annual trips by Jim Dickson and Keith Gillon. As a result, numbers of records have increased further (see Table). Since 2007 more than seven individuals of four to six species have been recorded annually with a peak of 17 individuals of five species in 2009.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper and Pectoral Sandpiper were the most numerous species recorded with respective totals of 45 and 43 individuals to date (Table 1). Buff-breasted Sandpiper occurred more frequently in groups, with a peak flock size of six in September 2007, when a separate group of two birds was also present (Bowler 2009b). Pectoral Sandpipers have usually occurred singly but there were three records of two birds together and three records of three birds together. American Golden Plover was the third most numerous species recorded (17 birds), whilst there were five individuals or fewer of the remaining six species.

Most birds arrived in autumn, as would be expected, starting at the end of August, with peak arrivals in early to mid-September and numbers dropped off quickly in early October. Peak arrivals occurred during 3-9 September accounting for 25.6% of all birds found. The latest arrival date was 24 October for two Pectoral Sandpipers in 1983, although given much lower coverage at the time, these birds could have arrived earlier. Indeed, all other autumn arrivals of Pectoral Sandpipers were before 11 October and there were no arrivals of Buff-breasted Sandpipers after 4 October. American Golden Plovers arrived in two distinct periods with nine appearing between 29 August and 14 September followed by a two week blank gap and then eight appeared in the first week of October. The former group consisted mostly of adults (six) and a second-calendar year bird plus two juveniles, whilst the latter group consisted of four each of adults and juveniles. The only records of a dowitcher sp. and of Lesser Yellowlegs were in October (on 6 October 1969 and 15 October 2011 respectively), whilst the only Spotted Sandpiper record was on 31 August 2009. There were also records of adult White-rumped Sandpipers in the first week of August 2011 and 2012. As these occurred on very similar dates and at the same location (Gott Bay) in consecutive years, they could well refer to a returning individual. In addition, it is conceivable that the adult bird that arrived on 31 August



**Left photo:** Pectoral Sandpiper, Sandaig, Tiree, September 2011 ©Jim Dickson

**Right photo:** Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Sandaig, Tiree in October 2010 ©Ross Ahmed

2014 at Gott Bay was also the same individual.

There were a total of seven (5.8%) spring records involving four Pectoral Sandpipers, two Buff-breasted Sandpipers and a Baird's Sandpiper between 14 May and 29 June and an unusual mid-summer record of an apparently juvenile Pectoral Sandpiper on 17 July 1997.

Vagrant Nearctic waders were found all over the island but there were hot-spots including Loch a' Phuill, Tiree's largest freshwater body, and adjacent grazed machairs in the south-west of the island, which accounted for almost half of the Buff-breasted Sandpipers and 30% of the Pectoral Sandpipers. The west coast machair at Sandaig to Greenhill with its Golden Plover flocks accounted for 75% of the American Golden Plovers, whilst the 5km long expanse of sand at Gott Bay accounted for all but one each of the Semipalmated Sandpipers and White-rumped Sandpipers.

## Discussion

The high number of Buff-breasted Sandpipers recorded on Tiree is notable in a Scottish context, with only the Outer Hebrides having more records over the same period in Scotland (Forrester *et al.* 2007, [www.western-isles-wildlife.com](http://www.western-isles-wildlife.com)). However, Tiree has less than 3% the surface area of those islands and is smaller than Benbecula alone. The concentration of Buff-breasted Sandpiper records on Tiree is therefore all the more remarkable and currently makes the island the best single location in Scotland to find

this species. The peak arrival of Buff-breasted Sandpipers in September on Tiree neatly fits the typical arrival pattern in Scotland, as do the two spring records, with some 11% of Scottish records to 2004 occurring in May-June (Forrester *et al.* 2007). The sharp increase in records in 2004-14 was also mirrored on the Outer Hebrides where 4-14 birds were recorded annually ([www.western-isles-wildlife.com](http://www.western-isles-wildlife.com)), compared to just 35 records previously, suggesting that the migration pattern of this species may have changed (Forrester *et al.* 2007). There was a large increase in numbers in Britain over the same period with a record total of 97 in 2011 including high numbers in Cornwall and on Scilly (White & Kehoe 2015).

