

**The Twenty Seventh
ARGYLL BIRD REPORT
With Systematic List for the year
2015**

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Introduction

2015 marked the 30th anniversary of the Argyll Bird Club during which time membership has grown to a steady 300 or so, and both the quarterly magazine, the Eider and our website have flourished thanks to all those involved. The Argyll bird report has been published by the club with the voluntary dedication of many folk over the years, however without the massive contribution of information provided to us there would be no report. As such it is pleasing to see that this year over 450 people provided in excess of 30,000 records. It should be noted that this information is collected from many sources including the bird club record input system and increasingly from the BTO, notably BirdTrack. It remains to be seen how the recording of this information will evolve in the next few years as we move rapidly into an increasingly digital age and whether the way we present this summarised report is still relevant, interesting and sustainable. Other regions of course face the same challenges and are finding different solutions, a subject on which your ideas and feedback are welcomed.

One thing that is not in doubt is the essential contribution that volunteer recording makes to our understanding of the changing numbers and distribution of bird and other species; in the face of continuing changes in land use and the slower effects of climate change.

This year saw the continuation of many studies, some under the umbrella of the BTO including ongoing wetland, breeding bird surveys, a house martin survey and a repeat of the 10 yearly NEWS (non-estuarine waterbird survey) targeting turnstone, ringed plover and purple sandpiper around our shores, of which Argyll has the longest coastline of any region in the UK. Other ongoing studies included and involved those on geese, eider, divers, black grouse, various seabirds, corn crakes, waders, raptors, owls, chough and finches. Results give us an idea of how our birds are 'doing' and perhaps indicate ways we can help. Breeding species that continue to decline include the waders; curlew, oystercatcher and lapwing, as well as swift, skylark and grey wagtail to name a few. In other parts of the UK the rook is showing a decline and with the last full Argyll survey of this species back in 1975 the bird club has decided to survey it again in spring 2017.

Many of you will not be involved with these surveys and studies (although participation is both easy and worthwhile with BTO training courses available to help) but rather just want to get out and enjoy the wonderful birdlife that Argyll still has to offer, often in spectacular surroundings. For the more serious 'birder' Argyll still remains relatively underwatched and, particularly during migration times, provides numerous locations to explore and find scarce and rare species.

So hopefully you will enjoy this report and if not already submitting records or involved in surveys, will perhaps do so in future. Articles, photographs and feedback are of course always welcome. One can only imagine what the state of our bird life and nature will be in another 30 years time...

Jim Dickson (Jan 2017)

Bird Recording in Argyll

If all records are received in an approved standard format it is very quick and easy to add them to the database. To make it easier for club members (and others) to do this we have devised a user friendly automated bird record template. You simply enter the basic information about the birds you have seen and the template produces a standardised *Excel* file of records that can be automatically e-mailed to the Recorder. With just a little practice you can also use it to keep your own bird records. **To use this system you will need a PC with Excel software and an internet connection.**

The software comes complete with full instructions and Malcolm Chattwood will be happy to talk you through it.

All you need to do to get your hands on this brilliant and time saving system is to e-mail Malcolm: abcrecorder@outlook.com with details of the operating system you are using (e.g. Microsoft XP, Vista 7,8,10 etc) and the version of *Excel* you have (e.g. *Excel* 2000 or later releases) and he will send you a ZIP-file of the appropriate software and the instructions for using it. Advice on what to record is available on the Argyll Bird Club website www.argyllbirdclub.org under 'Bird Recording'.

Rare birds

Details of all rare bird sightings should be sent in as soon as possible after the sighting to **Jim Dickson**, 11 Pipers Road, Cairnbaan, Lochgilphead, Argyll PA31 8UF. Tel: 01546 603967 E-mail: Argyllbirder@outlook.com Please use the standard form (available from Jim. These will be judged locally by the Argyll Bird Records Committee (whose members are listed on p. 2), sent on to the *Scottish Birds* Records Committee (SBRC), or passed to the *British Birds* Rarities Committee (BBRC), as appropriate.

The list below details rare species whose occurrence in Argyll needs to be fully documented i.e. details of the circumstances surrounding the sighting and a detailed description (see a helpful guide in *'The Eider'* for March 2009 pages 8 & 9 - also available on the club website www.argyllbirdclub.org). It is made up of the ABRC list of Argyll rarities and the SBRC list of Scottish rarities (those marked #) and UK rarities assessed by BBRC (those marked β). In general any claims of birds belonging to unusual races e.g. the races of Yellow Wagtail (Blue-headed, Grey Headed etc) must be supported by a description and any species not already on the Argyll list will also require a description before being accepted.

No record of any of the species and plumage phases listed below will be published unless adequate supporting details (including a description) are available. In addition, brief details may be requested for occurrences of scarce species not on the list where the circumstances appear to warrant this.

Records of rarities in the systematic list are accompanied by the names of the observers, starting with the finder(s)/identifier(s) (or, in the absence of this information, the person who first reported the bird to the recorder), followed by the observer(s) who submitted details of the record, if different. Summarised data from many surveys of breeding birds are also accompanied by the initials of the observers or organisations responsible, in order to help readers who are interested in obtaining more detailed information.

'Rare' species considered by the ABRC (as at Jan 2017), SBRC (# - as at Jan 2015) and BBRC (β - as at Jan 2015). **NB** some of these species are not yet on the Argyll list.

Bewick's Swan	Red-necked Grebe
Bean Goose	Black-necked Grebe
European White-fronted Goose	Honey-buzzard
(race <i>albifrons</i>)	Black Kite#
Lesser White-fronted Goose β	Montagu's Harrier#
Lesser Canada Goose β	Pallid Harrier β
Red-breasted Goose β	Goshawk
Egyptian Goose#	Rough-legged Buzzard
Ruddy Shelduck β	Red-footed Falcon#
Wood Duck β	Hobby
American Wigeon	Gyr Falcon β
Green-winged Teal	Spotted Crake
Garganey (lone females/juveniles)	Sora β
Black Duck β	Little Crake β
Blue-winged Teal β	Common Crane
Red-crested Pochard	Avocet
Ring-necked Duck	Stone Curlew#
Ferruginous Duck#	Little Ringed Plover
Lesser Scaup #	Killdeer β
King Eider β	Kentish Plover#
Harlequin Duck β	American Golden Plover
Surf Scoter (except adult males)	Pacific Golden Plover β
Smew	Semipalmated Sandpiper β
Ruddy Duck	Temminck's Stint
White-billed Diver#	White-rumped Sandpiper#
Black-browed Albatross β	Baird's Sandpiper β
Cory's Shearwater#	Pectoral Sandpiper
Great Shearwater#	Broad-billed Sandpiper β
Balearic Shearwater	Buff-breasted Sandpiper
Macronesian Shearwater β	Great Snipe β
Wilson's Storm-petrel#	Long-billed Dowitcher β
White-faced Storm-petrel β	Spotted Sandpiper β
Great Cormorant (race <i>sinensis</i>)	Spotted Redshank
Ascension Frigatebird β	Greater Yellowlegs β
Eurasian Bittern	Lesser Yellowlegs β
American Bittern β	Red-necked Phalarope (away from traditional breeding areas)
Night-heron#	Long-tailed Skua (except adult)
Cattle Egret#	Ivory Gull β
Snowy Egret β	Sabine's Gull
Great White Egret	Bonaparte's Gull β
Purple Heron#	Ross's Gull β
White Stork	Laughing Gull β
Glossy Ibis#	Ring-billed Gull
Eurasian Spoonbill	Yellow-legged Gull#
Pied-billed Grebe β	

Caspian Gull#
 American Herring Gull β
 Bridled Tern β
 Gull-billed Tern β
 Caspian Tern β
 Whiskered Tern β
 Black Tern
 White-winged Black Tern#
 Forster's Tern#
 Roseate Tern
 Brunnich's Guillemot β
 Pallas's Sandgrouse β
 Black-billed Cuckoo β
 Yellow-billed Cuckoo β
 Eurasian Scops Owl β
 Snowy Owl β
 Little Owl
 Nightjar
 Alpine Swift#
 European Bee-eater
 European Roller β
 Wryneck
 Lesser Spotted Woodpecker#
 Red-eyed Vireo β
 Brown Shrike β
 Red-backed Shrike
 Lesser Grey Shrike β
 Great Grey Shrike
 Woodchat Shrike#
 Firecrest
 Crested Tit
 Willow Tit
 Marsh Tit
 Bearded Tit
 Short-toed Lark#
 Wood Lark#
 Shore Lark
 Red-rumped Swallow#
 Cetti's Warbler#
 Long-tailed Tit (northern race *Aegithalos caudatus caudatus*) β
 Greenish Warbler#
 Pallas's Leaf Warbler
 Yellow-browed Warbler
 Radde's Warbler#
 Dusky Warbler#

Western Bonelli's Warbler β
 Barred Warbler
 Lesser Whitethroat*
 Dartford Warbler#
 Subalpine Warbler#
 Booted Warbler β
 Icterine Warbler
 Melodious Warbler#
 Aquatic Warbler β
 Blyth's Reed Warbler#
 Marsh Warbler#
 Reed Warbler
 Rose-coloured Starling
 Common Nightingale
 Bluethroat
 Red-breasted Flycatcher
 Blue Rock Thrush β
 Tree Sparrow
 Yellow Wagtail (all races)
 Citrine Wagtail#
 Richard's Pipit
 Tawny Pipit β
 Red-throated Pipit β
 Olive-backed Pipit#
 Rock Pipit (race *littoralis*)
 Water Pipit
 Buff-Bellied Pipit β
 European Serin#
 Common Redpoll (all races)
 Arctic Redpoll#
 Scottish Crossbill#
 Parrot Crossbill#
 Common Rosefinch
 Hawfinch
 Cirl Bunting#
 Ortolan Bunting#
 Rustic Bunting β
 Little Bunting#
 Yellow-breasted Bunting β
 Red-headed Bunting β
 Black-headed Bunting β
 Corn Bunting
 Brown-headed Cowbird β
 American Redstart β
 Northern Parula β

* Descriptions of Lesser Whitethroat are required for all records apart from those on Coll and Tiree during Aug-Oct inclusive.

Interpretation of the Species Accounts

The sequence of the bird species list has been updated for this report and follows the new order given by 'The *British Birds* list of Western Palearctic Birds' (2015) taken from the updated British Ornithologists' List, using the now agreed IOC international English name.

Each species heading is followed by a summary of the bird's known status and distribution within Argyll, together with any other relevant information.

Birds of Conservation Concern. The fourth review of the status of birds in the UK (BoCC 4) was published in *British Birds* (December 2015 Vol.108) and the updated species status has been applied to this report.

RED LIST is the highest conservation priority with species needing urgent action.

AMBER LIST is the next most critical group followed by Green (not given here) species that don't fall into the Red or Amber category. An up to date list and explanation can be downloaded from the BTO and RSPB websites.

The information regarding sites of national or international importance for wintering/passage birds is taken from Holt, C.A. *et al.* (2012). *Waterbirds in the UK 2010/11: The Wetland Bird Survey*. British Trust for Ornithology, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, RSPB, JNCC. The qualifying threshold for identification as such a site is generally that they hold, at some time during the qualifying period, at least 1% of the national (Great Britain) or international population of the species. The minimum qualifying count is normally 50 birds, although a lower figure has sometimes been chosen where the British population is very small.

For the purposes of this report, Argyll is divided into 10 areas, which are named on the accompanying sketch map. Because few records have been received from Lismore in recent years, it is no longer considered a separate area but has been merged with North Argyll. For similar reasons Gigha's records are now included with those from Kintyre. Note that the boundaries of the Argyll recording area remained unchanged despite local government reorganisation in 1996. This means that places like Tarbet and Helensburgh, which are in the Argyll & Bute Council area are still covered by the Clyde Bird Club.

Categories of the British list (as revised by the BOURC – 2013):

Category A. Species that have been recorded in an apparently natural state at least once since 1st Jan 1950. (The great majority of species recorded in Argyll naturally fall into this category.)

Category B. Species that were recorded in an apparently natural state at least once between 1st January 1800 and 31st Dec 1949, but have not been recorded subsequently. (The only species recorded in Argyll that falls into this category is White-faced Petrel although there are seven species (Red-crested Pochard, Wilson's Petrel, American Bittern, Sora, Little Crake, Great Snipe and Pallas's Sandprouse) that have been recorded in Britain since 1st Jan. 1950 but only prior to that date in Argyll.)

Category C. Species that, although introduced now derive from the resulting self-sustaining populations.

C1 *Naturalised introduced species* - species that have occurred *only* as a result of introduction e.g. Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus*.

C2 *Naturalised established species* - species with established populations resulting from introduction by Man, but which also occur in an apparently natural state e.g. Greylag Goose *Anser anser*.

C3 *Naturalised re-established species* - species with populations successfully re-established by Man in areas of former occurrence e.g. Red Kite *Milvus milvus*.

C4 *Naturalised feral species - domesticated* species with populations established in the wild e.g. Rock Pigeon (Dove)/Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*.

C5 *Vagrant naturalised species* - species from established naturalised populations abroad (e.g. possibly some Ruddy Shelducks *Tadorna ferruginea* occurring in Britain. There are currently no species in category C5).

C6 (Subcategory added 2005) *Former naturalised species* – species formerly placed in C1 whose naturalised population is either no longer self-sustaining or are considered extinct, e.g. Lady Amherst's Pheasant *Chrysolophus amherstiae*.

(There are less than 20 Argyll species that include Category C in their designated status although some may have a combined status e.g. Gadwall AC2 where birds were released or escaped in the past but also occur in a natural state.)

Category D. Species that would otherwise appear in Category A except that; there is reasonable doubt that they have ever occurred in a natural state. Species placed in Category D form no part of the British List, and are not included in the species totals.

(The only Argyll species in this category are Ruddy Shelduck and Red-headed Bunting although there are records, not identified as to species, of Flamingo and Pelican.)

Category E. Species that have been recorded as introductions, human-assisted transportees, or escapes from captivity, and whose breeding populations (if any) are thought not to be self-sustaining. Species that have bred in the wild are designated as E*. Category E species form no part of the British List, and are not included in the species totals (unless already included within Categories A, B or C).

Tables and Figures

Tables 2 – 7 are derived chiefly from Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) goose counts.

Tables 1, 8 – 19 and 25 - 34 are based principally on data from the Wetland Birds Survey (WeBS) and from the RSPB *Islay* database for 2015, although higher counts have been included where available. Some tables include 'monthly maximum day-counts' on *Tiree*. These may be at one site but often represent the total number of birds seen at two or more sites on the island on a given day. Figure 1 was supplied by David Jardine and is based on previous Bird Reports. Tables 20 - 23 and 35 - 38 are taken from the Argyll Raptor Study Group monitoring summaries produced by Roger Broad. Table 24 was from data supplied by Andy Robinson at the RSPB.

Figures in these tables for 'Loch Gruinart' represent the total for the whole of RSPB Loch Gruinart including the area known as Gruinart Floods (the area of flooded fields to the south of Loch Gruinart). Loch Crinan includes the outer Add estuary. In most cases the figures come from the respective WeBS counts for these areas although where higher counts are available these have been used. Also, 'outer Loch Etive' refers to WeBS counts covering the area from Connel Bridge to Taynult. '*Tiree*' refers to WeBS counts covering the four main freshwater lochs on the island viz. Loch an Eilein, Loch Bhasapol, Loch Riaghain and Loch a 'Phuill unless 'monthly maximum day-counts' are specified.

Studies and Surveys carried out in 2015

(1) **Common Bird Census.** This national scheme is run by the British Trust for Ornithology and involves mapping breeding territories of common and widespread birds in around 200 selected plots throughout the United Kingdom. The aim has been to quantify trends in bird populations and it has been instrumental, for example, in drawing attention to the declines among farmland birds. The scheme has been running nationally since 1962. From 1990 until 2012 two plots in the Taynish National Nature Reserve *Mid-Argyll* (one woodland and one coastal) have been monitored by John Halliday. Because it is very labour intensive (involving around 10 detailed survey visits each breeding season) the CBC has been gradually replaced by the simpler BBS scheme, which requires only three visits. From 2001 the CBC has no longer been supported nationally. However a core of about 50 high priority sites continued to be supported and fortunately the two Taynish plots were among them until 2012. Because of the detailed nature of this survey and the continuity of the work (annually since 1990) at Taynish, the data provided are particularly significant for Argyll. John Halliday has kindly volunteered to continue this valuable monitoring work at Taynish NNR from 2015 using CBC for consistency.

(2) **Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) study of seabird breeding success** [J. C. A. Craik]. As part of an on-going wider study of seabird breeding success, selected species were monitored in a study area along the west coasts of *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll*, and *N. Argyll* (including Lismore), and at additional sites in Loch Fyne (*Cowal/Mid-Argyll*) and *Mull*. In particular the effect of mink predation on, mainly island nesting, seabird colonies has been monitored since 1990. The effects of efforts to reduce the mink population at especially vulnerable/important sites have also been assessed.

(3) **Systematic sea-watching at Machrihanish SBO (*Kintyre*)** [E. J. Maguire (Warden) contact: msbowarden@yahoo.com]. Movements of seabirds, wildfowl and waders past this site have been monitored regularly during most months of the year since 1993. With a few exceptions, all individual birds flying past when the hide was manned are identified and logged. In the systematic list below, Eddie Maguire has provided all records relating to Machrihanish SBO. A colour-ringing study of Twite is also ongoing at MSBO (Rab Morton/Eddie Maguire) and part of the larger **UK Twite Study Project**.

(4) **Breeding Birds Survey (BBS).**

The BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) started in 1994. Its objective is to extend and improve the monitoring of population changes of common breeding birds. It now counts birds annually in more than 2,300 randomly chosen one-km squares in the UK, using a line-transect method. Currently 23 squares are covered in Argyll with many more available.

Please contact Nigel Scriven if you might be interested in taking part.

(5) **WeBS counts.**

The Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) is the scheme which monitors non-breeding waterbirds in the UK. The principal aims of WeBS are to identify population sizes, determine trends in numbers and distribution and to identify important sites for waterbirds. Counts are carried out at lochs, sea lochs and estuaries at monthly intervals, principally from September to March, with fewer observations in the summer months. In Argyll, regular counts currently take place at the four main freshwater lochs on *Tiree*; Loch Gruinart and Loch Indaal *Islay*; Holy Loch, Loch Long (Ardentinny to Strone Point), Loch Melldalloch and Kilfinan Bay *Cowal*, Sound of Gigha

Kintyre: Dunstaffnage Bay, Loch Craignish, Loch Crinan, Loch Etive, Loch Gilp, Loch Leathan and Loch Sween *Mid-Argyll* and Loch Creran *North Argyll*. These regular counts produce valuable information for conservation purposes nationally as well as for this report. We are always keen to encourage new recruits

Please contact Jim Dickson or Malcolm Chattwood if you might be interested in taking part.

(6) Treshnish Isles Auk Ringing Group.

The Group have been monitoring the Treshnish Isles breeding seabirds since 1971, producing annual reports since 1996. In 2013 the expedition took place between 22 June and 29 June. They were led by Robin Ward (robin_m.ward@tiscali.co.uk). The group based themselves around the village ruins at the northern end of Lunga, with the majority of the fieldwork taking place on Lunga and Sgeir a'Chaisteil, where an annual full seabird census, and ringing of specific colonies are carried out. The Shag ringing is registered as a BTO Retrapping Adults for Survival (RAS) Project. As well as studying the seabirds, the group also carried out recording of other birds and wildlife, including mammals, and Lepidoptera. Their 2015 annual report can be downloaded from their website. www.tiarg.org

(7) Argyll Raptor Study Group.

The Group was formed in 1993 when a nucleus of experienced raptor workers met to combine resources and knowledge and improve monitoring effort as a whole. Its members are enthusiasts first and foremost, their primary goals being to monitor their birds, participate in national surveys and identify real and potential threats as they arise. Data collected are passed on to the Raptor Monitoring Officer and ultimately to Scottish Natural Heritage to assist in formulating policies affecting raptors.

With such a large area and number of islands and a comparatively small membership, population estimates are best based on national survey results (when additional field workers are involved) or from intensive single species studies.

The group is always looking for new members (especially on Islay, Mull, Jura & North Argyll), who will usually have some amateur or professional background. For those that are inexperienced, we can usually offer mentoring and an 'apprenticeship' period of assessment which usually leads to full membership. (Chairman: David Warden)

(8) Aros Moss CES and Kintyre ringing studies.

Constant Effort Site (CES) ringing, under the BTO scheme, has been carried out at Aros Moss, near the Laggan, Kintyre by Neil Brown over the past 18 years. The scheme uses ringing to monitor various aspects of bird populations in the UK. At this 50 ha site, comprising peat bog, willow scrub and reed mace, 12 visits are made each season. Neil also carries out retrapping adults for survival (RAS) studies at two Sand Martin colonies, one of which has been monitored for the last 16 years, and also raptor ringing studies in south Kintyre.

Sighting Highlights of 2015

Jim Dickson

~ January ~

RING-NECKED DUCK A first-winter male at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree on 3 Nov 2014 was still present and remained to 7 Feb by which time it was acquiring more of an adult type plumage. **KUMLIEN'S (ICELAND) GULL** A juvenile was at Ormsary, Mid-Argyll from 28 Dec and was last seen on 6 Apr. **ICELAND GULL** Many more noted than average with 50+ birds in this winter period. **GLAUCOUS GULL** More than average reported with 35+ birds. **BLACKCAP** Two were at Tobermory, Mull on 2 Jan. **COMMON POCHARD** A drake was at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree on 6 Jan. **PURPLE SANDPIPER** A mainland peak of 32 was counted at Dunoon 'crazy golf', Cowal on 6 Jan. **LITTLE EGRET** One was at the Strand, Colonsay on several dates until 9 Jan. **POMARINE SKUA** A first-winter was off West Hynish on 11 Jan. **BARNACLE GOOSE** Counts on Islay: 38,604 there on 14 Jan. **NUTHATCH** One or more were present at Ardkinglas woodland garden, Cowal on 15 Jan the first of a good number this year. **ACKLING GOOSE** Singles were noted at Bridgend merse, Islay on 17 Jan. **BONAPARTE'S GULL** An adult at Loch Gilp on 4 Feb was presumably the same bird there at end of Dec 2014. **MEDITERRANEAN GULL** Following on from up to ten different birds at Loch Gilp, Mid-Argyll during mid-winter, a colour-ringed adult was there on 18 Jan and had been ringed as a chick in in Poland on 6 Jun 2004; an adult and a second-winter were there on 19 Jan and 2 adults there on 21 Jan. **SNOW BUNTING** Many widespread reports and a peak of 24 were at Corran Sands, Jura on 19 Jan. **SLAVONIAN GREBE** Fifty-one were on Loch na Keal, Mull on 21 Jan. **LITTLE GULL** Two adults and a first-winter were at Loch Gilp, Mid-Argyll on several dates in Jan (at least five different birds in total were at Loch Gilp Dec 14 – Feb 15) with several birds remaining in the area until Apr.

~ February ~

ACKLING GOOSE At least one bird remained in the Loch Gruinart area, Islay during Feb until 13 Mar. **GREATER SCAUP** High count of 77 at Loch Indaal, Islay on 10 Feb. **COMMON POCHARD** One was at Ardnave Loch, Islay on 16 Feb. **SNOW BUNTING** Highest counts: Four were seen on Oronsay, Colonsay on 12 Feb and five were at the Big Strand, Islay on 28 Feb.

~ March ~

RING-BILLED GULL A first-winter was at Glen More, Mull on 2 Mar and then Loch Beg until 21 Mar. **LITTLE AUK** One bird was off Duart Castle Mull on 13 Mar and six passed west off Aird, Tiree on 26 Mar. **NORTHERN WHEATEAR** First arrival was at Claddich, Islay on 15 Mar. **STOCK DOVE** One was seen near East Lodge (Moine Mhor), Mid-Argyll on 17 Mar. **BARN SWALLOW** First arrival was at The Oa reserve, Islay on 17 Mar. **WHIMBREL** First report was at Machrihanish SBO, Kintyre on 19 Mar. **WAXWING** One was found freshly dead in Bowmore, Islay on 22 Mar. **SAND MARTIN** First arrival was at Loch Leathan, Mid-Argyll on 22 Mar. **BONAPARTE'S GULL** A first winter bird was at Sorobaidh Bay, Tiree on 24 Mar and the Loch Gilp bird or a new adult bird was at Ormsary, Mid-Argyll on 26 Mar until 6 Apr. **HOUSE MARTIN** An early single was on Oronsay, Colonsay on 25 Mar. **GREEN-WINGED TEAL** A drake was seen at RSPB Loch Gruinart, Islay on 26 Mar. This or possibly a different

drake was seen on the distillery pond at Port Charlotte, Islay on 28 Mar. **MANX SHEARWATER** First noted was off Aird, Tiree on 26 Mar. **BLACK-TAILED GODWIT** First arrival was at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree on 27 Mar.

~ April ~

SCANDINAVIAN ROCK PIPIT a breeding plumaged bird was at the Add Estuary, Argyll on 1 Apr. **LONG-TAILED DUCK** The highest count was of 25 at the Sound of Gigha, Kintyre on 2 Apr. **GREAT NORTHERN DIVER** Highest counts: 175 were counted at the Sound of Gigha, Kintyre on 2 Apr and 53 were at Loch Indaal, Islay on 19 Apr. **OSPREY** First report was at West Loch Tarbert, Kintyre on 2 Apr. **RED KITE** One drifted over Heylipol and Loch a' Phuill, Tiree on 6 Apr. **WILLOW WARBLER** First arrival was near Campbeltown on 8 Apr. **TREE PIPIT** First arrival was at Ormsary, Mid-Argyll on 8 Apr. **GREENSHANK** Highest counts: five were at Loch Scridain, Mull on 9 Apr and six were at Loch Tulla, North Argyll on 29 Apr. **CUCKOO** First report was of one calling at Glen Fyne, Mid-Argyll on 11 Apr. **HOOPOE** One was seen in Oban, Mid-Argyll on 11 Apr, another was at Lochgair, Mid-Argyll on 14 Apr and one was at Ardchattan Priory gardens, North Argyll on 21 April and probably present a few days earlier. **COMMON SANDPIPER** First arrival was at Loch na Keal Mull on 12 Apr. **GREEN-WINGED TEAL** A drake was at Loch an Eilein, Tiree on 13-14 Apr. **LITTLE TERN** First report of two at Traigh Bhagh, Tiree on 16 Apr. **TREE SPARROW** Two were at The Oa RSPB reserve, Islay on 16 Apr. **GARGANEY** A pair were at Balinoe, Tiree on 17 Apr, a pair were seen at Gruinart RSPB reserve, Islay on 27 Apr, and a pair were seen on Oronsay, Colonsay on 29 Apr. **GREAT WHITE EGRET** One was at RSPB Loch Gruinart, Islay on 17 April. **CORN CRAKE** First arrival was at RSPB Loch Gruinart reserve on 17 Apr. **WOOD WARBLER** First arrival was at Aros Park Mull on 18 Apr. **WHINCHAT** First arrival was at Moine Mhor on 18 Apr. **MARSH HARRIER** A female was hunting at Loch Garadh nan Capull, Tiree on 19 Apr. **GARDEN WARBLER** First arrival was at Kilmartin on 21 Apr. **COMMON WHITETHROAT** First arrival was at Tobermory, Mull on 23 Apr. **ARCTIC TERN** First arrival was at Gunna Sound Tiree on 23 Apr. **COMMON TERN** First arrival was at Sorobaidh Bay Tiree on 28 Apr. **STOCK DOVE** One at Balephuill, Tiree on 28 Apr was the first on the island in 14 years.

~ May ~

LAPLAND BUNTING A female was at Crossapol Point, Tiree on 1 May. **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 the RSPB Loch Gruinart offices, Islay on 6 May. **WHIMBREL** High counts on Islay with 90+ at Uiskentuie Strand and 50 at Ardnave on 1 May. Passage peaks at Machrihanish SBO, Kintyre were of 33 on 7 May and 22 on 13 May. **CURLEW SANDPIPER** One was at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree on 3 May and one at Vaul Bay, Tiree on 14 May. **GREEN SANDPIPER** One arrived during heavy rain at Balephuill, Tiree on 3 May. **LITTLE EGRET** One was at Balvicar, Seil Island, Mid-Argyll on 5 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 a further two the next day. **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, Noerth Argyll on 20 May. Two adults were north of Tiree

from the Barra ferry on 21 May. At Machrihanish SBO, Kintyre an adult flew past on 29 May. Off north Mull there were singles on 10th, 18th and 20 May. **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. **LONG-TAILED SKUA** Four flew past Keillmore (Sound of Jura), Mid-Argyll on 8 May. An adult flew west across Hynish Bay towards Sorobaiddh Bay on 18 May and four were north of Mull on 20 May. **LITTLE GULL** One was reported from Islay on 9 May. A second-summer was at Loch na Keal, Mull on 15 May. **MARSH HARRIER** One was reported from Islay on 11 May and a female was at Moss, Tiree on 14 May. **SURF SCOTER** A male was at Loch na Keal, off Eorsa, Mull on 13 May. **RUFF** A moulting male was at Oronsay, Colonsay on 14 May and a female was at The Reef, Tiree on 18 May. **GARGANEY** A male was at RSPB Loch Gruinart, Islay on 14 May and a male was on Oronsay, Colonsay on 28 May. **REED WARBLER** One was at Balephuill, Tiree on 15 May. **COOT** One was on East Loch Fada, Colonsay on 16- 17 May. **SNOW BUNTING** One was at Kilmoluaig, Tiree on 20 May. **GREY PHALAROPE** A summer plumaged female was seen on the sea from the Gigha Ferry, Kintyre on 21 May. **EGYPTIAN GOOSE** An adult was found on a grassland flood by Strath Farm, the Laggan on 22 May. **SABINE'S GULL** An adult was at Salum Bay, Tiree on 23 May and presumably the same bird again at Soa, Tiree on 27 May. **RED KITE** One was at West Hynish, Tiree on 26 May. **RED-NECKED PHALAROPE** Two females were back on their breeding sites on 23 May, two males were on a pool by Strath Farm, The Laggan, Kintyre on 26 May and one was seen on the sea off Easdale Island, Mid-Argyll during a boat trip on 28 May.

~ June ~

SABINE'S GULL An adult again at Loch a' Phuill on 2 Jun. **WHOOPEE 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. **GARGANEY** A pair was on a pool at Kilmoluaig, Tiree on 9 Jun. **CEDAR WAXWING** An adult bird was viewed for a few minutes at The Glebe, Scarnish, Tiree on 10 Jun. **MARSH HARRIER** A female headed west at Vault, Tiree on 10 Jun and a female was seen between Craighens and Coullabus, Islay on 26 Jun. **LITTLE EGRET** One was at Kennacraig, West Loch Tarbert, Kintyre on 10-13 Jun. **QUAIL** Single birds were heard calling at Hynish, Tiree on 11-12 Jun, at Balephuill, Tiree on 16-30 Jun and at Iona, Mull on 18 Jun. **CURLEW SANDPIPER** One was near Heylipol Church on 14 and 17 Jun and two were at Loch Craighnish, Mid-Argyll on 12 Jun. **GREENSHANK** A max. of six were at Loch Tulla, North Argyll on 14 Jun. **RUFF** One was at RSPB Loch Gruinart, Islay on 18 Jun. **LITTLE GULL** A first-summer was at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree on 20 Jun. **GREAT WHITE EGRET** One was at RSPB Loch Gruinart, Islay on 24 Jun, following an earlier report of one there in Apr. **MEDITERRANEAN GULL** An adult flew past Machrihanish SBO, Kintyre on 30 Jun.

~ July ~

HOBBY One was at the Add Estuary, Mid-Argyll on 1 Jul. **QUAIL** Single birds were heard at Balephuill, Tiree on 5th, and at Coullabus, Islay on 3 Jul. **GREENSHANK** Three were at Arinagour, Coll on 3 Jul. **REED/MARSH WARBLER** One was caught at the Aros Moss ringing site, Kintyre on 9 Jul. **COMMON SCOTER** A high count of 276 birds (mostly males) were at the Sound of Gigha on 10 Jul. **SURF SCOTER** An adult male was at the Sound of Gigha, Kintyre from 10 Jul. **PECTORAL SANDPIPER** Single adults were at An Fhaodhail, Tiree on 10 Jul and at Strath Farm east pool, Kintyre on 19 Jul, reappearing on 22 Jul, then two were found at the pool on 27 Jul. **RED KNOT** Returning birds included: the first at

Machrihanish SBO, Kintyre on 13 Jul with 28 there on 17 Jul and at the Add Estuary, Mid-Argyll there were 42 on 17 Jul and 13 at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree also on 17 Jul. **CURLEW SANDPIPER** A summer adult was at Strath Farm east pool, Kintyre on 17 Jul. **MEDITERRANEAN GULL** One was at Loch Gilp, Mid-Argyll from 17 Jul onwards. **LAUGHING GULL** A bird in second-summer plumage was at Portnahaven, Islay on 21 Jul. **RING-BILLED GULL** A first-summer bird was at Loch Gilp, Mid-Argyll on 22 July and then on a few dates to the end of the month. **TREE SPARROW** Four were at Coullabus, Islay on 29 Jul. **SOOTY SHEARWATER** A single was off Gunna sound, Tiree on 31 Jul. **RUFF** Four juveniles were together at Loch Crinan, Mid-Argyll on 31 Jul.

~ August ~

HOBBY A first-summer bird was photographed at Dervaig, Mull on 4 Aug. **LITTLE STINT** Single juveniles were at Eilean Glas, Jura on 5 Aug and at Clachan, Tiree on 30 Aug. **CURLEW SANDPIPER** One was at the Add Estuary, Mid-Argyll on 6 Aug. **WOOD SANDPIPER** Singles were at Strath Farm pool, Laggan, Kintyre on 6 Aug, at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree on 7 Aug and at Loch Crinan, Mid-Argyll on 25 Aug. **SOOTY SHEARWATER** Thirteen were off Hynish, Tiree on 8 Aug. **SABINE'S GULL** An adult was off Balemartine on 9 Aug. **GREAT WHITE EGRET** One was on Glas Eilean, Sound of Islay, Jura from the Islay Ferry on 11 Aug. **GREEN SANDPIPER** Singles were at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree on 14 Aug and past Machrihanish SBO, Kintyre on 25 Aug. **ROSE-COLOURED STARLING** An adult was seen near Machir Bay, Islay on 20 Aug and remained in the area until 20 Oct. **GREENSHANK** Higher counts included four at Sorobaidh Bay, Tiree on 24 Aug and seven at Croig, Mull on 27 Aug. **SPOTTED REDSHANK** Single juveniles were at Sorobaidh Bay, Tiree on 24 Aug and at RSPB Loch Gruinart, Tiree on 9 Sep. **LITTLE GULL** An adult was at Loch Gilp, Mid-Argyll on 10 Aug and a sub-adult was at Gott Bay, Tiree on 24 Aug. **COOT** One was on a lochan near Glenfeochan House, Mid-Argyll from 27 Aug to 3 Sep. **RUFF** Very strong autumn passage throughout the islands and coastal mainland Argyll from early Aug through to early Oct with ca. 60 around Tiree at the end of Aug with a max. of 25 juveniles at Balephuill on 27 Aug. A max. daily count of 12 juveniles were at Strath Farm pool, Laggan, Kintyre on 5 Aug and a max. of 13 were at Gruinart Flats, Islay on 20 Aug.

~ September ~

PIED FLYCATCHER Singles were at The Glebe, Scarinish, Tiree on 1 Sep, at The Oa, Islay on 7 Sep, and at Balinoe, Tiree on 19-20 Sep. **BALEARIC SHEARWATER** One was seen from the Islay ferry on 3 Sep and one was off Hynish, Tiree on 27 Sep. **BARRED WARBLER** A first-winter was at Balephuill, Tiree on 6-7 Sep. **GREENSHANK** Six were at Ardencaple, Mid-Argyll on 8 Sep. **SOOTY SHEARWATER** Higher counts included 10 off NW Tiree on 10 Sep and 12 there on 27 Sep. **GREY PHALAROPE** Two were seen from the ferry NW off Tiree on 10 Sep, one was in Sorobaidh Bay, Tiree on 12 Sep, one was SW of Coll on 13 Sep and two were off Glengorm, Mull on 21 Sep. **LITTLE GULL** A sub-adult was at the Strath pool, Laggan, Kintyre on 12 Sep, and a first-winter was at Crinan Ferry, Mid-Argyll on 28 Sep. **BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER** A juvenile was at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree on 12 Sep. **MEDITERRANEAN GULL** A Polish ringed bird was at Blackmill Bay, Luining, Mid-Argyll on 12 Sep and an adult was at Loch Gilp, Mid-Argyll on 23 Sep. **AMERICAN WIGEON** An eclipse drake was at Arnave Loch, Islay from 14 Sep until 20 Oct. **YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER** A good showing with six records from Tiree in Sep and one at Ballygrant, Islay on

30 Sep. **SNOW BUNTING** One flew over Balephuil, Tiree on 16 Sep, two were on The Oa, Islay on 22 Sep and one was at Ardnave on 29 Sep. **CUCKOO** A very late immature was at Balephuil, Tiree on 18-19 Sep. **LAPLAND BUNTING** On Tiree, one was at Upper Kenovay on 21 Sep, one flew south at Barrapol on 26 Sep and one was at Keils, Jura on 28 Sep. **POMARINE SKUA** On Tiree two were off Hynish on 27 Sep and one off there on 28 Sep. **SABINE'S GULL** Two juveniles were off Hynish on 27 Sep. **BAIRD'S SANDPIPER** A juvenile was at Hough Bay, Tiree on 29 -30 Sep and again at Sorobaidh Bay, Tiree on 2 Oct.

~ *October* ~

LESSER WHITETHROAT One was at Balephuil, Tiree on 3-4 Oct. **LITTLE EGRET** One was at Fiddien, Mull on 4 Oct and one was near Barcaldine, North Argyll on 15 Oct. **RED KITE** Singles were seen at Loch Frisa, Mull on 5 Oct, Ormsary, Mid-Argyll on 10 Oct and Cluanach, Islay on 19 Oct. **CHIFFCHAFF (Siberian)** A classic *tristis* bird was at Balephuil, Tiree on 7 Oct. **GREAT CRESTED GREBE** One was on Loch Gorm, Islay on 9 Oct. **YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER** One was at Kinnabus, Islay on 10 Oct. **LAPLAND BUNTING** One was at Balephetrish on 11 Oct. **GREY PHALAROPE** Two passed Vaul, Tiree on 12 Oct and one flew past Aird, Tiree on 22 Oct. **QUAIL** A very late bird was heard calling at RSPB Loch Gruinart, Islay on 17 Oct. **GREAT GREY SHRIKE** One was at Dalmally, North Argyll on 20-28 Oct. **LESSER YELLOWLEGS** One was on a flooded field at Cornaigmore, Tiree on 21 Oct and again at a pool near Heylipol Church on 24 Oct. **AMERICAN WIGEON** A drake was at Loch Bhasapol, Tiree on 21-22 Oct then at Loch a' Phuill on 23-31 Oct. **SOOTY SHEARWATER** One was off Aird on 22 Oct and two were off Hynish, Tiree on 30 Oct. **LEACH'S PETREL** During the first NW gales of the autumn four passed Aird, Tiree on 22 Oct and six passed Hynish, Tiree on 22 Oct. At Machrihanish SBO, Kintyre 29 passed in 7 hrs on 22 Oct. A single was at Loch Indaal, Islay on 23 Oct. **SNOW BUNTING** Ten were at Ardnave, Islay on 22 Oct and one was at Scarinish, Tiree on 24 Oct. **POMARINE SKUA** Three were off Aird, Tiree on 22 Oct and two off there on 23 Oct. **SABINE'S GULL** Two juveniles were off Aird, Tiree on 22 Oct. **GREEN-WINGED TEAL** A drake was at RSPB Loch Gruinart, Islay on 23 Oct. **FIRECREST** One was in a garden near Barcaldine, North Argyll on 25 Oct. **FIELDFARE** Widespread arrivals from late Oct, however at Strath Farm, Laggan, Kintyre a high count of *ca* 2,500 on 29 Oct and 400 at Barsloisnoch, Mid-Argyll on 29 Oct. **REDWING** Widespread arrivals from late Oct and a high count of *ca* 1,500 at Strath Farm, Laggan, Kintyre on 29 Oct. **BRAMBLING** Small numbers were noted from early Oct and a max. count of seven were at Rockside, Islay on 29 Oct. **LONG-TAILED DUCK** Highest count was of 10 males at the Sound of Gigha, Kintyre on 31 Oct. **LITTLE GULL** An adult was off Tayinloan, Kintyre on 31 Oct.

~ *November* ~

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER A late bird was at Balephuil, Tiree on 1 Nov. **FIRECREST** One was at Knock, Mull on 1 Nov. **NORTHERN WHEATEAR** Two were at Uiskentuie, Islay on 1 Nov. **BRAMBLING** Most reported together were 12 at the Dunoon golf course, Cowal on 2 Nov. **TREE SPARROW** Two were at Balephuil, Tiree on 2 Nov and stayed until 28 Nov. **COMMON POCHARD** Six were on Islay on 4 Nov, with 5 on Loch Gorm and 1 on Ardnave Loch. **GREAT CRESTED GREBE** One was on Loch Gorm, Islay on 4 Nov. **WHOOPEE SWAN** An island record count of 502 were on Tiree, including site record of 431 at Loch a' Phuill, on 5 Nov. **ICELAND GULL** At least 11 birds were reported during the winter. **GLAUCOUS GULL** At least 8 singles were reported during the winter. **BLACK**

REDSTART One was near Loch A' Phuill, Tiree from 7- 16 Nov. **BARN OWL** One was seen on Tiree near the airport on 11 Nov. **ACKLING GOOSE** One was seen regularly on Islay during this winter period. **LEACH'S PETREL** One was off Port Charlotte, Islay on 12 Nov. On Tiree, two were off Hynish on 12 Nov and one was off Aird on 16 Nov. Three flew past Machrihanish SBO, Kintyre on 20 Nov. **POMARINE SKUA** On Tiree, a juvenile was off Hynish on 12 Nov, an adult flew past Aird on 16 Nov and 2 juveniles were there on 17 Nov. Two juveniles flew past Machrihanish SBO, Kintyre on 20 Nov. **BOHEMIAN WAXWING** One or two were noted on Islay on 13 Nov and one was at Balephuill, Tiree on 21 Nov. **LESSER SCAUP** An adult female was at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree on 16 Nov. **CHIFFCHAFF (Siberian)** One was at Balephuill, Tiree on 17 and 22 Nov. **AMERICAN WIGEON** A drake was on floods at Kilmichael Farm, near Campbeltown, Kintyre on 17 and 22 Nov. **SNOW BUNTING** One was at Ardnave, Islay on 18 Nov and one was at The Oa, Islay on 21 Nov. **GREY PHALAROPE** One flew past Machrihanish SBO, Kintyre on 19 Nov and one was on Oronsay, Colonsay on 20 Nov. **LONG-TAILED DUCK** Five flew past Machrihanish SBO, Kintyre on 20 Nov with a high count of 15 in Loch Indaal, Islay on 30 Nov. **COMMON SANDPIPER** A late bird was at the mouth of the Killail Burn, Otter Ferry, Cowal on 23 Nov. **BARN SWALLOW** A late bird was at Gartmain, Islay on 23 Nov.