Pectoral Sandpiper remains by far the most frequently recorded vagrant nearctic wader in Scotland (Forrester *et al.* 2007) and there is a recent suggestion that some of these birds may be coming from Siberia, rather than North America. However evidence for nearctic vagrancy on Tiree is supported by the arrival of birds associating with Buff-breasted Sandpipers in both September 2004 and September 2009 during periods of strong westerly winds off the Atlantic. Numbers of records increased in Britain in 1990-2012 with record numbers in 2011 and 2012 including a bumper total of 60 in the Outer Hebrides in 2011 (White & Kehoe 2015). Records of five birds on Tiree in May to July, accounted for 11.4% of records, and presumably related to birds heading north in spring having passed through western Europe in the previous autumn. These records



mirror a recent increase in the number of spring records of this species throughout Scotland, with spring and midsummer records accounting for almost 35% of records in 2000-04 (Forrester *et al.* 2007). None of the spring or summer birds were in adult breeding plumage and it would seem likely that they were all second-calendar year birds, even though one was attracted to displaying Dunlin and Redshank. The record of an apparent juvenile at The Reef on 17 July 1987 is more surprising and seems very early for a returning juvenile bird. It could perhaps refer to a second-calendar year bird instead, as these can still retain the conspicuous pale mantle lines of juvenile birds. However, a similar early record of a juvenile bird recorded at Cley, Norfolk on 13 July 2012 resulted in speculation that it had not travelled far from its natal site (White & Kehoe 2015).

The 17 records of American Golden Plover are impressive in a Scottish context, especially given that the first record from Argyll was not until 2001 and there had only been 71 Scottish records up to 2004 (Forrester *et al.* 2007). Records have become more frequent generally in Scotland in recent years with 49 individuals recorded in 2005-8 alone, accounting for more than two-thirds of the previous all-time total (ap Rheinallt *et al.* 2010). 2011 and 2012 saw record totals of this species in Britain, with Scotland accounting for 48% of records in the two years (White & Kehoe 2015). This recent increase in Scotland may partly be a result of improved observer awareness (Forrester *et al.* 2007) but may also relate to

changing patterns of Atlantic weather systems resulting in a general northward shift of vagrant Nearctic waders within Britain (Fraser *et al.* 2007). The preponderance of adult and first-summer birds (65%) recorded on Tiree seems high, compared to just four adults (17%) out of 24 birds recorded on the Outer Hebrides in 1990-2007 ([www.western-isles-wildlife.com](http://www.western-isles-wildlife.com)) and 40% out of 58 birds seen in Britain in 2011/12 (White & Kehoe 2015), although the comparative age breakdown for all Scottish records is not given by Forrester *et al.* (2007). It seems possible that some records of adult birds on Tiree could involve returning individuals, for example between 2004 and 2009, which would bias the overall age structure of the records, although it should be noted that three different adults were recorded in the latter year. The predominance of adult birds in the August and early September arrivals broadly accords with the pattern elsewhere in Scotland (Forrester *et al.* 2007), although some juveniles arrived on Tiree as early as 9 September and some adults arrived as late as 7 October.

The three regularly occurring North American peeps (small sandpipers) have occurred much less frequently and all have occurred four to five times on Tiree. Semipalmated Sandpiper has occurred five times, albeit with two birds present in both 1999 and 2013. This compares favourably with the four records each of Baird's Sandpiper and White-rumped Sandpiper, since Semipalmated Sandpiper was much rarer nationally in Scotland

to 2004 (15 records of 20 birds) than either Baird's Sandpiper (38 records) or White-rumped Sandpiper (68 records, Forrester *et al.* 2007). The equal numbers of records of the latter two species on Tiree might suggest that the nationally more numerous White-rumped Sandpiper has been overlooked on the island. This is possible since its favoured habitat of rocky seaweed-strewn beaches is both more extensive and harder to cover than the hard upper reaches of sandy beaches often favoured by Baird's Sandpiper. However, the recent increase in White-rumped Sandpiper records on Tiree mirrors an overall increase in Britain in 1990-2012 (White & Kehoe 2015), with 2011 and 2012 being two of the four best years on record. The record of a Baird's Sandpiper at Loch a' Phuill on 30-31 May 2007 was exceptional in Scotland, as there had only been one other spring record of this species (out of 38 records) to 2004, an adult on Islay in June 1979 (Forrester *et al.* 2007).

The Spotted Sandpiper record is remarkable in a Scottish context in that it was only the second record of a total of just five autumn juvenile/first-winter birds to have occurred to 2008 and remains by far the earliest on record (Forrester *et al.* 2007, *Scottish Bird Report* online). It was equally remarkable that it was found at all. The bird spent just a couple of hours feeding along an unremarkable stretch of road at Heylipol in the middle of the island before disappearing and was found by Keith Gillon, who was cycling around the island during a prolonged spell of heavy rain. The absence of further Long-billed Dowitcher records following the dowitcher in 1969 is perhaps surprising but this is a rare bird on the Scottish west coast. For example, only four birds had been recorded on the Outer Hebrides by 2006 (*Outer Hebrides Bird Report* 2005/06) and there are only three confirmed records plus two further older records of unidentified dowitchers from Argyll (*Argyll Bird Report* 2012, [www.argyllbirdclub.org](http://www.argyllbirdclub.org)). Within Scotland most records have come from the Northern Isles and NE Scotland (Forrester *et al.* 2007) suggesting that many may arrive from Siberian breeding areas rather than from North America.

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### John Bowler

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### Editor's note

This article is based on the following recently-published paper:

Bowler, J. (2015) Vagrant nearctic waders on the Isle of Tiree, Argyll. *Scottish Birds* 35(2): 177-183



Mother and cubs eating salmon ©Gordon Holm

## Grizzly Bears of Brooks River, Alaska

One of the world's great wildlife spectacles is the Grizzly Bears of Brooks River in Alaska catching salmon as they swim up the rivers to breed. Brooks River is located in the Katmai National Park, a volcanic area. During the 20th century the most powerful eruption of Katmai occurred in 1912.

My wife and I were lucky enough to stay there for three days, a number of years back. It is a very remote area, accessible only by sea plane. We flew in a conventional plane from Anchorage to King Salmon and then transferred to a sea plane which took us to Brooks Lake. On arrival the first thing you do is attend a bear awareness session. This is for your safety and to ensure you understand that bears have priority and must not be disturbed.

The first day of our trip was like Scotland, rainy with poor visibility, but it cleared up in the afternoon. Many people fly in for a day trip, so the viewing area becomes much quieter in the late afternoon. We were able to watch the bears catching salmon in the late afternoon sunlight. Females with cubs do not fish at the falls as the males can attack cubs.

At peak times of the salmon run there could be up to 15 bears at any one time at the upper

falls, whilst others could be near the mouth of the Brooks River. With so many bears in the one location it is interesting to see the different characters they have. The biggest bears will stand at the prime position on the falls, whilst others will stand below the falls hoping to catch salmon as they fall back. Others will have their heads under water looking for salmon and many appear to use the old scots technique of "guddling". One amusing bear was good at catching



Young bears play fighting ©Gordon Holm

Dominant bear catching a salmon ©Gordon



salmon, but not very good at holding on to them. He would catch a salmon and then put it on a rock to eat it. Half way through this, he would become distracted and the salmon would be washed away. When he looked back he appeared to be puzzled as to where his dinner had gone. Not the brightest bear! Downstream was a very smart young bear. He was not big enough to obtain a prime posi-

tion but obviously understood the habits of the previous bear. He would wait until this bear lost interest and the salmon was washed away. Quickly catching it in the current, he would rush away into the woods to eat it in peace.

Females would tend to catch salmon away from the group with their cubs nearby, so they could defend them if approached by an older, more aggressive bear. We witnessed this happening. A mother and two cubs were approached by another bear and there was a bit of a fight as she saw this one off. She then returned to her cubs where there was much licking, showing the affectionate side of these lovely animals.

Typically a bear would eat about ten salmon a day and this allows them to store up enough fat to survive hibernation. Having a diet of salmon compared to berries and nuts has allowed the Alaskan Grizzly Bears to become the largest of this species.

I am sure you will have witnessed this spectacle on many nature programmes. Brooks River Falls are often used when showing bears catching salmon. So look out the next time you see bears fishing in the water on television, I might just have been there!

**Gordon Holm**

Grizzly Bears fishing at Brooks River Falls ©Gordon Holm



## Papers for the AGM

The AGM of the club will be held during the autumn meeting on 14 November. Included here are the minutes of the last AGM and the agenda for the forthcoming AGM. The Treasurer's Report and the Membership Secretary's Report were included in the June *Eider*.