~ December ~

LITTLE GULL A near adult (third-winter) and an adult were at Loch Gilp, Mid-Argyll from 6 Dec and seen infrequently until February 2016. **SNOW BUNTING** One was at Gott tip, Tiree on 9 Dec. **GREEN-WINGED TEAL** A drake was at the RSPB Loch Gruinart, Islay from 14 Dec and remained throughout the winter period. **BOHEMIAN WAXWING** Seven were in Bowmore, Islay on 22 Dec. **AMERICAN WIGEON** On Islay the drake (first seen at Ardnave Loch on 12 Sep) was reported again at the RSPB Loch Gruinart on 24 Dec.



Young **Long-eared Owl** Colonsay (David Jardine)

Symbols and abbreviations

<i>ABR</i>	<i>Argyll Bird Report</i>
ABRC	Argyll Bird Records Committee
ARSG	Argyll Raptor Study Group
AOB	apparently occupied burrows
AON	apparently occupied nest-sites
AOS	apparently occupied sites
BBRC	<i>British Birds</i> Rarities Committee
BBS	Breeding Birds Survey
BOURC	British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology
<i>ca</i>	<i>circa</i> = approximately
<i>cf</i>	<i>confer</i> = compare
CBC	Common Birds Census
CES	Constant Effort (ringing) Site
<i>et al.</i>	et alia = and others
excl.	excluding
hr/hrs	hour/hours
imm.	immature
inc.	including
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
juv./juvs.	juvenile/juveniles
Machrihanish SBO	Machrihanish Seabird Observatory
max.	maximum (the highest of 2 or more counts at a given locality during the period being analysed)
min.	minimum
Moine Mhor NNR	Moine Mhor National Nature Reserve
NNR	National Nature Reserve
n/r	not recorded (in tables of counts, where no count was made)
nr.	near
RSPB Loch Gruinart	Loch Gruinart RSPB Reserve
SAMS	Scottish Association for Marine Science
Sd.	Sound
SBO	Seabird Observatory
<i>SBR</i>	<i>Scottish Bird Report</i>
SBRC	<i>Scottish Birds</i> Records Committee
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
Taynish NNR	Taynish National Nature Reserve
Ters.	Territories
TIARG	Treshnish Isles Auk Ringing Group
TTV	Timed Tetrad Visit in connection with the Bird Atlas.
<i>Viz</i>	<i>Videlicet</i> = namely
WeBS	Wetland Bird Survey
2CY, 3CY etc	Bird ages: second-calendar year, third calendar year etc.

Systematic List for 2015

The following systematic list includes entries for 228 Category A, B and C species recorded in Argyll during 2015 (*cf.* average 222 species during the years 1993- 2014) and is well down on the recent higher average of 235 species (2009-2014). One new species was added to the Argyll list in 2015 (Egyptian Goose) which stood at 352 species seen up to the end of 2015. Only one category E species was recorded in 2015 (Muscovy Duck).

All species that have occurred in Argyll are listed here other than Category B (i.e. species not recorded in Argyll since 1st January 1950): Red-crested Pochard, Wilson's Storm-petrel, White-faced Storm-petrel, American Bittern, Sora, Little Crake, Great Snipe, Pallas's Sandgrouse and Cirl Bunting. They are not referred to further in the following Systematic List. Gaelic names are included wherever possible. For description rarities the observer's names are given with the finder noted first.

MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor* Eala

AMBER LIST A *widespread and fairly common breeding species on the mainland and Tiree: scarcer on the other large islands. Not recorded recently on Colonsay until 1999. Flocks gather at favoured localities throughout the year, especially during moult but in decreasing numbers in autumn and winter.*

Winter/spring The highest count reported was 53 at the 4 main freshwater lochs on *Tiree* during the WeBS Count on 19 Jan. The only counts in double figures elsewhere were 23 at Loch Skerrols *Islay* on 19 Jun, 11 at Ulva Lagoons (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 26 Jan, 11 at Ardnave Loch *Islay* on 9 Feb and 11 during the WeBS Count at Loch Etive *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Jan.

Breeding/summer By the end of Apr a minimum of 10 nesting pairs had been located on *Tiree* at 8 sites. However, it was a poor breeding season there with just b/4 at The Reef, b/1 at Loch Bhasapol and b/1 at Loch a' Phuill remaining at the end of Aug. Elsewhere, pairs with young were noted at: Loch Don *Mull* b/5 on 29 May, Aoradh *Islay* b/5 on 16 Jun, Ardnave Loch *Islay* b/6 on 22 Jun, Ardencaple (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* b/1 on 8 Sep and RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* (2 pairs/2 young). Pairs on nests were also reported from: Loch Beg *Mull* on 12 May, Glas Eilean (Mucraidh) *Jura* on 16 May and Eilean Gamhna (Loch Melfort) *Mid-Argyll* on 30 May.

Autumn/winter The highest count reported was 43 at the 4 main freshwater lochs on *Tiree* during the WeBS Count on 16 Nov and Loch Sween *Mid-Argyll* had 34 during the WeBS Count on 17 Oct. Higher counts elsewhere included: 31 at Ulva Lagoons (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Oct, 20 at Ardnave Loch *Islay* on 04 Nov, 19 at Bowmore *Islay* on 30 Nov, 18 at Loch Skerrols *Islay* on 19 Dec, 15 at Gartmain (Loch Indaal) *Islay* on 10 Oct, 19 during the WeBS Count at Loch Etive *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Sep, 12 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 4 Sep and 11 at Loch Gruinart Floods *Islay* on 15 Dec.

BEWICK'S SWAN (TUNDRA SWAN) *Cygnus columbianus* Eala-bheag

AMBER LIST *Formerly more frequent, mainly on Islay and in Kintyre but now a very rare autumn and spring migrant: only two records since 1996: three adults at Ardnave Loch Islay in Nov 2003 and four birds at Stewarton Kintyre in Mar 2005.*

No records.

WHOOPER SWAN *Cygnus cygnus* Eala-fhiadhaich

AMBER LIST A *common passage migrant: smaller numbers wintering. Loch a' Phuill (Tiree) is a site of national importance for wintering birds. A few birds summer in most years and breeding has been recorded.*

Winter/spring The highest count reported was 272 on 24 Mar, a *Tiree* island total which included 220 at Loch a' Phuill (Table 1). Fewer were recorded elsewhere but higher counts included: 90 at head of Loch Gilp on 5 Apr, *ca* 80 at Colintrave Cowal on 13 Mar, 50 flying north over Lochgilphead *Mid-Argyll* on 25 Mar, 44 at Ormidale Cowal on 23 Mar, 42 at Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 4 Apr, 40 at Gigha Bay (Gigha) *Kintyre* on 18 Mar, 40 at Gruinart Flats *Islay* on 7 Apr, 35 at Cruachan Treshnish *Mull* on 14 Mar, 30 at Ardnave Loch *Islay* on 13 Jan, 30 on Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 8 Apr, 22 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 22 Mar, 19 at Loch na Keal *Mull* on 18 Mar and 19 at Loch Tarbert *Jura* on 24 Mar.

Breeding/summer Up to 7 were recorded at various sites on *Colonsay*, *Islay*, *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull* and *Tiree* during late May, Jun and Jul but with no indication of breeding.

Autumn/winter Early arrivals included: 4 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 27 Aug, 8 at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 19 Sep and 3 at Ardnave Loch *Islay* on 27 Sep. The peak count for passage birds at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* was 402 on 28 Oct, but on 5 Nov, a total of 502 were counted around the island – a record count for *Tiree*. High counts elsewhere included: 365 flying over Kilchoman *Islay* on 14 Nov, 328 in Loch Indaal *Islay* on 25 Oct, 258 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 14 Nov, 232 at Ardnave Loch *Islay* on 14 Nov, 160 at Coull Farm *Islay* on 25 Oct, a total of 110 flying out to sea from Loch Gorm *Islay* on 11 Nov, 84 at Kinnabus (The Oa) *Islay* on 15 Nov, 74 at Loch Pottie (Poit na h-I) *Mull* on 20 Nov, 61 at Ulva Lagoons (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 1 Nov, 57 at Easter Ellister *Islay* on 17 Nov, 50 at Loch Skerrols *Islay* on 2 Nov, *ca* 40 flying east at The Laggan *Kintyre* on 7 Nov and 39 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 30 Oct. Smaller numbers were reported widely elsewhere during Oct and Nov but the only counts in double figures during Dec were: 11 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 2 Dec, an all island count of 90 on *Tiree* on 8-10 Dec, 12 at Clachan Sound *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Dec and 10 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 15 Dec.

Table 1. Maximum monthly counts of Whooper Swans on *Tiree* and at Loch Gruinart in 2015.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	5	2	23	14	6	5	1	-	-	22	258	10
Tiree	140	108	272	108	7	5	6	7	17	376	502	90



Whooper Swans *Tiree* (John Bowler)

BEAN GOOSE *Anser fabalis* Muir-ghèadh

AMBER LIST *A vagrant recorded in only ten of the 33 years between 1980 and 2012. Two races have occurred in Argyll: A. f. fabalis or 'Taiga' Bean Goose from northern Europe is the more frequent, and A. f. rossicus or 'Tundra' Bean Goose from further east which has occurred in Mar 2004, twice in Nov-Dec 2011 and three records from 2012.*

No records.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus* Gèadh-gorm

AMBER LIST *There are variable numbers on passage, with occasional large flocks but relatively few over-winter.*

Winter/spring The only flocks of any size comprised 20 grounded on shore in heavy rain at Inveraray *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Mar, 75 heading north offshore at Caliach Point *Mull* on 18 Apr and 27 flying north at Craignure *Mull* on 19 Apr. Otherwise only single birds were reported, from *Islay, Mid-Argyll and Tiree*.

Autumn/winter The first birds of autumn were 3 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 13 Oct. Thereafter very few were reported anywhere in Argyll, with 11 at The Laggan *Kintyre* on 4 Nov, the only count in double figures. Otherwise up to 8 were seen at various locations in *Colonsay, Islay, Kintyre, Mid-Argyll, Mull and Tiree* until mid-Dec.

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons* Geadh-bhlàr

RED LIST *Both the nominate European and the Greenland races have occurred in Argyll. The Greenland race A. a. flavirostris winters in a small number of traditional haunts, and is also a passage migrant. Argyll holds about 50% of the world population of this race in winter and all the locations where they occur regularly are sites of international importance in the UK. The European race A. a. albifrons is a rare vagrant.*

'GREENLAND' WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *A. a. flavirostris*

Winter/spring The SNH co-ordinated count in Mar produced a total of 6,828 birds in Argyll (Table 2). This is, by some margin, the lowest spring count in Argyll for many years. In *Kintyre* birds were at: The Laggan (893), Clachan (33), Tayinloan (785), Gigha (130) and Glenbarr (0). In *Mid-Argyll* birds were at: Danna (0), Keills (0), Ulva (15) and Moine Mhor (8) [SNH Goose Project]. Significant counts elsewhere included: 170 at Loch Clach a' Bhuaile *Islay* on 2 Mar, 61 at Coshandrochaid (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 8 Feb, 63 at Loch na Cille (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Feb, 51 at Ulva Lagoons (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Jan, 53 Inverfolla (Appin) *North Argyll* on 28 Jan and 50 Ardnaclach (Appin) *North Argyll* on 28 Jan. The last reported one was at Balevullin *Tiree* on 23 May.

Summer No records were received for the period late-May to early-Oct.

Autumn/winter The first reported returning birds were 7 at Loch Skerrols *Islay* on 6 Oct. Numbers then built up steadily until 628 were counted at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 28 Oct and 600 at The Laggan *Kintyre* on 2 Nov. In the following days 51 were found at Loch Riaghain *Tiree* on 5 Nov, 28 at Ardnaclach (Appin) *North Argyll* on 6 Nov, 115 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 14 Nov, 550 at The Laggan *Kintyre* on 20 Nov, 24 at Loch na Cille (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 6 Dec, 45 at Ulva Lagoons (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 20 Dec and 47 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 31 Dec.

The co-ordinated count in Dec produced a total of 7,973 birds in Argyll. Although slightly up on Dec 2014's count of 7,133, this is still a historically low count (cf 9,247 birds in Dec 2013) (Table 3). The *Kintyre* birds were at: The Laggan (1,621), Clachan (0), Tayinloan (515) Gigha (0) and Glenbarr (64). In *Mid-Argyll* birds were at: Danna (0), Keills (153) Ulva (50) and Moine Mhor (3).

Table 2. Number of White-fronted Geese in Argyll areas in spring (per SNH).
March 2015.

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Lorn	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
1,841	23	n/r	25	126	748	66	0	3,995	4

Table 3. Numbers of White-fronted Geese in Argyll areas in winter (per SNH).
December 2015.

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Lorn	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
1,621	206	n/r	13	n/r	698	59	14	4,644	4

There were also 180 on Bute, which is outwith the Argyll recording area.

‘EUROPEAN’ WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *A. a. albifrons*

The European race A. a. albifrons is a scarce visitor in small numbers.

No records.

LESSER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser erythropus* Geadh-bhlàr-beag

A vagrant: two records; both on Islay in Mar 1980 and Mar 1986.

No records.



Greylag Geese *Mid-Argyll* (Jim Dickson)

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser* Gèadh-glas

AMBER LIST A resident: *with an increasing breeding population. Some may be native birds that have colonised from the Outer Hebrides, while birds of introduced origin breed in Mid-Argyll. Now that it is no longer possible to distinguish between them, WeBS refers to them as ‘British/Irish’ and identifies Tiree as a site of national importance. Migratory flocks are also reported from most areas.*

Winter/spring An all-island count on *Tiree* on 13-14 Jan found 2,216 birds. In *Mid-Argyll* on 8 Jan, 50+ were at the head of Loch Craignish, 30 at Kilmelford and 95 at Slockavullin. Elsewhere, 195 were at Blarcreen *North Argyll* on 22 Jan, 120 at Poltalloch *Mid-Argyll* on 24 Jan, 60 at Blackmill Bay (*Luing*) *Mid-Argyll* and 110 at Craobh Haven *Mid-Argyll* on 31 Jan,

235 at Ballymeanoch *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Feb, on Gigha 170 at Ardlamey and 112 at Gigha Bay (both Gigha *Kintyre*) on 18 Mar and 60 at Balvicar (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Mar. On The Laggan *Kintyre*, 620 were counted between Kilmichael and East Chiscan, in three flocks, on 28 Feb. In Mar, the SNH co-ordinated goose count recorded a total of 4,591 birds in Argyll, of which 2,123 (46.2%) were on *Tiree* (Table 4).

Breeding/summer 32 fledged broods totalling 121 young were found on *Colonsay* 4 to 7 Apr. The first fledged broods on *Tiree* were at Balephuill on 14 May and by the end of May 18 broods (mean = 3.7) were seen on Loch a' Phuill. Four adults with 7 goslings were found at New Danna (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 17 May and pairs with young were also reported from Iona *Mull*, Kerrera *Mid-Argyll*, Aros Castle *Mull*, Loch Conailbhe *Islay*, Ardnave *Islay* and RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay*.

Autumn/winter The peak count on *Tiree* was 1,903 on 24/25 Aug {of 1,587 aged, 472 (29.7%) were juveniles - mean brood size 2.54 (N = 186 broods)}. Larger counts elsewhere included: 1,140 at Loch Gruinart Flats *Islay* on 20 Aug, 929 on *Islay* (SNH international Goose Count. Average of 17 and 18 Nov), 820 at Machir Bay *Islay* on 4 Nov, 352 at Bowmore *Islay* on 16 Aug, 310 on and around Soa *Tiree* on 9 Jul, 250 at Inveresrigan *North Argyll* on 14 Sep, 225 on Luing *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Oct, 220 at The Laggan *Kintyre* on 9 Sep, 135 at Crossapol Dunes *Coll* on 7 Sep and 134 at Slockavullin *Mid-Argyll* on 26 Dec.

The co-ordinated count in Dec produced a total of 3,921 birds in Argyll, of which 1,696 (43.2%) were on *Tiree* (Table 5). Even allowing for the lack of a count from *Coll* this is well down on recent years.

Table 4. Numbers of Greylag Geese in Argyll areas in spring (per Tracey Johnston SNH). Mar 2015.

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Lorn	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
1,204	216	n/r	0	489	2,123	125	4	430	0

Table 5. Numbers of Greylag Geese in Argyll areas in winter (per Tracey Johnston SNH). Dec 2015.

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Lorn	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
1,328	187	n/r	0	n/r	1,696	107	0	596	7

There were also 1,140 on Bute, which is outwith the Argyll recording area.

SNOW GOOSE *Anser caerulescens* Gèadh-bàn

The small introduced population on Coll breeds on a small off-shore island and is now very sedentary. Stragglers among wintering goose flocks of other species are probably often genuine vagrants.

No reports received from outwith the feral population on *Coll*, where:

Breeding/summer 16 birds (8 prs) were noted as nesting on Soa island, off Port-na-Luing *Coll* on 23 Apr, however success appears to have been low, as 20 adults and no juvs were recorded at Airleod *Coll* on 27 Aug. This compares with a usually low production of between 1- 4 young from 2009-2014.

GREATER CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis* Gèadh-dubh

The resident population on Colonsay was introduced in 1934. Regular breeding has taken place since 1992 in Mid-Argyll in increasing numbers, with increasingly frequent breeding attempts elsewhere. A transatlantic origin seems probable for at least some of the medium-

sized and small individuals seen in winter goose flocks on Islay and Tiree. See also Lesser Canada Goose below.

Winter/spring The largest flock reported was 210 at Ballymeanoch (Moine Mhor area) *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Feb. Other large flocks included: 200 at Loch Creran *North Argyll* on 7 Feb, 135 at Port Appin *North Argyll* on 8 Feb, 102 at Inveresrigan (Loch Etive) *North Argyll* on 22 Jan, 72 at Ulva Lagoons *Mid-Argyll* on 15 Feb, 69 at Blackmill Bay (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Mar, 48 at Barbreck (Ardfern) *Mid-Argyll* on 31 Jan and 35 at Peninver *Kintyre* on 31 Jan. Smaller numbers were recorded on the outer islands with 24 at Craighouse *Jura* on 3 Jun, a max of 53 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 18 Feb, on *Islay* a max of 4 at Easter Ellister on 4 Apr, a max of 4 on *Tiree* of 4 at Heylipol on 17 Mar and a pair were at Arinagour *Coll* on 23 Apr.

Breeding/summer No data was recorded this year in the *Argyll* part of the SAMS study area. Broods of young or other evidence of breeding was reported from other locations in *Coll* (1), *Colonsay* (2), *Cowal* (2), *Jura* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (8) and *Mull* (3).

Autumn/winter The highest number reported at this time was 137 at Tainish (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 17 Oct. Other larger flocks included: 134 at Inveresrigan (Loch Etive) *North Argyll* on 12 Dec, 130 at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 23 Jul, 127 at Ulva Lagoons *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Oct, 107 at Loch Craignish *Mid-Argyll* on 17 Jul, 72 at Loch Etive *North Argyll* on 16 Oct, 70 at Portnacroish (Loch Laich) *North Argyll* on 21 Nov and 68 at Achuaran (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 28 Nov. On the outer islands a max of 50 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 14 Nov, 40 at Mid-Loch Fada *Colonsay* on 17 Oct.

LESSER CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis interior/parvipes*

Also known as Todd's Canada these distinct races are being considered by the BBRC. The race interior breeds NE Canada from Hudson Bay to Baffin Island and NW Greenland wintering in SE USA. The race parvipes breeds W Alaska, E to Yukon Territory and most winter Washington and Oregon. One was remained at Rhunahaorine, Kintyre from 2012 until 20 Mar 2013.

Autumn/winter On *Islay* 2 Todd's (*interior*) were in the Gruinart and Loch Gorm areas from 18 to at least 31 Oct and a single *parvipes* bird was also in this area from 20 Oct. All were seen well and photographed, however have not yet been submitted to the BBRC.

ACKLING GOOSE *Branta hutchinsii/minima*

This species group has recently been accepted by the BOURC as a split from other 'Lesser Canada Goose' types. A transatlantic origin seems probable for most of these hutchinsii birds being from the Canadian High Arctic. The BBRC are still considering numerous records from previous years with the following now accepted:

1984 One at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 26 Mar [R. A. Hume].

2009 One at Coraigmore *Tiree* on 8 Jan to 7 Mar [John Bowler *et al.*].

2013 One at Loch Gruinart *Islay* 9 Oct to 26 Mar 2014 [C. Bradshaw *et al.*]

2014 Two at Loch Gruinart *Islay* to 22 Feb then one to 26 Mar. [C. Bradshaw *et al.*].

(See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.134) including:

Winter/spring One *hutchinsii* was seen well and photographed from the Loch Indaal and Loch Gruinart areas between 14 Jan and 16 Mar, however no submission as yet to the BBRC.

Autumn/winter One *hutchinsii* was seen well and photographed from north *Islay* from 20 Oct and occasionally to 1 Nov. Again no submission as yet to the BBRC, therefore this species is not included in the yearly species total, but highlighted here to prompt submissions.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis* Cathan

AMBER LIST *Approximately two thirds of the Greenland population winter in Argyll, mostly on Islay with smaller numbers elsewhere. Coll, Colonsay, Islay, and Tiree are sites of international importance for wintering birds of the Greenland population of this species. A few birds occasionally summer and a few introduced birds have bred on the Rinns of Islay.*

Winter/spring In Mar, the SNH co-ordinated goose count recorded a total of 45,026 birds in Argyll and is lower than counts of 47,479 (Mar 14) and 53,585 (Mar 13) with regional totals given below in Table 6. The great majority (36,989) of these were on *Islay*. Other large site counts included: on *Islay* 1,870 at Loch Gruinart on 5 Jan with 1,690 there on 17 Apr, 1,670 at Loch Kinnabus *Islay* on 14 Feb, *Tiree* with 1,900 at Balephetrish on 2 Apr, *Mid-Argyll* with 280 on Luing on 14 Mar, *Jura* with 115 at Eilean na Cille on 13 Mar and *Colonsay* (Oronsay) with 1,200 on 15 Apr. No reports were received from *Cowal* or *North Argyll*.

Summer A bird with a damaged wing, first noted in early May was still present at Gott Bay *Tiree* on 27 Jun and a bird was moulting in a flock of Greylags on Gunna Island off *Coll* on 9 Jul.

Autumn/winter The first returning birds on *Islay* were 2 at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 17 Sep with the first wave of arrivals on 4-5 October with 224 and 500 birds, then the main arrivals with 17,150 on 12 Oct rising to 21,055 on 14 Oct and 24,330 on 22 Oct. The first arrival on *Colonsay* was 1 on 25 Sep and on *Tiree* with 4 birds at Soa Island on 5 Oct. The SNH co-ordinated goose count over 15-16 Dec recorded a total of 49,945 birds in Argyll (46,671 in Dec 2014) with regional totals given below in Table 7. The *Islay* all island total on these dates gave 43,883 however there was a higher count of 48,568 over 17-18 Nov. Other large site counts included: 2,460 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 18 Oct, 750 at Balephetrish *Tiree* on 27 Oct, 680 at Toberonochy (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Dec and 180 at Fiddien *Mull* on 20 Nov.

Table 6. Numbers of Barnacle Geese in Argyll areas, in spring. (per Tracey Johnston SNH). Mar 2015.

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
0	741	0	888	4,693	434	1,281	36,989	0

Table 7. Numbers of Barnacle Geese in Argyll areas, in winter. (per Tracey Johnston SNH). Dec 2015.

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
39	427	0	n/r	3,412	470	1,714	43,883	0

BRENT GOOSE *Branta bernicla* Gèadh-got

AMBER LIST *A passage migrant, in varying numbers: few in winter. Most birds seen in Argyll are of the Pale-bellied race B. b. hrota. Birds of the dark-bellied race B. b. bernicla have occurred, mainly on Islay and Tiree, with less than 20 records. There has been one record of the Black Brant B. b. nigricans on Islay in winter 1989/90.*

‘PALE-BELLIED’ BRENT GOOSE (*B. b. hrota*)

Winter/spring Most records from Jan to Mar were on *Islay* and included higher counts at Loch Indaal with 34 on 1 Jan, 41 on 3 Feb, 42 on 7 Feb and 58 on 1 Mar. 25 were at Loch Gorm on 15 Feb and only one report from Loch Gruinart of a single on 1 May. Numbers at Loch Indaal fell sharply during Apr. On *Tiree* there were several reports of 1-4 birds but 5 at Balephetrish on 20 Apr. 42 were at Glas Eilean (Sound of Islay) *Jura* on 4 Apr. On *Colonsay* a single was on

Oronsay on 23 Apr to 1 May. A single, with a Dark-bellied race bird, was at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 26 Apr and 4 there on 27 Apr. A single was at Fidden *Mull* on 1 to 7 May.

Autumn/winter The first of autumn were: 35 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 13 Sep with a max of 72 on 3 Oct. Elsewhere on *Islay* 45 were at Gartmain (Loch Indaal) on 9 Oct with peaks at the head of Loch Indaal of 57 on 14 Oct and 64 on 22 Nov. The first on *Tiree* were 29 on 25 Sep with 1-9 birds until 12 at Traigh Bhi and West Hynish on 5-10 Oct, 18 at Hynish on 23 Oct, 15 at Gott Bay on 27 Oct, 21 at Balephetrish Bay on 13 Nov and the last 5 at Loch a' Phuill on 16 Nov. On *Jura* 2 were at Glas Eilean on 30 Dec. On *Colonsay* singles were at Port Lobh on 27 Sep and Seal Cottage on 26 Sep, then 3 on Oronsay on 10 Oct with a peak of 12 there on 28 Oct. A single was at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 17 Nov. On *Mull* a single was at Fidden on 8 Oct then 2 at Killichronan on 29 Oct, 3 at Fishnish Bay on 3 Nov and 6 at Fidden on 20 Nov.

'DARK-BELLIED' BRENT GOOSE (*B. b. bernicla*)

Spring A single was at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 26 Apr with a single Pale-bellied bird [Jim Dickson].



Pale-bellied Brent Geese *Tiree* (Jim Dickson)

RED-BREASTED GOOSE *Branta ruficollis*

A vagrant: two records; an adult on Islay, first seen on 27th Oct 2001 and another adult on Islay from Oct 2012 into Apr 2013.

No records.

EGYPTIAN GOOSE *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

An introduced species that has naturalised and breeds as a feral species in England, Denmark and the Netherlands. No previous records noted in Argyll.

Spring A single bird was discovered on a large flooded pool at Strath Farm, The Laggan (nr Campbeltown) *Kintyre* on 22 May [Eddie Maguire]. The record was accepted by the SBRC and now becomes the first record for Argyll. (see article on page 141).

COMMON SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna* Crà-ghèadh

AMBER LIST A widespread, but not very numerous, breeding species around sandy coasts. The majority are absent from mid-Aug to late Oct when they migrate to moulting grounds.

Winter/spring Highest numbers were found on *Islay* with a peak of 155 at Loch Gruinart on 13 Apr. Other counts of 10 or more birds, apart from those shown in Table 8, included: 36 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 9 Feb with 66 there on 3 Mar, 10 Queens Bay *Colonsay* on 16 May, 23 at Loch Skerrols *Islay* on 8 May, 34 at Lagavullin *Islay* on 10 May, 21 at Salum *Tiree* on 6 Feb with 43 on 14 Feb and 26 on 7 Apr, 13 at Milton *Tiree* on 16 Mar, 23 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 16 Mar, 14 at Gigha Bay (Gigha) *Kintyre* on 18 Mar and 52 at The Laggan *Kintyre* on 19 May. Smaller numbers were reported from: *Mid-Argyll* at the Add Estuary/Loch Crinan, Loch Caolisport (Ormsary), Ulva Lagoons, Loch Caithlim (Seil), Keillmore; *North Argyll* on Lismore; *Cowal* at Otter Ferry spit and Kilfinan Bay; *Islay* at Ardbeg, Ardnave, Laphroaig, Glenegedale, The Oa, and Rhuvaal (Sound of Islay); and *Kintyre* at Dippen Bay, Carskies and Tayinloan.

Breeding/summer A total of 20 pairs were found on *Colonsay* and at least 6 pairs on Oronsay *Colonsay*. 5 fledged broods totalling 23 young were found on *Colonsay* (exc. Oronsay). The first broods noted were at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* and at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 24 May. Broods were also reported from: *Islay* at Ardnave, Bowmore, Bruichladdich, RSPB Loch Gruinart and Rhuvaal Lighthouse; *Kintyre* at The Laggan; *Tiree* at Clachan, Salum and Torosa and *Mull* at Scarisdale Point.

Autumn/winter Very few were noted away from *Islay*. 2 were at Lagganulva *Mull* on 21 Nov, 1 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 21 Nov, 1 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 23 Nov, 1 at Kilmoluaig *Tiree* on 10 Dec and 4 at Ruaig *Tiree* on 10 Dec were the only reports received.

Table 8. Maximum monthly counts of Shelducks at Loch Gruinart, Loch Indaal, Loch Craignish and Loch Sween.

Lochs	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	130	114	96	155	12	43	n/r	n/r	2	3	117	43
Indaal*	11	n/r	40	15	21	34	14	9	0	0	2	1
Craignish	4	12	9	4	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sween	1	20	30	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	-	-

* WeBS Counts for Bowmore to Gartbreck.

MANDARIN DUCK *Aix galericulata*

An introduced species which has bred regularly, at Loch Eck (Cowal), in recent years. The present size of the Argyll population (whose origin is unknown) suggests that it may well now be self-sustaining.

Winter/spring

Reported regularly from the area around Ford (Loch Ederline) *Mid-Argyll*, with a male on 4 Jan, 5 (3mm, 2ff) on 5 Mar, 6 (5mm, 1f) on 20 Apr and 5 on 6 May.

Summer/autumn 1 was at Duilett (Glen Strae) *North Argyll* on 18 Jun, with 3 there on 15 Jul. 5 were at Ford *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Jul and the only report received from the established population at Loch Eck *Cowal* was 2 on 10 Oct.

EURASIAN WIGEON *Anas penelope* Glas-lach

AMBER LIST A *scarce and local breeding species: common passage migrant and winter visitor to all areas.*

Winter/spring Many sites held up to 50 birds. Sites with counts of 50 or more, other than those listed in Table 9 (which now includes Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll*): 108 on floodwater at Kilmichael (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 5 Mar and 98 at Loch Craignish *Mid-Argyll* on 8 Mar.

Breeding/summer Two pairs were noted at Garmony Point *Mull* on 20 Apr and a pair was at Connel *Mid-Argyll* on 1 May, however no evidence of breeding. Up to 8 pairs were at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* and a pair at The Reef in Apr, however by late May only 2 pairs still at Loch a' Phuill and 1 pair at Loch an Eilein in early Jun, but no confirmation of breeding, although noted as 'breeding attempts likely'. Up to 3 pairs were at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* and a single female or eclipse male there on 2 Jul, but no confirmation of breeding. At Loch Tulla *North Argyll* a pair with 4 ducklings on 23 Jul was the only confirmed record of breeding.

Autumn/winter Sites with counts of 50 or more, other than those listed in Table 9, included:

184 at Ardnave Loch *Islay* on 2 Oct with a peak of 420 on 1 Nov, 56 at Lochdon *Mull* on 4 Oct, 86 at Ulva Lagoon *Mid-Argyll* on 1 Nov, 80 at Loch Skerrols *Islay* on 2 Nov with 61 on 23 Dec, 52 at Strath farm (Laggan) *Kintyre* on 11 Nov, 200 at Kilmichael floods *Kintyre* on 22 Nov, 100 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 24 Nov with 50 on 17 Dec, 50 at Salen Bay *Mull* on 26 Dec and 53 at Gearach (nr Port Charlotte) *Islay* on 27 Dec.

Table 9. Maximum monthly counts of Wigeon at regularly monitored sites that held 50 or more birds in winter, viz.: Lochs Gruinart and Indaal, *Islay*; Lochs Crinan, Etive, Gilp and Sween, *Mid-Argyll*; Holy Loch, Cowal and on *Tiree*.

Lochs	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart*	177	141	161	18	2	4	0	1	6	11	300	112
Indaal**	171	n/r	30	n/r	n/r	0	0	0	135	458	436	115
Crinan	84	73	67	14	0	0	0	0	68	258	375	151
Gilp	50	70	42	0	0	0	0	13	54	282	252	197
Etive	72	130	82	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	47	55	57	96
Sween	40	110	42	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	39	108	n/r	n/r
Holy Loch	82	93	34	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	0	81	53	55
Tiree	221	398	265	70	5	5	0	19	77	320	393	257

* Including Loch Gruinart Floods ** WeBS Counts for Bowmore to Gartbreck.

AMERICAN WIGEON *Anas americana*

A rare visitor: ten or more records.

Autumn/winter Three records of drakes. An eclipse male was at Ardnave Loch *Islay* on 14 Sep and remained there until at least 19 Oct [Jim Dickson *et al.*]. An adult male was at Loch Bhasapol *Tiree* on 21-22 Oct moving to Loch a' Phuill on 23 Oct where it remained until 16 Nov [John Bowler *et al.*]. A first-winter male was on flooded fields at Kilmichael farm (just north of Campbeltown) *Kintyre* on 17 and 22 Nov [Chris Bradshaw, Andy McKee *et al.*]. All records were accepted by the ABRC.

GADWALL *Anas strepera* Lach-ghlas

AMBER LIST A scarce but regular passage migrant and winter visitor with most recent records from: *Islay, Kintyre, Mid-Argyll, and Tiree. Breeds sporadically on Islay and Tiree.*

Winter/spring Birds were reported regularly at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay*, with peaks of 4 on 18 Mar, 9 on 18 Apr and 7 on 12 May. The only other records were on *Tiree*, with a pair at Sandaig on 14 Jan, a pair at Loch a' Phuill on 8 Feb, 2 at Knock (Loch na Keal) *Mull* on 24 Jan, a pair at Oronsay *Colonsay* in Apr and 2 passed N at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 5 May, also an eclipse male and fresh female there on 4 Jul.

Breeding/summer On *Islay* there were 4 pairs at RSPB Loch Gruinart and up to 6 pairs on *Tiree* where a female with a b/6 in Jul. A pair remained on Oronsay *Colonsay* Apr to Aug with a b/10 from 10 Jun and 10 fledged by 4 Aug.

Autumn/winter On *Islay* 6 were at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 14 Sep, with last report of 6 there on 17 Nov, 4 at Ardnave Loch on 10 Oct, 2 at Loch Skerrols on 2 Nov and 4 at Loch Gorm on 22 Nov. On *Tiree* 5 were at Loch Bhasapol on 31 Aug, 11 at Loch a' Phuill on 31 Oct and 6 there on 11 Nov. Elsewhere, 2 were at Ballachuan Loch (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Nov and 5 were at Knock *Mull* on 2 Dec.

EURASIAN TEAL *Anas crecca* Crann-lach

AMBER LIST A *widespread but uncommon breeding species: common passage migrant and winter visitor.*

Winter/spring The only counts of 50 or more birds away from the sites listed in Table 10 below were are: at the Holy Loch *Cowal* with 177 on 19 Jan, 121 on 9 Feb and 53 on 10 Mar and Loch Sween *Mid-Argyll* with 116 on 20 Jan. Other sites with smaller, but notable counts, included 37 at Balvicar Lagoon (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 31 Jan, 38 at Loch Etive *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Jan, 26 at Airds Bay (Taynuilt) *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Jan, and 21 at Loch Creran *North Argyll* on 8 Feb.

Breeding/summer At least 20 pairs were at likely breeding locations on *Tiree* in May, one nest found on 5 May, and a female with b/4 on 11 Jun. In *Cowal* 2 pairs were at Powder Dam on 14 Apr and 3 pairs at Loch Melldalloch on 16 Apr. On *Islay* 19 pairs were at RSPB Loch Gruinart and 1-2 birds at 3 sites Apr-Jun.

Autumn/winter Counts of 50 or more birds, other than those listed in Table 10, included: 50 at Loch Gorm *Islay* on 9 Oct, 90 at Machir Bay *Islay* on 3 Nov with 308 there on 5 Nov, 117 at Knock *Mull* on 21 Nov, 66 at the Holy Loch *Cowal* on 19 Oct with 61 there on 14 Dec. The highest count from *Kintyre* was 20 at the Laggan on 17 Sep.

Table 10. *Maximum monthly counts of Teal at RSPB Loch Gruinart and Loch Indaal Islay, Loch Crinan Mid-Argyll and on the Tiree freshwater lochs (i.e. all monitored sites which regularly held 100+ birds in the winter months).*

Lochs	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart*	n/r	465	226	n/r	0	16	0	0	n/r	684	208	226
Indaal**	212	61	59	n/r	n/r	4	0	0	0	57	210	413
Crinan	78	29	38	12	0	0	0	0	35	105	75	51
Tiree	530	529	91	9	1	1	0	3	150	80	310	503

* Including Loch Gruinart Floods ** WeBS Counts for Bowmore to Gartbreck.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL *Anas carolinensis*

A rare visitor: 22 or more records since 1980, mostly on Islay or Tiree: some records may well involve returning individuals.

Winter/spring A male was at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* 26 Mar-1 Apr [R. McNab, James How *et al.*] and most likely the same bird was at the distillery pond Bruichladdich *Islay* on 28 Mar [David Clugston]. A male was at Loch an Eilein *Tiree* on 13-14 Apr [John Bowler].

Winter A drake was at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 15 Nov to 29 Dec [Mary Redman, Roger Broad, David Jardine *et al.*].

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos* Lach-riabhach

A common breeding, passage and wintering species

Winter/spring Counts of 30 or more birds, other than those listed in Table 11, included: 35 at Ederline farm *Mid-Argyll* on 15 Jan, 38 at Loch Creran *North Argyll* on 19 Jan with 54 on 7 Feb, 32 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 18 Jan with 31 on 7 Feb, 112 at Knock (Loch na Keal) *Mull* on

21 Jan, 44 at Connel *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Jan, 150 at Ormsary *Mid-Argyll* on 24 Jan and 48 at Loch Sween *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Feb.

Breeding/summer On *Islay* there were 50 pairs at RSPB Loch Gruinart and 9 pairs at Ardnave Loch. Several pairs were noted on *Tiree* with broods from Apr. Pairs with young were also reported from: Oronsay *Colonsay*, several sites on *Colonsay*, Killail and Loch Melldaloch Cowal, Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre*, Connel and Loch na Cille *Mid-Argyll* and Loch Beg *Mull*.

Autumn/winter Counts of 40 or more birds, other than those listed in Table 11, included: 40 at the Laggan *Kintyre* on 3 Aug, 49 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Sep with 47 on 16 Oct and 43 on 16 Dec, 55 at Loch Sween *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Sep with 59 on 17 Oct, 42 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 20 Sep, 100 at Loch Ba *Mull* on 14 Sep, 48 at Loch Skerrols *Islay* on 6 Oct, 57 at Loch Finlaggan *Islay* on 21 Nov, 180 at Lagganulva *Mull* on 11 Oct and 96 at Ormsary *Mid-Argyll* on 26 Dec.

Table 11. *Maximum monthly counts of Mallards at RSPB Loch Gruinart and Loch Indaal, Islay, Loch Crinan, Loch Etive, Holy Loch and Tiree freshwater lochs (i.e. all regularly monitored sites which held 50+ birds in the winter months).*

Numbers at most sites were again lower than in recent years.

Lochs	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart*	60	119	112	35	-	24	-	-	46	43	45	223
Indaal**	38	12	3	17	23	-	-	-	80	n/r	121	105
Crinan	22	19	8	9	n/r	n/r	1	24	58	22	14	18
Etive	171	148	39	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	103	99	117	113
Holy Loch	112	104	63	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	148	32	69
Tiree	68	80	36	16	-	-	13	85	125	153	132	81

* Including Loch Gruinart Floods ** WeBS Counts for Bowmore to Gartbreck.



Mallard *Mid-Argyll* (Jim Dickson)

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK *Anas rubripes*

A vagrant: one record; at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree on 15 Jun 2001.

No records.

NORTHERN PINTAIL *Anas acuta* Lach-stiùireach

AMBER LIST A *very scarce breeding species on Tiree and a scarce passage migrant and winter visitor: regular only on Islay and Tiree.*

Winter/spring The highest count was of 54 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 14 Feb and 18 Mar. Elsewhere, 2 were at Loch Riaghan *Tiree* on 19 Jan and 9 Feb, 2 at Loch Creran *North Argyll* on 19 Jan and 7 Feb, 22 at Bowmore *Islay* on 19 Jan, 40 at Loch Gorm *Islay* on 15 Feb, 1 at the Laggan *Kintyre* on 8 Mar, 1 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 10 Mar with 3 N past there on 21 Apr.

Breeding/summer Up to 10 pairs were present at five sites on *Tiree* during the breeding season but no young were observed. 22 birds at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 14 Apr then no further records until Sep and no evidence of breeding.

Autumn/winter The highest count was 87 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 6 Nov. Numbers on *Tiree* peaked at 7 at Loch a' Phuill in Oct and Nov. A drake was at a small inland pond at Bellanoch *Mid-Argyll* on 18 Oct, 5 were at Bridgend *Islay* on 20 Oct, 6 at Corsapol *Islay* on 28 Oct, 2 flew S past Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 31 Oct, with 6 S past there on 11 Nov, 2 at Machir Bay *Islay* on 4 Nov, 3 at Kilmichael floods (nr Campbeltown) *Kintyre* on 22 Nov and 1 was at Ulva Lagoons (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 6 Dec.

Table 12. *Maximum monthly counts of Pintails at RSPB Loch Gruinart (including Loch Gruinart Floods), Islay.*

Loch	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	1	54	54	22	0	0	0	0	7	74	87	86

GARGANEY *Anas querquedula*

AMBER LIST A *regular spring visitor to Islay and Tiree and has bred in Kintyre in 1994, on Islay in 1997, and on Coll in 2004.*

Spring On *Tiree* a pair was at Loch Garradh nan Capull (nr Balemartine) on 17 Apr and a male was at Loch Bhasapol on 10-12 and 15 Jun. A pair was at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 25 to 27 Apr with 3 there on 12 May and last 1 on 15 May and a pair was at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 29 Apr.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL *Anas discors*

A vagrant: two or three records; all adult males with one on Tiree in May/Jun 1986, one on Tiree in May 1998, and (possibly the same) one on Islay, also in May 1998.

No records.

NORTHERN SHOVELER *Anas clypeata* Lach-a'-ghuib-leathainn

AMBER LIST A *scarce and localised breeding species restricted to Islay and Tiree. It is more numerous as a passage migrant and winter visitor: also largely restricted to Islay and Tiree.*

Winter/spring Away from *Islay* and *Tiree* [Table 13] the only record was at Westport Marsh *Kintyre* with a pair on 14 Apr and last seen on 26 May.

Breeding/summer Up to 15 pairs were noted at 8 sites on *Tiree* and at least 3 broods of young were seen. On *Islay* up to 21 pairs were noted at RSPB Loch Gruinart and a pair at Ardnave Loch. A pair were at Westport Marsh *Kintyre* on 14 Apr and 26 May but no reports of young: however nearby at Strath farm (Laggan) *Kintyre* 7 young were seen on 28 Aug. A pair was at Oronsay *Colonsay* during May-Jun, but no reports of young.

Autumn/winter The only other records away from *Islay* and *Tiree* concerned 4 at Oronsay Colonsay on 26 Sep, a male off Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* and 5 at Strath farm (Laggan) *Kintyre* on 28 Oct and 4 Nov.

Table 13. *Maximum monthly counts of Shovelers at RSPB Loch Gruinart (including Loch Gruinart Floods) and on Tiree.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
L. Gruinart	6	n/r	21	41	7	1	1	0	0	3	21	36
Tiree	32	28	16	30	26	2	4	2	2	6	12	15

COMMON POCHARD *Aythya ferina* Lach-mhàsach

RED LIST *An increasingly scarce winter visitor and passage migrant, in small numbers, particularly to: Tiree, Islay, and a few Mid-Argyll lochs. There has been no confirmed breeding in recent years. All records welcome.*

Winter/spring The only record concerned a single drake at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 6 Jan.

Autumn/winter On *Islay*, singles were at Loch Gorm on 9 and 18 Oct and a high count of 5 there on 4 Nov. A single bird was at Ardnave Loch on 4-6 Nov, with 3 there on 14 Dec and 2 on 16-17 Dec.

RING-NECKED DUCK *Aythya collaris*

A rare visitor: 20 records.

Winter/spring The 1CY male from Nov 2014 remained at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* until 19 Jan and was relocated at Loch an Eilein on 7 Feb [John Bowler].

FERRUGINOUS DUCK *Aythya nyroca*

A vagrant: one record; a drake was at Loch Bhasapol, Tiree on 21 to 29 Apr 2003.

No records.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula* Lach-thopach

A widespread winter visitor: most numerous on Islay and Tiree. Breeds in small numbers on: Colonsay, Islay, Mull, and Tiree with scattered pairs found throughout mainland Argyll.

Winter/spring Other than those listed in Table 14, the only sites with counts of 10 or more were: 21 at Loch Kinnabus (The Oa) *Islay* on 20 Jan with a max of 30 on 18 May, 20 at Loch Ballygrant *Islay* on 9 Feb, 15 at Ardnave Loch *Islay* on 1 Mar, 10 at Lily Loch *Islay* on 24 Mar, 15 at Loch Seil *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Feb, 10 at Balnagown Loch (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 8 Feb and 17 at Loch Leathan *Mid-Argyll* on 23 Feb.

Breeding/summer Approx. 21 pairs were present on *Tiree* with at least 9 broods of young located and an 'excellent breeding year'. Elsewhere, birds present in the breeding season: 4 pairs were at Ardnave Loch *Islay*, a pair at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 21 May, a pair at Ardtur (Appin) *North Argyll* on 3 Apr and 2 pairs at Ardencale (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 2 May. A male passed Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 2 Jun and an eclipse male was there on 5 Jul.

Autumn/winter Other than those listed in Table 14, the only sites with counts of 10 or more were: 35 at Loch Gorm *Islay* on 17 Sep with 42 on 9 Oct and a max of 116 on 14 Oct, and 10 at Loch Finlaggan *Islay* on 21 Nov. Elsewhere no site reached 10 or more with the highest recorded: 6 at Loch Kinnabus (The Oa) *Islay* on 16 Nov, 9 at Glenastle (The Oa) *Islay* on 14 Dec, 7 at Ballachuan Loch (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Nov, 4 at Loch Leathan *Mid-Argyll* on 15 Nov, 5 at Balinoe *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Nov and 9 at Loch Fiart (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 28 Nov.

Table 14. *Maximum monthly counts of Tufted Ducks at Ardnave Loch (Islay) and at the four main freshwater lochs on Tiree (mostly at Loch Bhasapol and Loch a' Phuill).*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Ardnave	n/r	4	15	11	n/r	3	n/r	n/r	2	1	3	2
Tiree	119	138	92	71	27	15	23	28	67	102	84	100

GREATER SCAUP *Aythya marila* Lach-mhara

RED LIST A *winter visitor and passage migrant with large numbers wintering at Loch Indaal (Islay): a site of national importance, but scarce and irregular elsewhere. Small flocks of migrants are sometimes seen during autumn sea-watches.*

Winter/spring On *Tiree* a female/imm was at Loch a' Phuill on 14 Jan, a male was at Loch Bhasapol on 4 to 13 May and a male was at Loch a' Phuill on 5 to 9 Jun. On *Islay* all reports came from Loch Indaal with 66 there on 17 Jan, 77 on 3rd and 7 Feb and 12 on 1 Mar.

Autumn/winter On *Islay* counts at Loch Indaal included 19 there on 10 Oct, rising to 39 on 22 Oct, 43 on 27 Oct, 48 on 4 Nov, 54 on 26 Dec and 72 on 31 Dec. The only report away from *Islay* was of a female/imm at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 31 Oct to 2 Nov.

LESSER SCAUP *Aythya affinis*

A vagrant: four records; Islay in Nov 1998, Loch Leathan, Mid-Argyll in Dec 2005, Loch a' Phuill, Tiree in Nov 2006, and Loch Skerrols, Islay in Jan 2009.

Winter An adult female was at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 16 Nov [John Bowler]. Record was accepted by the SBRC.

COMMON EIDER *Somateria mollissima* Lach-Lochlannach

AMBER LIST A *resident breeding bird: common on all suitable coasts, especially on the Clyde. The Firth of Clyde is a site of national importance for Eiders. Large flocks of moulting drakes and first-year birds gather at some sites during Jun to Sep.*

Winter/spring The only counts of 50 or more birds, other than those at sites listed in Table 15, were: 87 at Kilfinan Bay *Cowal* on 8 Feb with 97 on 8 Mar and 61 on 19 Apr, 78 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 16 Mar, 120 at Bowmore *Islay* on 20 Apr, 100 at Loch Melfort *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Apr, 150 at Ormsary *Mid-Argyll* on 28 Mar, 55 at Balephetrish Bay *Tiree* on 8 Jan and 90 at West Hynish *Tiree* on 21 Mar.

Breeding/summer There were no data this year from the Argyll part of the SAMS study area. On *Colonsay* (inc *Oronsay*) only 5 broods noted with 14 young (incomplete count). At Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* the local population continues to decline, after a 75% decrease in 2014 only three broods were noted this year (b/1, b/2, b/5). On the Treshnish Isles *Mull*, a single (b/6) on Lunga and 2 broods on Fladda. Adults with young were also noted as follows: *Cowal* (4 sites), *Islay* (11 sites), *Mid-Argyll* (6 sites), *Mull* (3 sites), and *Tiree* (7 sites).

Autumn/winter The 2015 co-ordinated count of Eider in the Firth of Clyde in Sep gave a total of 2,006 for the Argyll part of the area, including 795 in Loch Fyne. This is a slight decrease since last year, however there appears to be some stabilisation in overall numbers in the Firth of Clyde since 2010, but still down 67% since 1997. Away from the sites listed in Table 15, counts of over 50 included: 152 at Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* on 30 Sep with 250 there on 30 Oct (174 males, 74 females and 24 imms), 362 at Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 27 Jul, 511 on 7 Aug and 432 (237 males, 197 fem/imms) on 14 Sep, 120 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 29 Sep, 132 at Bowmore *Islay* on 3 Nov, 142 at Ormsary *Mid-Argyll* on 26 Dec, 80 at Loch na Keal *Mull* on 14 Oct, 210 at West Hynish *Tiree* on 17 Aug and 140 at Hynish *Tiree* on 28 Sep.

Table 15. Maximum monthly counts of Eiders at Holy Loch and Loch Long (Cowal) and Loch Creran (North Argyll) and Sound of Gigha (Kintyre).

Lochs	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Holy L.	6	32	31	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	141	129	99
Craignish	55	34	9	27	3	17	n/r	8	14	75	5	52
Creran	7	77	n/r	2	25	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	88	n/r	n/r
Long*	173	n/r	56	46	n/r	340	257	89	90	96	69	114
Sound of Gigha	17	46	18	14	n/r	55	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r

* Ardentinny to Strone Point

‘NORTHERN’ COMMON EIDER *Somateria mollissima borealis*

No previous Argyll records of this Eider sub-species which breeds in Greenland and northern Canada.

The following records previously submitted to the BBRC are now no longer being considered (see note below).

2012. Adult male Tragh Bhi Tìree on 7 Apr.

2013. Adult male West Hynish Tìree 8-16 May.

The British Ornithologists' Union review of evidence for geographic variation in the three subspecies *borealis*, *faeroensis* and *mollissima* indicates that no clear subdivisions have been documented, that variation is mostly clinal, and that recognition of multiple subspecies is problematic. Thus, all Western Palearctic populations are treated as a single subspecies, *S. m. mollissima*” (BOU 2015). The subspecies ‘*faeroensis*’ and ‘*borealis*’ are therefore now regarded as invalid.

The BBRC welcomes claims of *dresseri* and *v-nigrum* but claims of ‘*borealis*’ are no longer sought.

KING EIDER *Somateria spectabilis*

A vagrant: at least 14 Argyll records; all of single males. The most recent was in Kintyre in Feb/May 2008.

No records.

HARLEQUIN DUCK *Histrionicus histrionicus*

A vagrant: one record; a female was at Claggain Bay, Islay on 20 to 30 Oct 1987 and was only the fifth Scottish record.

No records.

LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis* Eun-buchainn

RED LIST An uncommon winter visitor, most frequent in Sound of Gigha (Kintyre), Coll, Islay, and Tìree. Usually marine but occasionally seen on inland lochs. Occasional summer records. Now Red Listed as a ‘Vulnerable’ species – all records required.

Winter/spring The largest numbers recorded were in the Sound of Gigha off Rhunahaorine Point Kintyre where there were 17 on 20 Jan, 14 on 10 Mar, 25 on 2 Apr and 10 still there on 24 Apr. Elsewhere, on Tìree, 9 were at Hough Bay on 3 Jan, 4 at Balephetrish Bay on 8 Jan, 12 at Hough Bay on 30 Jan and 8 at Balephetrish Bay on 16 Mar, increasing to 12 on 23 Mar. On Islay, 2 were off Bridgend Pier on 14 Jan, with 10 seen in Loch Indaal on 18 Mar and 5 at Laggan Bay on 3 Feb. The last sighting of the spring was at Breachacha Coll on 26 Apr.

Summer Unusually one was at Loch Gilp Mid-Argyll on 24 Jun.

Winter/spring The numbers reported were lower than in the spring. The first noted was one at Blackrock (Loch Indaal) *Islay* on 13 Oct, followed by one at Hynish *Tiree* on 22 Oct and 10 at Rhunahaorine Point *Kintyre* on 31 Oct. Away from the usual sites, 2 were seen off Kerrera *Mid-Argyll* on 3 Nov and one was inland on Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 22 Nov – the only freshwater record during year. Numbers increased at Loch Indaal *Islay* during Nov, with 15 reported on 30 Nov. Small numbers remained around *Tiree* through until Dec, when one was in Gunna Sound on 8 Dec and 3 were at Balephetrish Bay on 11 Dec.



Long-tailed Ducks *Kintyre* (Jim Dickson)

COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra* Lach-bheag-dhubh

AMBER LIST *Present throughout the year at Loch Indaal (Islay) and in the Sound of Gigha (Kintyre): a scarce winter visitor elsewhere. The very small breeding population may well now be extinct.*

Winter/spring Regular sightings were received from three sites throughout the year (Table 16), but numbers reported were significantly lower than last year, with 23 in the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on Apr (*cf* 150 off Port Charlotte *Islay* in May 2014). There were other widespread sightings of small numbers of birds: during winter singles were in the Gunna Sound *Tiree* on 13 Jan and at Port-an t-Salainn *Mull* on 21 Jan, 9 at Ormsary *Mid-Argyll* on 31 Jan and 3 in Kilfinnan Bay *Cowal* on 19 Feb. During migration one was on Loch na Keal *Mull* on 29 Mar, 3 at Loch Scridain *Mull* on 11 Apr, a male flew north at Cullipool (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 2 May and on 23 May 5 were in the Gunna Sound *Tiree* and a single at Kiloran Bay *Colonsay*.

Breeding/summer During June a pair were seen inland on Loch Conaibhle *Islay* on 15 Jun, however a female on a pond on Easter Ellister *Islay* on 26 Jun was of unknown origin.

Autumn/winter The first post-breeding records were of 15 off Calaich Point *Mull* on 23 Jun and 3 in Loch Craignish *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Jul. A noticeable build up occurred later that month when 276 were counted in the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on 10 Jul and 50 were noted off the south end of Oronsay *Colonsay* on 12 Jul. Three were also at Milton *Tiree* on 28 Jul. Later at least one was noted off Iona *Mull* on 12 Aug, 15 were at Sandaig *Tiree* on 24 Oct, 58 at Rhunahaorine Point *Kintyre* on 13 Oct and 90 in Loch Indaal *Islay* on 30 Dec.

Table 16. Maximum monthly counts of Common Scoter at Loch Indaal (*Islay*), Machrihanish SBO (*Kintyre*) and Sound of Gigha (*Kintyre*)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Loch Indaal	12	n/r	20	10	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	53	70	64	90
Machrihanish SBO	n/r	n/r	1	n/r	n/r	6	12	3	9	n/r	n/r	n/r
Sound of Gigha	16	n/r	9	23	20	n/r	276	n/r	n/r	58	n/r	n/r

NB. No regular systematic monitoring was carried out for Loch Indaal as a whole: counts are therefore casual and incomplete.

SURF SCOTER *Melanitta perspicillata*

A rare visitor: at least 16 records.

Summer An adult male was at Loch na Keal (Eorsa) Mull on 13 May [Marcus Conway, John Dowson *et al.*] and another adult male was near Rhunahaorine Point (Sound of Gigha) *Kintyre* on 10-11 Jul [Jim Dickson, David Jardine].

VELVET SCOTER *Melanitta fusca* Lach-dhubh

RED LIST *Scarce but regular in and around the Sound of Gigha, and in much smaller numbers, at Loch Indaal, Islay. The wintering population in the Sound of Gigha is now much reduced from the population in the 1970s when over 50 were present. Now Red Listed as a ‘Threatened’ species – all records required.*

Winter/Spring A female was noted at Rhunahaorine Point *Kintyre* on 17 Jan, 5 were there on 2 Apr with one ‘possible’ bird remaining until 24 Apr. The only other spring record was of a bird at Loch na Keal *Mull* on 2 Apr, which was also reported there on 26 Apr and 1 May.

Summer/autumn/winter. Only two birds were reported: a male off Eorsa (Loch na Keal) *Mull* on 19-20 Oct and a ‘probable’ off Blackrock (Loch Indaal) *Islay* on 30 Oct.

COMMON GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula* Lach-bhreac

AMBER LIST *A common winter visitor: birds are regularly present in all areas from early Oct to late Apr with occasional summer records.*

Winter/spring Other than those in Table 17, the highest count was 70 at the fish hatchery outfall at the head of Loch na Keal *Mull* on 13 Jan, with 35 still there on 13 Mar. Other notable sightings were 5 on the Lismore Lochs *North Argyll* on 2 Feb, 16 at Kilmarnock (Loch Striven) *Cowal* on 6 Feb, 23 at Loch Gair *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Feb, one in Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* on 14 Feb, 9 at Ardnave Loch *Islay* on 4 Mar, 8 at Glenastle *Islay* on 18 Mar and 7 at Airds Bay Taynuilt *Mid-Argyll* on 21 Mar. 10 were on Loch Tulla *North Argyll* on 15 Feb, with 2 still there on 19 Apr. A female on Loch Cholla *Colonsay* on 27 Apr and a male on Loch an Torr *Mull* on 29 Apr, were the last spring records.

Breeding/summer The only record between late Apr and mid Oct concerned 3 on Loch Ederline *Mid-Argyll* on 24 May.

Autumn/winter The first returning birds recorded were 3 on Loch Gorm *Islay* on 9 Oct. 6 had returned to Eilean Traighe (Ormsary) *Mid-Argyll* by 26 Oct, where 84 were found on 26 Dec. It is interesting to note that the two most important sites for this species recorded in 2015 were fish-hatchery outfalls. Other than those listed below, interesting records included one at Strath Farm (The Laggan) *Kintyre* from 31 Oct – 2 Nov and 4 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 13 Dec.

Table 17. *Maximum monthly counts of Goldeneye in: Loch Indaal (Islay), Outer Loch Etive (N Argyll), Loch Sween (Mid-Argyll), Holy Loch (Cowal) and at the four main freshwater lochs on Tiree.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Oct	Nov	Dec
L. Indaal	1	n/r	5	2		1	11	5
L. Etive	12	24	5	n/r		n/r	3	4
L. Sween	20	21	25	n/r		n/r	n/r	2
Holy L.	9	7	8	n/r		n/r	n/r	n/r
Tiree	68	69	42	9		17	53	46

SMEW *Mergus albellus* Siolta-bhreac

A rare winter visitor: about 10 records since 1954; last records were at Loch Poit na h-I (Pottie), Mull on 16 May 2004 and off Bowmore, Islay on 21 Dec 2012.

No records.



Red-breasted Mergansers *Kintyre* (Jim Dickson)

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator* Siolta-dhearg

A common resident breeder: large moulting flocks gather, particularly in Loch Indaal (Islay) and Sound of Gigha (Kintyre) during late summer. The Sound of Gigha (Kintyre) is a site of national importance for wintering birds. Small numbers are found on fresh water.

Winter/spring Interesting counts, other than at the regularly counted sites listed in Table 18, included: 43 at Killail Cowal on 4 Feb, 16 around Tiree on 19 Jan, 46 at Port an t-Salainn Mull on 21 Jan, 20 at Kilfinan Bay Cowal on 8 Feb, 6 on Oronsay Colonsay on 17 Feb, 6 at Loch na Breac Jura on 5 Mar, 12 at Loch na Keal Mull on 29 Mar, 25 at mouth of West Loch Tarbert Kintyre on 4 Apr, 14 in Dippen Bay Kintyre on 14 Apr, 14 at Druim na Cloiche (Appin) North Argyll on 19 Apr, 34 at Traigh Bhagh Tiree on 13 May and 6 at Arinagour Coll on 8 May.

Breeding/summer The breeding population on Tiree was estimated to be 10 pairs located in five different sites. The only brood of young reported was b/1 at Loch a'Phuill Tiree on 18 Jul.

Autumn/winter Around 400 birds were found in the moult flock at the Sound of Gigha Kintyre on 27 Jul and is the largest count at this important site for some time. Counts of 10 or more, other than at regularly counted sites listed in Table 18, included: 34 at Ballimore shore Cowal on 7 Aug, 12 at Gairletter Point Cowal on 24 Aug, 17 at Killiechranan Mull on 3 Sep, 15 at Airds Bay (Appin) North Argyll on 13 Sep, 36 at Corracha Cowal on 23 Sep, 14 at The Strand Colonsay on 7 Sep, 17 on Oronsay Colonsay on 11 Oct, 28 at Otter Ferry Cowal on 27 Nov and 10 at Port Ramsay (Lismore) North Argyll on 28 Nov.

Table 18. *Maximum monthly counts of Red-breasted Merganser at: Lochs Gruinart and Indaal (Islay), Sound of Gigha (Kintyre), Lochs Craignish, Crinan, Gilp and Sween (Mid-Argyll) and Holy Loch and Loch Long (Cowal).*

Lochs	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart*	7	8	16	13	n/r	n/r	n/r	5	14	9	32	14
Indaal	20	5	4	56	32	n/r	1	n/r	52	99	58	35
Craignish	38	16	16	32	28	14	11	25	62	43	7	16
Crinan	6	n/r	6	26	n/r	n/r	16	17	23	16	16	17
Gilp	2	19	33	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	12	17	5	12
Holy	11	6	3	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	12	6	n/r
Long**	6	n/r	10	3	n/r	8	8	12	21	5	8	13
Sween	15	21	12	21	8	n/r	n/r	n/r	18	17	n/r	n/r
S. of Gigha	4	28	6	56	n/r	15	n/r	n/r	41	n/r	n/r	n/r

* Including Loch Gruinart Floods. ** Blairmore Farm

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser* Sìolta

A scarce breeding species mainly in: Cowal, Mid-Argyll, Mull, and N Argyll. The population is more widespread in winter but in small numbers.

Winter/spring During this period most reports were of 1-3 birds; there were no records from *Coll, Colonsay, Jura* or *Tiree*. The largest counts reported were 7 at Loch Tulla *North Argyll* on 15 Feb, 6 at Loch Ba *Mull* on 28 Apr and 4 at Killiechronan *Mull* on 25 Feb. Interestingly 2 were at Rhunahaorine Point *Kintyre* on 17 Jan, 2 on the River Laggan *Islay* on 18 Feb and one at the head of Loch Indaal *Islay* on 10 May.

Summer/autumn/winter A large gathering of 121 'redheads' at Loch Riddon *Cowal* on 12 Aug with 143 (an *Argyll* record) there on 15 Aug and an increase on the 118 there on 6 Sep 2013 and 124 on 27 Aug 2014. It is likely this is a group of moulting females with juveniles however still unclear how far these birds have travelled. Other than the count at Loch Riddon *Cowal*, the largest counts reported were 24 redheads at Hunters Quay *Cowal* on 11 Aug, 22 at Craignure Golf Course *Mull* on 13 Sep, 13 at Croig *Mull* on 5 Aug and then 17 there on 10 Sep, 10 at the Islandadd Bridge *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Sep, with 11 there on 23 Sep and 8 at the head of Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 30 Oct. Away from their more usual sites one was at Castle Stalker *North Argyll* on 10-11 Jul, 2 were at Balvicar Lagoons (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Jul and one flew south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 17 Nov.

RUDDY DUCK *Oxyura jamaicensis*

A vagrant: four records; all since 1984, the most recent was at Claddach Loch, Islay on 12th May 1999.

No records.

COMMON QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix* Gearradh-gort

AMBER LIST *A rare and irregular summer visitor: mainly to Kintyre and the islands.*

Summer Calling birds were reported on *Tiree* at Hynish on 11-12 Jun and at Balephuill on 16 Jun -5 Jul and on *Islay* at Coullabus Wood on 3 Jul and at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 13 Jul. One was heard on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 8 and 9 Jul. A very late record, of what was thought to be this species, was heard calling at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 17 Oct.

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa* Cearc-thomain-dhearg-chasach

Birds (some hybrids with Chukar A. chukar) have been introduced to several areas. Although this species is in Category C of the British list, populations in Argyll do not appear to be self-sustaining. Since about 2006 records, especially on the mainland and Islay, have been more frequent presumably as a result of widespread releases.

Birds were seen on *Colonsay* during the spring (500 released autumn 2013) and they were widely reported on *Islay*, from Mar-Nov including 17 at Carrabus on 6 Nov. Elsewhere there were single records from *Cowal* at Drum Cottage (nr Kilfinan) on 19 Apr, Corra Farm (Otter Ferry) on 29 Apr-11 May and Holy Loch on 18 Mar, also at Blarcree and Inveresragan *North Argyll* on the 25 Jun and 9 Sep respectively.

RED GROUSE (WILLOW GROUSE) *Lagopus lagopus scotica* Coileach-fraoic

AMBER LIST *A sparsely distributed, resident, breeding bird.*

Winter/spring Most of the records received involved low numbers from *Islay, Cowal, Mull* and *Mid* and *North Argyll*. The highest count was at Capul Choiche (Glendaruel) *Cowal* with 11 on 27 Jan.

Breeding Widespread during the breeding season with most reports from *Cowal, Islay, Mull* and *Mid-Argyll*. A pair with 8 large chicks was noted at Beinn Bhuidhe (Calgary) *Mull* on 30 Jun.

Autumn/winter Few records were received. 3 were at Meall Dearg *North Argyll* on 9 Sep, 2 were at Glen Cannel *Mull* on 14 Sep, and on *Islay*, 2 were at The Oa on 21 Nov and 2 were at Scarabus on 31 Dec.

PTARMIGAN (ROCK PTARMIGAN) *Lagopus muta* Tàrmachan

A localised resident breeding bird: generally above 800m in north and east Argyll, and on Mull. All records required.

Winter/spring One was at Ben Lui *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Mar, 7 were at the Head of Loch Creran *North Argyll* on 17 Mar and 2 were at Glas Bheinn Mhor (Glen Kinglass) *North Argyll* on 4 Apr.

Breeding/summer Only two records of single birds, at Beinn Narnain *Cowal* on 25 Apr and Beinn Sgulaire *North Argyll* on 7 Jun.

Autumn/winter Three records of single birds at Meall Dearg *North Argyll* on 9 Sep, at Coire na Capuill (Glen Creran) *North Argyll* on 17 Sep and at Coire Creagach (Abyssinia) *Cowal* on 24 Oct.

BLACK GROUSE *Tetrao tetrix* Caoileach-dubh

RED LIST A scarce, localised, resident breeder. Numbers may now be stabilising after a steep decline. Very thinly distributed in all mainland areas: with a few on Islay and Jura. All records required.

Winter/spring Four were at Tom an t-Saoir (Loch Avich) *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Jan and 16 Feb, 2 (male & female) were at Loch Tallant (Kildalton) *Islay*, 3 were at Tom an t-Saoir (Loch Avich) *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Mar and 12 males were at Crispie (nr Portavadie) *Cowal* on 16 Apr.

Breeding/summer A single bird was at Tom Mor *Cowal* on 20 Mar and 16 Apr. 3 were displaying at Kilninver *Mid-Argyll* on 30 Apr, 6 (5 displaying males) were at Craigendive *Cowal* on 11 May and a lone male at Glen Kin *Cowal* on 4 Jun. RSPB lek surveys (relies on volunteers & FCS etc to repeat a sample of core leks) recorded a total of 95 displaying males at 34 lek sites throughout Argyll. At a sample of 16 sites monitored in 2014 the 2015 population showed a 6% decline (from 52 to 49) of lekking males. The largest leks recorded were 9 males in the Tullochgorm area *Mid-Argyll* and 5 males on a farm in NE Loch Awe side *Mid-Argyll*.

Autumn/winter Two were at Connel *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Dec.

WESTERN CAPERCAILLIE *Tetrao urogallus* Capall-coille

RED LIST A once rare resident. There have been a few records from Mid-Argyll, and they are known to have bred in Cowal in 1993. However, with no recent records in either locality, or elsewhere, it seems likely that Capercaillie is currently extinct in Argyll.

No records.

GREY PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix* Cearc-thomain

A very localised distribution. Introductions, which take place in several areas, do not appear to result in self-sustaining populations. All records required.

No records.

COMMON PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus* Easag

May be abundant, in those parts of Argyll, where birds are released for shooting. Reports from Jura and North Argyll are rare.

Large numbers were widely reported on *Islay* throughout the year, including 20 at Loch a' Gheoidh (Sunderland) on 18 Nov. 12 were at Loch nam Breac *Jura* on 5 Mar and smaller numbers were widely reported from *Colonsay*, *Cowal*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull* and *Tiree*. Breeding was confirmed on *Islay* and *Colonsay*.



Common Pheasant *Mid-Argyll* (Jim Dickson)

GOLDEN PHEASANT *Chrysolophus pictus*

The last positive report concerning the introduced population on Mull was in 2009.

No records.

RED-THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata* Learga-ruadh

A scarce widely distributed breeder (on moorland lochs), winter visitor, and passage migrant.

Winter/spring Reported widely on the sea in small numbers: around islands, in sea lochs, and along the mainland coast especially in more sheltered areas. Particular concentrations occur in certain favoured locations, such as: 12 from the ferry crossing between *Islay* and Kennacraig *Kintyre* on 3 Feb and 8 Feb, and 12 at the mouth of West Loch Tarbert *Kintyre* on 4 Apr.

Breeding/summer Birds were reported at breeding sites from Apr until late Aug. BTO Atlas data suggest there may be around 100 pairs in Argyll (Wilson *et al.* 2015 SWBSG Report 1504), but there is a lack of recent monitoring data from breeding sites of this species.

Autumn/winter Small numbers were reported from all coastal areas apart from innermost sea lochs throughout autumn and winter. Numbers on the sea increased from Jul, suggesting arrival of failed breeders rather early. There were 8 at the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on 10 Jul and 12 there on 27 Jul, and 8 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 23 Jul. There were 14 at Loch Indaal *Islay* on 17 Sep and 25 there on 13 Dec, 15 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 20 Oct, and 55 seen from the *Islay* to Kennacraig *Kintyre* ferry on 22 Nov.

BLACK-THROATED DIVER *Gavia arctica* Learga-dhubh

AMBER LIST A *very scarce breeder in Mid and North Argyll: scarce in winter but more numerous on passage. The Sound of Gigha, Kintyre and Kilfinan Bay, Cowal are sites of national importance for wintering birds. Knapdale Lochs Special Protection Area is designated for breeding black-throated divers.*

Winter/spring Birds were widely distributed in small numbers around islands, in sea lochs, and along the mainland coast especially in more marine areas. However, there were unusually large numbers, mostly reported at sites in *Kintyre*, in late winter and spring. There were 22 in Loch Caolisport *Mid-Argyll* on 8 Feb, 50 between the mouth of West Loch Tarbert *Kintyre* and Gigha *Kintyre* on 13 Mar, 28 at Gamna Gigha *Kintyre* on 18 Mar, 43 off Rhunahaorine Point *Kintyre* on 2 Apr, 47 in the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on 24 Apr and 8 in Loch Indaal *Islay* on 19 Apr. Some birds were reported to be in breeding plumage from the start of Mar while some remained in winter plumage until midsummer.

Breeding/summer Breeding has been confirmed at 13 sites between 1985-2015 and an average of 2.7 chicks fledged annually in the last 10 years. In 2015, successful breeding was reported at Loch Awe *Mid-Argyll*, and birds were seen on several freshwater lochs in Jun. At 6 sites monitored by RSPB, 4 pairs nested and a 5th probably did so. Three pairs (two nesting on rafts) hatched 5 young and 4 of these are thought to have fledged.

Autumn/winter Single birds were seen at many sites, especially around *Islay*, *Tiree*, *Mull* and *Kintyre*. Larger groups included: 6 at Croig *Mull* on 6 Sep, 15 at Ronachan Bay *Kintyre* on 29 Sep, 15 at Ballochroy *Kintyre* on 4 Oct, and 12 off Rhunahaorine Point *Kintyre* on 13 Oct.

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer* Muir-bhuachail

AMBER LIST A *numerous winter and passage visitor. Birds in breeding plumage are regularly recorded from Apr to mid-Jun. Pre-migratory gatherings occur off some coasts in late Apr and early May and a few individuals summer. The Sound of Gigha and the seas around Tiree and Coll are sites of international importance for wintering birds and: Loch na Keal Mull, Loch Indaal Islay, West Loch Tarbert Kintyre, and Lochs Beg & Scridain Mull are sites of national importance.*

Winter/spring Birds were reported from all coastal areas, especially sea lochs and coasts of: *Colonsay*, *Gigha*, *Islay*, *Kintyre*, *Mull*, and *Tiree*. Highest numbers seem to be reported in spring, although this may in part relate to better conditions for counting and more birdwatching activity. Larger numbers included: 60 at Loch na Keal *Mull* on 21 Jan and 96 on 5 Apr, 50 at Loch Scridain *Mull* on 22 Jan, 45 at Loch Tuath *Mull* on 24 Jan and 104 on 5 Apr, 53 seen from the Kennacraig *Kintyre* to *Islay* ferry on both 3 and 8 Feb, 42 on 28 Feb and 59 on 4 Apr, 175 off Rhunahaorine Point *Kintyre* on 2 Apr, 53 at Loch Indaal *Islay* on 19 Apr, and 43 in Gott Bay *Tiree* on 24 Apr. Smaller numbers were reported in May but with some in full breeding plumage, the largest counts that month being 10 at Gott Bay *Tiree* on 7 May, 11 at Loch Beg *Mull* on 13 May, 23 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 13 May, 28 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 13 May and an exceptional 72 at Tayinloan Bay *Kintyre* on 13 May. During Jun, numbers fell further, to just the occasional one or two birds, though widely distributed off *Kintyre* and the Argyll islands.

Summer There was no indication of breeding in Argyll, but non-breeders, some apparently in full summer plumage, were present throughout the summer at many sites. Records came especially from *Colonsay*, *Kintyre*, *Islay*, *Mull*, and *Tiree* where mostly single birds were reported in Jun-Sep, with the fewest records (three) in Aug.

Autumn/winter Many individuals were reported in Sep but the only large count was of 13 in Loch Indaal *Islay* on 17 Sep. Numbers began to build up in Oct, and counts of 10 to 20 birds were not uncommon from: *Coll*, *Colonsay*, *Islay*, *Kintyre*, *Mull*, and *Tiree* in Oct to Dec, with smaller numbers at many other locations with fully marine coastlines. Larger numbers included:

45 passing Aird Tìree in 2 hrs on 22 Oct, 167 off Rhunahaorine Point Kintyre on 28 Oct, 54 at Crag Mhor na Faing Islay on 4 Nov, 53 in Loch Indaal Islay on 3 Nov, 49 at Knock Mull on 11 Nov, and 58 in Loch Indaal Islay on 13 Dec.

WHITE-BILLED DIVER *Gavia adamsii* Learga-bhlàr

A vagrant: 10 records; all since 1986, most recently on Mull in 2009, off Tìree in Oct 2011 and off Machrihanish SBO, Kintyre in Mar 2013.

No records.

BLACK-BROWED ALBATROSS *Thalassarche melanophrys*

A vagrant: one record; an adult flew north past Machrihanish SBO, Kintyre on 27 October 2008.

No records.

FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis* Eun-crom

AMBER LIST *A common but localised breeding species in all areas apart from Cowal and North Argyll. Large numbers occur on passage off western headlands.*

Winter/spring Most records came from the western fringes of Argyll, especially Tìree and Islay. Large numbers attended nest sites somewhat erratically from Jan onwards. For example, there were 1,000 on sites at Ceann a' Mhara Tìree on 9 Feb. Moderate numbers were seen passing headlands in spring; for example numbers flying west off Aird Tìree in 1 hr were 105 on 26 Mar, 72 on 28 Mar, 104 on 31 Mar, 40 on 1 Apr, and 64 on 15 May.

Breeding At Ceann a' Mhara Tìree there were 889 occupied sites (AONs) with some birds incubating eggs on 20 May, 854 AONs with many birds incubating but no visible chicks yet on 17 Jun, 618 AONs most with small chicks on 11 Jul, 506 AONs most with mid/large chicks on 22 Jul, 350 AONs most with large chicks on 7 Aug by which date some chicks were thought to have fledged. Also on Tìree, there were 50 AONs in the quarry on Balephetrish Hill on 20 May. On Colonsay in Jun sample plot counts found 8 AONs N of Eilean Easdale (Kiloran Bay), 13 at Port Lobh, 40 at Lamallum and 268 at Uragaig. Treshnish Isles Auk Ringing Group (TIARG) reported that there were 285 AONs on Lunga plus Sgeir a' Chaisteil (Treshnish Isles) Mull, a 19% decline from the count in 2014.

Autumn/winter Numbers seen at sea in Aug and Sep were highest off Tìree, with tens to hundreds passing per hr on different dates. As usual, numbers seen in Oct were small, with tens per hr flying past Tìree. About 700 birds were back on the cliffs at Ceann a' Mhara Tìree on 14 Nov, with at least 300 there on 21 and 29 Nov, but very few records from elsewhere in Argyll in Oct-Dec.

CORY'S SHEARWATER *Calonectris borealis*

A rare passage migrant: nine records; mostly in Aug or Sep. Last report was off Tìree in Aug 2005.

No records.

GREAT SHEARWATER *Puffinus gravis* Fachadh-mòr

A rare passage migrant: mostly in autumn with last reports from Sep 2007.

No records.

SOOTY SHEARWATER *Puffinus griseus* Fachadh-dubh

A passage migrant: almost exclusively recorded Jul-Oct. Sometimes seen in large numbers from western headlands, islands, and on ferry crossings during Aug-Sep.

Autumn A few more records than last year with all but one coming from *Tiree*. First report was 1 at Gunna Sound *Tiree* on 31 Jul followed by further reports from *Tiree* at Hynish with 13 on 8 Aug, 4 on 9 Aug, 16 on 27 Sep, 2 on 30 Oct and 4 on 12 Nov. Also off *Tiree* 12 were seen from the ferry on 10 Sep, and from Aird (north coast) with 1 on 22 Oct, 2 on 30 Oct, 4 on 12 Nov, 3 on 13, 16 and 17 Nov. 1 was off Caliach Point *Mull* on 3 Sep.

MANX SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus* Fachadh-bàn

AMBER LIST *Breeding colonies have been confirmed only on Sanda Islands and Treshnish Isles. Large numbers are seen on passage, especially during Aug-Sep.*

Spring The first records in spring came from Aird *Tiree* where 36 birds passed in 1 hr on 26 Mar, 195 in 1 hr on 28 Mar, 520 in 1 hr on 31 Mar and 450 in 1 hr on 1 Apr. There were 600 rafting off Glengorm *Mull* on 22 Apr, 300 off the Treshnish Isles *Mull* on 24 Apr, 500 offshore from Arnabost Farm *Coll* on 6 May, and 8,000 feeding off Aird *Tiree* on 7 May.

Breeding/summer In contrast to the small numbers reported in Jun-Jul 2014, large numbers were reported passing through Argyll offshore waters from early summer in 2015. There were 2,650 passing Hynish *Tiree* in 1 hr on 1 Jun, 5,000 at Ardmores Bay *Mull* on 10 Jun, 1,000 passing Happy Valley *Tiree* in 30 mins on 21 Jun, 2,000 feeding off *Tiree* on 11 Jul, 570 passing Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* in 2 hrs on 13 Jul, and 16,000 passing Balevullin *Tiree* in 1 hr on 23 Jul. In contrast to 2014 when numbers in Argyll waters peaked in Aug, numbers in Aug in 2015 were generally lower than in Jun-Jul. However, there were 400 passing The Oa *Islay* on 7 Aug, 730 passing Hynish *Tiree* in 1 hr on 8 Aug and 710 in 1 hr on 20 Aug, 500 or more feeding off Sandaig *Tiree* on 9 Aug, and 1,000 off Rubha na Faing *Islay* on 25 Aug. Since breeding birds should have eggs in Jun and early Jul, and chicks in the nest in late Jul and Aug, it seems probable that birds from the huge colony on Rum, and possibly other colonies, must commute into or through Argyll waters to feed while breeding. There were no data on breeding at Sanda Islands *Kintyre*. Treshnish Isles Auk Ringing Group reported adults present on Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* at night, but with no assessment of the breeding numbers at that colony. TIARG reported up to 3,000 birds rafting off Harp Rock (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* in the evening.

Autumn The observation of 400 birds flying up Loch Long past Ardentinn *Cowal* on 26 Aug is unusual for an area so far from the open sea. Numbers seen in Sep were very much lower than the numbers in Jun-Aug, suggesting that migration from the massive colony on Rum (where chicks fledge in Sep) may occur less through Argyll waters than foraging activity of chick-rearing adults. The largest counts after mid-Sep were of 111 in 1 hr passing Hynish *Tiree* on 27 Sep and 122 in 1 hr on 28 Sep. The last record of the year was of 4 birds passing Aird *Tiree* on 22 Oct.

BALEARIC SHEARWATER *Puffinus mauretanicus*

RED LIST *A scarce passage migrant (Aug-Dec) since 1992 but in very small numbers: usually seen with Manx Shearwaters.*

Autumn One was seen from the Kennacraig to Islay ferry (off Gigha) *Kintyre* on 3 Sep [Mark Lewis] and one was seen off Hynish *Tiree* on 27 Sep [John Bowler].

MACARONESIAN SHEARWATER *Puffinus baroli*

A vagrant: one record; one off Frenchman's Rocks, Islay on 30 Jun 1974. A record from 2000 is still under consideration during a full review of records by the BBRC.

No records.

EUROPEAN STORM-PETREL *Hydrobates pelagicus* Pàraig

AMBER LIST A *summer visitor. The main breeding colonies are on Sanda Islands and Treshnish Isles with a few pairs on Soa and Staffa. Breeding birds first come ashore in late May or Jun. Most sightings away from breeding colonies are during Jul-Sep, when non-breeders wander extensively. Breeding European Storm-petrel is a feature of Treshnish Isles SPA.*

Spring The first spring records were of 16 birds seen north of *Tiree* from the ferry between Oban and Barra on 21 May, 3 passing Hynish *Tiree* on 1 Jun, and 6 passing Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 6 Jun.

Breeding TIARG reported that many birds were heard churring in burrows on Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil (Treshnish Isles) *Mull*. Although no counts were made at the colonies, TIARG caught 138 birds in one 18m mist net set for 3¾ hrs south of Corran Lunga close to the known breeding area. They also caught 154 and 339 birds in two or three nets set on the boulder beach below the village for periods of 2½ and 3¾ hrs respectively, and 196 birds in three nets set over two nights (total of 6¼ hrs). On Fladda they caught 374 birds in two nets set for 4 hrs, all sessions being in fairly calm weather. TIARG report that house mice were present in the village area on Lunga, but that none were found on Fladda. Storm petrels caught at the Treshnish Isles included birds first ringed at North Ronaldsay, Eilean nan Ron (Highland), Faraid Head (Highland), Sanda, Ballyreagh (Londonderry), Tullagh Point (Donegal), Sheepland Harbour (Ardglass), Harrington (Cumbria), Calf of Man, and Annagh Head (Co. Mayo). No information at all was available from Sanda Islands *Kintyre*, the other main breeding site.