### Minutes of the 29th Annual General Meeting held at the Cairnbaan Hotel on Saturday 22 November 2014

41 members were present.

#### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Lilly Cregeen, Stuart Crutchfield, Paul Daw, Gordon Holm, David and Heddy Merrie, and Callum Satchel.

#### 2. Minutes of the 2013 Annual General Meeting

The minutes of the 28th AGM held on 2 November 2013 had been published in the September 2014 issue of the *Eider*. Acceptance of the minutes as a true record of the meeting, proposed by Malcolm Chattwood and seconded by Roger Broad, was unopposed.

#### 3. Matters arising not covered in the following items

There were no matters arising from the minutes which would not be covered by the items on the agenda.

#### 4. Chairman's report

Mike Harrison delivered his report: Since being elected chairman of the club at last year's AGM I have tried to follow the philosophy that "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" with regard to the club and its activities. Through its 29th year therefore the Club's activities have continued more or less unchanged from previous years with a programme of indoor meetings and field trips, and publication of information about Argyll's birds through a website, a quarterly newsletter, and the *Argyll Bird Report*.

This time last year we were in this very room for a programme of talks on the theme of bird monitoring in Argyll. Topics covered included an account of the programme of coordinated counts of Black Grouse, the work of the raptor study groups generally and the Argyll group in particular, the use of colour ringing and automatic cameras at raptor nest sites, a plea for more records of upland species to enable better monitoring, and finally a tutorial on the club's own computerised

data entry system which enables efficient delivery of our records to the Argyll bird recording team. In March, despite problems on the road over the Rest and be Thankful, we had a good turnout of members for our spring meeting in the Three Villages Hall in Arrochar. Topics covered on this occasion included the tracking of Basking Sharks off Tiree and seabirds off Colonsay, observing birds using infra-red thermography, an account of a visit to Tiree by a group of members in September last year, a comparison of the migration behaviour of Scottish and English-bred Cuckoos fitted with GPS tags, the threat to birds in Argyll from wind, wave and tidal power, and the frustrations of ringing Jack Snipes for years with few recoveries were contrasted with the encouraging recovery rate of Lesser Black-backed Gulls fitted with large telescope-readable rings. Our thanks for putting together the programmes for these meetings go to our well-connected committee members Bob Furness and Nigel Scriven.

Meanwhile the programme of monthly field trips continued throughout the year, though not without interference from the weather. Trips were arranged across most of mainland Argyll, from Machrihanish through Gigha, Knapdale and Mid-Argyll to Cowal and Bute, not forgetting a ferry trip to Islay on the way and thanks are due to those who undertake to lead these trips and to the members who come along to see what's there. Turnout varied depending on location and weather forecast; more members would be welcome on these trips, as would new sites to visit, so if you have a particular patch which you would like to share with other members please let us know and we can include it in the programme.

Our quarterly newsletter, the *Eider*, continued to go from strength to strength under the editorship of Steve Petty and is now invariably over 20 pages and incurs large letter postage rates: all the more reason for members to opt for the elec-

tronic version rather than a paper copy if at all possible. Please let Bob know if you want to change how you receive your copy. Of course, Steve can only publish good newsletters if he gets suitable material—so please write-up your birding experiences and send them in.

In between newsletters our website provided a means of keeping up to date with what's going on both ornithologically through the recent reports section and organisationally through the news section where you can find details of forthcoming field trips and meetings.

The recent reports section of the website is one of the windows into the world of the recording team; the other is the *Argyll Bird Report*. You may recall that we were able to issue Volume 24 of the report covering 2012 at the spring meeting in March. I am pleased to report that work is already well in hand to publish Volume 25, covering 2013, in time to be issued at the spring meeting in March next year. Thanks are due to editor Jim Dickson and his teams of helpers, not only those who help with the report but also those who help with the data entry and maintenance of the database, and we must not forget the even more esoteric world of the Records Committee whose workload has increased in line with the number of rarities appearing in Argyll in recent years. Publication of the *Argyll Bird Report* is one of the principal activities of the Club but of course it depends entirely on observers sending in their records; so please continue to send in yours, or start sending them in if you don't already do so. We prefer them to arrive electronically through the club's data entry system but other methods are acceptable too. Please speak to Malcolm Chattwood if you want a copy of the data entry system.