Autumn Small numbers were reported from seawatching from *Coll* and *Tiree*. The last record was 20 northwest of *Tiree* on 10 Sep.



Leach's Storm Petrel *Kintyre* (Eddie Maguire)

LEACH'S STORM-PETREL *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* Gobhlan-mara

AMBER LIST A *scarce, but regular, autumn passage migrant off western headlands; particularly after strong westerlies. There are occasional reports in spring and summer.*

Autumn There were 12 records between 22 Oct and 20 Nov, many of individual birds, but with 4 off Aird Tìree in gale force winds on 22 Oct, 29 passing Machrihanish SBO Kintyre also on 22 Oct and 6 off Hynish Tìree on 23 Oct. The last of the year were 3 birds passing Machrihanish SBO Kintyre on 20 Nov also in gale force weather.

NORTHERN GANNET *Morus bassanus* Sùlaire

AMBER LIST *Most gannets in Argyll waters probably come from Ailsa Craig (30 km east of Mull of Kintyre) and St Kilda (190 km northwest of Tìree). Gannets are common inshore in Argyll waters from Apr to Oct, and often seen high up sea lochs. They are also reported in small numbers Nov to Mar.*

Winter/spring Very small numbers (max 4 birds) were reported on a few dates in Jan from Tìree, and a freshly dead bird was found on the shore at Ensay Burn mouth Mull on 10 Jan. Similar small numbers were seen in Feb off Islay, Colonsay and Tìree with the highest count of 6 at Colonsay on 27 Feb. Numbers increased very considerably in Mar with records from Islay, Mull and Tìree including 220 in 1 hr off Aird Tìree on 26 Mar, 166 in 1 hr on 28 Mar, and 164 in 1 hr on 31 Mar. There were more reports and larger numbers during Apr, from a wider range of areas, including Kintyre, Coll, Jura, and one report from Mid-Argyll (3 fishing in Loch na Cille on 26 Apr). There were 300 feeding off Sorobaigh Bay Tìree on 19 Apr, and 420 off the Mull of Kintyre Kintyre on 28 Apr.

Summer Birds were reported from all marine areas of Argyll in May-Jul but mostly in small numbers, with few flocks exceeding 10 birds except in offshore areas. There were 102 passing Hynish Tìree in 1 hr on 15 May, 200 there in 1.5 hrs on 16 May, 108 off Hynish Tìree on 1 Jun, 85 feeding off Sandaig Tìree on 9 Jun, 144 passing Hynish Tìree in 1 hr on 17 Jul, and 200 between Tìree and Coll on 31 Jul. Numbers passing through Argyll waters increased in Aug, with 500 fishing off Frenchman's Rocks Islay on 2 Aug, 720 off Tìree on 20 Aug, 600 off Rubha na Faing Islay on 25 Aug. There appear to be no sites in Argyll being prospected by gannets as future colony sites, despite the moderate numbers regularly present in Argyll waters in summer. A bird found dead at Brock Tìree on 27 May had been ringed as a chick at Ailsa Craig in June 1986 so was in its 29th year. An adult was found grounded on the mud at the head of Loch Gilp Mid-Argyll on 4 Aug. Eddie Maguire reported many adults flying inland over Lossit House Kintyre in late Aug and Sep, apparently taking a short cut to avoid the longer sea route around the Mull of Kintyre Kintyre. (see article on page 136).

Autumn/winter Tens per hour, occasionally hundreds per hour, flew past seabird hotspots such as Frenchman's Rocks Islay, Aird Tìree and Machrihanish SBO Kintyre on various dates in Sep and Oct, with the highest count of 925 passing Aird Tìree in 2 hrs on 22 Oct. Although numbers passing Machrihanish SBO Kintyre were smaller, the peak autumn count there (of 220 birds) was also on 22 Oct. Numbers of gannets reported declined in Nov, although there were still 30 to 70 per hr passing Tìree on various dates in the earlier part of that month. Only four single birds were reported in Dec, from Mull, Luing Mid-Argyll and two sites in Islay, with two of these late records being of juveniles.

GREAT CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo* Sgarbh

Breeds in: Cowal, Jura, Kintyre (including Gigha), Mid-Argyll, Mull, and North Argyll, with around 230 pairs in recent years. Less numerous than Shag, but numbers have increased recently. Small numbers occur on some inland waters.

Winter/spring There were small numbers (mostly 1-5 birds) at many estuarine (predominantly sea loch) sites across Argyll. Larger numbers were: 10 at Kilmaronag Islands (Loch Etive) Mid-Argyll on 6 Feb, and 6 at Rhuvaal lighthouse Islay on 22 Apr.

Breeding Only colony count provided was from Glas Eilean *Mid-Argyll* with 4 birds from 12 Feb, 24 AONs on 18 Mar rising to 34 AONs on 13 Apr.

Autumn/winter Birds were fairly well dispersed throughout the sea lochs and sheltered coasts of Argyll throughout autumn and winter. The largest recorded groups were: 39 at Port Appin *North Argyll* on 14 Sep, 40 at Balmeanach (Griburn) *Mull* on 21 Sep, 40 at Lady's Rock *Mull* on 26 Sep, and 30 at Sgeir na Sgarbh *Islay* on 18 Nov.

GREAT (Continental) CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*

A rare but increasingly frequent visitor to Scotland. Increasing as a breeder at inland sites in England where some hybridisation occurs with nominate Atlantic Great Cormorant. One was at Loch a' Phuill Tìree on 13 Oct 2014.

No records.



European Shag *Kintyre* (Eddie Maguire)

EUROPEAN SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* *Sgarbh-an-sgumain*

RED LIST *A very common resident, breeding on the mainland coast, outer isles, and on islands in sea lochs. Widespread in winter and spring but very rare inland at all times.*

Winter/spring As usual, birds were widely distributed on sea coasts in the early part of the year. The largest numbers reported were: 150 feeding at Hynish Tìree on 17 Jan, 68 at Loch na Keal *Mull* on 21 Jan and 70 at Ardmucknish Bay *North Argyll* on 8 Feb.

Breeding/summer John Bowler reported that at Ceann a' Mhara Tìree there were 100 AONs on 7 Apr, decreasing to 83 on 20 May, by which time most nests held eggs but some birds were still nest-building. By 17 Jun there were 89 AONs at the Ceann a' Mhara Tìree colony, with most nests holding small chicks (mean brood size 1.89). On 11 Jul this colony held 72 AONs with mid to large chicks in most occupied nests (mean brood size 1.52), and there were 59 AONs on 22 Jul with a mean brood size of 1.46 (but with some nests already having fledged chicks). A

few nests there were still active on 11 Aug. At Happy Valley *Tiree* there were 16 AONs on 21 Jun, a big increase at that site. There were 190 birds feeding in Gunna Sound *Tiree* on 15 Jun, 580 there on 20 Aug, and 60 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 9 Jul. On *Colonsay* at sample colonies in Jun there were 8 AONs at Pigs Paradise and 6 AONs at Uragaig. TIARG reported that there were 180 AONs on Lunga, and 8 on Sgeir a' Chaisteil (Treshnish Isles) *Mull*, well below numbers present in 2013 but an increase from 2014. Up to 600 shags were feeding around the Treshnish Isles *Mull*, suggesting that many birds were choosing not to breed but were still present in the local population. TIARG have been carrying out a colour ringing study of this population to assess survival rates as part of the BTO 'RAS' programme, but survival rates have not yet been estimated.

Autumn/winter Although west coast shags tend not to migrate extensively, there can be large aggregations in autumn and some large local movements. There were 500 in Gunna Sound *Tiree* on 10 Sep, 300 at the Creachasdal Islands *Tiree* on 10 Sep, and 152 passing Hynish *Tiree* in 1 hr on 25 Oct.

ASCENSION FRIGATEBIRD *Fregata aquila*

A vagrant: two records; an immature bird was found exhausted at Loch a' Phuill (Tiree) on 9 Jul 1953 and died later and remarkably another juvenile was seen briefly at Bowmore harbour, Islay on 5 Jul 2013. These are the only records for the Western Palearctic.

No records.

EURASIAN BITTERN *Botaurus stellaris* Chorra-ghràin

AMBER LIST A rare visitor: six records of single birds since 1980; at Dervaig, Mull in Jan-Mar 1982, near Rhunahaorine Point, Kintyre on 4 Dec 1982, at Dervaig, Mull on 23 Dec 1983, one found dead at Appin, North Argyll on 19 Sep 1999, at Craobh Haven, Mid-Argyll Dec 2009 to Feb 2010 which later died in care and at Lochgilphead, Mid-Argyll on 19 Mar 2013 killed by a vehicle.

No records.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON *Nycticorax nycticorax*

A vagrant: three records; two in the nineteenth century, then reports of an adult on Coll (Apr 1987), and on Tiree (Apr to Jun 1987), which was probably the same individual.

No records.

CATTLE EGRET *Bubulcus ibis*

A vagrant: two records; one on Islay in Oct 2009 and one at Mull on 27 Oct 2011 with the same bird at Tiree on 17-25 Nov 2011.

No records.

SNOWY EGRET *Egretta thula*

A vagrant: one record; at Balvicar, Mid-Argyll on 5 Nov 2001 which was subsequently seen at various locations in Argyll until 13 Jun 2002. This remains the only British records to date.

No records.

LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta* Corra-ghéal-bheag

A scarce visitor: no records prior to 1958 but several since, mostly in spring and autumn. It has been seen more frequently in Argyll since breeding colonies have become established in England and Ireland.

Winter One on Oronsay *Colonsay* from Nov 2014 remained until 9 Jan [Isobel Baker, Mike Peacock et al.].

Summer One was near the Kennacraig ferry terminal (West Loch Tarbert) *Kintyre* on 13 Jun [Alan Hall].

Autumn/winter One was at Fiddon *Mull* on 4 Oct [Meg Daves, Martin McDerby et al.]

After 8 or 9 birds in 2014 this is a less than average recent showing. This species is no longer assessed by the ABRC however supporting details and photographs are encouraged prior to publishing records.

GREAT WHITE EGRET *Ardea alba* Corra-bhàn-mhòr

A vagrant: seven records; one at Gruinart Flats, Islay in Jun 1986, one Ballachuan Loch (Seil) Mid-Argyll in Apr 1988, one at Loch Gruinart, Islay in May 1998, one on Tiree in May & Jun 2000, one on Tiree in May and Jun 2002, one at Feolin, Jura in Oct 2009 and one at Inveraray, Mid-Argyll in May 2011. This species is increasing in the Netherlands and France. It bred in Somerset, England in 2012.

Spring/summer Three records which may relate to just one, but possibly three different individuals. One, apparently showing ‘plumes’ was at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 17 Apr [James How et al.], one was at the same location, apparently not showing ‘plumes’ on 24 Jun [Peter Roberts et al.] and one was seen from the Kennacraig to Port Askaig ferry at Glas Eilean (Sound of Islay) *Jura* on 11 Aug [Alisdair Paterson]. All records were accepted by the ABRC.

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea* Corra-ghrithreach

A widespread resident: breeding in all areas except Tiree.

Winter/spring Birds were widely distributed in small numbers, especially along the Argyll sea loch coasts, with the largest counts being 27 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 7 and 12 Jan, 36 at Loch Don *Mull* on 12 Jan, 21 at Loch Creran *North Argyll* on 19 Jan and 27 at Eilean Traighe (Loch Etive) *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Jan and 42 on 6 Feb.

Breeding In many areas of Argyll herons nest as individual pairs or groups of two or three nests rather than in large heronries, and these scattered pairs are easily overlooked so breeding numbers are probably much higher across the county than totals recorded. There are few large heronries in Argyll, but there were 31 occupied nests at Ardachy *North Argyll*, 18 at Ardtur and 20 at Ballachuan hazel wood *Mid-Argyll* on 3 Apr. Five pairs bred at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay*. Several former sites on *Colonsay* have been abandoned but there were 11 nests at Garvard, 2 at East Loch Fada and on Oronsay 5 nests on Seal Island.

Autumn/winter Birds were widely distributed in small numbers, especially along the Argyll sea loch coasts. WeBS counts in Aug-Dec mostly gave totals between 5 and 32 individuals on each of Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll*, Loch Etive *North Argyll*, Loch Craignish *Mid-Argyll*, Loch Gruinart *Islay*, and Loch Sween *Mid-Argyll*. Elsewhere, there were 12 at Garmony Point *Mull* on 31 Aug, 17 at Glen Cannel *Mull* on 14 Sep, 10-18 at Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* throughout autumn, 16 at Gorsten *Mull* on 4 Oct, 16 at Lochdon *Mull* on 26 Oct, and 26 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 28 Dec.

BLACK STORK *Ciconia nigra*

A vagrant: one record; a bird seen flying over NW Mull on 26 May 2013.

No records.

WHITE STORK *Ciconia ciconia*

A vagrant: three records; singles at Benderloch, North Argyll in Apr 1971, on Islay in Apr/May 1978, and at Campbeltown, Kintyre in May 1978.

No records.

GLOSSY IBIS *Plegadis falcinellus*

A vagrant: nine records since 1901; the most recent being one at Loch Sween, Mid-Argyll on 25 and 26 Sep 2009, Colonsay from 27 Dec 2013 to 5 Feb 2014 and Tiree on 13 Jan 2014.

No records.

EURASIAN SPOONBILL *Platalea leucorodia*

A rare visitor: eight records; the most recent of these involving four juveniles on Islay in 1998 and two together on Mull on 23 Jun 2010.

No records.

PIED-BILLED GREBE *Podilymbus podiceps*

A vagrant: three records; one at Loch Peallach, Mull in Jun 1998, one at Salen Bay, Mull on 22 Mar to 6 Apr 2011 and one at Loch Feorlin, Mid-Argyll on 30 May to 6 Jun 2014.

No records.

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis* Spàg-ri-tòn

A local breeder in small numbers: widespread in sheltered coastal waters in winter with concentrations at Loch Etive, North Argyll and Loch Sween, Mid-Argyll.

Winter/spring There were records from all areas of Argyll apart from Jura. A bird at Ballyhough Loch Coll on 25 Apr was the first seen on Coll since 2012. Highest WeBS counts included: 18 at Loch Etive Mid-Argyll on 22 Jan with 15 on 6 Feb, 11 at Holy Loch Cowal on 19 Jan, 9 at Loch Creran North Argyll on 19 Jan and 13 at Loch Sween Mid-Argyll on 9 Feb. Most records were of one or two birds, with largest numbers: 7 at Campbeltown Loch Kintyre on 4 Feb and 8 at Black Mount (Oban) Mid-Argyll on 21 Mar.

Breeding Breeding was reported from a small number of sites throughout much of Argyll. Six pairs nested on Colonsay. One pair nested at RSPB Loch Gruinart Islay and breeding was suspected on Coll.

Autumn/winter There were records from all areas of Argyll except for Coll, Tiree and Jura. Highest WeBS counts included: 19 at Loch Etive Mid-Argyll on 16 Oct with 18 on 16 Nov and 20 on 12 Dec, and 17 at Loch Sween Mid-Argyll on 17 Oct. Elsewhere most were of one or two birds, with the highest count being 6 at inner Loch Scridain/Loch Beg Mull on 3 Nov.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus* Gobhlachan-laparan

An uncommon winter and passage visitor: with 1-6 records annually since 1984 and recorded in all months except Jun.

Winter/spring Three were on Loch Long (near Blairmore Farm) Cowal on 10 Jan, and two were still there on 21, 26, 29 Jan and 15 Mar.

Autumn/winter One was in the shallows next to the road at Kennacraig Kintyre on 14 Sep, there were two at Ronachan Bay Kintyre on 29 Sep, one at Loch Gorm Islay on 9 Oct and 4 Nov, one on Loch Long (near Blairmore Farm) Cowal on 15 Nov and two there on 24 Nov and 27 Dec.

RED-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps grisegena* Gobhlachan-ruadh

RED LIST A *scarce winter and passage visitor: most records are in Sep-Mar; at least 42 records.*

No records.

SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus* Gobhlachan-mara

RED LIST A *regular winter and passage visitor to sea lochs and sounds: occasionally on inland waters. The Sound of Gigha, Loch na Keal, Mull and Loch Indaal, Islay are sites of national importance for wintering birds.*

Winter/spring Counts at the best known sites (Loch Indaal Islay, Loch na Keal Mull and the Sound of Gigha Kintyre) are summarised in Table 19. Elsewhere, there were 5 at Kilfinan Bay Cowal on 8 Feb and 13 Mar, 7 in West Loch Tarbert Kintyre on 3 and 9 Feb and 4 there on 28 Feb (close to but outwith the Sound of Gigha count area). There were no records during May-Aug inclusive.

Autumn/winter Counts at the three main sites are in Table 19. Elsewhere, there were 2 at Ballimore shore Cowal on 12 Dec, 10 at Ballochroy Kintyre on 4 Oct (close to but outwith the Sound of Gigha count area), 1 at Loch a' Phuill Tiree from 16-22 Nov, 19 at Lagganulva Mull on 21 Nov (close to the Loch na Keal count area), and 1 at Loch Gilp Mid-Argyll on 16 Dec.

Table 19. *Maximum numbers of Slavonian Grebes counted in 2015 at the three main sites for this species in Argyll (n/r = no data).*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
L. Indaal	5	5	3	1	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	11	17	33	6
L. na Keal	51	6	5	21	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	5	7	n/r	n/r
S. of Gigha	n/r	n/r	n/r	23	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	1	34	n/r	n/r

BLACK-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps nigricollis* Gobhlachan-dubh

AMBER LIST A *rare passage migrant and winter visitor: 14 records since 1936, with decreasing reports, the last records were in 2003.*

No records.

EUROPEAN HONEY-BUZZARD *Pernis apivorus*

AMBER LIST A *rare passage migrant: 12 records since 1980.*

No records.

BLACK KITE *Milvus migrans*

A vagrant: three records; one at Vaul, Tiree on 16th May 1997, one near Dalmally, North Argyll on 31 May 2010 and one at Kilmichael Gelen, Mid-Argyll on 3 May 2014.

No records.

RED KITE *Milvus milvus* Clamhan-gobhlach

A re-introduction programme in Scotland since 1996 has involved releases in Highland, central, and south west Scotland. Genuine vagrants have occurred in the past, but most recent Argyll records involve these released birds. All records are requested, ideally with details of wing tags if present.

Spring/summer Following a poor year in 2014, with only a single record, 2015 saw a return to the recent trend of several sightings; one drifted from Cornaigmore to over Heylipol an Loch a' Phuill Tiree on 4 Apr and another was at West Hynish Tiree on 26 May.

Autumn One was over Loch Frisa Mull on 5 Oct and the second of autumn was at Cluanach Islay on 18 Oct.

WHITE-TAILED EAGLE *Haliaeetus albicilla* Iolair-mhara

RED LIST *A rare but increasing resident breeder in Argyll: wandering immatures (and sometimes adults) occur widely. Most are derived from re-establishment projects in north-west Scotland since 1975. Birds from similar projects in Ireland and the east coast of Scotland have also appeared in Argyll recently. All records are requested, ideally with details of wing tags if present.*

Unsurprisingly, for such a striking and sought after bird, over 250 records were received in 2015, an increase of over 10% on 2014. The great majority were from *Islay* and *Mull*, although in the former case this probably reflects the numbers of birders rather than birds present. Birds were reported from all Argyll recording areas throughout the year except *Cowal* and *Kintyre*. The total sightings reported for each recording areas were: *Coll* (3), *Colonsay* (including *Oronsay*) (4), *Islay* (over 40, a decline from over 80 in 2015), *Jura* (7), *Mid-Argyll* (40 an increase from 28 in 2014), *Mull* (over 135, some of two or more birds together), *North Argyll* (5) and *Tiree* (9, an increase from 4 in 2014). Reports of 2 or more birds were regular with 5 juvs being seen at Danna *Mid-Argyll* on 6 Jan, 6 (2 ads and 4 juvs) at Loch na Keal *Mull* on 29 Mar and a remarkable 10 at Beinn Talaidh *Mull* on 24 Apr. One was seen eating a Barnacle Goose at the head of Loch Indaal *Islay* on 9 Feb.

Please continue to send in all sightings, which will be particularly useful as birds expand their range into new areas on the mainland and the islands.

Breeding 29 pairs with nest sites were reported and 25 of these were confirmed to have laid eggs and one additional pair probably laid eggs. 18 pairs were successful and fledged 22 chicks (one more than in 2014). There are additional new “pairs” but none of these are yet known to have built nests. Accessible chicks in 2015 continued to be fitted with oxidised aluminium colour rings on the left leg (David Sexton, RSPB Scotland, Roger Broad). 96 breeding attempts were monitored across the whole of Scotland in 2015 (Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme).

WESTERN MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus* Clamhan-lòin

AMBER LIST *A scarce, but recently more or less annual, passage migrant: records in every year but one since 1986. Most records Apr-Jun.*

Spring/summer A female was photographed hunting at Balephuill *Tiree* on 19 Apr with another or the same at Moss *Tiree* on 14 May, whilst another female was seen heading west at Vaul *Tiree* on 10 June and another female was found at Craigens (Gruinart) *Islay* on 26 June. An immature male bird was seen to fly in from *Tiree* and over the southern slopes of Cruachan (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* on the evening of 3 Jul. This was the first record of Marsh Harrier on the Treshnish Isles by TIARG.

Winter A male was found at Traigh an Luig *Islay* on 15 Dec - this is the first Marsh Harrier to be noted in Argyll during winter.

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus* Brèid-air-tòin

RED LIST *A sparse but widespread breeding species: Argyll holds around one quarter of the Scottish breeding population. Seen regularly: away from breeding areas, on migration, and in winter with reports from all recording areas.*

During the year around 650 records were received, from all Argyll recording areas including Crossapol Dunes *Coll*, Leim (Gigha) *Kintyre* and Achafolla (Luining) *Mid-Argyll*. On 28 Oct, 8 were seen over the RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* and on 16 Oct a ringtail was watched taking a Teal at the same location.

Breeding

Table 20. *Outcome of monitored Hen Harrier territories in Argyll in 2015.*

Area	Sites checked	Sites occupied	Sites where eggs laid	Sites successful	Sites failed	Outcome unknown	Min no. large young	Young per successful site
Colonsay	1	1	1	1	0	0	3	3.00
Mull	27	27**	27	22	5	0	57	2.59
Colonsay	9	4	4	1	2	1	3	3.00
Islay	8	8**	8	6	0	2	15	2.50
N Argyll	1	1	1	0	0	1		
Mainland*	7	4**	3	2	1	0	7	3.50
Cowal	12	6	4	2	2	0	6	3.00
Bute	1	1					0	
Total	66	52	48	34	10	4	91	2.61***

* *Mainland includes sites in Mid Argyll (3) and Kintyre & Knapdale (4).*

** *Includes on mixed ad/imm pair*

*** *Calculated for 31 broods from all areas where fledged brood size accurately known.*

NB Bute is outwith the Argyll recording area.

Mull: 27 Hen Harrier sites nests were monitored. There were additional pairs displaying etc but no additional nests were found. Clutch sizes were unknown at 10 nests and there was one nest with c/3, seven with c/4, eight with c/5 and one with c/6. Five nests failed entirely and the 22 successful nests fledged 57 young (P Howarth).

Islay: 8 nests were monitored on the Rinns, all of which successfully fledged at least 1 young. No exact nesting locations are known and these are not included in the table above (per M A Ogilvie). What might have been expected to be adverse weather during the breeding season does not appear to have been a limiting factor for hen harriers in 2015 and nests on Mull in particular produced a good total of fledged young (ARSG per Roger Broad).

Roosts Seven (3MM, 4FF) were observed going to roost at RSPB Loch Gruinart Islay on 3 Nov. No other details of roost counts were received.

PALLID HARRIER *Circus macrourus*

A vagrant: two records both in 2011; one on Mull on 20 and 24 Sept and one in Kintyre on 22 Sept.

No records.

NORTHERN GOSHAWK *Accipiter gentilis* Glas-sheabhag

A sporadic visitor of uncertain status: last confirmed record was at Glen Creran, North Argyll in Jan 2010.

Spring/summer Two records from one area in *Mid-Argyll* possibly, but not definitely, relate to the same bird on 29 and 30 Apr. Both records were accepted by the ABRC.

(See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.134-135).

EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus* Speireag

A widespread, resident, breeding species.

During 2015 birds were reported from all Argyll recording areas except *Coll*. Prey species noted included: Lapwing, Rock Dove, Starling and Chaffinch. Interestingly a migrant was seen flying

south out to sea from the southern tip of Gigha *Kintyre* on 17 Oct as part of a small raptor movement.

Breeding Six sites were checked in 2015 (*Colonsay* 5, *Cowal* 1). Four sites were occupied with eggs laid at all of them. Three sites were successful to the large young stage and one site failed. (ARSG per Roger Broad).

COMMON BUZZARD *Buteo buteo* Clamhan

A resident breeding bird: common in all areas and the most abundant raptor in Argyll.

During 2015 numerous records were received from all Argyll recording areas. The following counts give some idea of the numbers present: 17 were once again noted during the goose count on *Tiree* 13/14 Jan (same as 2014) and 24 were around *Tiree* on 24/25 Aug. Seven were at *Kilchoman Islay* on 9 Mar, 7 at *Duich Lots Islay* on 9 Jul, 6 at *Gleann Cul Bhurg (Iona) Mull* on 12 Aug, 6 on *Crossapol Dunes Coll* on 7 Sep and 8 at *Glen Cannel Mull* on 14 Sep.

Breeding

Table 21. *Outcome of monitored Common Buzzard territories in Argyll in 2015* (ARSG – coordinator I. Hopkins). **NB: includes data for Bute, which is outwith the Argyll Recording area.**

			Sites where breeding proven				
Area	Sites checked	Sites Occupied	Sites failed	Sites successful	Outcome unknown	Number fledged*	Large young per successful site
Tiree	16	16	0	2	0	4	2.00
Colonsay	58	18**	3	7	3	10	1.42
Islay	12	11	0	8	0	12	1.50
Luing	7	7***	0	3	4	4	1.33
Mid-Argyll	2	2	1	1	0	1	1.00
Kintyre	1	1	1	0	0		0
Cowal	22	19	3	6	2	8	1.33
Bute	49	25***	0	17	0	22	1.29
TOTAL	167	99	8	44	9	61	1.38

* large young on last visit are assumed to have fledged.

** Includes 5 sites with single birds

*** Includes 1 site with a single bird

**** includes 4 sites with single birds.

There is still a scarcity of rabbits on Bute (Ian Hopkins), but there was some sign of an increase on Colonsay (David Jardine).

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD *Buteo lagopus* Bleidir-molach

A rare visitor: (several old reports); 13 records since 1963, latest records; on Tiree on 17 Sep 1997 and at Gleann Mor, Islay on 11 and 19 Nov 2014.

No records.

GOLDEN EAGLE *Aquila chrysaetos* Iolair

A scarce, but widespread, resident breeding species. Immatures tend to wander and may be recorded in areas where breeding does not occur.

Away from breeding sites, birds were reported from all Argyll recording areas except *Coll* and *Tiree*. There were two records of 7 birds together: at Loch na Keal *Mull* on 21 Mar and Glen More *Mull* on 13 Jul, while 5 were seen together at Gribun Cliffs *Mull* on 19 Aug and The Oa *Islay* on 14 Sep.

Breeding Coverage of the Golden Eagle population was increased as part of the 2015 National Survey. 87 territories held pairs and 5 held single birds (although some of the latter may have been from adjacent territories. This compares favourably with the 75 territories holding pairs (and 5 with single birds) in 2003 and the 82 territories holding pairs (and 2 with single birds) in 1992.

Table 22. *Summary Information 2015*

	Ts checked	Ts Occupied	Ts where eggs laid	Ts known to have fledged young	% of occupied Ts that fledged young	Min no. of large young	Young per successful pair
N Argyll	13	8prs +1	4	3	33.33	3	1.0
S Argyll	31	26prs+2	21	8	28.57	8	1.0
Mull	36	32 prs	21	3	9.37	3	1.0
Other Islands	25	21prs+2	11	4	17.39	4	1.0
Total	105	87prs+5	57	18	19.56	18	1.0

North Argyll: on the first survey visit, the only known nest in one territory was under snow and ice and no birds were seen in this nest on later visits. It is not known whether eagles were present elsewhere in this territory. At another infrequently monitored territory a pair of eagles was found nesting in a new area.

South Argyll: 26 home ranges were occupied by adult pairs. There was strong evidence that single eagles seen in two other home ranges were not 'resident' but from adjacent occupied territories. At additional historical sites, one was not visited and there were no signs of occupation at three other sites, although these did not get the recommended three monitoring visits. Information and experience from other recent years indicates it is highly unlikely that these four historical sites were occupied in 2015. Pairs were confirmed to have laid eggs in 21 territories and may have done so in two other territories. Eight successful territories had 8 large young or fledged chicks on the last visit. One pair deserted their nesting attempt after a hill fire on 8 Apr.

Mull: 36 former territories were monitored and included 4 that have been considered amalgamated with adjacent territories for some years. Currently 32 occupied territories are separately recognised. One of these areas, occupied many years ago by an immature pair, and where breeding has never been recorded, was reoccupied by a sub-adult pair seen mating in 2015, but no nest was located. Breeding success has been well recorded for many years on *Mull* and 2015 was the poorest on record with most nesting attempts failing on eggs or small young.

Other Islands: 25 former territories were monitored and include 2 that are now considered amalgamated and occupied by just one pair (ie 24 occupied territories). Fieldwork during the National Survey has confirmed the presence of 2 additional pairs that has necessitated splitting two territories. Three visits failed to find any eagles in the central part of one territory, but it is not known whether eagles were present in an important outlying section where breeding has been recorded on a number of occasions.

Age of Pairs: where the age of territorial/breeding pairs has not been established, it has been assumed that they were in adult plumage. Territorial birds in sub-adult/immature plumage were found in three territories.

Nest sites: the majority of nest sites known in all territories are built on crags. In 2015 tree nests (Scots Pine, Oak and Sitka Spruce) were used in three territories. (ARSG per Roger Broad).

Table 23. *Golden Eagle Summary Information 2004-2015.*

Year	Ts Checked	Ts occupied	Ts where eggs laid	Ts known to have fledged young	% of occupied Ts that fledged young	Min number of large young	Number of young per successful pair
2015	105	92	57	18	19.56	18	1.00
2014	71	70	41	20	28.57	20	1.00
2013	64	61	37	20	32.78	23	1.15
2012	65	61	36	18 (21)	31.14% (36.06%)	19 (22)	1.05 (1.04)
2011	60	54	25	17	31.48	17	1.0
2010	65	61	37	20 (25)	32.78% (40.98%)	28	1.10 (1.12)
2009	66	59	40	16	27.11%	18	1.12
2008	73	64	42	33 (35)	51.5% (54.68%)	36 (38)	1.09
2007	69	63	41	25 (26)	39.6% (41.2%)	25 (26)	1.00
2006	73	66	43	17	26.15%	17	1.00
2005	65	59	40	17 (18)	28.8%	19 (20)	1.11
2004	61	56	38	28 (29)	50%	32 (33)	1.14 (1.13)

() = figures in brackets include sites with large young in nest at last visit.

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus* Iolaire-iasgaich

AMBER LIST A *summer migrant, breeding in small but increasing numbers: occurs more widely on passage.*

Spring The first arrival reported was a female Loch Ederline *Mid-Argyll* on 4 Apr. This was followed by birds at: Loch na Cille and the Add Estuary, both *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Apr, Chapel of Kilbride *Cowal* on 9 Apr, Loch Lussa *Kintyre* on 14 Apr, and Loch Tulla *North Argyll* on 19 Apr. On the islands the first were singles at Scallastle *Mull* on 24 Apr and at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 2 May.

Breeding 17 pairs with nests and three sites with single birds were located in 2015. One site was not visited. At several sites the start of egg-laying was 2-3 weeks later than usual. 14 pairs were confirmed to have laid eggs and the outcome of egg-laying was uncertain for three pairs. Four pairs failed including a new pair in *Kintyre*. The average brood size of the 10 successful pairs (1.70 large young/ successful site) was the lowest recorded in 10 years (ARSG Roger Broad).

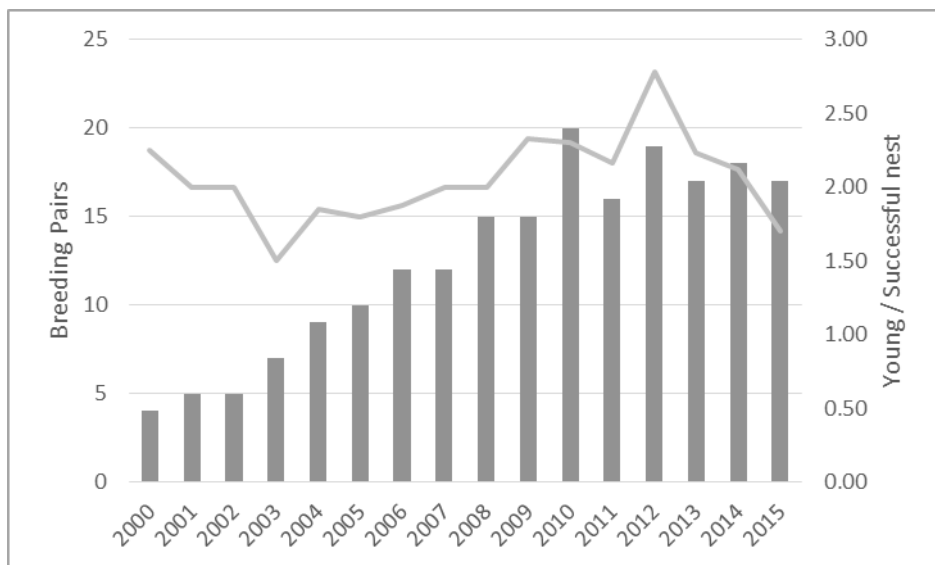


Figure 1. Number of breeding pairs of Osprey in Argyll (bars) and breeding success – young per successful nest (line) 2000 – 2015

Autumn Migrant birds and non-breeding birds were widely reported, including one on *Colonsay* on 20 Jun and regularly on *Islay* and *Mull*. One was reported regularly at Balvicar (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* from 13 Jul and one flew NE over Milton *Tiree* towards *Coll* on 28 Jul. A single bird was at Holy Loch *Cowal* on 5-11 Aug. The last records were of single birds at Lochdon *Mull* on 8 Sep, Balvicar (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Sep and Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 15 Sep.

Reports of colour-ringed Ospreys:

A chick ringed in *Mid-Argyll* in 2013 reported at Lamin Lodge, Gambia on 10 Nov 2014, was seen there again on 16 Nov 2015. Another chick, ringed in 2012, was seen in Djoudj National Park, Senegal on 21 Oct 2015, and another chick from 1998 was also photographed in Senegal in 2015. During the breeding season a chick fledged in Argyll in 2008 was photographed at Loch of Kinnordy, Angus in 2015, and another raised in 2010 was nesting near Lake of Menteith, Central, in 2014.

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus* Snagan-allt

AMBER LIST A *secretive and under-recorded resident: occurs at low density on the mainland but in larger numbers on the outer islands. Immigration is thought to occur in winter.*

Winter/spring The only records from the mainland were 3 at Lochan Luing *Kintyre* in Jan, 4 responding to a tape at Loch Ederline *Mid-Argyll* in Feb and 1 at Ardtur, Appin *North Argyll* in Apr but there were regular reports from the islands with sightings or calling birds on: *Islay* (2 sites), Lismore *North Argyll*, *Colonsay* (3 sites) and *Tiree* (3 sites). A single bird was found run over by a car at Balemartine *Tiree* in Apr.

Summer/breeding Birds were heard calling at 5 sites on *Tiree* during the summer. In May-Jun, birds were also recorded calling at 3 sites on *Colonsay*, at 2 sites on *Islay* including at least 6

calling birds at RSPB Loch Gruinart and a pair at Ardnave, and at single sites on Oronsay *Colonsay*, *Islay*, *Mull*, *Seil Mid-Argyll* and *Luing Mid-Argyll*. One calling from cliff-top bracken on Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* on 27 Jun-4 Jul was the second to be recorded there by TIARG, following calling in the same location in 2014. A second bird called by day at the south end of Lunga on 30 Jun and another was found dead near the village on 27 Jun.

Autumn/winter Birds were a little more widespread with records from Gigha *Kintyre* in Oct-Dec, at 2 sites on *Seil Mid-Argyll* in Jul-Oct, at 2 sites on *Colonsay* in Sep-Oct, at 2 sites on *Luing Mid-Argyll* in Oct-Nov, at 2 sites on *Mull* in Nov and at single sites on Oronsay *Colonsay* in Oct-Nov, at Bolsay *Islay* in Oct and in a reed-bed at Rubh' Ard an Duine, Kerrera *Mid-Argyll* where 6 birds responded to a tape-lure on 31 Dec. Birds were recorded from 7 sites on *Tiree* including a group of at least 3 birds squealing at Balephuill from Jul through Dec with odd birds seen there and 3 calling from ditches at The Reef on 18 Aug.

SPOTTED CRAKE *Porzana porzana* Traon-breac

AMBER LIST *A rare and irregular summer visitor: also recorded as an autumn migrant in the past.*

Spring/summer After a good year in 2014 when 4 birds were recorded, no Spotted Crakes were recorded in Argyll in 2015.



Corn Crane *Tiree* (John Bowler)

CORN CRAKE *Crex crex* Traon

RED LIST *A localised summer visitor, now breeding mainly on: Coll, Colonsay, Iona (Mull), Islay and, Tiree. Following recent conservation activities a long-term decline in numbers is being reversed.*

Spring/summer Arrivals were fairly typical this year, with the first birds reported at Ballinaby *Islay* on 9 Apr and at Cruach *Islay* on 15 Apr, with first arrivals on *Coll* on 20 Apr and on *Tiree* and *Iona Mull* on 21 Apr. No birds were heard calling on Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* by TIARG but single males called on Fladda on 1 Jul and on Sgeir a' Chasteil on 2 Jul, whilst the wing of a freshly killed Corn Crane was found in the nest of a Great Black-backed Gull on

Lunga. There were no confirmed mainland records. Young birds and broods were noted on *Tiree* in Jul-Aug. The overall Argyll total was 14% down on 2014 with big drops in numbers on *Tiree*, *Coll* and *Colonsay / Oronsay*, although numbers were up on both *Islay* and *Iona Mull*, whilst the Argyll total was still higher than in 2013. It is possible that the proportion of males that called on survey nights in Jun was lower than normal because of unusually low (single digit Celsius) temperatures experienced during the month.

Autumn The final male birds stopped calling as usual in the first 2 weeks of Aug and most had left by mid-Sep but odd birds were seen at various sites on *Tiree* until the first week of Oct.

Breeding The table below summarises the results of surveys of calling Corn Crakes in Argyll in 2015 and shows earlier years for comparison. The reduction in the Argyll totals after 2007-12 is due in part to a re-assessment of the numbers on *Coll*.

Table 24. *Number of calling Corn Crakes in Argyll areas, 2006-2015.*

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Coll	171	180	118	122	116	121	103	64	91	78
Tiree	316	391	413	392	391	385	371	348	396	333
Iona	39	30	50	46	34	24	31	25	28	32
Mull	7	4	8	2	7	6	2	3	3	3
Colonsay/ Oronsay	62	73	67	61	72	58	71	53	86	55
Islay	59	70	82	84	81	85	86	87	98	102
Smaller islands*	10	7	n/r	2	2	12+**	2	1	4	2
Mainland	1			5	3+				2	
Grand Total	664	755	738	714	706	691	666	581	708	605

* includes records from McCormaig Islands, Gigha, Lismore, Staffa, Treshnish Isles etc. NB At least one calling bird recorded on the Treshnish Isles in every year except 2008 and 2010.

** includes 8 or 9 on mainland and smaller islands plus 4 on the Treshnish Isles.

COMMON MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus* Cearc-uisge

A localised, sparsely distributed, resident breeding species: most numerous on Islay and in Mid-Argyll.

Winter/spring Birds were well scattered early in year. On *Tiree* there were singles at Crossapol Farm in Jan, at Cornaigmore in Feb and at Loch na Mointeach in Mar, whilst there were 2 at Sandaig in Apr. Birds were present at the RSPB *Coll* reserve in Apr and nearby at Uig in May. On *Mull* 2 were at Gruline House in Jan and birds were present at Tobermory in Apr. From *Mid-Argyll*, 2 were in Oban in Jan, 1 was at Ardrishaig in Mar and 1 was at Crinan Canal in Apr. 2 were at Ardtur (Appin) *North Argyll* in Apr. On *Islay* up to 6 birds were present at RSPB Loch Gruinart in Mar-Apr, whilst 4 were on a distillery pond at Port Charlotte on 16 Mar.

Summer/breeding Possible/probable breeding pairs were at Sandaig *Tiree* in May-Sep, at Bellanoch *Mid-Argyll* in May, at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* in Jun and at Claddach *Islay* in Jul, whilst up to 7 pairs bred at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay*. Confirmed breeding involved a pair with 2 young chicks plus an older fledged juvenile at Kilkenneth *Tiree* in Aug, an immature bird at East Loch Fada *Colonsay* on 29 Aug, 3 adults with 2 juveniles and an older immature bird at Ardencaple House, Seil *Mid-Argyll* in Sep, 2 chicks at Benderloch *North Argyll* on 30 May, 3 juveniles on a distillery pond at Port Charlotte *Islay* on 8 Sep and a pair with 2 chicks at

Ballyhough Loch *Coll* on 14 Sep, whilst a dead juvenile was found at Muasdale *Kintyre* on 20 Aug.

Autumn/winter Birds remained scattered later in the year. On *Islay* there were singles at Port Charlotte in Oct and at Loch Skerrols in Nov. On *Tiree* there were singles at Kilkenneth in Sep and at Sandaig in Sep-Oct. Elsewhere 6 birds remained at Ardencaple House, Seil *Mid-Argyll* in Oct, 3 were at Benderloch *North Argyll* on 15 Sep, with singles at Achafolla, Luing *Mid-Argyll* in Oct, at Mishnish Lochs *Mull* in Oct, at Balnoin *Mid-Argyll* in Oct-Nov, at Cullipool Quarry Luing *Mid-Argyll* in Nov, 2 at Kilcheran Loch and 1 at Balnagown Loch, both Lismore *North Argyll* in Nov and at Oban *Mid-Argyll* in Dec.

COMMON COOT *Fulica atra* Lach-a'-bhlàir

A very scarce and irregular breeder and uncommon winter visitor: mainly found on Tiree.

Winter/spring The declining fortunes of this species in Argyll continue. There were just 2 records, 2 were at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 6 Jan and 1 was at East Loch Fada *Colonsay* on 16-17 May.

Summer No records.

Autumn/winter One was at Glen Feochan *Mid-Argyll* on 27-29 Aug.

COMMON CRANE *Grus grus*

AMBER LIST A rare visitor: eighteen records; some records of up to three together between 1966-2013. Up to nine individuals were recorded in 2012.

No records.

EURASIAN STONE-CURLEW *Burhinus oedicnemus*

RED LIST A vagrant: one record; one at Loch Gruinart Flats, Islay on 23-24 May 1997.

No records.

PIED AVOCET *Recurvirostra avosetta*

AMBER LIST A vagrant: four records; at Loch Seil, Mid-Argyll in 1936, Mull in 1977, Kintyre in 1986, and Kintyre in 2002.

No records.

EURASIAN OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus* Gille-Brìghde

AMBER LIST A widespread and common breeding species: in all recording areas. Flocks congregate at favoured locations outside the breeding season and numbers often rise noticeably during spring and autumn passage.

Winter/spring Counts were received on a regular basis throughout the year from twelve sites (see Table 25). Notable winter records were 66 at Loch Caolisport *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Jan, 119 at Gairletter Point *Cowal* on 26 Jan and 60 on *Tiree* on 9 Feb. 125 at The Reef *Tiree* on 16 Feb was the first suggestion of the return of breeding birds, later 80 were at Traigh Bhagh *Tiree* on 8 Apr, 32 at Eilean Ramsay (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 11 Apr, 68 at The Strand *Colonsay* on 26 Apr, 33 at Lochbuie *Mull* on 29 Apr, 85 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 6 May, 10 at the RSPB Reserve *Coll* on 6 May and 10 at Arinagour *Coll* on 8 May, 55 at Loch Beg *Mull* on 12 May and 30 at Saulmore *Mid-Argyll* on 20 May.

Breeding/summer The first young were noted at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 2 Jun. 120 pairs were found breeding at The Reef *Tiree*, 11 breeding pairs were found at Gruinart and 20 pairs at Ardnave (both *Islay*) and a minimum of 55 pairs were found on *Colonsay*. On the Treshnish Isles *Mull*, 10 pairs (2 confirmed breeding) were found on Lunga, 2 pairs (one with one chick)

on Sgeir an Eirionnaich, 1 pair on Sgeir an Caisteal, 1 pair on Sgier an Giusaich and one pair was confirmed breeding on Fladda. Elsewhere breeding was proved at Claggain Bay and Gortan (both *Islay*), Port na Fraing, Camus Cuil ant-Saimh, and Baille Mor (all *Iona*) *Mull*, and at the Barcaldine Factory *North Argyll*. Probable breeding was noted at Saligo Bay *Islay*, Kilbride (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* and Inch Kenneth *Mull*. A non-breeding flock of 23 was noted at Lochgoilhead *Cowal* on 4 Jun, with 30 at Garmony Point *Mull* on 6 Jun and 18 at New Danna *Mid-Argyll* on 28 Jun.

Autumn/winter Away from the regularly counted sites (Table 25), 100 were on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 7 Jul, 330 flew south in 4 hrs at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 13 Aug, 50 were at Bagh an Traighleach *Coll* on 8 Sep and 150 at Plaide Mhor *Colonsay* on 27 Sep. 265 were at Glenramskill jetty (Campbeltown Loch) *Kintyre* on 30 Sep and 400 were there on 16 Oct, 30 were at Saulmore *Mid-Argyll* on 16 Nov, 20 at Port Ramsay (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 28 Nov, 431 at Otter Ferry spit *Cowal* on 29 Nov and 25 at Calgary Bay *Mull* on 24 Dec.

Table 25. *Maximum WEBS monthly counts of Oystercatchers at Loch Gruinart, Loch Indaal (Islay) Loch Sween, Loch Crinan, Loch Gilp, Loch Craignish (Mid-Argyll), Holy Loch, Loch Long (Ardentinny – to Strone Point) (Cowal), Loch Etive, Loch Creran (North Argyll), the Sound of Gigha and West Loch Tarbert (Kintyre) in 2015.*

<i>Lochs</i>	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	219	139	111	174	43	135	nc	179	92	231	141	127
Indaal	73	133	151	167	189	91	250	145	20	41	47	52
Sween	19	27	22						17	25		
Crinan	24	14	28	8			37	18	34	23	9	7
Gilp	184	234	203					244	308	250	188	257
Craignish	35	42	46	32	22	9	24	10	9	11	4	9
Holy L.	355	218	241							242	261	194
Loch Long	119		49	39		37	68	89	153	141	88	56
Creran	68	103		39	26					107		
Etive		16	51							2	10	10
S of Gigha	17	32	13	12		14						
W Loch Tarbert		10	13	12			7	20	10			

AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis dominica*

A rare autumn visitor: 22 records; all 2001-2014.

No records.

PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis fulva*

A vagrant: four records; all on Tiree, in Oct 2000, in Aug/Sep 2006, in Oct 2008 and in Aug/Sep 2009.

No records.

EUROPEAN GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria* Feadag

A moderate but probably decreasing number breed on moorland in several parts of Argyll. Large numbers are present at traditional sites by the coast in winter and also during spring and autumn passage, especially on: Islay, Tiree, and Mull.

Winter/spring The largest numbers throughout the year were reported from *Tiree* and *Gruinart Islay* (see Table 26), where a peak count of 4,750 was noted at *The Reef Tiree* on 9 Apr. There were no records from *Cowal*. The first report of the year was an interesting record of 7 found on the way to the top of *Beinn Bheigheir Islay* on 1 Jan. Away from *Tiree* and *Islay*, 230 were on *Oronsay Colonsay* on 29 Jan, increasing to 319 there on 27 Feb. Few were found elsewhere until late Mar, when 5 prs were at the head of *Loch Creran North Argyll* on 17 Mar, and one was at *Loch Beg Mull* on 21 Mar. In line with increasing numbers on *Tiree*, sightings were more widespread in April when 12 were at *Treshnish Point Mull* on 12 Apr and 12 were on *Iona Mull* the next day. 350 were *Oronsay Colonsay* on 16 Apr, increasing to 600 on 30 Apr; 150 were at *Fiddien Mull* on 19 Apr and 200 at *Cliad Coll* on 25 Apr. Migration tailed off in May with 9 on *Iona* and 18 at *Lochbuie* (both *Mull*) on 1 May and 64 at *Fiddien Mull* on 11 May, being the more interesting records.

Breeding/summer Very few reports were received from birds in breeding habitat: 3 were at *Dhiseig Mull* on 29 May; 20 on *Beinn nan Ghabar Mull* on 24 Aug were probably returning migrants, but may have been a local post-breeding group.

Autumn/winter 36 at *Loch a' Phuill Tiree* on 11 Jul, one at the *Add Estuary Mid-Argyll* on 22 Jul and 41 at *Garmony Point Mull* on 30 Jul were the first obvious autumn migrants. Away from *Tiree* and *Loch Gruinart Islay*, 76 were at *Traigh nam Barc Colonsay* on 26 Sep, 700 at *Clochkeil* (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 4 Oct and 250 were on *Oronsay Colonsay* on 24 Oct, rising to 452 on 15 Nov. Towards the year end amongst the more notable records were 1,200 at *Bridgend Merse Islay* on 3 Nov and 20 on *Iona* and 53 at *Ardalanish Bay* (both *Mull*) on 20 Nov.

Table 26. *Maximum monthly day-counts of Golden Plovers on Tiree and Gruinart Islay in 2015.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tiree	3280	3780	2750	5200	5	1	36	880	1881	930	2300	2350
Gruinart	800	1520	150	500					4	585	1600	1065



European Golden Plovers *Islay* (Jim Dickson)

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola* Feadag-ghlas

AMBER LIST *An uncommon passage migrant, recorded most frequently in Kintyre and on the islands: also, a winter visitor in small numbers, mostly on Islay and Tiree.*

Winter/spring Six were found at Ardnave *Islay* on 6 Jan; one on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 16 Jan and two at Balephetrish Bay *Tiree* on 19 & 23 Jan were the only other records that month. One was seen at Balephetrish Bay *Tiree* on 19 Feb, when there were also 3 at Salum Bay *Tiree*. Seven were at Ardnave *Islay* on 17 Mar. Spring passage was light with 2 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 9 Apr, one at Croig *Mull* on 7 May, with the last noted at Killinallan Point *Islay* on 14 May.

Autumn/winter The first autumn record was of 3 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 14 Sep, which were followed by 3 at Traigh Bhi *Tiree* on 15 Sep. From the end of the month numbers increased when one was at Traigh nam Barc *Colonsay* on 27 Sep, 4 were at Salum Bay *Tiree* on 28 Sep and 30 were found at Loch Indaal *Islay* on 14 Oct and 12 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 16 Oct. Numbers declined thereafter, but 2 were at Otter Ferry spit *Cowal* on 20 Oct, 1 was at Vault Bay *Tiree* on 29 Oct and 10 were still present at Bowmore *Islay* on 7 Nov. Few wintering birds were noted: one was at Aros Castle *Mull* on 6 Nov, 3 at Ardnave *Islay* on 2 Dec and one on Oronsay *Colonsay* on the same day.

NORTHERN LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus* Curracag

RED LIST A localised breeder and widespread wintering species: numbers highest on Tiree and Islay.

Winter/spring Large numbers were reported throughout the year at Gruinart *Islay* and *Tiree* (see Table 27). 44 were on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 12 Jan, increasing to 100 on 16 Feb, 180 were at the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on 26 Jan and 13 at the Holy Loch *Cowal* on 19 Jan. Very few were reported elsewhere, but singles were at the Ensay Burn mouth *Mull* on 17 Jan and Coshandrochaid *Mid-Argyll* on 18 Jan. Into Feb, birds started to return with 18 noted at Saulmore *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Feb and 45 at Loch Ba *Mull* on 17 Feb. Later 10 were at Drimvore *Mid-Argyll* on 4 Mar, 13 at West Tarbert (Gigha) *Kintyre* on 18 Mar and 4 at Kilchattan (Luining) *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Mar.

Breeding Birds were on eggs and territory on *Tiree* from mid-Mar. The first brood on *Tiree* was noted at the The Reef on 5 May. A good breeding season was noted here with a total of 323 pairs found. At Gruinart *Islay*, where the first brood was noted on 28 Apr, there were 218 pairs (cf 207 in 2014), while 87 pairs were found at Ardnave *Islay*. 68 pairs were noted on Oronsay *Colonsay* and 33 pairs were found on *Colonsay*. 120 were on the RSPB Reserve *Coll* on 28 Apr and 10 were on Iona *Mull* on 24 Jun. Elsewhere breeding was confirmed at Garvard *Colonsay* and Balinaby *Islay* and possible breeding reported at Balnahard *Colonsay*, Tayinloan *Kintyre*, Connel and Drimvore *Mid-Argyll*, Fiddien, Glengorm, Loch Ba and Loch Beg (all *Mull*).

Autumn/winter Post-breeding flocks reported included 140 at Traigh nam Barc *Colonsay* on 29 Aug and 100 at Crossapol Dunes *Coll* on 7 Sep. Unusually one was at Ardencaple (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 8 Sep, while 19 at Strath Farm (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 11 Sep was more expected as were 99 at Westport Marsh *Kintyre* on 9 Oct. 75 were on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 2 Nov, 50 at Fiddien *Mull* on 11 Nov, 47 at Ardalanish Bay *Mull* on 20 Nov and 90 at Ardnave Loch *Islay* on 14 Dec.

Table 27. Monthly Maximum counts of Lapwings at Loch Gruinart RSPB Reserve and on *Tiree* in 2015.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	500	545	293			34		100	142	260	705	71
Tiree	3045	3405	715					3270	3310	n/c	3390	3150

N.B. These counts exclude breeding pairs.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius*

A vagrant: four records; on Islay in May 1983, at Machrihanish SBO, Kintyre in Jul 2007 and Jul 2009 and on Islay in May 2013.

No records.

COMMON RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula* Trilleachan-tràghad

RED LIST A *widespread and fairly common breeding species: present throughout the year. Flocks congregate at favoured locations outside the breeding season and especially on passage.*

Winter/spring Reports throughout the year were received from *Tiree*, where large counts are regular, and from Bowmore-Gartbreck *Islay* (see Table 28). Elsewhere during winter 16 were at Loch Cuin (Dervaig) *Mull* on 19 Jan, 79 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 29 Jan, 19 at Cluniter *Cowal* on 6 Feb, 20 at Killail *Cowal* on 18 Feb, 20 at Otter Ferry spit *Cowal* on 26 Feb, 12 at New Danna *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Feb and 4 at Ledaig Point *North Argyll* on 28 Feb. During spring, sightings became more widespread and numbers on passage increased with 257 found at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 13 Apr, 50 at Ardnave *Islay* on 18 Apr, and 255 were at Traigh nam Barc/The Strand *Colonsay* on 25 Apr. 38 were at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 14 May increasing to 139 on 25 May, while 30 were on Iona *Mull* on 17 May.

Breeding The first hatched young was reported from the Reef *Tiree* on 8 May and Loch Indaal *Islay* on 11 May. 41 pairs were found at the Reef *Tiree*, 11 pairs at Ardnave *Islay*, and one pair at Gruinart *Islay*. 13 pairs were located on *Colonsay* where two nests with c/4 and one brood b/2 were found. On the Treshnish Isles *Mull*, the only breeding pairs on Lunga were confined to Corran Lunga and the adjacent boulder beach, where one, possibly two pairs were on territory with 2 fledged juveniles. Breeding was also proved at Port na Fraing (Iona) *Mull*, Benderloch *North Argyll* and probable breeding was noted at the Laggan Estuary *Islay*, Tayinloan *Kintyre*, Inch Kenneth, Loch Beg and Lochbuie (all *Mull*).

Autumn/winter 22 flying south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 17 Jul were the first signs of autumn passage. Later in the month 81 were at Bridgend *Islay* on 26 Jul, and larger numbers were reported in Aug, including 80 flying south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 9 Aug, 180 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 12 Aug, 120 at Killiechronan *Mull* on 17 Aug, 85 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 19 Aug, 109 at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Aug, 200 at Traigh nam Barc *Colonsay* on 29 Aug and 65 at Ledaig Point *North Argyll* on 31 Aug. The following month 21 were at Fidden *Mull* on 1 Sep, 67 at Crossapol *Coll* on 7 Sep, 34 at New Danna *Mid-Argyll* on 20 Sep, 23 at Rubh Garbh *North Argyll* on 26 Sep and 42 Glenramskill Jetty *Kintyre* on 30 Sep. The following notable sightings were made towards the year end: 101 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 10 Oct, 26 at Ardminish Bay (Gigha) *Kintyre* on 17 Oct, 75 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 18 Oct, 32 at Cullipool (Luining) *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Nov, 53 at Camas Cuil an t-Saimh (Iona) *Mull* on 20 Nov and 200 at Loch Indaal *Islay* on 20 Nov.

Table 28. *Maximum monthly day-counts of Ringed Plovers on Tiree, and Bowmore–Gartbreck Islay in 2015.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tiree	270	200	90	380	340	30	35	143	395	300	180	70
Bowmore	46		6	50	24	20	15	14	11	1	83	n/c

KILLDEER *Charadrius vociferus*

A vagrant: three records; on Colonsay in Jan 1984, Oronsay, Colonsay in Oct 2006 and Islay in Jan 2011.

No records.

EURASIAN DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus* Amadan-mòintich

RED LIST A *scarce migrant: mostly seen in late Apr and May. There are occasional breeding records in North Argyll.*

Spring The first noted was a migrant at the south end of Oronsay *Colonsay* on 29 Apr, and another single was found at Monument (The Oa) *Islay* on 4 May. The following day 8 were on *Tiree*; 6 at Hough and 2 at the Reef. Four of these, or another 4 were at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 6 May and 4 were on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 7 May, with 3 lingering until the following day.

Summer There were no reports from breeding habitats.

Autumn/winter No reports.

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus* Eun-Bealltainn

RED LIST A *regular passage migrant: usually in small numbers and mainly on the islands. More frequent in spring (Apr-May) than in autumn (Jul-Oct) and is recorded regularly in summer but rarely in winter.*

Spring There were no winter records. The first migrant noted was one flying north at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 19 Mar. The next were two there on 11 Apr, followed by singles at Traigh Bhagh *Tiree* on 17 Apr and on 19 Apr at Port Charlotte *Islay* and Oronsay *Colonsay*, when there were also 10 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre*. Migration picked up towards the end of the month with singles at Ensay burn mouth *Mull* on 21 Apr and Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* on 24 Apr. 25 were seen over the Sound of Mull *Mull* on the same day, 6 were at Lochbuie *Mull* on 26 Apr, 14 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 26 Apr, 14 at Haunn *Mull* on 27 Apr, 8 at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 28 Apr, 15 on *Tiree* on 29 Apr, 30 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 29 Apr, 10 at Fidden *Mull* and 50 Ardnave *Islay* on 30 Apr. Numbers remained high and widespread during early May: 90 were at Uiskentuie *Islay* on 1 May when 27 were on Oronsay *Colonsay*. One was at Toberonochy (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 2 May, 25 were at the RSPB Reserve *Coll* on 6 May, when 51 were on *Tiree*. On 7 May, 21 were at Langamull *Mull* and 33 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre*, with 40 at Ardnave *Islay* the following day. Thereafter 16 were at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 11 May, 7 at Otter Ferry spit *Cowal* on 18 May, 5 on Iona *Mull* on 21 May and 35 at Ardnave *Islay* on 21 May. Two at Rubha Mor (Kames) on 31 May were the only record during the year from *Cowal*.

Summer In Jun there were scattered sightings with up to three on *Tiree*, singles at various locations on *Colonsay* including Oronsay, and at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 17 Jun,

Autumn Most sightings in autumn were of 1-2 birds from late Jul – mid-Sep. A single at Ensay burn mouth *Mull* on 5 Jul and 7 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 6 Jul were the first returning birds. Four were at Bowmore *Islay* on 20 Jul, 16 at Ruaig *Tiree* on 13 Aug, 11 at Killail *Cowal* on 1 Sep, 10 at Crossapol Dunes *Coll* on 7 Sep and 10 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 16 Sep. One at Rubha Charsalich (Achnaba, Loch Etive) on 10 Sep was the only record during the year from *North Argyll*. There were three records during Oct - two on *Mull*, one at Ardnadrochit on 4 Oct and another single at Quinish on 11 Oct. A single at Tarbert Bay on 29 Oct was the only record during the year from *Jura*. One at Ardnave Loch *Islay* on 4 Nov was the last recorded.

EURASIAN CURLEW *Numenius arquata* Guilbneach

RED LIST An *increasingly rare breeding species in suitable habitat: more numerous on passage and in winter.*

Winter/spring Regular counts were received throughout the year from Loch Gruinart and Loch Indaal (both *Islay*), Loch Crinan and Loch Gilp (both *Mid-Argyll*) and the Holy Loch *Cowal* (see Table 29). Other interesting reports during winter were 75 at Crossapol *Tiree* on 21 Jan, 15 at Toberonochy (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 31 Jan, 30 at Ardachy (Loch Etive) *North Argyll* on 6

Feb, 172 at the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on 10 Feb, 30 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 13 Feb and 55 at Sorobaidh Bay *Tiree* on 25 Mar.

Breeding/summer 20 pairs bred at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* (the same number as 2014). One was heard giving a bubbling call at The Reef *Tiree* on 23 May, but there was no further evidence of breeding there. A pair with a single chick was found at Balinaby *Islay* on 30 May and probable breeding was reported at Glengorm *Mull*. Small numbers of non-breeding birds were seen on other islands during the summer eg 6 at Baugh *Tiree* on 3 Jun and 4 at Ardskenish *Colonsay* on 5 Jun.

Autumn/winter Signs of returning migrants were first noted on 1 Jul when 46 were on Oronsay *Colonsay* and two were on Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull*. Increased numbers were seen during the autumn eg on 10 Aug 72 were on *Tiree*, including 40 at Loch a' Phuill, where 68 were seen on 27 Aug. 40 were at Otter Ferry spit *Cowal* on 16 Aug, 85 were at Middleton *Tiree* on 5 Sep and 29 were at Fennachrochan (Lismore) *North Argyll* on the same day. Thereafter 15 were at Eilean Ornsay *Coll* on 10 Sep, 80 at Glenramskill jetty (Campbeltown Loch) *Kintyre* on 30 Sep, 60 at Westport Marsh *Kintyre* on 9 Oct and 92 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 18 Oct. Towards the end of the year 53 were at Machir Bay *Islay* on 3 Nov, 52 at Inveresragan *North Argyll* on 16 Nov, 27 at Fidden *Mull* on 20 Nov and 21 at Loch Feochan *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Nov.

Table 29. *Maximum monthly counts of Curlews at Loch Gruinart and Loch Indaal (Islay), and WEBS counts from Loch Crinan and Loch Gilp (Mid-Argyll), the Holy Loch (Cowal) and Loch Etive (North Argyll) in 2015.*

<i>Loch</i>	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	146	77	96	84	78			253	219	135	63	94
Indaal	34	71			1		200	95	26	179	101	77
Crinan	28	38	79	6			22	69	51	72	10	27
Holy Loch	65	147	126							118	21	38
Gilp	44	25	29	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	31	28	5	30	16
Etive	23	44	14						13	12	32	23

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa islandica* Cearra-ghob

RED LIST A regular passage migrant, especially on Islay, Tiree, and south Kintyre with occasional winter records: scarce elsewhere. Most Argyll records have been presumed to relate to the Icelandic race *L.l.islandica* but at least one individual of the nominate race *L.l.limosa* has been identified (a bird leg flagged as a chick in The Netherlands and seen on Tiree in 2009).

Winter The only birds recorded in winter were two seen at the head of Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Feb.

Spring Two at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 27 Mar were the first migrants noted and two were noted flying west at Langamull *Mull* on 29 Mar. During Apr, 8 colour-ringed birds were noted on *Tiree* – 3 were from Iceland, 2 from France, one from Portugal and two from the Wash, East Anglia, one of which was at least 22 years old. 14 were at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 14 Apr, 2 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 14 Apr and 5 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 18 Apr. Following this, numbers increased with 153 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 21 Apr, 64 on *Tiree* (incl 55 over The Reef) on 21 Apr, 34 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 25 Apr with 96 on *Tiree* on 26 Apr, and 138 there on 27 Apr, 424 on 28 Apr and 435 on 29 Apr. Elsewhere 1 was at Loch Don *Mull* on 28 Apr, 59 at Gruinart Floods *Islay* on 30 Apr, 22 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 29 Apr, 2 at Loch Caithlim (Seil)

Mid-Argyll on 2 May, 12 at *Lagavulin Islay* on 10 May and 24 at *Gruinart Islay* on 20 May. The last spring migrant was one on *Tiree* on 22 May.

Summer A few remained over summer including 3 at *Blackrock (Loch Indaal) Islay* on 11 June. One was on *Oronsay Colonsay* on 1 Jul, followed by 57 returning migrants flying over there on 4 Jul and up to 15 were seen there during 7-14 Jul.

Autumn In addition to the birds over *Oronsay Colonsay* on 4 Jul, migrants were noted at *Loch a Phuill Tiree*, where there were 80 on 17 Jul and 99 on 18 Jul, 36 were *Strath Farm (The Laggan) Kintyre* on 17 Jul, 1 was at *Cuin (Dervaig) Mull* on 18 Jul, and on the same day 1 was at *Craignure Golf course Mull* and 5 at the *Add Estuary Mid-Argyll*. 62 were on *Tiree* on 21 Jul, 13 at *Loch Indaal Islay* on 3 Aug, 3 at *Croig Mull* on 5 Aug, 10 at the *Add Estuary Mid-Argyll* on 9 Aug, 10 on *The Laggan Kintyre* on 20 Aug, 5 at *Loch Beg Mull* on 20 Aug and 4 were at *Fidden Mull* on 2 Sep. 39 were at *Loch Gruinart Islay* on 20 Aug, increasing to 65 on 25 Aug, when 64 were also on *Tiree*. 8 were at the *Add Estuary Mid-Argyll* on 7 Sep and 14 at *Barrapol Tiree* on 23 Sep. During Oct the only records were of a single at *Loch a' Phuill Tiree* on 6 Oct, 2 at *Gruinart Islay* on 10 Oct and one at *Loch Indaal Islay* on 13 Oct.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica* Roid-ghuilbneach

AMBER LIST A *mainly autumn migrant and winter visitor: the largest numbers occurring on Islay. Birds are also regular on Tiree and at a few other island and mainland sites.*

Winter/spring Away from *Islay*, where large numbers were seen and counted regularly (see Table 30), smaller numbers were noted elsewhere: 25 at *Loch Gilp Mid-Argyll* on 10 Jan, 17 at *Sorobaiddh Bay Tiree* on 17 Jan and 1 at *Killiechronan Mull* on 25 Feb. Away from *Islay*, single spring migrants were noted on *Oronsay Colonsay* on 26 Apr and in summer plumage at *Loch Caithlin (Seil) Mid-Argyll* on 5 May. 6 were at *Salum Tiree* on 29 May.

Summer Away from *Islay* where 40 were at *RSPB Loch Gruinart* on 14 Jun and 15 at *Bowmore* on 17 Jun, small numbers of summering birds were noted including 3 at *Hynish Tiree* during early Jun.

Autumn/winter The peak counts were again on *Islay* (Table 30). The first suggestion of autumn migration was of 2 on *Oronsay Colonsay* on 17 Jul and 2 at the *Add Estuary Mid-Argyll* on the same date. 10 were at *Hynish Tiree* on 16 Aug, while 4 flying south at *Machrihanish SBO Kintyre* on 28 Aug was the only record at this site. 8 were at *Achnadrochit Mull* on 1 Sep, 16 at *Sorobaiddh Bay Tiree* on 13 Sep and a total of 37 on *Tiree* on 28 Sep. 14 were at *The Strand Colonsay* on 26 Sep, 2 at *Appin Rocks North Argyll* on 29 Sep, 3 at the *Aros Estuary Mull* on 12 Oct, 9 at *Loch Crinan Mid-Argyll* on 22 Oct, 25 at *Loch Gilp Mid-Argyll* on 30 Oct and 37 were there on 30 Nov. 47 were at *The Strand Colonsay* on 17 Dec and one was at *Gigalum Sound (Gigha) Kintyre* on 19 Dec.

Table 30. *Maximum monthly counts of Bar-tailed Godwits at Loch Gruinart and Loch Indaal Islay in 2015.*

Lochs	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	98	28	200			40		89	119	17	130	55
Indaal	45	135	54	1	20	15	63	59	66	164	113	125

RUDDY TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres* Trilleachan-beag

AMBER LIST A *a common and widespread passage migrant and winter visitor: mainly from mid Jul to early Jun. Mid summer records are not unusual.*

Winter/spring Regular counts were received throughout the year from *Oronsay Colonsay*, *Loch Gruinart Islay*, *Campbeltown Loch Kintyre* and *Tiree* (see Table 31). During winter 56 were

reported at Dunoon *Cowal* on 6 Jan, 60 at Ledaig Point *North Argyll* on 26 Jan, 75 at Otter Ferry fish farm *Cowal* on 29 Jan and 14 at Loch na Keal *Mull* on 25 Feb. 30 were at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 18 Apr, 15 at Pennyghael *Mull* on 23 Apr, 30 flew south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 5 May and 2 were on Iona *Mull* on 18 May.

Summer There was a slightly greater number of sightings during Jun than in 2014: 12 were at Hynish *Tiree* on 1 Jun, then up to 8 on *Tiree* on 3 dates in Jun which lingered through July, 1-3 were at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 5 days, one was on the Cairns of Coll *Coll* on 11 June, one was at Bowmore *Islay* on 14 Jun and one was heard calling over Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* on 29 Jun. Up to 5 were seen on 5 dates in Jul at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* and 5 were on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 6 Jul.

Autumn/winter 37 had returned to Ardrishaig *Mid-Argyll* on 21 Aug, and during autumn 10 were at Croig *Mull* on 1 Sep, 10 at Cliad Bay *Coll* on 8 Sep, 127 at Kirm (Dunoon) *Cowal* on 22 Sep, 3 at Rhugarbh *North Argyll* on 26 Sep, 6 on Gigha *Kintyre* on 17 Oct and 7 at Cullipool (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 24 Oct. Larger counts included 65 at Otter Ferry spit *Cowal* on 17 Oct, 106 at Dunoon *Cowal* on 24 Oct and 70 at Rhunarhaorine Point *Kintyre* on 31 Oct. Other interesting reports included 20 at Scarisdale Point *Mull* on 4 Nov, 10 at Lagganulva *Mull* on 21 Nov, 4 at Port Ramsay (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 28 Nov, 33 at Uiskentuie *Islay* on 29 Nov and 10 at Eilean Taighe (Ormsary) *Mid-Argyll* on 26 Dec.

Table 31. *Maximum monthly counts of Turnstones at Loch Gruinart (Islay), Campbeltown Loch (Kintyre) Oronsay (Colonsay) and Tiree in 2015.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	59	1	18	17	7			5		3	5	60
Campbeltown Loch	+	20	43	15					28	77		
Oronsay	11	18	25	14	7		5			1	2	5
Tiree	160	90	105	93	55	12	8	38	55	55	+	+

RED KNOT *Calidris canutus* Luatharan-gainmhic

AMBER LIST *An uncommon passage migrant: mostly in autumn, and mainly on Islay and south Kintyre. A few winter, mainly on Islay, and occasional birds occur in summer.*

Winter/spring During Jan and Feb the only record was of 20 at Bowmore *Islay* on 19 Jan. 22 were at Otter Ferry spit *Cowal* on 15 Mar, singles were found at Torloisk *Mull* on 8 Mar and on Iona *Mull* on 9 Apr. Two were at the head of Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 10 May, when 6 were at Lagavulin *Islay*. 23 were found at Bowmore *Islay* the following day.

Autumn/winter The first autumn migrant was one found on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 8 Jul, followed by one at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 13 Jul. There was a notable movement on 17 Jul when 28 were noted flying south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre*, 42 were at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* and 13 at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree*. During Aug 283 were noted flying south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre*, 2 were at Croig *Mull* on 6 Aug, 35, mostly juvs, were at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 21 Aug, 13 at Langamull *Mull* on 26 Aug, 6 at Traigh nam Barc *Colonsay* on 29 Aug, 11 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 30 Aug and 14 at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 30 Aug. The following month 30 were at Gott Bay *Tiree* on 1 Sep, 90 flew south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 4 Sep, 31 were at Bowmore *Islay* on 13 Sep and 6 at Campbeltown Bay *Kintyre* on 15 Sep. During winter there were fewer records, but 6 were at the head of Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Nov, 18 at Bowmore *Islay* on 13 Dec, 14 at Otter Ferry spit *Cowal* on 19 Dec and 2 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 17 Dec.

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax* Gibegan

RED LIST *An uncommon passage migrant with most records in autumn.*

Spring Three spring migrants were found: the first lingered on Oronsay *Colonsay* from 15 Apr – 14 May, a female was at The Reef *Tiree* on 18 May and one was at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 16–17 Jun.

Autumn/winter The first autumn migrant was on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 27 Jul. Five birds found on 31 Jul, one at Loch Gruinart *Islay* and four juvs at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll*, were the first of an excellent autumn for this species, which one observer in *Kintyre* described as the best in 40 years. During Aug the largest numbers were on *Tiree*, where 12 were found on 7 Aug, increasing to 21 on 17 Aug, and peaking at 31 on 29 Aug, when 24 were at Balephuill, 4 at Kilkenneth and 3 at Balemartine. Almost all of these were juvs; movements between sites makes it difficult to tell how many birds were involved. Good numbers were also seen in Aug on *Islay*, when 13 were at Loch Gruinart on 20 Aug and 20 at Bridgend Merse on 24 Aug. Numbers peaked at 12 juvs at Strath Farm (the Laggan) *Kintyre* on 5 Aug, and on *Mull* 3 were at Killichronan on 17 Aug and 2 at Fidden on 20 Aug. Smaller numbers were seen regularly in Sep on *Tiree*, with a max count of 16 on 14 Sep, when 9 were at Ruaig, 6 at Middleton and one at Balevullin. Up to 5 were at Strath Farm *Kintyre* (on 15 Sep), with the last seen in this area on 27 Sep. On *Islay*, 2 at Loch Gruinart on 13 Sep and 2 at Bowmore on the same day were the only birds reported. 1-2 lingered at a few sites on *Tiree* until 2 Oct.

BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER *Limicola falcinellus*

A vagrant: two records; both on Tiree, one in May 1994 and one in May/Jun 2005.

No records.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea* Luatharan-crom

AMBER LIST *A scarce but annual passage migrant: most records in autumn.*

Spring Five birds were observed in spring. The first was at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 3 May. On 14 May an adult in summer plumage was at Vaul Bay *Tiree*, two were at Loch Craignish *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Jun and another adult was at Heylipol Church Pool *Tiree* on 14-17 Jun.

Autumn Passage was very light. An adult was at Strath Farm (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 17 Jul and a juv was noted at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 6 Aug.

TEMMINCK'S STINT *Calidris temminckii*

RED LIST *A rare passage migrant: five records; one at Machrihanish, Kintyre in Jul 1974, one at Fidden, Mull in Sep 1985, one at An Fhaodhail, Tiree in Aug 1992, one at Loch Gruinart, Islay in May 2000 and one at RSPB Loch Gruinart, Islay on 22-23 May 2014.*

No records.

SANDERLING *Calidris alba* Luatharan-glas

AMBER LIST *A mainly passage migrant, most numerous in: Islay, south Kintyre, and Tiree. Regular wintering is confined to: Coll, Colonsay, Islay, and Tiree. A few non breeders occur on the islands in summer.*

Winter *Tiree* remained the stronghold of this species (see Table 32); no records were received from *Cowal* and *North Argyll*. During winter colour-ringed/flagged birds were found on *Tiree* including a juv marked on Greenland and an adult marked on Iceland. 50 were at Ardnave *Islay* on 7 Jan, 61 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 19 Jan, 47 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 29 Jan and 140 Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 2 Mar. There were no reports away from *Tiree* and these islands.

Spring Spring migration peaked at 899 on *Tiree* on 6 May (the same date as in 2014) when 650 were at Gott Bay, 210 at Balephetrish Bay and 39 at Traigh Bhi. This peak is c60% of that in 2014. During spring passage, only two marked birds, both from Greenland (2) were noted on

Tiree. Elsewhere 8 were seen flying north at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 22 Mar and one at Langamull on 29 Mar was the first noted during the year on *Mull*. 50 were present off-passage at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 6-11 Apr, and 50 were also at Seal Cottage (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 26 Apr and at Arnabost Farm *Coll* on 6 May. 23 were at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 25 May and 75 on Iona *Mull* on 5 Jun.

Autumn While 3 juvs were reported flying south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 17 Jul and another was seen at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on the same day, none were seen on *Tiree* until 17 Aug; On *Tiree*, 17% of a total of 454 seen on 31 Aug were juvs, on 14 Sep 12.4% were juvs (sample 483), dropping to 10.4% juv on 28 Sep (sample 394) and 8% in Oct. Only one flagged bird was noted - a bird ringed as a juv in Greenland in 2013. Elsewhere 26 were at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 21 Jul, 40 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 28 Jul, 12 at Machir Bay *Islay* on 6 Aug, 40 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 21 Aug and one at Langamull *Mull* on 26 Aug. In Sep, 52 were at Hogh Bay *Coll* on 8 Sep, 50 on Machir Bay *Islay* on 21 Sep and 40 flew south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 23 Sep. 38 were at The Strand *Colonsay* on 18 Oct, but one at Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* on 29 Oct, was away from the usual haunts of this species.

Winter Wintering colour-ringed/flagged individuals on *Tiree* from Greenland and Iceland had both been seen there in previous winters. Away from there and *Islay* the only birds reported in Nov and Dec were 18 flying south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 9 Nov. On *Islay* 85 were at Loch Gruinart on 3 Nov and 45 at Ardnave Point on 2 Dec.

Table 32. *Maximum monthly counts of Sanderlings on Tiree in 2015. Counts from Tiree are not always of the whole island.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tiree	320	195	205	220	899	63	192	454	483	398	320	150

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina* Graillig

AMBER LIST A *very localised breeding species mainly on Tiree. Numbers are highest on passage but large numbers winter on Islay and Tiree with smaller numbers elsewhere.*

Winter/spring Regular counts were undertaken at two sites on *Islay* and on *Tiree*, where the largest concentrations occur (Table 33). Elsewhere 35 were at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 2 Jan, 48 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 27 Feb and 90 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 2 Mar. Spring passage on *Tiree* peaked at 1,140 on 6 May, but earlier 2,000 had been at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 2 May. Elsewhere 100 were on The Strand *Colonsay* on 25 Apr, 6 at Langamull *Mull* on 1 May, 6 on Iona *Mull* on 2 May, 5 at Blackmill Bay (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 2 May, 15 at Loch Cuin (Dervaig) *Mull* on 3 May, 150 at Arnabost Farm *Coll* on 6 May and 350 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 7 May. On 12 May, 32 were found at Loch Beg *Mull* and 60 at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll*, 100 at Tayinloan jetty *Kintyre* on 13 May, c30 were on Iona *Mull* on 17 May and 296 at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 25 May was the last big migrant flock noted in spring.

Breeding/summer It was a good breeding season at the Reef *Tiree* where 54 singing males were found. A late brood b/2 was found there on 30 Jul. Earlier an ad with b/4 was found at Moss *Tiree* on 18 Jun and 2 ads were found with b/3 at Claggain Bay *Islay* on 24 Jun. A pair was seen displaying at Gruinart *Islay* on 18 May and 2 pairs were found at Ardnave *Islay*. 5 were at Loch Tulla North *Argyll* on 14 Jun and 16 were noted on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 20 Jun.

Autumn/winter Autumn passage was first noted when 20 were seen flying south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 5 Jul, and 80 were seen there on 17 Jul, when 63 were also at Strath Farm (The Laggan) *Kintyre*. 160 flew south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 28 Jul and during Aug 730 were noted moving south there with a max of 180 on 9 Aug. 34 were at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 4 Aug, 25 at Loch Cuin *Mull* on 26 Aug, 200 at Traigh nam Barc/The Strand *Colonsay* on 29 Aug and 20 at Achnadrochit *Mull* on 4 Oct and 55 at Otter Ferry spit

Cowal on 20 Dec. 7 at Port Ramsay (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 28 Nov was the only record of this species from this area during the year. No records were received from *Jura*.

Table 33. *Maximum monthly counts of Dunlin at Loch Gruinart and Loch Indaal Islay and on Tiree in 2015.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	414	50	63	51	2000	1	20	400	95	73	50	535
Indaal	100		42	22		22	150	7	88	70	300	52
Tiree	150	75	35	65	1140	25	25	118	50	16	45	Nc



Dunlins and Common Ringed Plovers *Mid-Argyll* (Jim Dickson)

PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima* Luatharan-rioghail

AMBER LIST A *widely, but sparsely, distributed winter migrant along rocky coasts from Sep to May.*

Winter/spring 60 at Hough Bay *Tiree* on 3 Jan were the first reported. Elsewhere 32 were at Dunoon *Cowal* on 6 Jan, 2 at Laine Sgeir (Cargary) *Mull* on 19 Jan, 5 at Ormsary *Mid-Argyll* on 24 Jan, 3 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 6 Feb, 13 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 17 Feb and 10 at Bowmore *Islay* on 15 Mar. 31 were still at Dunoon *Cowal* on 8 Apr, and 4 were at Ronachan coast *Kintyre* on 14 Apr, 11 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 23 Apr and interestingly 20 were on Staffa *Mull* on 24 Apr. The last birds noted were 2 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 23 May and 5 on Ruadh Sgeir (Sound of Jura) *Mid-Argyll* on the same day.

Autumn/winter The first returning birds were 3 at Happy Valley *Tiree* on the early date of 18 Aug. One was at Cullipool (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Sep and 3 were at Glen Cannel *Mull* on 14 Sep. One was on An Dubh Sgeir (Gigha) *Kintyre* on 17 Oct and the first of the autumn was not seen at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* until 21 Oct. 7 were back at Dunoon *Cowal* on 28 Oct, 7 were at Hynish *Tiree* on 12 Nov, 9 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 23 Nov, 17 at Dunoon *Cowal* on 25 Nov, 7 at Balephetrish Bay *Tiree* on 26 Nov, 11 at Killail *Cowal* on 1 Dec and 4 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 17 Dec.

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER *Calidris bairdii*

A vagrant: nine records; four on Islay (in Jun 1979, Sep 1999, Sep 2005 and Sep 2011), four on Tiree (in May/Jun 2007, Sep 2009, Sep 2011 and Sep 2013) and one at the Add Estuary, Mid-Argyll in Sep 2008.

Autumn A juvenile was on *Tiree* at Hough Bay on 29-30 Sep and then at Sorobaidh Bay on 2 Oct [Jerry Wilson, John Bowler, Jim Dickson]. Record was accepted by the BBRC.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta* Luatharan-beag

A scarce but annual passage migrant: with the majority of records in autumn.

Spring There was only one spring record; a single was seen at Ardnave Point *Islay* on 21 May.
Autumn Only two were found in autumn; one was at Glas Eilean *Jura* on 8 Aug and a juv was at Clachan Mor *Tiree* on 30 Aug.

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER *Calidris fuscicollis*

A vagrant: six records of singles; on Islay in Aug 2000 and Oct 2005 and on Tiree in Aug and Sep 2011, Aug 2012 and Aug 2014.

No records.

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER *Tryngites subruficollis*

A rare spring and scarce autumn visitor: 33 records of upto 42 birds since the first in 1971.

Autumn A juvenile was at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 12 Sep [John Bowler]. Record was accepted by the ABRC.

PECTORAL SANDPIPER *Calidris melanotos*

A scarce mainly autumn visitor: at least 51 records.

Autumn One was at An Fhaodhail *Tiree* on 10 Jul [John Bowler], one was on flooded fields at Strath farm (near Campbeltown) *Kintyre* on 19 Jul and two birds appeared there on the 27 Jul [Eddie Maguire, Rab Morton]. All birds were aged as 2CY or older and records were accepted by the ABRC.

SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER *Calidris pusilla*

A vagrant: five records (seven birds); two each on Tiree and Islay in Sep 1999 and singles on Tiree in Sep 2012 and Sep 2013 and on the Isle of Luing, Mid-Argyll in Sep 2013.

No records.

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE *Phalaropus lobatus* Deargan-allt

RED LIST A very rare breeding species and irregular passage migrant.

Spring Two males were on a pool at Strath Farm (Laggan) *Kintyre* on 26 May [Eddie Maguire, Jim Dickson]. One was at sea off Easdale Island *Mid-Argyll* on 28 May [Anthony McLean]. The first two females returned to their (confidential) breeding sites on 23 May.

Breeding At one of the same (confidential) sites as in 2010-14, 9 birds (4 males and 5 females) were noted on 10 Jun. A pair was at a new site on 9-10 Jun. At least 2 males with broods were at the main site until 6 Aug and there was a male with a brood at another site on 8 Aug.

GREY PHALAROPE *Phalaropus fulicarius* Liathag-allt

Irregular passage migrant particularly associated with autumn gales: rare in winter and spring none in Apr-May, single records in Jun and Jul.

Spring A female in breeding plumage was seen from the Gigha ferry *Kintyre* on 21 May. This is the first spring record for over 10 years [Rob and Niall Lightfoot].

Autumn There were eight sightings of up to two individuals in autumn 2015; one was in Sorobaidh Bay *Tiree* on 12 Sep, another was off SW *Coll* on 13 Sep and two were seen off Glengorm *Mull* on 21 Sep. Two flew west off Upper Vault *Tiree* on 12 Oct and on 22 Oct one was in Cornaig Bay *Tiree* and another flew past Aird *Tiree* during a 2 hr seawatch. In Nov one was at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 19 Nov and another was on Oronsay *Colonsay* the following day.

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos* Luatharan

A widespread and common breeding summer visitor and spring and autumn passage migrant in small numbers: occasional mid-winter records.

Spring One found at Loch na Keal *Mull* on 7 Apr was the first reported. First records from other regions were at Chapel of Kilbride *Cowal* on 9 Apr, at Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Apr, at Barrs (Loch Etive) *North Argyll* on 14 Apr, at Dippen Bay *Kintyre* on 14 Apr, Eleraig *Mid-Argyll* on 15 Apr, Kilchiaran *Islay* on 18 Apr and Arinagour *Coll* on 24 Apr. Most records in spring were of 1-2 birds, but 6 were at Loch Tralaig *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Apr, 6 at Loch Caithlim (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 2 May, 8 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 5 May and 12 at Loch Kinnabus (The Oa) *Islay* on 18 May.

Breeding/summer Breeding was confirmed at Loch nam Ban, (Loch Skerrols) *Islay*, Loch na Cuilce *Mull* and on Corran Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* where two pairs were on territories with chicks. Three territories were located on the Tainish CBC *Mid-Argyll*, the highest total since 2005 and on *Colonsay* 25 territories were found (27 territories in 2014). Probable breeding was reported from Balnahard Bay *Colonsay*, Ardnave and Ballinaby (both *Islay*), Taylinloan *Kintyre*, Auchgoyle Bay, Brainport Bay, Keillmore, Kilbride (Seil), Kilninver, Loch nam Druimnean, and Minard (all *Mid-Argyll*) Bagh Chrossapol and Tiroran (both *Mull*) and Milton *Tiree*. Possible breeding was noted at Loch Beg *Mull*.

Autumn During late Jun and Jul, larger post-breeding /migrating groups were noted as follows: 4 at Baille Mhor (Iona) *Mull* on 12 Jul, 6 at Loch Craignish *Mid-Argyll* on 17 Jul, 6 flying south in 5 hrs at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 5 July and 11 south in a similar time period on 11 Jul. On 12 Aug and also on 15 Aug 12 were noted moving south there, but the largest movement at this site was 22 going south on 24 Aug. The following day 5 were noted at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll*. Amongst the later birds reported were singles at West Hynish *Tiree* on 15 Sep, Gortan *Islay* on 16 Sep and at Milton *Tiree* on 20 Sep.

Winter Single birds were reported at Tobermory *Mull* on 1 Nov, Loch na Keal *Mull* on 14 Nov and at Killail *Cowal* on 23 Nov.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER *Actitis macularius*

A vagrant: two records; at Loch Indaal, Islay in Jun 1984 and at Heylipol, Tiree in Aug 2009.
No records.

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus* Luatharan-uaine

AMBER LIST *A scarce, but almost annual passage migrant with the majority of records in autumn: seldom in spring.*

Spring There was a single spring record of one at Balephuill *Tiree* on 3 May.

Autumn Only two were recorded in autumn; singles at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 14 Aug and the other over Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 25 Aug.

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus* Gearradh-breac

AMBER LIST *A scarce passage migrant: more or less annual in autumn.*

Autumn Single juveniles were seen at Sorobaidh Bay *Tiree* on 24 Aug [John Bowler] and at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 9 Sep [James How]. Both records were accepted by the ABRC.

GREATER YELLOWLEGS *Tringa melanoleuca*

A vagrant: two records; on Islay, in Oct 1985 and May 2002.

No records.

COMMON GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia* Deoch-bhuidhe

AMBER LIST A *scarce breeding species: only in Mull and North Argyll in recent years. A widespread migrant: more numerous in autumn than spring and there are regular winter records in some localities.*

Winter A total of at least 19 different wintering birds were found during Jan-Feb. One was at Appin *North Argyll* on 19 Jan, 3 at Taynish *Mid-Argyll* on 20 Jan, 4 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 1 Feb, 4 at Loch Cuin (Dervaig) *Mull* on 19 Jan, 1 at Aros Estuary *Mull* on 25 Jan, 2 at Loch Caithlim (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 31 Jan, 1 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 13 Feb, 2 at Benderloch *North Argyll* on 28 Feb and one at Kennacraig *Kintyre* on 28 Feb.

Spring Three were at Loch Caithlim (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Mar and 2 at Linne Mhuirich *Mid-Argyll* on 15 Mar. One flying north at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 17 Mar was the first definite evidence of spring migration, but 3 at Loch Feochan *Mid-Argyll* on 25 Mar were still in winter plumage. Two were on the north shore of Loch Etive *North Argyll* on 3 Apr, singles were on *Tiree* at Salum on 8 Apr and at Loch an Eilein on 10 Apr, 5 were at Loch Scridain *Mull* on 9 Apr, 1 flew over Loch Balnagowan (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 11 Apr and one was at Westport Marsh *Kintyre* on 14 Apr. A late migrant was at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 9 May.

Breeding/summer Six were reported close to a breeding site in *North Argyll* on 19 April and were still present on 14 Jun. Single birds at Barrs (Loch Etive) *North Argyll* on 13 Apr and the head of Loch Creran *North Argyll* on 24 Apr may have been off-territory birds.

Autumn/winter Migration commenced early with 1 at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Jun and singles were also at Scarinish *Tiree* on 10 Jun and on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 14 Jun. 5 were at Loch Beg *Mull* on 29 Jun, 3 at Arinagour *Coll* on 7 Jul and 2 at Balvicar (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Jul. Passage peaked in Aug - Sep, when 7 were at Croig *Mull* on 7 Aug, 5 on *Tiree* on 24 Aug, 6 at Ardencaple (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 8 Sep, 4 at Bowmore *Islay* on 13 Sep and 2 at Loch Laich *North Argyll* on 26 Sep. During Nov- Dec, at least 24 wintering birds were reported from *Colonsay* (2), *Islay* (5+), *Mid-Argyll* (5+), and *Mull* (12). There were no records throughout the year from *Cowal* or *Jura*.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS *Tringa flavipes*

A vagrant: seven records; at North Argyll in 1951, Mid-Argyll in Oct 2000, Islay in May 2003, Islay and Colonsay in Sep 2005, Islay in May 2007, Islay in Apr 2009 and Tiree in Oct 2011.

Autumn An adult in non-breeding plumage on *Tiree* was at Cornaigmore on 21 Oct and later at Barrapol on 24 Oct [John Bowler, Toby Green *et al.*]. Record was accepted by the BBRC.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola* Luatharan-coille

AMBER LIST A *scarce passage migrant: recorded in 22 of the 30 years 1980-2009, with the majority of records in late spring.*

Spring In contrast to 2014, when there were no autumn records, there were no records in spring 2015.

Autumn There were three autumn records involving singles at; Strath Farm (The Laggan) *Kintyre* and Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 7 Aug. The last was at Eilean Glas (Loch Crinan) *Mid-Argyll* on 25 Aug.

COMMON REDSHANK *Tringa totanus* Cam-ghlas

AMBER LIST A *localised breeder, mainly on the islands: widespread passage migrant and wintering species.*

Winter/spring Regular counts were made at Loch Gruinart *Islay* and on *Tiree* (Table 34). 9 were at Dubhchladach *Mid-Argyll* on 4 Jan, 6 at Loch Cuin (Dervaig) *Mull* on 19 Jan, 10 at Bowmore *Islay* on 19 Jan and 13 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 20 Jan. 9 were at Islandadd bridge *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Feb, 10 at Crinan Ferry *Mid-Argyll* on 3 Apr, 45 at the head of Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Apr with a marked overnight arrival of 254 there on 15 Apr, while the only record from *Jura* during the year was of 2 at Loch na Breac on 5 Mar. 20 were still at Loch Cuin *Mull* on 12 Apr.

Breeding/summer 58 pairs were noted at The Reef *Tiree*, where the first hatched chick was noted on 25 May. 10 territories were found on *Colonsay* (one more than in 2014). 139 pairs were noted at Gruinart *Islay*, a further increase from 2014 (117 pairs). 26 pairs were found at Ardnave *Islay*, while 6-7 pairs were at Loch Cuin (Dervaig) *Mull*. Breeding was also proved at Balnahard *Colonsay* and Iona and Loch Ba (both *Mull*) 10 were on the RSPB Reserve *Coll* on 6 May and possible breeding was reported on Staffa *Mull*.

Autumn/winter 18 flew south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 30 Jun and post-breeding groups of 8 were at Catchean *Mull* on 1 Jul, 30 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 8 Jul. On 17 Jul, 24 were at Strath Farm (The Laggan) *Kintyre* and 145 at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll*, suggesting a major arrival of migrants. 27 were at Otter Ferry spit *Cowal* on 19 Jul, 10 at Loch Beg *Mull* on 21 Jul and 70 flew south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 19 Aug. 6 were at Cliad Bay *Coll* on 8 Sep, 37 at the head of Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Sep, 55 at Bowmore *Islay* on 13 Sep and 2 at Innellan *Cowal* on 28 Dec.

Table 34. *Maximum monthly counts of Redshanks at Loch Gruinart (Islay), Holy Loch (Cowal) and monthly maximum day-counts on Tiree in 2015.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	140	42	30	105				176	48	27	150	59
Tiree	27	39	15	116	110				17	12	22	26
Holy Loch	25	31	24							6	9	9

JACK SNIBE *Limnocyptes minimus* Gobhrag-bheag

A scarce autumn passage migrant and winter visitor, which is possibly under recorded: most records are from Islay, Mid-Argyll, and Tiree.

Winter/spring There were ten winter/spring records, a slight increase on the six reported in 2014. Singles were at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 12 Jan, Monument (The Oa) *Islay* on 23 Jan, Creag an Uisgean (The Oa) *Islay* on 25 Jan, Balemartine *Tiree* 24 Jan, Milton *Tiree* on 9 Feb, Benderloch *North Argyll* on 8 Mar, Allt Buidhe (Carradale) *Kintyre* on 18 Mar, Ardnave Point *Islay* on 27 Mar and the Reef *Tiree* on 2 Apr. The last bird found in spring was one by the Lussa River *Mull* on 8 Apr.

Winter Only six singles were reported in autumn/winter. None was reported until the late date of 16 Nov when one was at the Strand *Colonsay*, another was on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 21 Nov. The others were at Sandaig *Tiree* on 25 Nov, Balinoe *Tiree* on 1 Dec, Oronsay *Colonsay* on 13 Dec, and Gialum Bay (Gigha) *Kintyre* on 19 Dec.

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

A vagrant: three records; on Islay in June 1986, Apr 2009 and May 2013. There are also three acceptable records (1891-1973) of unidentified to species (Long or Short-billed) Dowitchers.

No records.

2009. A bird at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 29 Dec [Kevin Rylands] has been considered by the BBRC and found not to be proven as a Long-billed, however it has been accepted as a 'dowitcher' species (Long-billed or Short-billed), therefore there are now four Argyll records in this category.

EURASIAN WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola* Coileach-coille

RED LIST A *widespread, but probably under recorded, breeder. Numbers are augmented in winter by immigrants from Scandinavia and other parts of Scotland: a small proportion of native birds leave for Ireland and possibly elsewhere.*

Roding birds are under recorded and all records are welcome for this species, which is believed to have declined as a breeding species in Argyll (Bird Atlas 2007-11).

Winter/spring The first record of the year was of 2 on the lawn at dusk at Kintallen (Tayvallich) *Mid-Argyll* on 1 Jan; these birds were seen most days through the winter, with the last bird seen on 14 Mar. Most Jan-Mar records were of 1-2 birds noted in *Colonsay, Cowal, Islay, Mid-Argyll, Mull, and Tiree*, however, at least 15 were flushed from the roadside at Strathlachlan forest *Cowal* on 1 Feb and 7 were flushed from the verges of the East Loch Awe road *Mid-Argyll* in the early morning on 1 Mar.

Breeding/summer Roding birds were reported from 9 Apr at Loch Frisa *Mull* and also from Scalasaig *Colonsay*, Ardmor and Aros Park (Tobermory) both *Mull* and Glenure *North Argyll*. At Colonsay House *Colonsay*, there were 8 registrations in 75 minutes during the national Woodcock Survey on 18 May (cf 27 in 2014) and 25 and 10 registrations on 9 and 18 Jun respectively. By comparison, a similar survey in Knapdale Forest *Mid-Argyll* had 4, 3 and 1 registrations. The only other record during the summer was one at Aoradh (Gruinart) *Islay* on 16 Jun. There were no reports in Jul, Aug (as in 2013 and 2014) or Sep.

Autumn/winter The first report in autumn was of 1 at Balephuill *Tiree* on 11 Oct (three days later than 2014), but there were no other records until the middle of the month when one was found at Scalasaig *Colonsay* on 18 Oct, but the main arrival occurred from early Nov, when 4 were at Ardura and Carsaig (both *Mull*) on 2 Nov and 3 were at Taynish *Mid-Argyll* the following day. At least 15 were flushed over 2 miles of roadside at Bealachandrain (Glendaruel) *Cowal* on 28 Nov. There were also other sightings of 1-2 wintering birds in *Colonsay, Islay, Mid-Argyll, Mull* and *Tiree*, however, 4 were on Beinn Mor (The Oa) *Islay* on 26 Nov and 4 at Ardfad Point (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Dec were the last reported.

COMMON SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago* Naosg

AMBER LIST A *widespread and locally common breeding species: particularly on the outer islands. Higher numbers occur on passage and as winter visitors: mainly on the islands.*

Winter/spring During winter most sightings were of fewer than 5 birds on the islands. 10 at Airds Bay (Taynuilt) *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Jan were notable and 16 were there on 6 Feb. 8 were at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 13 Jan, 16 at Eilean Traigh (Loch Etive) *Mid-Argyll* on 6 Feb, 15 were at Loch Cuim (Dervaig) *Mull* on 15 Feb and 3 at Fennachrochan (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 8 Feb were the only report from this region. Scattered groups of up to 10 birds were on *Tiree* in Feb and evidence of returning birds was found when 13 were at Gruinart Floods *Islay* on 18 Mar.

Breeding/summer Widespread drumming was noted on *Tiree* from 13 Mar. Drumming was also noted at Loch Frisa *Mull* on 9 Apr, at Kilchoman *Islay* on 16 Apr, and 2 birds were drumming at Loch Ba *Mull* on 18 Apr. Breeding was confirmed at The Reef *Tiree*, where there were 108 displaying birds during 17-21 May. This is a slight increase on 2014 (when 91 were found), while at Gruinart *Islay* as small decline was reported to 56 displaying males (from 64 in 2014). 32 displaying males were found at Ardnave *Islay*. Broods of b/1+ were found at Garvard *Colonsay* on 22 May and Balnahard *Colonsay* on 16 Jun. At least 8 breeding pairs were noted on Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* and another pair was noted on Fladda (Treshnish Isles). Other

displaying birds were noted at the Arnabost *Coll*, Scalasaig *Colonsay*, Blackrock *Islay*, Tayinloan *Kintyre*, Add Estuary, Connel Eleraig and Loch Caithlim (Seil) (all *Mid-Argyll*) and Cuin (Dervaig) *Mull*. Birds were reported during the breeding season from Chapel of Kilbride and Eilean Math-ghamhna (both *Cowal*). A late breeding bird at The Reef *Tiree* was still on eggs on 21 Jul.

Autumn/winter Larger groups and sightings from other regions were reported following the breeding season. 35 were at Kilkenneth *Tiree* on 29 Aug, 2 at Feolin *Jura* on 16 Sep, 19 at the Drury Loch (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 30 Sep, 40 at Sandaig *Tiree* on 1 Oct, and 5 at Port Charlotte *Islay* on 17 Oct. The peak autumn count, 55 at Barrapol *Tiree* on 21 Oct was lower than that in 2014. Numbers declined thereafter with 30 at Balinoe *Tiree* on 1 Dec, 3 at Loch Cuin (Dervaig) *Mull* on 7 Nov, and singles at Caolas Gialum (Gigha) *Kintyre* on 19 Dec and at Balvicar (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Dec being the more notable records.



Common Snipe *Tiree* (John Bowler)

POMARINE SKUA *Stercorarius pomarinus* Fasgadair-donn

A scarce but regular passage migrant: mainly seen in autumn but has been recorded in all months.

Winter A 2CY was off West Hynish *Tiree* on 11 Jan and 1 was off The Oa *Islay* on 27 Feb.

Spring Above average numbers of adults with 4 off Scarinish *Tiree* on 7 May, 1 at the Sound of Mull *Mull* on 10 May, 4 off West Hynish *Tiree* and 2 off Lismore (heading up the Firth of Lorn)

North Argyll both on 16 May, 16 at sea between Mull and *Tiree* on 18 May, 17 at sea between Lismore *North Argyll* and Oban *Mid-Argyll* on 20 May, 1 off West Hynish *Tiree* and also 2 at sea off north *Tiree* on 21 May, and 1 was off Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 29 May.

Autumn Less than average reports with 19 birds between 27 Sep and 20 Nov. 3 were off Hynish *Tiree* on 27 Sep with 1 on the 28 Sep, 3 were off Aird (north coast) *Tiree* on 22 Oct with 2 past there on 23 Oct, 1 on 16 Nov and 2 on 17 Nov. 1 was between *Jura* and Scarba (Corryvreckan) *Jura* on 3 Nov with 3 there on 8 Nov. 1 was off Hynish *Tiree* on 12 Nov, 1 adult was off Aird *Tiree* on 16 Nov with 2 juveniles west there on 17 Nov and the last report was of 2 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 20 Nov.

ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus* Fasgadair

RED LIST *Previously the most common skua in Argyll with small numbers regularly seen in summer near large seabird colonies, this species has become scarce. The small breeding colonies on Jura and Coll have been in serious decline in recent years. Passage birds can be widespread in spring and especially autumn, but variable in numbers from year to year.*

Spring First of the spring was seen off Caliach Point Mull on 18 Apr. 1-3 birds were seen on various dates during May-Jul off Colonsay, Islay, Jura, Kintyre, Mid-Argyll, Mull, Coll and Tiree. The highest counts were of 8 off Garmony Point Mull on 7 May and 6 passing Machrihanish SBO Kintyre on 8 May. Over 80% of the birds where the colour phase was reported were dark phase individuals, suggesting very little spring passage of birds from northern breeding areas through Argyll.

Breeding No data were available on breeding numbers or success for the colonies in Coll and Jura. Up to 5 at any one time were seen by TIARG in Jun-Jul around the Treshnish Isles Mull. In view of the rapid decline in breeding numbers at Argyll colonies, it would be good to have counts from the remaining sites to see if any are still breeding in Argyll.

Autumn Small numbers were seen off Mull, Islay, Kintyre, North Argyll, Coll, but especially Tiree in Aug-Oct. Most autumn records were during Aug, but the peak count was 10 birds off Aird Tiree in 2 hrs on 22 Oct. About half of the birds seen in autumn where colour phase was reported were dark birds, so likely to originate from relatively local, at least low latitude, breeding areas. The last record of the autumn was of a juvenile off Coll on 29 Oct.



Sandwich Tern pursued by an Arctic Skua Kintyre (Eddie Maguire)

LONG-TAILED SKUA *Stercorarius longicaudus* Fasgadair-stiùireach
A scarce and irregular passage migrant: spring and autumn records off western coasts and islands.

Spring Four adults were off Keillmore Mid-Argyll on 12 May and 1 adult was off Sorobaidh Bay Tiree on 18 May.

GREAT SKUA *Stercorarius skua* Fasgadair-mòr

AMBER LIST *Previously an uncommon passage migrant and summer visitor but an increasing summer visitor which now breeds or holds territory in very small numbers on: Coll, Treshnish Isles Mull, Tiree, Colonsay, Islay and Staffa.*

Winter/spring The first spring record was one at The Reef *Tiree* on 5 Apr, and a pair was present at Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree* from 7 Apr. There were reports for most dates from then through to autumn, but primarily from breeding sites rather than from passage of birds through Argyll. Apart from 1-2 birds seen passing Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on a few dates in spring and 5 birds seen at a fishing boat 10 miles NW of Machrihanish *Kintyre* on 23 Apr, all reports were from *Tiree, Mull, Coll, Colonsay* or *Islay*, or from ferries travelling to/from those islands, and were of groups of no more than 6 birds.

Breeding On Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull*, TIARG reported that at least 3 territories were occupied (2 on Lunga, at least 1 on Fladda), but breeding status was not determined. No data were received on the current breeding status at Staffa *Mull* although a pair was present during Jul. A bird dive-bombing people on the moor at Iona *Mull* in Jul was presumably breeding there. At least 3 pairs held territory on *Colonsay* with the first successful breeding noted on Oronsay *Colonsay*, where one chick fledged in Sep. At least 1 pair bred successfully at Gunna Island *Coll*, and at least 1 pair held territory on *Tiree* fledging at least one chick. One pair bred on Nave Island at RSPB Ardnave *Islay*. There were several reports of predatory attacks on other bird species, including birds on *Tiree* killing a fledged Lapwing, and birds on *Islay* killing 'wadgers', an adult Shelduck and a Black-headed Gull (the last subsequently being stolen by a Great Black-backed Gull).

Autumn/winter Small numbers (mostly single birds) were seen on passage in Aug to Oct from a variety of coastal sites but especially *Tiree*. The peak count was of 25 passing Aird *Tiree* in 2 hrs on 22 Oct, but most autumn records were sightings of single birds. The last records of the year were of 2 off Aird *Tiree* on 16 Nov and one there on 17 Nov.

ATLANTIC PUFFIN *Fratercula arctica* Buthaid

RED LIST A *very localised breeding species with main colonies on Sanda Islands and Treshnish Isles: only very occasionally recorded in winter.*

Winter/spring The first 3 birds reported were all found dead at Traigh Bhagh *Tiree* on 29 Jan and 16 Feb and at Traigh nan Gilean *Tiree* on 14 Feb. The first live Puffin was seen on 4 Apr at Glas Eilean *Jura*. Mostly small numbers were seen during Apr-May off *Tiree, Mull, Jura* and *Colonsay*, but 500 were counted at the Treshnish Isles *Mull* on 7 Apr and 800 on 24 Apr. There were 80 off Glengorm *Mull* on 22 Apr. One came ashore at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 15 Apr but died the next day. In Loch Fyne single birds were noted at Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 16 Apr, off Tarbert harbour *Kintyre* on 10 May and 2 were off Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 28 May.

Breeding On the Treshnish Isles *Mull*, the estimated breeding population was 3,165 Apparently Occupied Burrows (AOBs) on Lunga plus Sgeir a' Chaisteil. No data were available from Sanda Islands *Kintyre* where mink have reached the seabird colonies recently. Small numbers are thought to breed on Staffa *Mull*.

Autumn/winter There were 100, mostly juveniles, on the sea between *Tiree* and *Coll* on 31 Jul. On 8 Aug, 111 flew past Hynish *Tiree* in 1 hr. however, the only record after 8 Aug was of one bird in Gott Bay *Tiree* on 10 Sep.

BLACK GUILLEMOT *Cephus grylle* Gearra-breac

AMBER LIST *A widespread, resident breeding species: on coasts, islands, and in sea lochs. Black Guillemot is a protected feature of Clyde Sea Sill MPA.*

Winter/spring Birds were widely distributed along Argyll coasts in small numbers. Larger counts included: 12 at Oban Bay *Mid-Argyll* on 26 Mar, 16 at Port Askaig *Islay* on 28 Mar, 12 at

Balliemore shore *Cowal* on 29 Mar, 20 Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree* on 7 Apr, 12 at Eilean Bheag *Jura* on 19 Apr, 12 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 13 May and 17 at Appin *North Argyll* on 19 May. Because Black Guillemots are believed to remain in much the same area throughout the year these counts are likely to indicate the size of the local populations in these sites (though including immature as well as adult birds), possibly better than counts during the breeding season (when adults may be in burrows/cavities at nests so not detected).

Breeding Widely distributed along Argyll coasts where nesting habitat is available. There were 18 adults visible at Port Askaig *Islay* on 27 Jun and 28 in Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* on 2 Jul. Ten adults were counted close to the tern raft at South Shian (Loch Creran) *North Argyll* and two nest boxes on the raft were used. Two chicks fledged from one of these. Two adults were killed and eaten by a Peregrine, with remains left on the raft. Former colonies at (Glas Eileanan) Sound of Mull *Mull*, E. Inshaig (Loch Craignish) *Mid-Argyll* and E. Fada (Loch Caolisport) *Mid-Argyll* have now been completely eradicated by predation (mink being thought the main culprit), while only 2 nests were found at Eileanan an Glasa (Sound of Mull) *Mull* where mink are also present now.

Autumn/winter Birds were widely distributed along Argyll coasts in small numbers, with few reports of large groups however 14 were at Loch Creran *North Argyll* on 17 Oct and 52 headed west off Aird *Tiree* in 2 hrs on 22 Oct.



Black Guillemot *Kintyre* (Jim Dickson)

RAZORBILL *Alca torda* Falc

AMBER LIST A *locally common breeding species, although much less numerous and with smaller colonies than Common Guillemot. Large numbers of passage migrants may be seen from headlands with smaller numbers regular in sea lochs in winter.*

Winter/spring None were seen in Jan, and only relatively small numbers were reported in Feb (the only counts exceeding 10 being 40 at *Tiree* on 6 Feb and 60 off *Colonsay* on 27 Feb). However, larger numbers arrived in Mar with 275 between *Mull* and *Coll* on 13 Mar, 196 passing Aird *Tiree* in 1 hr on 26 Mar and 960 passing Aird *Tiree* in 1 hr on 31 Mar, while 1,320 were counted passing Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* in 6 hrs on 7 Apr.

Breeding At Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree* there were 200 birds on the cliff on 7 Apr with large numbers feeding at sea around the island. On 20 May there were 236 birds on the cliff but no eggs seen yet; similar numbers were present on 17 Jun when many were incubating. On 11 Jul there were 259 birds on the cliff, most attending chicks. By 22 Jul many chicks had fledged and only 100 adults remained on the cliff. At *Colonsay* there was a mean of 31.6 AONs (mean of 5 counts in Jun) at the Urugaig sample monitoring plot. TIARG counted a total of 271 adults on Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* in addition to birds associated with 23 chicks in boulder colonies.

Autumn/winter After post-breeding dispersal in Jul-Aug, reports were mostly of small numbers. However, there were 500 seen (in numerous small groups) from the Tarbert *Kintyre* to Portavadie *Cowal* ferry on 4 Oct. Very few were reported after that date, the last records being single birds in the Sound of Mull *Mull* on 13 Oct, Dunlossit *Islay* on 31 Oct, Loch Indaal *Islay* on 13 Nov and odd birds in *Tiree* bays in Dec.

LITTLE AUK *Alle alle* Colcach-bheag

A scarce and irregular winter visitor: usually seen during sea-watches or after severe gales.

Winter One off Duart Castle *Mull* on 13 Mar was possibly ill as it was nearly run over by the ferry. One was reported the same day at Killean (Lismore) *North Argyll*. Six flew past Aird *Tiree* in 1 hr on 26 Mar. One was in Oban Harbour *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Dec.



Common Guillemots *Mull* (John Bowler)

COMMON GUILLEMOT *Uria aalge* Eun-dubh-an-sgadain

AMBER LIST A *highly colonial, and locally abundant, breeding species. Adults with small young appear on the sea far from colonies in late summer. Large numbers of passage migrants may be seen from headlands and smaller numbers are regular in sea lochs in winter. Breeding Common Guillemots are a feature of North Colonsay & Western Cliffs SPA.*

Winter/spring None were reported in Jan-Feb although 600 'Auk sp' were seen off Greenhill *Tiree* on 30 Jan which may have been predominantly Common Guillemots. Reports of Common Guillemots were regular from late Mar onwards. There were 750 flying past Aird *Tiree* in 1 hr on 28 Mar. About 600 were back on nesting ledges at Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree* on 7 Apr and birds

were then also widespread around the *Tiree* coast. About 500 were feeding off Glengorm *Mull* on 22 Apr.

Breeding/summer At Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree*, 2,176 were on ledges on 20 May but no eggs were visible. On 17 Jun there were 2,634 on ledges and 3,600 on the sea nearby. Numbers fell to 1,877 on ledges on 12 Jul but with only 20% of these brooding chicks and apparently none yet fledged so a poor breeding season. By 22 Jul all surviving chicks had fledged from the colony but 412 adults were present. The monitoring plot at Urugaig *Colonsay* held 87 birds (mean of 5 counts in Jun). At the Treshnish Isles *Mull*, 7,360 birds were counted at Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil (c.f. 6,434 in 2014). Breeding success was noted as being high, with lots of chicks fledging from 3 Jul onwards. From a sample of 2,024 birds checked, 99 (4.9%) were bridled (c.f. an estimated 8.7% bridled in 2014). Given the high survival and high site fidelity of Common Guillemot such a large change as this is unlikely from one year to the next, suggesting some bias in one (or both) of these counts.

Autumn/winter There were no reports of high mortality of juveniles in the autumn. Only small numbers of birds were reported in Aug-Oct in most areas, although large numbers of 'auks' (Common Guillemots and/or Razorbills) were seen passing *Tiree*, especially during Oct with often 100 and up to 1,000 per hour. As usual, there were very few reports in Nov and Dec, indicating that birds had generally moved offshore from Argyll by early winter.

BRÜNNICH'S GUILLEMOT *Uria lomvia*

A vagrant: one record; found dead at Loch Caolisport, Mid-Argyll on 11 Oct 1969.

No records.

BRIDLED TERN *Onychoprion anaethetus*

A vagrant: one record; present on Tiree on 30 Jun to 9 Jul 1994 and was the fourth Scottish record.

No records.

LITTLE TERN *Sternula albifrons* Steàrnag-bheag

AMBER LIST *A scarce summer visitor with regular breeding restricted to: Coll, Islay, and Tiree. Scarce passage migrant and irregular breeder elsewhere.*

Spring Records came mainly from *Islay* and *Tiree*, the first being 3 on 16 Apr at *Tiree*. Peak counts were 12 at Traigh Bhagh *Tiree* on 29 Apr, and 2 at Ardnave *Islay* on 30 Apr. Outwith those areas, there was 1 at Langamull *Mull* on 22 Apr, and 1 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 28 Apr.

Breeding On *Tiree*, there were about 30 pairs in total, spread across several sites which is a substantial decrease from numbers in 2014. No chicks fledged from any sites on *Tiree*. However, about 45 pairs nested on Gunna Island *Coll* where there had been none in 2014. Breeding success was low, but at least 6 chicks fledged from Gunna Island *Coll*. None were seen in the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* where a colony had been present in the past. Two pairs bred at RSPB Ardnave *Islay*.

Autumn Many birds had already left breeding areas during Jun. The last autumn records were of 3 at Balevullin *Tiree* on 23 Jul and 1 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 4 Aug.

GULL-BILLED TERN *Gelochelidon nilotica*

A vagrant: two records; both on Tiree, in Sep 2008 and in Apr 2010.

No records.

CASPIAN TERN *Hydroprogne caspia*

A vagrant: one record; an adult seen between Ardpatrik Point, Mid-Argyll and Gigha, Kintyre in Jun 1981.

No records.

WHISKERED TERN *Chlidonias hybrida*

A vagrant: one record; an adult at Machrihanish, Kintyre on 9 Jul 2007.

No records.

BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger* Steàrnag-dhubh

A scarce and irregular passage migrant usually in Sep; 20 records (24 birds) between 1980 and 2011.

No records.

WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN *Chlidonias leucopterus*

A vagrant: one record; an adult at Balephetrish, Tiree on 2 and 3 Sep 1999.

No records.

SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis* Sàrnag-mhòr

AMBER LIST A *regular passage migrant but very rare, and irregular, breeding species.*

Winter/spring The first records of the spring were both on 9 Apr, when 2 passed Machrihanish SBO Kintyre and 1 was seen at Port Charlotte Islay. Records were frequent but involving small numbers (mostly 1, 2 or 3 birds) throughout the rest of Apr, and only from Islay and Kintyre. The largest counts in Apr were of 14 on 13 Apr at Campbeltown Loch Kintyre, and 14 at Machrihanish SBO Kintyre on 23 Apr. In May the highest count was of 35 at Machrihanish SBO Kintyre on 17 May.

Breeding/summer There were rather few records in Jun and Jul (considerably fewer than in 2014). Small numbers were present throughout Jun-Jul at Machrihanish SBO Kintyre but with 20 there on 2 Jun. A few juveniles were seen from 4 Aug onwards, presumably migrating from distant breeding sites and 3 juvs were with 2 ads at Killail Cowal on 4 Aug. Small numbers (mostly 1-7 birds) were seen in Jun-Aug elsewhere in Cowal, Kintyre, Islay, Tiree, Coll, Mull and Mid-Argyll.

Autumn/winter Records came mainly from Kintyre, but the largest group was 11 seen at Gairletter Point Cowal on 24 Aug. The latest was a single seen at Campbeltown Loch Kintyre on 13 Sep.

FORSTER'S TERN *Sterna forsteri*

A vagrant: one record; at Oban Bay and Loch Feochan, Mid-Argyll from 8 to 11 Jan 2003.

No records.

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo* Steàrnag-chumanta

AMBER LIST A *locally common summer visitor: considerably more numerous than Arctic Tern close to the mainland, but often less so on outer isles. Many colonies are severely affected by mink predation and often unproductive where no trapping is undertaken. Seabird 2000 found that Argyll held the second largest colony in Britain and the largest in Scotland. Breeding Common Terns are a feature of Glas Eileanan SPA.*

Spring The first of the season was seen at Sorobaidh Bay Tiree on 28 April. The species was seen regularly from then onwards, in many coastal areas of Argyll. Most spring records were of

small numbers, with flocks of more than 6 birds being unusual. However, there were 15 off SW *Coll* on 7 May, 10 at Kiloran Bay *Colonsay* on 18 May, and 60 at Duncuan Island *Mid-Argyll* on 29 May.

Breeding/summer In the study area monitored by Clive Craik a total of 19 sites held at least 420 pairs, with largest numbers at Kilmaronag Islands (Loch Etive) *Mid-Argyll* with about 200 pairs which fledged at least 48 young, E. Inshaig (Loch Craignish) *Mid-Argyll* with 51 pairs which fledged 3 young, Abbot's Isles (Loch Etive) *Mid-Argyll* with about 40 pairs which fledged 12 young, Sgeir an Eitich (Oban) *Mid-Argyll* with about 30 pairs which fledged 15-20 young. Many sites were affected by mink whereas productivity was high in some (but not all) sites where mink were controlled. Purpose-made mink-proof tern rafts in Loch Creran *North Argyll* managed by Clive Craik were abandoned by terns this season after repeated predation of adults by a Peregrine. Three pairs bred at RSPB Ardnave *Islay*, and 2 or 3 pairs bred on Big Scone Island (Machrihanish) *Kintyre*.

Autumn Birds were reported only in very small numbers in *North Argyll*, *Mull* and *Tiree* in Aug-Sep. Last records were: 3 at Quinish House *Mull* on 13 Sep, and 1 at Sgeirean Beaga *Mull* on 14 Sep.

ROSEATE TERN *Sterna dougallii* Steàrnag-stiùireach

RED LIST A rare migrant; prior to 1980 it occasionally bred in *Argyll*. The most recent records were from *Kintyre* in 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2012.

No records.



Arctic Tern *Tiree* (Jim Dickson)

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea* Steàrnag

AMBER LIST A summer visitor and localised breeding species particularly on: *Coll*, *Colonsay*, *Islay*, *Jura*, *Mull*, and *Tiree*. Many colonies are severely affected by mink predation and are often unproductive where no trapping is undertaken. Seabird 2000 counted 1,823 pairs in *Argyll & Bute*.

Spring The first birds reported were 1 at Gunna Sound *Tiree* on 23 Apr and 1 at Breachacha Castle *Coll* on 26 Apr. Reports came from several locations from 28 Apr onwards, mostly from

Tiree, Coll, Mull and Islay. There were 55 at Traigh Bhagh *Tiree* on 4 May, 90 around islets at the east end of the Sound of Mull *Mull* on 9 May, 190 feeding off Glengorm *Mull* on 12 May, 140 at Vaul Bay *Tiree* on 12 May, and 200 off Ardnave Point *Islay* on 21 May.

Breeding There were 387 pairs nesting at 20 sites across *Tiree*, with small chicks present by late Jun. The breeding season was described as ‘reasonably good’ with at least 100 chicks fledged from the 5 main colonies by mid-Jul. On *Coll*, at least 50 pairs bred at Gunna, 10 at Arinagour and 30 at Sorisdale. 30 pairs bred at Claggain Bay *Islay*, 29 pairs at RSPB Ardnave *Islay*, and 26 pairs at Big Scone Island (Machrihanish) *Kintyre*. TIARG reported that 178 pairs bred on Sgeir an Eirionnaich and 75 pairs on Sgeirean na Guisaich on the Treshnish Isles *Mull*. Clive Craik monitored 7 colonies, mostly in the Sound of Mull *Mull*, which held a total of about 100 pairs, and fledged about 45 chicks, most of these colonies being in areas where mink numbers were controlled.

Autumn Birds were widely distributed in more marine areas of Argyll in early Aug but only very small numbers remained after mid-Aug. There were few records during Sep and all from *Tiree*, but the last record was of 1 at Aird *Tiree* on 22 Oct, the only record in that month.

IVORY GULL *Pagophila eburnea*

A vagrant: four records; on Islay in 1867, at Campbeltown, Kintyre in 1873, between Coll and Mull in 1969, and at Ardnave Point, Islay on 23 and 24 Apr 2000.

No records.

SABINE’S GULL *Xema sabini*

A scarce and irregular passage migrant mainly in autumn.

Spring An adult was at Salum Bay *Tiree* on 23 May and at Soa *Tiree* on 27 May, which then relocated to Loch a’ Phuill *Tiree* on 2 Jun [Christian Verstraete, John Bowler].

Autumn An adult was at Balemartine *Tiree* on 10 Aug [Nick Wall]. Two juveniles were off Hynish *Tiree* on 27 Sep [Jerry Wilson] and 2 juveniles were off Aird *Tiree* on 22 Oct [John Bowler]. All records were accepted by the ABRC.

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla* Ruideag

RED LIST *Normally a strictly marine species. The main breeding area is on Colonsay, with other colonies on: Islay, Treshnish Isles, and Tiree. Scarce in winter and very scarce inland. Breeding Kittiwakes are a feature of North Colonsay & Western Cliffs SPA.*

Winter/spring Numbers were generally very low in Jan-Feb. There were small numbers off *Tiree* throughout Jan-Feb, but there were 90 feeding off Greenhill *Tiree* on 30 Jan. Larger numbers appeared during Mar, with passage at Aird *Tiree* of 330 in 1 hr on 26 Mar, 920 in 1 hr on 28 Mar, 425 in 1 hr on 31 Mar and 1,520 in 1 hr on 1 Apr. Peak spring passage at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* was on 31 Mar with 440 birds passing in 6 hrs.

Breeding At Ceann a’ Mhara *Tiree* some 100 birds were back on ledges on 7 Apr, when increasing numbers were also noted offshore, and on 20 May there were 200 AONs but mostly still nest building activity and no eggs. The number of AONs increased to 246 on 17 Jun with a further 250 off-duty, nonbreeding or immature birds nearby. On 11 Jul, 170 of the nests contained medium-large chicks (mean 1.46 chicks per nest in a sample of 78 nests), while on 22 Jul there were 135 nests with large chicks close to fledging and some may already have fledged. On 11 Aug, there were still about 100 adults and 30 fledglings at the colony. At Uragaig *Colonsay* there were 19 AONs on the monitoring plot in Jun. At Pigs Paradise mean clutch = 1.71 (n=7). TIARG reported that at the Treshnish Isles *Mull* there were 325 AONs on Lunga (cf. 507 in 2014). In addition there were up to 330 birds roosting on intertidal rocks. At Pigs

Paradise *Colonsay* a colour ringed adult was a bird that had been ringed as an adult in the same colony in 1993.

Autumn/winter The first juvenile at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* was not seen until 15 Aug, which suggests a late breeding season. However, on 16 Aug, 464 birds passed the observatory in 5 hrs and 70% of those were juveniles, suggesting a productive breeding season. During Aug and Sep, moderate numbers passed sea watching sites, with mostly tens per hour passing Aird *Tiree*. Much larger numbers were seen there in Oct-Nov, with peaks of 1,060 in 1 hr on 12 Oct, and 1,130 in 1 hr on 16 Nov. At Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* the largest count was of 2,814 birds passing in 7 hrs on 22 Oct. Despite high numbers in mid-Nov, very few were seen after 19 Nov, although at *Tiree* one or two were passing by most days through to the end of Dec.

BONAPARTE'S GULL *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*

A vagrant: seven or eight records; Islay in Jun and Sep 1975, Tiree in Apr 2010, the Add Estuary, Mid-Argyll in Aug 2012, Traigh nan Gilean and Loch a' Phuill, Tiree in Jun 2013, a first-winter at Loch Gilp, Mid-Argyll in Jan 14 with an adult there in Dec 14 and possibly the same adult at Loch Caolisprt, Mid-Argyll in Mar 14.