The committee has met four times over the past year and has spent a lot of time discussing the financial position of the club. As you will see from the Treasurer's report, we have a healthy bank balance but our costs have increased with the return to annual publication of the bird report. The committee has concluded that we should continue to use the money generated by publication of *Birds of Argyll* to fund ornithological research and conservation in Argyll rather than to support the continuing expenditure of the club's normal activities and it is highly likely that the subscription rates will rise from January 2016. In the

meantime we will seek to defray the cost of the bird report through advertising, sponsorship and sales and if any members have particular skills in sales and marketing and would like to help in this regard we would very much welcome your assistance. Projects which we have supported with club funds this year include Twite ringing at Machrihanish, and signage and fencing to protect the Little Tern colony at Rhunahaorine Point. You may recall that, a few years ago, the club supported the provision of a hide overlooking the Holy Loch at Broxwood as part of the development of this area near Sandbank as a nature reserve. That process finally concluded in May with the official designation as a Local Nature Reserve by Argyll and Bute Council. Congratulations to Nigel Scriven for the successful conclusion to his long-running campaign.

My thanks go to my fellow officers and committee members for their work and support over the past year, especially to Katie Pendreigh who is retiring from the committee after 10 years as secretary of the club. As the club enters its thirtieth year I believe it is in good heart.

## 5. Secretary's report

Katie Pendreigh delivered her report: To start with I would like to thank Mike, and the committee for all their help and support throughout the year.

As usual our meetings were held at the Argyll Arms Hotel, Inveraray where we were provided with a comfortable meeting room as well as tea, coffee and biscuits that were most welcome, especially on cold stormy nights. We met four times throughout the year—in January, April, August and November for about two hours in the evening, to discuss business related to the running of the club.

Once committee members who had enjoyed a pre-meeting meal at the George Hotel had joined us, we made a prompt start by 7 o'clock to allow enough time to work through the items on the agenda and travel home at a reasonable hour. Following decisions made, actions were allocated to volunteers for them to carry out agreed tasks in order to make progress.

The club's Public Liability Insurance was renewed with Golden Valley Insurance Services for a further year as well as our telescope, and the Office of the Scottish Charitable Regulator accepted our accounts, which allow ABC to maintain its

charitable status for a further year.

Items on the agenda usually included the club's website, matters pertaining to the *Eider*, the *Argyll Bird Report*, the club's finances and the spending of club funds, and the arranging of monthly field trips and future meetings.

It is with some regret that I have handed in my notice as secretary (Honorary Secretary) and I do hope someone will come forward and volunteer to help. I have very much enjoyed the position - meetings are interesting and frequently entertaining and the committee have been unfailingly supportive and helpful in keeping me on the right tracks (I have never been a secretary before). The committee work hard to make this such a successful and enjoyable club and without doubt they would divide my simple tasks (e.g., booking the next meeting venue) between them, but it would be helpful to have a secretary to save others from having to be concerned with such matters, so please do consider it.

## **6. Treasurer's report for financial year 2013-2014**

Bob Furness delivered his report: Our cash balance at the end of the year stood at £10,260.24, a reduction of £3,897.15 from the previous year. Income from subscriptions was very slightly higher than for the previous year. Income from bank interest was zero as Treasurer's Accounts no longer get interest. Raffles at the indoor meetings continue to provide useful income, as well as entertainment, and we are grateful to members who contribute items to be raffled.

Expenditure included printing of two *Argyll Bird Reports* and associated postage and envelope costs. This is the first time ever that we have published two bird reports within the same financial year. Insurance costs included insurance of the club's telescope and binoculars now available for monthly field trips, as well as third party cover for club activities. Grants made during 2013-14 represent a contribution to RSPB towards costs of buying data loggers for deployment on seabirds on Colonsay as part of the RSPB FAME project (now re-branded STAR project). Members who attended the talks by Tessa Cole about the seabird tracking at Colonsay will appreciate that this study is strategically important in understanding likely interactions between seabirds and marine renewable developments in Argyll, and is producing very interesting results.