Winter/spring A first-winter bird (2CY) was at Sorobaidh Bay *Tiree* on 24 Mar [John Bowler] and an adult, presumed returning bird from 2014, was at Loch Caolisport *Mid-Argyll* on 26 Mar to 6 Apr [John Nadin, Mark Wood, Jim Dickson *et al.*]. Both records were accepted by the BBRC.



Black-headed Gull and Oystercatcher *Mid-Argyll* (Jim Dickson)

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* Faoileag-a'-chinn-duibh
AMBER LIST A *patchily distributed resident breeder: reduced or absent at some sites due to mink predation and scarce in many areas in winter.*

Winter/spring Although scarce in most of Argyll during winter, there were 33 at RSPB Gruinart Islay on 19 Jan, 30 at Bowmore Islay on 19 Jan, 100 at Eilean Traighe (Ormsary) Mid-Argyll on 24 Jan, 81 at Loch Gilp Mid-Argyll on 7 Feb, 60 at Dunstaffnage Bay Mid-Argyll on 12 Feb and 100 at Ardachy (Loch Etive) North Argyll on 12 Feb, 320 were back on Tiree on 16 Mar.

Breeding On Tiree, in Apr-May numbers of AONs at 10 sites were: 170 at The Reef, 76 at Greenhill, 60 at Loch a' Phuill, 18 at Barrapol, 15 at Loch Bhasapol, 12 at Soa Point, 8 at Loch Carrastaoine, 4 at Loch an Eilein, 3 at Loch Anlaig, 2 at Loch Riaghain. Productivity was high on Tiree with the first fledglings in mid-Jun, large numbers of fledged young by mid Jul, and birds departing colonies mostly during late Jul. At Gunna Island Coll there were 20 pairs with at least 5 fledglings on 9 Jul. At least 27 pairs bred at Duncuan (Loch Gilp) Mid-Argyll and 25 pairs bred at RSPB Gruinart Islay.

Autumn/winter The first juvenile heading south past Machrihanish SBO Kintyre was seen on 4 Jul. The species was widely distributed in autumn and winter, though mostly in small numbers. However, there were 125 at Smelly Corner (Bridge End) Islay on 26 Jul, 130 on the Add Estuary Mid-Argyll on 3 Aug, 156 at RSPB Loch Gruinart Islay on 21 Aug, 34 at Gairletter Point Cowal on 24 Aug, 42 at Bowmore Islay on 13 Sep, 234 at RSPB Gruinart Islay on 14 Sep, 100 at Gruline Mausoleum Mull (feeding at the fish farm outfall) on 11 Oct, 60 at Gigha Kintyre on 17 Oct, 40 at the head of Loch Gilp Mid-Argyll on 12 Nov, 120 at Gairletter Point Cowal on 17 Dec, 70 at Gigha Kintyre on 19 Dec, and 111 at Eilean Traighe (Ormsary) Mid-Argyll on 26 Dec.

LITTLE GULL *Hydrocoloeus minutus* Crann-fhaoileag

An annual visitor, most frequently in autumn but may be encountered at any time of the year.

Winter/Spring More reports than usual from Loch Gilp Mid-Argyll with at least 4 between 1 Jan and 29 Apr with peaks of 2 adults on 2 Jan, 2 adults and a 2CY on 20 Jan, an adult and 2 2CY on 8 and 18 Feb, 2 adults and a 2CY on 6 Mar.

Spring/summer A 3CY was at Loch Gilp Mid-Argyll on 29 Apr, 1 (age not given) was at Loch na Keal Mull on 18 May and 1 Jun. A 2CY was at Loch a'Phuill Tiree on 20 Jun.

Autumn An adult was at Loch Gilp Mid-Argyll on 10 Aug, a 3CY was at Gott Bay Tiree on 24 Aug, 1 (age not given) was at Croig Mull on 6 Sep, a 3CY was at Strath Farm (The Laggan) Kintyre on 12 Sep and an adult, seen during an Argyll Bird Club field meet, was at Tayinloan Kintyre on 31 Oct.

ROSS'S GULL *Rhodostethia rosea*

A vagrant: four records; an immature at Frenchman's Rocks, Islay on 15 August 1976, an adult at Aird, Tiree on 9 August 2006, a first-winter bird at Ormsary, Mid-Argyll from 14 Dec 2006 to 15 Jan 2007 and later at Portavadie, Cowal from 13-25 Feb 2007 and a first-winter past Machrihanish SBO, Kintyre on 12 Nov 2010.

No records.

LAUGHING GULL *Larus atricilla*

A rare visitor: nine records; all between 1974 and 2011.

Summer/autumn A 3CY (second-summer) at Portnahaven Islay was first suspected as this species at the end of Jun or start of Jul [Ian Turner]. This report was later confirmed and the bird photographed when refound on 21 Jul [John Armitage]. Record was accepted by the BBRC.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Larus melanocephalus*

AMBER LIST A *scarce visitor mainly in autumn and winter.*

Winter Many more than average were recorded at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* during Jan to early Mar with possibly 10 birds involved (all un-ringed). An adult was there on 4 Jan, then a peak of 7 (4 adults and 3 2CY: comprising a first winter and 2 second-winters) on 20 Jan, then smaller numbers including possibly 3 new individuals, until 6 Mar.

Spring/summer A 2CY was at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 1 Apr then an adult was there on 30 Jun. An adult was at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 17-27 Jul.

Autumn A 2CY was at Blackmill Bay (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Sep and 10 Oct and was wearing a Polish colour ring. *It was ringed as a nestling on 20 May 2014 at Ryn, Wejdyki, Warminsko-Mazurskie, Poland, a movement of 1,735km (west north west).*

Winter No winter reports, which is unusual.



Mediterranean Gull *Kintyre* (Eddie Maguire)

COMMON GULL (MEW GULL) *Larus canus Faoileag-chumanta*

AMBER LIST A *widespread and common resident breeding species but reduced or absent at some sites due to predation by mink.*

Winter/spring Widely distributed in winter across Argyll with largest numbers reported from *Tiree*, including: 185 on 1 Jan, 360 on 12 Jan, 335 at Crossapol Farm on 21 Jan and 450 there on 22 Jan, 565 on 30 Jan, 490 on 4 Feb, 290 at Sorobaidh Bay on 11 Feb, 365 on 16 Feb, 865 on 16 Mar, 230 on 17 Mar, 190 on 23 Mar, 360 on 24 Mar, 260 on 25 Mar, 450 on 27 Mar, 250 at Loch an Eilein on 6 Apr, 220 at Loch a' Phuill on 19 Apr. Elsewhere, high counts included: 184 at Gairletter Point *Cowal* on 26 Jan, 253 at Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on 26 Jan, 141 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Feb, 58 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 13 Apr, 127 at Loch Creran *North*

Argyll on 19 Apr, 54 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 19 Apr, 41 at Balvicar Bay *Mid-Argyll* on 2 May, and 70 at Post Office (Lochbuie) *Mull* on 6 May.

Breeding Widely distributed, mostly in small numbers. On *Tiree*, breeding numbers (AONs) were: 101 at Loch a' Phuill, 62 at The Reef, 70 at Crossapol, 9 at Balevullin Pools, 3 at Milton, 15 at Balinoe, 8 at Greenhill, 3 at Loch Bhasapol, 15 at Happy Valley, 19 at Hough dunes, 9 at Loch Aulraig, 27 at Heylipol Church pool, 23 at Druimbuidhe, 15 at Traig Ghrianaidh, 2 at Hynish, 2 at Soa Point, 2 at Salum. Productivity on *Tiree* was good, with large numbers of fledglings from 20 Jun and most fledged by the end of Jun. The first dispersing juvenile passed Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 8 Jul, which fits with the observed timing of breeding at *Tiree*. Clive Craik monitored 19 sites with a total of about 420 pairs. These fledged about 150 chicks, mostly from sites where mink were controlled. The largest of these colonies were 200 pairs at Kilmaronag Islands (Loch Etive) *Mid-Argyll* where at least 48 chicks fledged, and 51 pairs at E. Inshaig (Loch Craignish) *Mid-Argyll* where only 3 chicks fledged. There were 16 pairs at Loch Tralaig *Mid-Argyll*, and 28 pairs bred at RSPB Ardnave *Islay*. About 50 pairs at Gunna Island *Coll* fledged at least 20 chicks. About 8 pairs bred on the Treshnish Isles *Mull*. There were 45 pairs on Oronsay *Colonsay* and 34 on *Colonsay* during a complete count.

Autumn/winter Widely distributed, but often in small numbers. Large counts included: 200 at Smelly Corner (Bridgend) *Islay* on 26 Jul, 200 at Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 16 Aug, 225 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 22 Aug, 350 on *Tiree* on 24 Aug, 210 at The Laggan *Kintyre* on 28 Aug, 100 feeding at the outfall from the fish farm at Gruline Mausoleum *Mull* on 11 Oct, 109 at Bowmore *Islay* on 22 Nov, and 220 on *Tiree* on 8 Dec.

RING-BILLED GULL *Larus delawarensis*

A scarce to rare visitor: usually annual with one to four records in late winter and spring, although there are records for every month of the year.

Spring/summer A first-winter (2CY) was at Glen More *Mull* on 2 to 21 Mar [Bryan Rains] and a first-summer (2CY) was at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 22 to 27 Jul [Jim Dickson, Stuart Crutchfield, Scott O'Hara]. Both records were accepted by the ABRC.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus* *Farspag-bheag*

AMBER LIST *A widespread breeding species: generally present from Mar to Sep. Some colonies are much affected by mink predation. A few remain in winter. Seabird 2000 found 3,235 pairs in Argyll and Bute.*

Winter/spring A first-winter (1CY) was photographed at Campbeltown harbour *Kintyre* on 6 Jan, and two 1CY were at the head of Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 6 Feb. Another 1CY was seen at Sorobaiddh Bay *Tiree* on 20 Feb. Two adults were at Largiemore *Cowal* on 26 Feb. Singles of unspecified age were reported from Cnoc na h-Uamha *Islay* on 19 Feb and RSPB Gruinart *Islay* on 28 Feb. Four were at the head of Loch Indaal *Islay* on 1 Mar, and numbers increased throughout Mar, with 27 at Drimvore *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Mar and 33 at The Laggan *Kintyre* on 15 Mar.

Breeding On *Tiree*, there were: 55 pairs at Loch Bhirceapol, 25 pairs at Milton, 6 at Ceann a' Mhara, 14 at The Ringing Stone, 1 at Hough dunes, 6 at Ballevullin, 6 at Rubha Chraiginis, 8 at Scarinish moor. In contrast to the early departure from colonies in 2014, numbers at *Tiree* dropped only slowly with many remaining through autumn. 17 pairs bred at RSPB Ardnave *Islay*, and 2 pairs on Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull*. On *Colonsay* there were 2 AONs and on Oronsay *Colonsay* 8 AONs. There were no data from other breeding sites.

Autumn/winter Widely distributed across Argyll during autumn, but records especially from *Tiree*, *Mull*, and *Colonsay*. Larger counts included: 80 at Balephuill *Tiree* on cut silage on 10 Aug, 61 at The Laggan *Kintyre* on 28 Aug, 48 at Ardnave *Islay* on 14 Sep. Numbers declined

during Sep with no counts above 5 birds after 23 Sep. Only 3 reports during Nov: at Glenbyre (Loch Buie) *Mull*, Rubha nan Gall Mor (Loch Don) *Mull* and Port Ellen *Islay*, and only one report in Dec, at Calgary Bay *Mull*.

EUROPEAN HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus* Faoileag-an-sgadain

RED LIST A *widespread and abundant resident breeding species that forms large flocks outside the breeding season. Recently several large colonies have been abandoned, and very few now breed inland.*

Winter/spring Widespread across Argyll, especially on sheltered coasts, at harbours, and on pasture land near the coast. There were: 350 at West Hynish *Tiree* on 1 Jan, 190 at Sandaig *Tiree* on 18 Jan, 200 at Bowmore *Islay* on 19 Jan, 240 at Crossapol Farm *Tiree* on 22 Jan, 170 at Milton *Tiree* (already attending the colony area there) on 16 Feb, 269 at Holy Loch *Cowal* on 9 Feb, and 640 at Eilean Traighe (Ormsary) *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Mar. A colour ringed first-winter bird at Sorobaidh Bay *Tiree* on 26 Jan had been ringed as a chick on 4 Jul 2014 at Oronsay *Colonsay*.

Breeding On *Tiree*, numbers of breeding pairs were: 29 at Milton, 10 at Loch Bhirceapol, 18 at The Ringing Stone, 14 at Rubha Chraiginis, 5 at Hough dunes, 6 at Balevullin, 8 at Ceann a' Mhara, 25 at Scarinish moor, and 6 at Salum. Good numbers of fledglings were about by 11 Jul at the colonies on *Tiree*. On *Colonsay* there were 94 AONs and 97 AONs on Oronsay *Colonsay*. There were 28 AONs at Glas Eilean (Mucraidh) *Jura*. On the Treshnish Isles *Mull*, breeding was confirmed on Lunga (9 pairs), and there were single occupied territories on Fladda and Sgeir a' Chaisteil, but none on Sgeir an Eirionnaich or Sgeirean na Guisaich, Sgeir an Fheoir or Sgeir na h-Iolaire. In the study area monitored by Clive Craik only 5 sites were investigated in detail: 5 pairs at Sgeir nan Gobhar (Sound of Mull) *Mull* fledged no chicks, 2 pairs on the shore at River Forsa Sound of Mull fledged 2 chicks, none nested at the once large colony at Eileanan Glasa (Sound of Mull) *Mull*, and only 1 pair nested at Ardachy Islets (Loch Etive) *North Argyll* and 1 pair at Sgeir an Eitich (Oban) *Mid-Argyll*. At least 40 chicks fledged from the colony at Kilmaronag Islands (Loch Etive) *Mid-Argyll* and at least 70 from the nearby colony at Abbot Islands (Loch Etive) but the numbers of breeding pairs at those sites were not counted. 18 pairs bred at RSPB Ardnave *Islay*. At least 7 pairs nested on rooftops in Campbeltown *Kintyre*, with at least 15 chicks fledging from those nests.

Autumn/winter Widespread, with highest counts: 3,000 at The Laggan *Kintyre* on 28 Aug, more than 250 at the fish farm outlet at Gruline Mausoleum *Mull* on 11 Oct, 1,500 at Bagh an Tailleur (Loch Fyne) *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Nov, 296 at Bowmore *Islay* on 22 Nov, 435 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 16 Dec and 253 at Gigha Bay (Gigha) *Kintyre* on 19 Dec.

YELLOW-LEGGED GULL *Larus michahellis*

AMBER LIST A *vagrant: two records; one at Loch Gruinart, Islay on 1-7 Sep 2002 (in this case the race/sub-species 'atlantis' was not ruled out) and an adult at Drumlemble, Kintyre on 21-22 Feb 2014.*

No records.

Note: A putative 2CY (first-winter) Caspian Gull (Larus cachinnans) was found at Loch Gilp Mid-Argyll on 17 Jan and widely confirmed from photographs as being this species. It remained at this location throughout most of the year, however as the moult cycles progressed, some hybrid features became evident with a likely Yellow-legged or perhaps Herring Gull influence. As such this record was not accepted as a pure Caspian Gull by the SBRC.

AMERICAN HERRING GULL *Larus smithsonianus*

A vagrant: two previous records; a first-winter bird on Tiree in 2007 (two records on Tiree from 2007 still under consideration by the BBRC) and a first-winter near Campbeltown, Kintyre on 6 Feb-27 Mar 2014.

No accepted records. (See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.134-135).

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucooides glaucooides* Faoileag-liath

AMBER LIST A scarce but regular winter visitor: most frequent Jan-Mar, with numbers varying widely from year to year. There are a few summer records.

Winter/spring There were about twice as many records compared to this period last year, with 52-56 individuals. The majority of birds were in 2CY (juvenile or into first-winter) plumage and only 1 adult was recorded. On *Colonsay* a 2CY was on Oronsay between 19 Feb and 3 Mar. In *Cowal* 1 was at Cairndow on 2 Mar. On *Islay* probably 7-8 different single birds were involved (not all birds were aged) between 25 Jan to 27 Apr. Reports came from Cornabus, Port Charlotte, Bridgend, Errabus, Kennacraig to Islay ferry, Gruinart, The Oa, Springbank and Storakaig. On *Jura* a 2CY was at Am Fraoch Eilean on 13 Mar. In *Kintyre* 10-11 birds were recorded between 21 Jan and 14 Apr with most at Campbeltown Loch with 4 2CY birds in late Mar. Single 2CY birds were noted at Bellochantuy on 28 Feb, Kennacraig on 28 Feb, Machrihanish SBO on 8 Mar, Ballochroy on 23 Mar, Rhunahaorine on 2 Apr. 2 CY birds were at Machrihanish SBO on 14 Apr. In *Mid-Argyll* at least 15 birds were recorded between 1 Jan and 8 May with most being at Eilean Traighe (Ormsary) where at times up to 6 were present with 4 2CY (juvs), a 3CY and an adult, most having arrived on 1 Mar and still 5 there until 8 Apr at least. In Oban Bay 2 2CY birds were there in Mar and a 4CY (third-winter/summer) bird was there from 25 Mar to 12 Apr. Within this area single birds were reported from Loch Caithlim (Seil), Inverneill, Connel, Kerrera, Loch Gilp, and head of Loch Fyne. On *Mull* 10-12 birds were recorded between 24 Jan and 23 Jul, all of singles apart from 2 at Loch Spelve on 26 Jan. Single birds were at Knock, Loch na Keal, Tobermory, Reudle, Glengorm, Bloody Bay and on Iona. On *Tiree* probably 6 different 2CY birds were recorded between 30 Jan and 6 May, including reports from Balinoe, Gott Bay, Loch a' Phuill, Loch an Eilein, Sandaig, and West Hynish.

Summer A pure white 2CY (first-summer) bird on *Iona Mull* remained from 13 May until at least 23 Jul. A 2CY (first summer) bird was on *Tiree* at Balinoe on 9 Jun and at Traigh Bhi on 12 Jun and 13 Jul.

Autumn/winter There were up to 11 birds in this period compared to only 1 last year. On *Islay* an early record was at Loch Gruinart on 10 Oct and presumably the same bird at Ardnave on 26 Oct. A 2CY was at Ardnave on 16 Dec. In *Kintyre* 1 was at Machrihanish SBO on 28 Nov and 2 2CY birds were at Gigha Bay (Gigha) on 19 Dec. In *Mid-Argyll* a 2CY (juv) was at Ormsary on 1 Nov to 12 Dec and 3 2CY (juvs) were at Oban Bay from 19 Nov until end of Dec. On *Mull* a 2CY was at Calgary on 18 Nov, a 2CY at Loch na Keal in Dec.

'KUMLIEN'S' ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucooides kumlieni*

A sub-species of Iceland Gull, from arctic NE Canada, with no Argyll records prior to 2011 however an influx of eleven birds during late winter 2011/12 reflected record numbers in the UK and Europe.

Winter/spring A 2CY (juv) was at Eilean Traighe (Ormsary) *Mid-Argyll* from 1 Jan to 8 Apr, having arrived there on 28 Dec 2014. A 2CY (juv) was at Tayinloan jetty *Kintyre* on 21 Jan.

GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus* Muir-mhaighstir

AMBER LIST A scarce but regular winter visitor: most frequent Jan-Mar.

Winter/spring There were more than average numbers with 35-36 individuals reported (very similar to last year) with 11+ birds on *Tiree*, 8 in *Mid-Argyll*, 7 on *Islay*, 3-4 on *Mull* and smaller numbers in other areas. On *Coll* a 1CY was at Cliad Bay on 7-8 Apr. On *Colonsay* a 2CY was on Oronsay on 3-5 May. On *Islay* there were at least 7 widespread reports of singles (most from around Loch Indaal) between 6 Jan to 30 Apr, most being aged as 2CY. On *Jura* 1 was at Ardlussa and Tarbert Bay on 17-18 Jun. In *Kintyre* a 3CY was at Machrihanish SBO on 23 Apr and a 1CY at Tayinloan on 26-27 May. In *Mid-Argyll* at least 6 singles were recorded between 31 Jan and 12 May: however 2 2CY birds were at Ormsary in Feb. In *North Argyll* a 2CY was at Eilean Musdile (Lismore) on 26 Mar. On *Mull* singles were at Loch na Keal on 8-10 Mar, at Glengorm on 30 Apr, at Treshnish on 18 May, at Tobermory on 19 May and at Lagganulva on 28 May. On *Tiree* birds were present from 12 Jan when a 2CY was at the Reef, with notable influxes of 7 on 17 Jan (4 2CY together at West Hynish, a 2CY and a 3CY at Traigh Bhagh and a 2CY at Gott Bay) followed by a count of 11 around the island on 30 Jan. Smaller numbers remained into Mar-Apr with 2 birds in May and a long staying 2CY bird remaining until 20 Jul.

Autumn/winter Eight singles were recorded. The first report was at An Airidh *Tiree* on 31 Oct. A long staying 1CY (juv) was at Arrochar *Cowal* from 26 Nov into 2016. On *Islay* singles were at Uiskentuie (Loch Indaal) on 15 Nov and at Machir Bay on 24-31 Dec. In *Kintyre* a 1CY (juv) was at Campbeltown Loch from 6 Nov and later at the Laggan on 15 Nov. In *Mid-Argyll* a 1CY (juv) was at the head of Loch Fyne from 11-16 Dec. In *North Argyll* a 1CY (juv) was at Kilcheran Loch then Achnacroish on Lismore on 28 Nov. From *Tiree* came reports of singles on 6 and 10 Dec.



Glaucous Gull *Islay* (Steve Percival)

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus* Farspag

AMBER LIST A *common resident: breeding widely on small islands along the coast.*

Winter/spring Records were mostly of small numbers, from all coastal areas of Argyll but particularly on *Tiree*, *Islay*, *Mull* and *Colonsay*. Largest counts were: 20 at Port na Mine *North Argyll* on 3 Jan, 35 at Bowmore *Islay* on 19 Jan, 57 at Hough Bay *Tiree* on 31 Jan, 25 at Rubha Chraiginis *Tiree* on 17 Feb, 28 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 21 Apr, 80 passing Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* in 3 hrs on 8 May, and 30 at Kiloran Bay *Colonsay* on 17 May.

Breeding On the Treshnish Isles *Mull*, breeding was confirmed on Sgeir an Eirionnaich (21 pairs), Lunga (10 pairs), Sgeir an Fheoir (6 pairs) and Sgeir na h'Iolaire (1 pair) but none held territories on Sgeir a' Chaisteil or Sgeirean na Guisaich, and total numbers have declined since the 1990s. On *Colonsay* 15 pairs were found and 14 pairs on Oronsay *Colonsay*. On *Tiree*, there were 3 pairs at Loch Bhirceapol, 1 at Hough dunes, 1 at Rubha Chraiginis, 2 at Milton, 10 at the Ringing Stone, and 12 at Scarinish Moor. There were 4 pairs at Gunna Island *Coll*, 3 pairs at Glas Eilean *Jura*, and 6 pairs at RSPB Ardnave *Islay*. In the study area monitored by Clive Craik, 9 sites (mostly in Loch Etive *Mid-Argyll* and the Sound of Mull *Mull*) held at least 24 pairs which fledged at least 31 chicks.

Autumn/winter Widely distributed on coasts of Argyll in small numbers. Larger groups included: 25 at Bowmore *Islay* on 16 Aug and 27 there on 13 Sep, 40 at The Laggan *Kintyre* on 28 Aug, 67 on Soa *Tiree* on 7 Sep, 33 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Sep, 29 on Nave Island *Islay* on 13 Oct, 84 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 8 Nov, 70 there on 12 Nov, 106 on 15 Nov and 52 on 24 Nov, 80 at Lagganulva *Mull* on 11 Nov, 33 at Holy Loch *Cowal* on 17 Nov, 102 at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 4 Dec and 43 there on 6 Dec, and 45 at Rubha Chraiginis *Tiree* on 10 Dec. A colour-ringed juvenile at Campbeltown *Kintyre* on 12 Oct had been ringed as a chick at Pladda (Arran) on 15 Jun 2015.

ROCK DOVE *Columba livia* Calman-creige

A resident breeder except in Cowal: concentrated on the islands and in Kintyre. Large flocks often gather on arable fields outwith the breeding season. The genetic integrity of most populations is now in doubt because of interbreeding with feral pigeons: those on the islands being probably nearest 'pure' Rock Dove. Feral Pigeons are recorded from most areas, but there is little information on population size.

Winter/spring The highest counts from the islands were: 100 at Baugh *Tiree* on 1 Jan, 60 at Balephetrish *Tiree* on 30 Jan, 45 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 15 Feb, and 200 at Ballinaby *Islay* on 26 Feb. The only reports from *Mid-Argyll* were 8 at Balvicar on 31 Jan and 16 at Barr Mor both Seil on 3 Apr.

Breeding/summer Birds were reported to be present during the breeding season in all areas except *Cowal*, *Jura*, and *North Argyll* but there were no reports of breeding. A flock of 20 was at Treshnish *Mull* on 8 Jul, 30 were at Balephuill *Tiree* on 28 Jul, 30 were at Kiloran Bay *Colonsay* on 29 Aug, and 45 were at Crossapol *Tiree* on 29 Aug.

Autumn/winter The largest count reported was 211 at the Oa *Islay* on 14 Dec. Other large counts were: 105 at Ruaig *Tiree* on 14 Sep, 25 at Keil Point (Southend) *Kintyre* on 1 Oct, 80 at Whitehouse *Tiree* on 5 Oct, 53 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 11 Oct, and 80 on barley stubble at Sunderland Farm *Islay* on 17 Nov.

FERAL PIGEON There were 45 at Oban town centre *Mid-Argyll* on 24 Feb, 50 were at Balvicar (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Mar and 8 May, 10 at Ballachuan Loch (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 15 Jul, 14 at Glen Cannel *Mull* on 15 Sep, and 10 at Cullipool Quarry (Luining) *Mid-Argyll* on 3 Dec. Birds were also reported from *Colonsay*, *Cowal*, *Islay*, and *North Argyll*.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas* Calman-gorm

AMBER LIST A *very scarce and local resident: only regularly reported from Cowal and Mid-Argyll in recent years.*

Winter/spring Five were at Sanaigmore *Islay* on 4 Mar, 1 was at Poltalloch *Mid-Argyll* on 17 Mar, and a bird was present at Cnoc nan Dosan *Mull* on 12 Apr. A single bird seen briefly with a Rock Dove at Balephuill *Tiree* on 28 Apr was the observer's first record of this species in 14 years on *Tiree*.

COMMON WOOD PIGEON *Columba palumbus* Calman-fiadhaich

A *common resident breeding species: less numerous on Mull, scarce on Coll, and rare on Tiree. Large flocks which form on the mainland in winter may include immigrants.*

Winter/spring The only large flock reported in the spring was of 74 at Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 10 Jan. On *Tiree* the first of 5 migrant birds was at Carnan Mor on 19 Apr with the last at Crossapol on 9 Jun.

Breeding/summer Breeding was confirmed from *Colonsay* and *Mull* and thought probable on *Coll* 13 birds were at RSPB Gruinart *Islay* on 14 May, 2 were at Glen Kin *Cowal* on 4 Jun, 25 were at Bridgend Woods *Islay* on 19 Jun, and 2 were at Scalasaig *Colonsay* on 29 Aug. A single bird flying in off the sea at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 16 Aug was a very rare sight and a flock of 12 flying over The Laggan *Kintyre* on 20 Aug was also unusual.

Autumn/winter A flock of 105 was feeding on silage aftermath at Sunderland Farm *Islay* on 12 Sep. Elsewhere: 20 were foraging at Bridgend *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Oct, 16 were at Killiechchronan Wood *Mull* on 21 Nov, 21 were on the shinty pitch at Tighnabruaich *Cowal* on 8 Dec, and 14 were at Barrahormid (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Dec.

EURASIAN COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto* Calman-a'-chrios

A *widespread but sparsely distributed species throughout Argyll: usually associated with human settlement. It is resident at many locations, but is mainly a late spring migrant or summer visitor to some islands.*

Winter/spring Higher counts were: 6 at Crossapol *Tiree* in Feb and 14 at Port Charlotte *Islay* on 14 Mar. Smaller numbers were reported from all areas except *Jura*, and *Kintyre*.

Breeding/summer Nest building was noted at Balvicar *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Mar and pairs were reported from several sites on *Mull*. 13 birds were noted at Kiloran Farm *Colonsay* on 18 Jun and 15 were at Balephuill *Tiree* on 25 Jun.

Autumn/winter Birds were reported from all areas except *Colonsay* and *Jura*. There were 28 on Gigha *Kintyre* on 17 Oct, 18 at Cairnbaan *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Oct, 9 below feeders at Port Charlotte *Islay* on 4 Nov, and regularly up to 10 on *Tiree*.

EUROPEAN TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur* Calman-tùchan

RED LIST A *scarce but almost annual passage migrant: most frequently recorded during May and Jun.*

Spring/summer Only one record, a single bird was at Treshnish (NW *Mull*) *Mull* on 8 Jul.

COMMON CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus* Cuthag

RED LIST A *common summer visitor that is more frequent and widespread on the mainland: less numerous on the outer islands.*

Spring First arrivals were at Glen Fyne *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Apr, Auchnaha *Cowal* on 14 Apr, Caol Scotnish (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 15 Apr, then Kilunaig *Mull* and Glen Kin *Cowal* on

16 Apr. Widespread arrival soon followed with birds reported from: *Islay* and *Jura* on 17 Apr, *North Argyll* on 22 Apr and *Coll* on 24 Apr.

Breeding/summer 26 singing male territories were noted on *Colonsay*. 4 birds were at Rhudle *Mid-Argyll* on 23 May, 4 were at Craigendive (Loch Striven) *Cowal* on 4 Jun, 3 were at Glen Kin *Cowal* on 4 Jun, 3 were at Grasspoint *Mull* on 5 Jun, and 3 were at Dalvore (Moine Mhor) *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Jun. Juvs. were first reported from *Tiree* on 20 Jul, followed by *Mid-Argyll* on 23 Jul and *Mull* on 30 Jul The final report of the year was of a single immature bird at Balephuill on 18-19 Sep, the latest ever record on *Tiree*.

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*

A vagrant: one record; a first-winter bird found dead near Southend, Kintyre on 8 Nov 1950.

No records.

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO *Coccyzus americanus*

A vagrant: two records; one found dead on Colonsay on 6 Nov 1904 and one found dying at Barcaldine, North Argyll in late Sep 1969.

No records.

BARN OWL *Tyto alba* Comhachag

A patchily distributed breeding species: probably most numerous in Kintyre. It is widespread on Cowal, Islay, and Mull but only a rare visitor to Coll, Colonsay, and Tiree. All records are requested.

More than half of the year's records came from *Islay*, with the remainder from: *Cowal*, *Jura*, *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull*, *North Argyll*, and *Tiree*. Most records were of single birds although 3 were reported from *Mull* on 4 Nov and 2 were reported several times on *Islay*, *Jura* and in *North Argyll*. Single birds were reported several times from the Cairnbaan/Moine Mhor/Kilmichael area of *Mid-Argyll*. A single bird was seen at the airport on *Tiree* on 11 Nov.

Barn Owls had a poor breeding season as can be seen from the table below. The average of 2.1 young per successful site is less than half the 4.7 young per successful site achieved in 2014.

Table 35. Outcome of monitored Barn Owl territories in Argyll in 2015. (ARSG per Roger Broad).

Area	Sites occupied	Sites where eggs laid	Sites successful *	Sites failed	Outcome unknown	Min no. large young/fledged	Young per successful site
Islay	2	2	1	0	1	2+	2.0+
North Argyll	1	1	1	0	0	2	2.0
Kintyre/Knapdale	25	23	8	11	4	15	1.87
Cowal	19	17	7	9	1	17	2.42
Total	47	43	17	20	6	36+	2.12**

* Fledged young or large young in nest on last visit

** Calculated for 16 nesting attempts where fledged brood size accurately known.

EURASIAN SCOPS OWL *Otus scops*

A vagrant: one record; found dead at Scarinish, Tiree on 6 Apr 1997.

No records.

SNOWY OWL *Bubo scandiacus*

A vagrant: six records; a male on Coll on 27 Jan 2007 and an immature female on Tiree on 29 Jan 2007. Four old records between 1870 and 1892 are also considered acceptable.

No records.

TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco* Comhachag-dhonn

AMBER LIST A *widespread and common resident breeding bird: absent from Coll and with only single records for Colonsay and Tiree.*

Birds were reported from: *Cowal, Islay, Mid-Argyll, Mull, and North Argyll*. Three birds were at Glen More *Mull* on 3 Jan and at Glenure *North Argyll* on 7 Jun; all other records were of 1 or 2 birds. This is a still a much under-recorded species and all records are welcome.

Breeding Nineteen sites are known to have been successful, raising 25 large young (*cf* 16 sites and 33 young in 2014).

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus* Comhachag-adharcaiche

A very scarce resident breeding bird and winter visitor: almost certainly under recorded. All records are requested.

Breeding Two pairs on *Colonsay* raised at least 3 young. A pair reported with at least 2 calling chicks on *Coll* on 2 Jul is the first proven successful breeding of this species on the island. A pair with at least 2 calling chicks was on *Seil Mid-Argyll* in Jul.

Summer/autumn Single birds were at *Salen Forest Mull* on 7 Aug and at *Balephuill Tiree* on 18 Sep.

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus* Comhachag-chluasach

AMBER LIST A *widely but thinly distributed breeder and winter visitor. Numbers fluctuate and distribution varies with the abundance of small rodents, especially field voles (Microtus agrestis).*

Birds were reported during the year in all areas except *Cowal* and *North Argyll* with most records referring to one or two birds.

Winter/spring Several reports of 2 birds on *Mull* during Apr: at *Loch Frisa* and *Treshnish Point* on 9 Apr, at *Aros Mains* on 21 Apr, at *Lochdon* on 22 Apr, at *Ardachoil (Loch Spelve)* on 26 Apr, and at *Beinn Bhuidhe (Cargary)* on 30 Apr.

Breeding Breeding success is thought to have been poor. In *Cowal*, 2 pairs failed to fledge chicks, a pair was present on *Islay* but the outcome is unknown, and on *Mull* a pair is believed to have bred in the north of the island.

Autumn/winter Two birds were reported from *Killinallan Islay* on 3 Nov; singles were reported from *Colonsay, Jura, Mid-Argyll, and Tiree* in Oct and from *Islay, Kintyre and Tiree* in Nov.

EUROPEAN NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus europaeus* Sgraiacheag-oidhche

AMBER LIST A *rare and irregular summer visitor and passage migrant: has bred in the past in Kintyre and Cowal. Last accepted record was at Glen Forsa, Mull on 3 Aug 2010.*

No records.

COMMON SWIFT *Apus apus* Gobhlan-mòr

AMBER LIST A *summer visitor, breeding locally on the mainland: wandering birds and passage migrants may occur anywhere.*

Breeding/summer The first sightings were in *Mid-Argyll* with 2 birds at Achnashelloch (Lochgilphead) on 7 May and 3 birds were seen inspecting nest boxes in Kilmichael Glassary on 14 May where a bird was seen emerging from a box on 20 May. Further early season records were received mainly from *Mid-Argyll* with 6 birds on 18 May at Bridgend and 12 over Oban on 2 June. The first island records were of single birds at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 9 May, Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 15 May and Treshnish *Mull* on 3 Jun, 12 at Balephuill *Tiree* on 11 Jun was a high recent count for the island. Breeding was suspected in nestboxes at Kilmichael Glassary *Mid-Argyll* with up to 10 birds regularly seen through the summer. Counts of 20 or more birds included: 20 at Lochdon *Mull* on 20 Jun, 40 at Coullabus *Islay* and 20 at Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* on 1 Jul and 25 over Oban *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Aug. 7 birds were still around Kimichael Glassary on 20 Aug but the main passage appeared to be complete with late pairs seen in *Mid-Argyll* at Connel on 24 Aug, Cairnbaan on 25 Aug and Bridgend on 29 Aug. The last record was of a single bird also at Bridgend on 30 Aug.

ALPINE SWIFT *Apus melba* Gobhlan-monaidh

A vagrant: two records; one at Largybaan, Kintyre on 15 Apr 1993 and one on the Treshnish Isles, Mull on 11 Jul 1994.

No records.

EURASIAN HOOPOE *Upupa epops* Calman-cathaidh

A scarce passage migrant, with most records in spring.

Spring One was seen and photographed in a garden in Oban (near the golf course) *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Apr and this or perhaps another seen and photographed at Ardochattan Priory gardens *North Argyll* on 21 Apr and had probably had been present there for a few days. One was seen briefly at Lochgair *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Apr.

Record numbers were reported in the UK in spring 2015.

EUROPEAN BEE-EATER *Merops apiaster*

A rare migrant: six or seven records since the first in 1981. Lastest records: two birds on Mull on 24 to 26 Apr 2010 and one in Glen Aros Mull on 27 May 2014.

Summer A group of 3 birds were at Wester Ellister *Islay* on 26 Jun [Alan and Inga Filmer] and a group of 4 birds were at Upper Cragabus (The Oa) *Islay* on 1 Jul [Michael Hordley, Elizabeth Morrison]. It seems likely that the same group of birds were involved in these sightings. Both records were accepted by the ABRC.

EUROPEAN ROLLER *Coracias garrulus*

A vagrant: seven records between 1887 and 2011. Last record was on Mull on 16 Jun 2011.

No records.

COMMON KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis* Biorra-crùidein

AMBER LIST A scarce but regular visitor with most records in autumn and winter at a few regular mainland locations. The only proven breeding record was in Kintyre in 1993.

Winter/spring Sightings were sparse and widespread including: Aros *Mull* on 2 Jan, Connel *Mid-Argyll* on 6 Feb, Sandbank Cowal on 25 Feb, Inveraray *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Mar and Saddell Bay *Kintyre* on 27 Mar.

Breeding/summer The only summer records were all in Aug with single birds again at Saddell *Kintyre* on 4, Kilmun *Cowal* on 12, Taynish (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 22 and Dervaig *Mull* on 25.

Autumn/winter Records were widespread and were all of single birds including: Loch Skerrols *Islay* on 14 Oct, Bowmore *Islay* on 20 Oct, Dervaig *Mull* and Dunoon *Cowal* both on 17 Nov.

EURASIAN WRYNECK *Jynx torquilla* Geocair

RED LIST A rare and irregular passage migrant in spring and autumn; eleven records since 1969. Last record was at The Oa, *Islay* in Aug 2013.

No records.

GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis* Snagardach

Rare: but recorded regularly in *Cowal* in recent years as well as in *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull* and *N Argyll*. Breeding may have occurred in *Kintyre* in 1998. All records required.

Breeding/summer There were three sightings from *Mull* with single birds at Tobermory on 18 Feb and 8 Apr and at Aros Park (Tobermory) on 15 Jul.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major* Snagan-daraich

A resident breeder: widespread on the mainland and *Mull*, with occasional records on *Islay*.

Winter/spring Birds were reported from a number of sites including pairs regularly seen at Otter Ferry *Cowal* and Tayvallich *Mid-Argyll*. There were also records from sites in all mainland areas and also *Islay* and *Mull*. On *Islay* single birds were seen at Ballygrant on 26 Feb and near Port Askaig on 19 and 23 Mar.

Breeding/summer Records in the breeding season were reported from: *Cowal*, *Islay*, *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll* and *Mull*. At the Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* long running CBC site there were 3 Terns. Sightings of juvs were reported from Otter Ferry *Cowal*, and in *Mid-Argyll* from Bridgend, Connel and Tayvallich.

Autumn/winter Sightings were reported from: *Cowal*, *Islay*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull* and *North Argyll* including a bird at Achafolla (Isle of Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 2 Nov.

COMMON KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus* Clamhan-ruadh

AMBER LIST A widespread, but uncommon, breeding bird. The breeding population in some areas appears to be on the decline. There is emigration from some areas in autumn and immigration to others.

During 2015 there were records from all Argyll recording areas except *Jura*. As usual sightings increased noticeably in most recording areas from late summer onwards. A record from Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* of one flying N past the observatory well out to sea on 28 Jul continues a pattern of post-breeding movement at this site. Most records involve one or two birds, but 7 were seen at Grasspoint *Mull* on 19 Aug, 4 were on *Tiree* on 2 Oct and 3 were at Rubh a' t-Suibhain *Mull* on 14 Mar.

Breeding In addition to the ARSG records, a nest with 2 well grown young was found at Eilean Orasaig *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Jun and a family party of 4 birds was at Grasspoint *Mull* on 19 Jul.

Table 36. Outcome of monitored Kestrel territories in Argyll in 2015. NB: includes data from Bute, which is outwith the Argyll Recording area.

Area	Sites occupied	Sites where eggs laid	Sites successful	Sites failed	Outcome unknown	Min number large young	Young per successful site
Colonsay	2prs + 1	2	1	0	1	2	2.0
Kintyre	4	3	3	0	0	6	2.0
Cowal	6	4	2	0	0	7	3.5

Bute	2	1	1	0	0	4	4.0
Total	14 prs+1	10	7	0	1	19	2.17

RED-FOOTED FALCON *Falco vespertinus*

A vagrant: three records; one at Machariorch, Kintyre on 19 August 1990, one at Todd Hill, Kintyre on 12 July 2005 and one near Port Charlotte, Islay on 2 May 2010.

No records.

MERLIN *Falco columbarius* Mèirneal

RED LIST *Breeds very locally on open moorland and bogs: more widely distributed on passage and in winter on low coastal ground and farmland.*

Of around 185 records, around a third were on *Islay*, where birds were seen regularly throughout the year. Around a third of the records also came from *Tiree* where there were records from throughout the year apart from early May to late Aug. There were at least 15 records each from *Mull* and *Colonsay* (incl. *Oronsay*), especially during late Apr – early May when migrating birds were held up by strong northerly winds. Interestingly, a late migrant was also seen at *Ardinamir* (*Luing*) *Mid-Argyll* on 16 May. Elsewhere, there were relatively few records from: *Coll*, *Cowal*, *Jura*, and *Mid-Argyll* but none from *North Argyll*.

Breeding Very few reports received. In *Cowal*, a pair was seen in the early season in the usual area and had 4 large chicks when last seen (ARSG per Roger Broad).

Autumn The first bird back on *Tiree* was on 29 Aug with 1-3 regularly thereafter until the year's end. Fewer were seen on autumn passage at *Machrihanish SBO Kintyre*, which had only reported two sightings, but 1 was seen flying south out to sea from the southern tip of *Gigha Kintyre* on 17 Oct.