The committee agreed to raise Expenditure above

Income in order to make best use of the club's healthy bank balance, and to follow guidance from the Charity Commissioners that bank balances held by charities should not normally greatly exceed about two years' income. However, running a deficit cannot be sustained indefinitely and we may need to consider ways to increase income at some point in future if we are to continue to spend at the present level. This is further brought into focus by our having moved from biennial bird reports to annual bird reports, production of which represents a major item in our expenditure. Having said that, I can report that our bank balance has now increased to £12,000 (as of August 2014) which is the same level it was at in autumn 2012, thanks to recovery of back-dated tax refunds from HMRC and recent income from data provision. Bob Furness, 19 August 2014.

Adoption of the Treasurer's Report and Accounts, proposed by Robin Harvey and seconded by Ian Hopkins was, unopposed.

## **7. Membership Secretary's report**

Bob Furness delivered the Membership Secretary's report on behalf of Sue Furness: Our number of memberships has remained at almost exactly the same as last year's total. In July 2014 we had a total of 215 memberships, including a good number of family memberships, though (as usual) a few members have not yet responded to a request for subscription renewal, so may lapse. We have approximately 300 members in the club if we count individuals rather than memberships. The number of new members joining this year has been small, and it may be worth looking at ways to raise the profile of the club locally. There is little evidence to suggest that many of our new members have joined as a result of finding our web page. Possibly advertising the club through local newspapers might be a more productive approach, but at present most new members join as a result of personal recommendation from existing members. Sue Furness, 19 August 2014.

## **8. Election of office bearers and committee members**

All the office bearers and committee members had indicated that they were willing to stand for re-election with the exception of the Club Secretary, Katie Pendreigh, who stood down from the committee after ten years as Secretary. Katie was thanked warmly by the meeting for her service to the club.

For the post of Chairman, Mike Harrison was proposed by Malcolm Chattwood, seconded by Nigel Scriven and elected unopposed.

For the posts of Vice-Chairman and Treasurer respectively, Nigel Scriven and Bob Furness were proposed by Norman Rea, seconded by David Jardine and elected unopposed.

No nominations were made for the post of Secretary. In the absence of any nominations, John Anderson proposed that the Committee be given the authority to appoint a Secretary should someone volunteer before the next AGM. This was seconded by Nigel Scriven and agreed by the members present.

Retiring committee members Neil Brown, Malcolm Chattwood, Jim Dickson, Steve Petty, Andy Robin-

son and Blair Urqhart were proposed en-bloc for election to the committee by Malcolm Chattwood and seconded by Nigel Scriven. David Jardine was proposed for election to the committee by Nigel Scriven and seconded by Steve Petty. No other nominations were made and, as the maximum number of committee members had not been reached, the seven nominees were confirmed as committee members.

For the post of Membership Secretary, Sue Furness was proposed by Robin Harvey, seconded by Nigel Scriven and elected unopposed.

#### **9. A.O.C.B.**

There was no other business.

**JM Harrison 25.11.14**

### **Agenda for the 30th AGM of the Argyll Bird Club**

The AGM will be held on Saturday 14 November 2015 at the Cairnbaan Hotel, Lochgilphead.

#### **Agenda**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 2014 AGM
3. Matters arising not covered in the following items
4. Chairman`s report
5. Secretary`s report
6. Treasurer`s report
7. Membership Secretary`s report
8. Election of office bearers and committee members

The current office bearers and committee members are listed on the back page. A maximum of 12 members can be elected and nominations are invited.

#### **9. A.O.C.B.**

### **Rare hawkmoth**



David Jardine was lucky enough to catch this Bedstraw Hawkmoth on 22 August at Kilmartin while moth trapping. This is the first record of this species for vice county 98 (mainland Argyll).

This is primarily a migratory species with small numbers recorded in the UK each year, although occasionally larger numbers invade from the continent. It has not been recorded recently on the UK's main migratory moth website (<http://www.atropos.info/flightarrivals/?entry=0>), so David was extremely lucky to have caught this specimen. In recent years this species has bred in small numbers in eastern England.

For those involved in moth trapping, this is a good time of the year to catch migratory species.

Articles for the December issue of the *Eider* should with the editor before the 24th November 2015

### Officials and Committee of the Argyll Bird Club (2015/2016)

**Chairman:** Mike Harrison, 8 Ferryfield Drive, Connel, Oban PA37 1SP (phone 01631 710656)

**Vice Chairman:** Nigel Scriven, 14 Taylor Avenue, Kilbarshan, Johnstone PA10 2LS (phone 01505 706652)

**Acting Secretary:** Mike Harrison, 8 Ferryfield Drive, Connel, Oban PA37 1SP (phone 01631 710656)

**Treasurer:** Bob Furness, The Cnoc, Tarbet, Arrochar, Dunbartonshire G83 7DG (phone 01301 702603)

**Membership Secretary:** Sue Furness, The Cnoc, Tarbet, Dunbartonshire G83 7DG (phone 01301 702603, e-mail [sue.cnoc@gmail.com](mailto:sue.cnoc@gmail.com))

**Committee:** Neil Brown (Campbeltown), Malcolm Chattwood (Lochgilphead), Jim Dickson (Cairnbaan), David Jardine (Kilmartin) Steve Petty (Ardentinny), Andy Robinson (Partick), Blair Urquhart (Kilmichael Glen)

**Editor of the Argyll Bird Report:** Jim Dickson (contact details under Argyll Bird Recorder below)

**Editor of the Eider:** Steve Petty, Cluaran Cottage, Ardentinny, Dunoon, Argyll PA23 8TR (phone 01369 810024)

**ABC Website:** <http://www.argyllbirdclub.org>

### Argyll Bird Records Committee

Jim Dickson (Secretary, contact details below), John Bowler, Roger Broad, David Jardine, Malcolm Ogilvie & Simon Pinder

### Argyll Bird Recorder

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### BTO Regional Representatives in Argyll

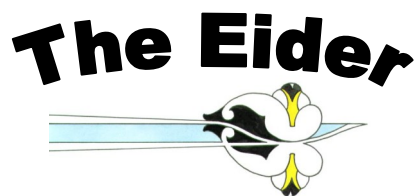
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**Argyll North—Mull, Coll, Tiree & Morvern:** Nigel Scriven (contact details above)

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The *Eider* is the quarterly newsletter of the **Argyll Bird Club**. The editor welcomes articles about birds, wildlife conservation and ecology in Argyll, including articles of a wider natural history interest, notices of forthcoming events, book reviews, press releases and letters. Whenever possible, contributions should be submitted to the editor as e-mail attachments in Microsoft Word or rtf format. But, this should not deter potential contributors, as hand-written scripts are also acceptable. If in doubt about whether an article is suitable, please contact the editor for advice.

Suitable illustrations greatly enhance the attractiveness of the *Eider*, and artists and photographers are encouraged to submit artwork and unedited digital photographs (jpeg files preferred) of birds and their habitats to the editor. Please do not embed digital images in word files. Digital photographs of Schedule 1 species taken at or near the nest will not be accepted for publication unless the photographer was covered by an appropriate SNH licence.

The *Eider* is published during the first week of March, June, September and December. Articles for each issue must be with the editor **before** the 24th day of the month prior to publication. However, it greatly helps if material can be submitted well before these deadline dates. Contributions are accepted in the order they are received, which may result in some late submissions being held over until the next issue.

Opinions expressed in articles are those of the author/s and not necessarily those of the **Argyll Bird Club**.

**Advertising rates:** £80 for a full page, £20 for a quarter page, 7p per word for smaller adverts. Payment must accompany adverts, with cheques made payable to the **Argyll Bird Club**. Contact the Editor for further information.

### More about the Argyll Bird Club

The club was established in 1985 and has around 400 members. Its main role is to encourage an interest in wild birds and their habitats in Argyll; an area of outstanding natural beauty and biological diversity.

The club endeavours to provide a friendly and sociable forum for members of all ages, to meet and enjoy their common interest. This in itself provides a challenge as the human population of Argyll is relatively small and widely dispersed. The club hosts two one-day meetings each year, in spring and autumn. The venue of the spring meeting is rotated between different towns, including Dunoon, Oban and Lochgilphead. The autumn meeting/AGM is held in a convenient central location, usually near Lochgilphead. The club organises field trips for members. It publishes the *Argyll Bird Report*. Additional or past copies can be purchased from the Treasurer. Your annual subscription entitles you to one copy of the *Argyll Bird Report*, four issues of the *Eider* and free admission to the two indoor meetings. New members are always welcome, whether you live in Argyll or not. Membership categories and rates are:

Ordinary	£10
Junior (under 17)	£3
Family	£15
Corporate	£25

Subscriptions are due on 1st January and can be paid by cheque or standing order. New members joining after 1st October are covered until the end of the following year. Further information can be obtained from the Membership Secretary (see the box opposite).