Merlin *Islay* (Jim Dickson)

EURASIAN HOBBY *Falco subbuteo* Gormag

A rare visitor: mostly in spring and autumn.

Summer/autumn One (un-aged) was at the *Islandadd* bridge (Add Estuary) *Mid-Argyll* on 1 Jul [John Halliday] and a first-summer (2CY) was at *Dervaig Mull* on 4 Aug [Ewan Miles]. Both records were accepted by the ABRC. (*See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.134-135.*)

GYRFALCON *Falco rusticolus* Seabhag-mhòr-na-seilg

A rare visitor: several records prior to 1950 but only eight recent records, between 1973 and 2015 with last record on Islay in 2010.

No records.

2009 A first-winter (white morph) on *Tiree* at Kilmoluaig then Loch Bhasapol, Balephetrish and Caoles on 24 Mar to 7 Apr [Neil Munn, John Bowler *et al.*]. Record accepted by the BBRC.

PEREGRINE FALCON *Falco peregrinus* Seabhag

A widespread but scarce breeding species in all areas of Argyll, with about 70 occupied territories in 2005. There have been indications of a decline in numbers breeding away from coastal areas. Found throughout the year in most areas.

Over 230 records were received, including records from all recording areas. Around 120 were from *Islay*, followed by 43 from *Tiree*, 24 from *Colonsay* (inc *Oronsay*) and 23 from *Mull*. During the TIARG visit 27 Jun - 4 Jul, only one bird was seen on Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* on 2 Jul. From 13 Aug to the end of the year an adult was regularly seen perched on the top of Connel Bridge *Mid-Argyll/North Argyll*. Attacks were reported on Manx Shearwater, Black Guillemot, Common Tern, Buzzard, Oystercatcher, Lapwing, Curlew, Black-tailed Godwit, Buff-breasted Sandpiper and Blackbird.

Breeding Following the detailed reporting for the National Peregrine Survey in 2014, surveying reverted to a more normal level in 2015.

Table 37. *Peregrines in Argyll and Bute 2015* (ARSG per Roger Broad). NB: includes data for *Bute*, which is outwith the Argyll Recording area.

Area [no. of known sites]	Sites checked	Sites occupied	Sites where eggs laid	Sites successful (large young)	Sites failed	Outcome unknown	Min no. large young	Young per success-ful site
Mull [18]	1	1	1	1	0	0	1+	
Islay & Jura [28]	6	3	3	1	0	2	1+	
Other Islands * [13]	7	4prs + 1 single	3	1	0	1	2+	
Mainland (exc. Cowal) [50]	3	2						
Cowal [26]	11	5	3	2	1	0	3	1..50
Bute [3]	3	3					0	
Total	31	18 pr + 1 single	10	6	1	3	7+	1.33**

* *Lismore, Coll, Tiree, Colonsay & Oronsay.*

** *calculated for the 4 pairs (all areas) where fledged brood size accurately known.*

RED-EYED VIREO *Vireo olivaceus*

A vagrant: two records; singles at Arinagour, Coll on 3 Oct 1992 and at Caoles, Tiree on 9 Oct 2008.

No records.

EURASIAN GOLDEN ORIOLE *Oriolus oriolus*

RED LIST A *rare and irregular passage migrant: mainly in spring.*

No records.

BROWN SHRIKE *Lanius cristatus*

A vagrant: one record; a first-winter at Balephuill, Tiree from 22 Oct to 20 Nov 2011.

No records.

RED-BACKED SHRIKE *Lanius collurio*

RED LIST A *rare passage migrant: 18 records between 1954 and 2014.*

No records.

LESSER GREY SHRIKE *Lanius minor*

A vagrant: three records; Mull in 1974, Coll in 1988 and Tiree in Aug 2008.

No records.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor* Feòladair-glas

A rare passage migrant and winter visitor. Most recent records: Tiree in Nov 2008 and at Slockavullin, Mid-Argyll in Dec 2009.

Autumn One was near the Duncan Ban McIntyre monument, Strath of Orchy (Dalmally) Mid-Argyll on 20 to 26 Oct [Andy Robinson *et al.*]. Record was accepted by the ABRC.

WOODCHAT SHRIKE *Lanius senator*

A vagrant: two records; a juvenile near Port Ellen, Islay on 16 Sep 1996 and a female at Balephuill, Tiree on 19-21 May 2013.

No records.

RED-BILLED CHOUGH *Pyrhocorax pyrrhocorax* Cathag-dhearg-chasach

The Argyll islands hold almost the entire Scottish population. Islay is the stronghold, with smaller numbers on Oronsay and Colonsay. All records away from Islay are appreciated.

Winter/spring On Colonsay most reports were from the Oronsay RSPB Reserve where counts exceeded 10 birds on 6 occasions with a maximum of 14 on 9 Feb. On Islay monthly maxima at Ardnave were 54 in Jan, 60 in Feb and 55 in Mar. Elsewhere, 5 were at Sanaigmore on 4 Mar and 30 were at Kilchoman on 9 Mar.

Breeding/summer A complete island survey on Oronsay and Colonsay found a total of 10 breeding pairs – one pair failed and there were 9 successful nests fledged 16 young. Five non-breeding birds were also found. A group of 8 were at Machrins on 7 Jul. Full details of the breeding population on Islay were not received but at Ardnave 6 pairs fledged 15 young and at Gruinart 2 pairs reared 5 young. Five birds were seen at the Oa on 14 Jun and a flock of 26 non-breeders were at Ardnave on 20 May; other than these the largest summer count was of 30 birds at Ardnave on 9 Aug.

Autumn/winter Records from Colonsay generally referred to flocks in single figures although 10 birds were noted on Oronsay on 29 Oct increasing to a maximum of 20 on 27 Dec. On Islay Ardnave provided the largest flocks with 46 on 27 Oct and 46 on 22 Nov. Elsewhere 10 were at

The Oa on 13 Oct, 4 at Laggan Point on 15 Oct, 10 at Sanaigmore on 18 Oct and 22 were seen heading to roost at Kilchoman on 13 Dec.

EURASIAN MAGPIE *Pica pica* Pioghaid

A local breeder restricted to Cowal. Elsewhere, has been a scarce and sporadic visitor (mainly in spring): in recent years appearing to be becoming more widespread.

Winter/spring Most records came from the breeding areas in *Cowal* with a max. of 10 together in Dunoon in early Jan. A single at Butterbridge (possibly the same bird from Sep 2014) was outwith the usual range in *Cowal* on 20 Feb and still there on 15 Apr. On *Islay* a single report came from RSPB Loch Gruinart on 11 May. In *Kintyre* the failed breeding pair from 2014 remained in the Campbeltown area all year. Singles were at Ronachan on 19 Feb, nearby at Whitehouse on 24 May and a bird reported at Carradale on 20 Mar had apparently been there for over a year. In *Mid-Argyll* singles (perhaps the same bird) were at Kilmichael Glen on 21 Feb, Lochgilphead on 23 and 26 Feb and Cairnbaan on 27 Feb. Also singles were at Dalavich on 15 Mar, Balvicar (Seil) on 20 Apr and Newtown (Inveraray) on 17 Jun. On *Mull* the long staying bird at Tobermory from May 2014 was still present until at least 22 Oct, singles were also noted at Loch Spelve on 18 Apr, Fishnish Bay on 19 Apr, Craignure on 6 May, Haunn on 23 May and Tostary on 12 Jun. Some of these were perhaps wandering individuals reported in several places.

Breeding/summer There was no evidence that the pair in Campbeltown *Kintyre* attempted to breed this year. The single bird in Tobermory *Mull* was seen gathering nesting material on 18 Mar. This, or perhaps another bird, was seen at Aros Park *Mull* on 22 Jul. No breeding or summer reports were received from *Cowal*.

Autumn/winter Outwith the *Cowal* stronghold (where only a single report received) singles were noted in *Mid-Argyll* at Caol Scotnish on 19 Oct and Tayvallich on 25 Dec, on *Mull* at Calgary on 23 Oct (possibly the Tobermory bird) and in *Kintyre* the pair at Campbeltown remained until late Nov at least.

EURASIAN JAY *Garrulus glandarius* Sgraicheap

A widely distributed (but scarce) woodland resident on most of the mainland: rarely reported from the islands. There is some immigration in autumn.

Winter/spring There were frequent reports of 1-2 birds in west *Cowal* in Jan to Mar and 4 at Largiemore on 21 Jan. 'Noisy' birds and visits to peanut feeders were noted during Mar-Apr. Birds were noted as regular in the Dunoon area, with 4 on 9 Jan and 5 on 6 Feb in a Dunoon garden. On *Islay* 1 was at Gruinart on 12 May. In *Kintyre* 2 were at Saddell on 2 Apr and 2 at Cnoc Sturraig (SW Kintyre) on 4 May. In *Mid-Argyll* there were widespread reports from across the area, at 17 sites, mainly of 1 or 2 birds, however 4 were at Ford on 4 Jan and 4 were at Birdfield (Minard) on 1 Feb. There was a significant increase in reports from *Mull* with singles at 8 sites and 4 were in the Tobermory area on 9 Apr.

Breeding/summer There was no direct evidence of breeding activity in this secretive species but birds were noted in *Cowal* at Glen Kin on 4 Jun, a possible pair at Corra Farm on 19 May and 1 at Clachaig on 2 Jun and in *Kintyre* at Loch Luireach (Central Kintyre) on 21 Jun. In *Mid-Argyll* reports were of singles from 10 sites, but 3 were in Cairnbaan on 3 Aug. On *Mull* there were 3 reports of singles.

Autumn/winter In *Cowal* 1-2 birds were regular at Otter Ferry/Corra Farm from 28 Sep to 25 Dec. 1-2 birds were noted elsewhere in west *Cowal*. A single was at Whin Park *Islay* on 18 Sep. In *Mid-Argyll* 1-2 birds were noted at 17 widespread sites. On *Mull* singles were recorded at 5 sites between Sep and Dec: however 5 were noted in the Salen area on 15 Nov. A single at Treshnish (NW Mull) on 14 Oct was the first for that area. In *North Argyll* 1 was at Ardtur

(Appin) on 5 Sep and 1 was at Loch Etive mouth on 11 Nov. On *Tiree* a bird was observed flying in off the sea in misty conditions on 1 Oct and was the first record for the island.

WESTERN JACKDAW *Corvus monedula* Cathag

A resident breeder, common throughout much of mainland Argyll: scarce on Mull and does not breed on Coll or Tiree. Breeding colonies are often located in towns and villages.

Winter/spring Presumably under-recorded with few reports received. On *Coll* 6 were at Arinagour on 8 May; on *Tiree* 15 remained at Loch an Eilein on 1 Jan to 20 Feb with 8 there on 13 Mar; on *Colonsay* 16 were on Oronsay on 18 Mar and 13 were at Port Sgibinis on 25 Apr; in *Cowal* noted as 'present' at Kilbride on 9 Apr and a max of 32 at Kilfinan on 19 May; on *Islay* several reports received with highest counts of 40 at Traigh Ghruineart on 11 May, 50 at Bunnahabhain on 13 May and 40 at Bridgend Woods on 15 May; no reports from *Jura*; in *Kintyre* noted as 'present' at Carskier on 11 May and at Tayinloan on 13 May; in *Mid-Argyll* the highest count was of 16 on Luing on 2 May; on *Mull* highest count of 10 at Ruanaich (Iona) on 20 May; no reports from *North Argyll*.

Breeding/summer On *Colonsay* birds noted as ON at Balnahard Bay on 14 Jun; in *Cowal* noted as 'present' at Gairletter Point on 24 Jul; on *Islay* 50 birds were at the Woollen Mill on 19 Jun, 63 at Kilchoman on 10 Jul and 200 there on 26 Jul and noted as 'breeding' at RSPB Loch Gruinart; in *Mid-Argyll* 100 were at Killinochonoch on 5 Jun and 28 adults/juvs were at Bridgend on 4 Jul; on *Mull* noted as ON at Baile Mor (Iona) on 22 May and *North Argyll* noted as 'present' at Loch Creran on 22 Jul.

Autumn/winter On *Colonsay* 20 were at Uragaig on 26 Sep; in *Cowal* highest count of 10 at Innellan on 28 Dec; on *Islay* highest counts were of 150 at Kilchoman on 13 Aug, 14 at The Oa on 27 Oct, 20 at Esknish on 16 Nov and 30 at RSPB Gruinart reserve on 18 Nov; in *Kintyre* noted as 'present' at 2 sites in Sep; in *Mid-Argyll* noted as 'present' at 4 sites; on *Mull* highest counts of 54 at Caliach Point on 12 Oct and 23 at Ensay Burn mouth on 13 Oct; in *North Argyll* noted as 'present' at North Ledaig on 10 Sep.



Rooks *Islay* (Jim Dickson)

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus* Ròcas

A resident breeder, common throughout much of Argyll, but scarce on Mull and does not breed on: Colonsay, Coll, or Tiree. There can be a post breeding influx of juveniles to some islands, e.g. Mull and Tiree.

Winter/spring Presumably under-recorded with few reports from many areas and no reports from *Coll*, *Colonsay*, *Jura* and *Kintyre*. Elsewhere generally low counts where numbers are given, with highest counts: *Cowal* with 22 at Millhouse on 14 Apr; *Islay* with 40 at Bridgend on 6 Mar and 16 at The Oa on 19 Mar; *Mid-Argyll* with 10 at Dunstaffnage on 12 Feb and 18 at Lochgilphead on 28 Feb; *North Argyll* with 5 at Ardachy (Loch Etive) on 12 Feb and *Tiree* with a single bird, from Nov 2014, remaining until 17 Mar.

Breeding/summer On *Islay* 53 AON at Port Charlotte on 19 Apr, 8 AON at Bridgend on 19 Apr, 50 birds at Lagavulin on 10 May, 40 birds at Traigh Ghruineart on 13 May, 200 birds at the Woollen Mill on 16 Jun and 47 birds at Kilchiaran on 26 Jun. Also 145 AON at RSPB Loch Gruinart; in *Kintyre* only 2 reports of 'present' in May; in *Mid-Argyll* 27 AON at Inverneill on 28 Mar, 50 AON, some with young, and 20 AON on Luìng on 2 May; on *Mull* 50 AON on Iona, otherwise other reports noted as 'present'; in *North Argyll* 40 AON at Achuaran (Lismore) on 11 Apr with 31 and 7 old nests respectively found at Achuaran and Clachan (Lismore) on 28 Nov.

Autumn/winter No reports from *Coll*, *Colonsay*, *Jura*, *Mull* or *Tiree*. In *Cowal* only report of 1 at Gairletter Point on 24 Jul; on *Islay* the highest counts were 70 at Port Charlotte on 8 Sep and 20 at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 17 Nov; in *Kintyre* 2 reports of 'present' in Sep; in *Mid-Argyll* 16 in Lochgilphead on 7 Jul and 17 at Toberonochy (Luìng) on 5 Dec and in *North Argyll* 20 at Clachan (Lismore) on 28 Nov.

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone* Feannag-dhubh

A sedentary resident: mainly in east Cowal and parts of Mid-Argyll, in a variety of mainly low ground habitats. It hybridises readily with Hooded Crow where ranges overlap.

Winter/spring/summer Most reports came from *Cowal*, at 7 sites, with up to 10 birds noted. On *Islay* 1 was with 12 Hooded Crows at Octofad on 7 Mar. In *Mid-Argyll* 1-2 birds were noted from 9 sites.

Autumn/winter In *Cowal* 1-2 birds were noted at 4 sites. In *Mid-Argyll* 1-2 birds were noted at Lochgilphead and in *North Argyll* 1 was at Port Appin on 14 Sep.

HYBRID CROW *Corvus corone x cornix*

Hybrids between Carrion and Hooded Crow are most prevalent where the ranges of the two species overlap. Any records are welcome as they will help to document the change in position of the hybrid zone, which is known to have moved north westwards in the past.

Under recorded, particularly in overlap zone from *Cowal* to *Mid-Argyll*.

Winter/spring The only report received was of 1 with Hooded and Carrion Crows at Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 11 Mar.

Autumn/winter The only report received was of 1 at Machrins *Colonsay* on 25 Sep.

HOODED CROW *Corvus cornix* Feannag-ghlas

A widespread, and very common, resident breeding species.

Winter/spring Larger flocks with 10 or more birds included: *Coll* with 10 at RSPB reserve Coll on 6 May and 10 at Arinagour on 8 May; *Colonsay* with 55 on Oronsay on 28 Apr; *Cowal* with 20 at Knochnafenaig on 14 May; *Islay* with 20 at The Oa on 10 Feb, 23 at Laganvulin on 10 May and 23 at Traigh Ghruineart on 12 May; *Jura* with 15 at Loch nam Breac on 5 Mar; *Tiree* with 10 at Balephuill on 7 May.

Breeding/summer Widely reported from all areas except *Coll*. Nesting birds noted on *Colonsay*, *Mull*, *Luìng* *Mid-Argyll* and 5 pairs at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* and a flock of 28 there on 5 Jun. On *Colonsay* at least 33 Terrs; 2 out of 17 nests failed and a mean brood size (successful nests) = 2.47. A flock on 80 non-breeding birds was at Druim Mor *Colonsay* on 11

Jun, 70 were on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 18 Jun and a pre-roost flock of 50 birds was at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 23 Jun.

Autumn/winter Records came from all areas. Large flocks tended to found on the islands including: 15 at East Loch Fada *Colonsay* on 25 Sep; 50 at Gruline *Mull* on 11 Nov; 40 at Coull Farm on 18 Nov, 20 at Sunderland Farm on 18 Nov and 64 at Monument (The Oa) *Islay* on 25 Nov; and 21 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 12 Dec.

NORTHERN RAVEN *Corvus corax* Fitheach

A common resident breeding species on both the mainland and islands: large flocks may occur, especially in winter.

Winter/spring There were records from all recording areas. Larger flocks exceeding 10 birds included: 10 at RSPB reserve *Coll* on 6 May and 34 at Ben More *Mull* on 8 Jun.

Breeding/summer

Table 38. Outcome of monitored Common Raven territories in Argyll in 2015. NB: the table includes data for Bute, which is outwith the Argyll Recording area.

Area	Sites checked	Sites occupied	Sites where eggs laid	Sites successful	Sites failed	Outcome unknown	Min no. young fledged	Young per successful site
Tiree	11	10	10	3	0	7	7	2.33
Colonsay	22	13	11	8	2	1	27+	3.37+
Islay/Jura	3	3	2	2	0	0	6	3.0
MidArgyll	10	9	4	1	1	2	3	3.0
Kintyre/Knapdale	4	4	4	2	2	0	7	3.5
Bute	23	14*	7	6	0	1	14+	2.33
Total	73	53	38	22	5	11	64+	3.11**

* includes one site occupied by single adult

** calculated for 17 pairs (all areas) where fledged brood size accurately known.

Autumn/winter There were records from all recording areas except *Jura*. Larger flocks exceeding 10 birds included: 23 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 1 Jul, 12 at Hough *Tiree* on 25 Aug, 20 at The Oa *Islay* on 15 Sep, 12 at Benvorlich *Islay* on 29 Oct, 69 at Cluanach *Islay* on 5 Nov, 32 at Lagganulva *Mull* on 7 Nov, and 14 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 12 Dec.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus* Crìonag-bhuidhe

A common resident breeding species: augmented by passage migrants in spring and especially autumn but scarce on Coll and Tiree.

Winter/spring Mainland records were from *Cowal* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (3) and *North Argyll* (2) whilst reports from the islands included: *Colonsay* (1), *Islay* (5), *Jura* (1), *Mull* (1) and *Tiree* (3). Counts included: 3 at Port na Mine (Taynuilt) *North Argyll*, 4 at Bridgend *Islay* on 23 Mar and 7 at Balephuill and Carnan Mor *Tiree* on 22 Mar.

Summer/breeding Sightings were reported from all mainland areas with the exception of *North Argyll* and *Kintyre*. There were records from all the islands including *Jura*. There were widespread reports of singing males including a record from *Coll* on 24 Apr. 4 breeding Ters. were reported from Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*.

Autumn/winter Counts in low single figures were evident from a number of sites across *Cowal*, *Islay*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull* and *Tiree*, with a high count of 30 dispersed in forestry near Cairnbaan

Mid-Argyll on 18 Oct. Some 25 migrant birds were recorded near-daily on Tiree from 10 Sep to 29 Oct.

COMMON FIRECREST *Regulus ignicapilla* Crìonag

A rare migrant/visitor: ten records between 1980 and 2012.

Autumn One, possibly a female, was in a garden near Barcaldine *North Argyll* on 25 Oct [Andy Dale] and one, possibly a male, was at Knock Mull on 2 Nov [David and Sue McDowell]. Both records were accepted by the ABRC.

EURASIAN BLUE TIT *Cyanistes caeruleus* Cailleachag-cheann-ghorm

A widespread and common resident breeder: an infrequent visitor to Coll and Tiree.

Winter/spring Reported from many locations including: *Colonsay* (3), *Cowal* (1), *Islay* (6), *Mull* (5), *Mid-Argyll* (15) and *North Argyll* (5). A count of 80 foraging on the ground in a garden at Tayvallich *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Jan was exceptional. 28 birds were observed exhibiting similar behaviour at the same site on 23 Feb.

Summer/breeding Reported from: *Colonsay* (2), *Cowal* (3), *Islay* (6), *Kintyre* (2), *Mid-Argyll* (24), *Mull* (20) and *North Argyll* (5). At the Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* long running CBC site there were 39 Ters. Breeding was probably widespread but there were only two records of fledged young in: *Mid-Argyll* at Taynish on 8 Jun and Kilmory (Knapdale) on 28 Jun. A late BBS survey at Rhudle (Kilmartin) *Mid-Argyll* on 20 Jun produced a count of 14.

Autumn/winter Reported from: *Cowal* (1), *Islay* (5), *Mid-Argyll* (5), *Mull* (4) and *North Argyll* (3).

GREAT TIT *Parus major* Currac-bhaintighearna

A widespread and common resident breeder: only an infrequent visitor to Coll and Tiree.

Winter/spring Reported from: *Cowal* (3), *Colonsay* (1), *Islay* (10), *Mid-Argyll* (9), *Mull* (3) and *North Argyll* (6). No reports from: *Coll*, *Jura* or *Tiree*. Larger counts were on Lismore *North Argyll* (12) on 8 Feb and in *Mid-Argyll* with 12 at Cairnbaan on 11 Feb and 32 at Tayvallich on 25 Feb.

Summer/breeding Records came from locations in: *Cowal* (5), *Islay* (6), *Kintyre* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (23), *Mull* (32) and *North Argyll* (4). At the Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* long running CBC site there were 14 Ters. Fledged young were noted at Tayvallich *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Jun.

Autumn/winter Reported from: *Colonsay* (1), *Cowal* (1), *Islay* (9), *Kintyre* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (3), *Mull* (5) and *North Argyll* (2). No reports from *Kintyre*. A bird was reported as “carrying food” at Ballygrant *Islay* on 12 Oct. The only count of 5 or more was 14 at Tayvallich *Mid-Argyll* on 28 Dec.

EUROPEAN CRESTED TIT *Lophophanes cristatus* Gulpag-stuic

A vagrant: two records; one near Water of Tulla, North Argyll in November 1991 and one at Tobermory, Mull in Oct to Nov 2002.

No records.

COAL TIT *Periparus ater* Smutag

A widespread and abundant resident breeder: except on Coll and Tiree. Found almost exclusively in woodland: especially conifers.

Winter/spring Reported from: *Cowal* (2), *Islay* (5), *Jura* (2), *Kintyre* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (6), *Mull* (2) and *North Argyll* (5). No reports from *Coll*, *Colonsay* or *Tiree*. Larger counts were 5 at Stonefield (Tarbert) *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Feb and 6 at Bridgend *Islay* on 4 Mar.

Summer/breeding Reported from: *Coll* (2), *Colonsay* (3), *Cowal* (3), *Islay* (5), *Mid-Argyll* (11), *Mull* (18) and *North Argyll* (3). At the Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* long running CBC site there were 10 Ters. There were no reports from *Kintyre*.

Autumn/winter Reported from: *Colonsay* (1), *Islay* (5), *Mull* (6) and *North Argyll* (3). Counts included: 6 at Colonsay House *Colonsay* on 27 Sep, 12 at Lochdon *Mull* on 3 Oct and 6 at Bridgend *Islay* on 28 Oct.

WILLOW TIT *Poecile montanus* Currac-ghiuthais

RED LIST *A vagrant: one record; near Water of Tulla, North Argyll on 1 Jun 1991.*

No records.



Eurasian Skylark *Mid-Argyll* (Jim Dickson)

EURASIAN SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis* Uiseag

RED LIST *A widespread breeding species: common in some areas. Many emigrate in winter, with remaining birds mainly in coastal and low lying localities.*

Winter/spring Reported from sites at *Tiree* (3), *Mull* (4), *Islay* (37), and *Mid-Argyll* (7), as well as at Oronsay *Colonsay*, Kilfinan Bay *Cowal*, Ardnaclach *North Argyll* and Tayinloan *Kintyre*. The largest counts were on *Islay* including: 120 near Coull on 18 Jan with 300 there on 28 Feb, 80 at Mulindry on 28 Jan, 150 at Coullabus on 17 Feb, 410 at Sunderland Farm on 20 Feb, 110 at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 20 Feb and 200 at Ballinaby on 5 Mar. Elsewhere there were 80 at Crossapol *Tiree* on 16 Mar, 10 at Loch Ba *Mull* on 13 Mar, 50 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 27 Feb, 29 at Drimvore *Mid-Argyll* on 4 Mar, 55 on Luing *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Mar and 47 at Crear, Knapdale *Mid-Argyll* on 16 Mar, with 35 nearby at Keppoch, Knapdale *Mid-Argyll* on the same date.

Summer/breeding Reported from sites at: *Tiree* (4), *Coll* (7), *Mull* (28) including birds singing on Staffa, *Colonsay* (5), *Islay* (29), *Jura* (1), *North Argyll* (3), *Mid-Argyll* (16), *Kintyre* (5), and

Cowal (2). Counts included: 40 at An Fhaodhail *Tiree* on 7 May, 23 at Bunnahabainn *Islay* on 13 May, 30 at Inch Kenneth *Mull* on 27 Jun and at least 4 males holding territories on Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* at the end of Jun (TIARG).

Autumn/winter Reported from sites at: *Tiree* (12), *Coll* (2), *Mull* (3), *Colonsay* (5), *Islay* (11), and *Kintyre* (1). Higher counts included: 20 at Baugh *Tiree* on 21 Sep, 50 at Strath Farm, the Laggan *Kintyre* on 2 Oct and 50 at Loch Gorm *Islay* on 22 Nov.

SHORE LARK (HORNED LARK) *Eremophila alpestris*

A vagrant: one record of three birds; on Islay on 18 to 19 Oct 1976.

No records.

GREATER SHORT-TOED LARK *Calandrella brachydactyla*

A vagrant: three records; one on Tiree in Aug 2008, another Tiree in Oct 2010 and one on Oronsay, Colonsay in Oct 2011.

No records.

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia* Gobhlan-gainmhich

AMBER LIST *A summer visitor: localised breeding species and passage migrant. All breeding records required.*

Spring The first bird was at Dervaig *Mull* on 21 Mar followed by 2 at Loch Leathan *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Mar. Birds were reported from *Islay* on 8 Apr, *North Argyll* and *Tiree* on 11 Apr, and *Kintyre* on 14 Apr. The first large flock, 30 birds, was at Loch Peallach *Mull* on 12 Apr.

Breeding/summer More than 50 pairs nested at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* with a further 35 pairs at 7 other sites on *Tiree*. Nine AOB were found at Kiloran Dunes *Colonsay*. No other colony counts were reported but 34 birds were at Bunnahabhainn *Islay* on 13 May, 22 at Loch Beg *Mull* on 14 May, 60 were foraging by the shore at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 29 May, and 40 were at Cnoc Iolairean *Islay* on 4 Jul.

Autumn On *Tiree*, up to 170 were seen at Loch a'Phuill and up to 35 at Loch an Eilein and Loch Bhasapol during Aug. Numbers quickly declined in Sep. Ten birds were at Loch Ba *Mull* on 7 Sep, 2 at Port Charlotte *Islay* also on 7 Sep, and the last 4 birds were seen at Balevullin *Tiree* on 25 Sep.

BARN SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica* Gobhlan-gaoith

A widespread, common, summer visitor and passage migrant.

Spring The first arrival, two weeks earlier than last year, was at The Oa *Islay* on 17 Mar but the main arrival only commenced on 5 Apr when one was at Fidden *Mull*. Birds reached Ardrishaig *Mid-Argyll* on 6 Apr, Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 7 Apr, Kilbride Island (Loch Fyne) *Cowal* on 9 Apr, and Sorobaidh Bay *Tiree* on 10 Apr. Reports were widespread from 16 Apr. A northward coastal passage of 160 birds in 3 hours was noted at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 8 May. Several flocks of c50 birds were noted on *Islay* in early May. Other larger flocks included 54 at Loch Beg *Mull* on 12 May, 25 at Kiloran *Colonsay* on 17 May, 18 at Ruanaich (Iona) *Mull* on 20 May, 40 on Kerrera *Mid-Argyll* on 23 May, and 50 at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 26 May.

Breeding/summer Breeding was confirmed from *Cowal*, *Colonsay*, *Islay*, *Kintyre*, *Mull*, *North Argyll*, and *Tiree* with the first fledglings noted at Balephuill *Tiree* on 28 Jun. Breeding continued late in the season with young still in the nest at Cornaig *Tiree* on 24 Sep and at Treshnish *Mull* on 26 Sep.

Autumn Post-breeding flocks started to build in Aug with: 55 at Kilchoman *Islay* on 17 Aug, 50 at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 25 Aug, 133 at Port Charlotte *Islay* on 7 Sep, 50 at Balvicar

Lagoons *Mid-Argyll* on 8 Sep, 60 at Portnahaven *Islay* on 10 Sep, and 120 at Balevullin *Tiree* on 21 Sep. Good numbers were still being reported in Oct with 50 at Mulindry *Islay* on 3 Oct and 35 at The Reef *Tiree* on 8 Oct. Other late birds were reported from *Cowal, Islay, Kintyre, Mid-Argyll, Mull*, and *Tiree* before the final bird was seen at Gartmain (Loch Indaal) *Islay* on 23 Nov.

COMMON HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbicum* Gobhlan-taighe

AMBER LIST A *common summer visitor on the mainland: less numerous on the islands with only one recently recorded breeding attempt on Tiree.*

Spring The first arrival was at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 25 Mar followed by 1 at Scarinish *Tiree* on 7 Apr. Two were at The Oa *Islay* on 8 Apr, 1 at Minard *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Apr, 1 near Portavadie *Cowal* on 15 Apr, and 2 at Treshnish *Mull* on 16 Apr, after which reports became widespread. The largest flocks reported were 12 at Loch Beg *Mull* on 12 May and 13 at Ederline Farm *Mid-Argyll* on 24 May.

Breeding/summer Breeding was reported from *Cowal, Islay, Mid-Argyll, Mull*, and, for the first time, *Tiree*, where 2 adults were seen with 2 fledged young at Meningie on 5 Sep.

Autumn A flock of 15 flew SE over Cairnbaan *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Aug, 20 juveniles were at Calgary *Mull* on 6 Sep after which small numbers were reported from *Islay, Mid-Argyll, Mull* and *Tiree*. The last birds were reported on 29 Sep: 5 at Largiemore *Cowal* and 2 at Barnakill *Mid-Argyll*.

RED-RUMPED SWALLOW *Cecropis daurica*

A vagrant: two records; one at Loch Tuath, Mull on 5 Jul 2011 and one at Ceann a' Mhara, Tiree on 20 May 2014.

No records.

LONG-TAILED TIT *Aegithalos caudatus* Ciochan

A widespread and fairly common resident: scarce on Colonsay and a rare visitor to Coll and Tiree.

Winter/spring Reported from: *Cowal* (1), *Islay* (2), *Jura* (2), *Mid-Argyll* (4), and *Mull* (3) and *North Argyll* (2). No reports from *Colonsay, Coll, Kintyre* or *Tiree*. Counts included: 11 at Killail (Otter Ferry) *Cowal* on 20 Jan, 14 at Cairnbaan *Mid-Argyll* on 21 Jan and 15 at Lochdon *Mull* on 4 Feb.

Summer/breeding Reported from: *Colonsay* (1), *Cowal* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (5) and *Mull* (2). At the Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* long running CBC site there was 1 Ter. Probable breeding was indicated at Colonsay House *Colonsay* on 21 May.

Autumn/winter Reported from: *Cowal* (3), *Islay* (4), *Mid-Argyll* (6) and *Mull* (8) and *North Argyll* (1). Reported numbers were generally low but counts of 8 or more included: at Glen Aros *Mull* 9 on 6 Oct, at Otter Ferry *Cowal* 11 on 16 Oct and 10 on 12 Dec, 12 at Lochdon *Mull* on 3 Nov and at Moine Mhor (Kilmartin), *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Nov.

GREENISH WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

A vagrant: two records; one trapped on 27 May 1983 at the Mull of Kintyre lighthouse, later taken into care and died, and one trapped at Sanda, Kintyre on 31 Jul 1987.

No records.

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER *Phylloscopus inornatus* Ceileiriche-buidhe
A rare passage migrant: at least 37 records between 1954 and 2014, the majority on Tiree. A record 12 or 13 individuals were recorded in 2013.

Autumn Seven were recorded on *Tiree* between 16 Sep (earliest Argyll record) and 1 Nov, with singles at Balephuill on 16-17 Sep, 19-20 Sep, 20-21 Sep, 30 Sep and 1 Nov. Singles were at Balemartine on 19-20 Sep and at Carnan Mor on 20 Sep [John Bowler]. On *Islay* one was at Ballygrant on 30 Sep [Gary Turnbull] and one was at Kinnabus (The Oa) on 14 Oct [David Wood]. All nine records were accepted by the ABRC.

WESTERN BONELLI'S WARBLER *Phylloscopus bonelli*

A vagrant: one record; at Carnan Mor, Tiree on 8 Sep 2006 and confirmed as a Western.

No records.

BONELLI'S WARBLER (EASTERN or WESTERN) *Phylloscopus bonelli* or *P. orientalis*

A vagrant: one record; a singing male on Islay in May 1976, was not specifically assigned to either Western or Eastern Bonelli's Warbler.

No records.

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* Ceileiriche-coille

RED LIST *A scarce but widely distributed summer visitor to mature broadleaved woodlands. Infrequent on Islay and Jura and only occurs as a rare passage migrant on Coll and Tiree.*

Spring/breeding First arrivals were singles noted at Aros Park Mull on 18 Apr, at Bellanoch Mid-Argyll on 19 Apr, at Rhudle Glen Mid-Argyll on 24 Apr, at Loch Frisa Mull on 26 Apr, at Beinn Bheag (Loch Etive) North Argyll on 27 Apr and at Loch Barnluasgan Mid-Argyll on 30 Apr. Thereafter into May and Jun there were several reports of singing birds mainly from sites in Mid-Argyll (14) followed by Mull (11), North Argyll (6), Islay (2) and from Cowal (1). Sites with more than 2 pairs were at: Quinish Mull with 3 Ters on 4 May, Glen Nant Mid-Argyll with 10 Ters on a 2.5 mile walk on 25 May and Bellanoch Mid-Argyll with 4 Ters on 3 Jun. At the Taynish NNR Mid-Argyll long running CBC site there were 5 Ters.

Summer/autumn The last summer reports were of birds singing at Tobermory Mull on 22 Jun and at Taynish Mid-Argyll on 25 Jun, then no further confirmed reports.

COMMON CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita* Caifean

A summer visitor and local breeding species: occasionally recorded in winter. More frequent on passage on some of the islands.

Spring/breeding Early birds were noted at Barguilean Farm (nr Taynuilt) Mid-Argyll on 14 Mar, 1 at Dunoon Cowal on 17 Mar and at Kinnabus (The Oa) Islay on 18 Mar with a gap before the next 1 at Kilmory Loch (Lochgilphead) Mid-Argyll on 27 Mar, then 2 at Auchagoyle Bay (Minard) Mid-Argyll on 2 Apr. Thereafter arrivals were more widespread and numerous, and from Apr to the end of Jul, singing males and territorial birds were widely reported from sites in Coll (1), Tiree (6) including 1 pair that raised 2 young, Colonsay (6), Cowal (5), Islay (3), Kintyre (2), Mid-Argyll (11), Mull (10) and North Argyll (3). No reports were received from Jura. At the Taynish NNR Mid-Argyll long running CBC site there were 2 Ters. The number of sites however was generally much reduced from the previous year.

Autumn/winter Scarce in autumn with 12 records in Sep from Tiree and 20 records there in Oct including 3 together at Sorobaidh Bay Creek on 3 Oct. Only one report elsewhere in Oct: 1 at Lower Killeyan (The Oa) Islay on 15 Oct and one report in Nov: 1 on Oronsay Colonsay on 22 Nov.

Birds showing features of the 'Scandinavian' race *abietinus* were noted on *Tiree* at Balephuill on 2- 4 and 7-10 Nov, The Glebe on 3-5 Nov and at Sorobaidh Bay on 14 Nov.

'SIBERIAN' CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*

A rare visitor: an eastern race of Chiffchaff, still regarded as a sub-species of Common Chiffchaff, rather than a distinct separate species. Rare in Argyll, although small numbers of this race occur during late autumn in Scotland.

Autumn/winter Singles were seen at Balephuill *Tiree* on 7 Oct, 17 Nov and 22 Nov.

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus* Ceileiriche-giuthais

AMBER LIST A **widespread and abundant summer visitor.**

Spring/breeding The first arrivals were a few days later than average, with the first single at Gobagrennan (nr Campbeltown) *Kintyre* on 8 Apr followed by 1 at Loch Beg *Mull* on 9 Apr, 1 at Kinnabus (The Oa) *Islay* on 9 Apr and 3 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 9 Apr. Thereafter there was a widespread arrival from 10 Apr, with birds being noted as 'singing everywhere' on *Islay*. Elsewhere birds were noted in *Mid-Argyll* from 10 Apr, *North Argyll* from 11 Apr and on *Tiree* from 16 Apr. During May to Jun, breeding was widespread and numerous with birds reported from sites in: *Coll* (5), *Colonsay* (9), *Cowal* (10), *Islay* (37), *Jura* (2), *Kintyre* (8), *Mid-Argyll* (61), *Mull* (54), *North Argyll* (10), and *Tiree* (5). At the Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* long running CBC site there were 89 Ters. A brood of 6 were ringed on *Colonsay* on 10 Jun, young being fed at the nest at Balvicar (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Jun whilst 21 recently fledged juvs were counted and prs were feeding juvs at Carnan Mor (Balephuill) *Tiree* on 31 Jul.

A bird at Bellanoch *Mid-Argyll* on 27 May was assigned to the 'Scandinavian' race *acredula* based on plumage and recordings of its distinctive song.

Autumn A late singing bird was at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 16 Aug. 1 was on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 22 Aug, 1 was at Quinish *Mull* on 24 Aug, 1 was at Vaul *Tiree* on 29 Aug with 4 there on 18 Sep, 2 were at Balevullin *Tiree* on 31 Aug, up to 5 were at Balephuill *Tiree* 1-30 Sep with 2 there on 1-7 Oct, 1 was at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 18 Sep, 1 was at Balinoe *Tiree* on 19 Sep, 2 were at Treshnish *Mull* on 1 Oct and 1 was at Ensay Burn *Mull* on 1 Oct.



Eurasian Blackcap *Mid-Argyll* (Jim Dickson)

EURASIAN BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla* Ceann-dubh

A scarce but increasing summer visitor and regular passage migrant especially in autumn: an increasing number winter in Argyll.

Winter Three were reported: 2 at Tobermory *Mull* on 2 Jan, 1 in Dunoon *Cowal* on 2-3 Feb and 1 at Glen Egedale *Islay* on 20 Mar may have been an early arrival.

Spring/breeding The first arrival/migrant was a male at Balephuill, *Tiree* on 9 Apr followed by 1 at Cairnbaan *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Apr, 1 at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Apr, 1 at Ensay Burn *Mull* on 15 Apr followed by a more widespread arrival from 16 Apr. From late Apr until the end of Jul birds were reported from sites in *Coll* (4), *Colonsay* (3 sites 12 Ters.), *Cowal* (5), *Islay* (14), *Kintyre* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (25), *Mull* (24), *North Argyll* (4) and *Tiree* (7). At the Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* long running CBC site there were 22 Ters. (long term average = 6 Ters.). No reports were received from *Jura*. For *Tiree* reports were of migrant birds only.

Autumn There was only one report in Aug: 1 at Lower Killeyan (The Oa) *Islay* on 4 Aug. On *Tiree* migrants were noted from the 19 Sep with 1 at Balephuill, with 2 more there to 1 Oct then 6 on 3-6 Oct, 2 on 8-14 Oct, 3 on 28 Oct, 1 on 6 Nov, 2 on 13 Nov and finally 1 there on 22 Nov. Elsewhere on *Tiree* singles were noted at Vaul on 1 Oct, Hough on 2 Oct, Cornaigbeg on 7 Oct, The Glebe on 27 Oct, Milton on 30 Oct and Sorobaidh Bay creek on 31 Oct. On *Colonsay* 1 was at Colonsay House woods on 17 Oct. On *Islay* 1 was at Kinnabus (The Oa) on 29 Oct, 1 at Gruinart Farm on 30 Oct and 1 at Bridgend Woods on 31 Oct. In *Kintyre* 1 was at West Coast Salmon (Rhunahaorine) on 31 Oct, and on *Mull* 1 was in Tobermory on 13 Nov.

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin* Ceileiriche-garaidh

A scarce but increasing summer visitor: breeding in woodland and scrub habitats.

Spring/breeding First arrival was a singing male at Kilmartin *Mid-Argyll* on 21 Apr, a few days earlier than average, then 1 at Dalintober (Loch Creran) *North Argyll* on 1 May, 1 at Lakefield farm (Taynuilt) *Mid-Argyll* on 3 May, 1 at North Shian *North Argyll* on 9 May, 1 at Loch Feochan *Mid-Argyll* on 9 May, 1 at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 10 May, 2 at RSPB Loch

Gruinart reserve *Islay* on 12 May, 2 at the head of Loch Creran *North Argyll* on 13 May, 1 at Bridgend Woods *Islay* on 14 May, 1 at Tullochgorm *Mid-Argyll* on 14 May and singles on *Tiree* at Carnan Mor on 5 Jun and at The Glebe on 9 Jun. Singing birds were noted between 21 Apr and 14 Jun from sites in: *Cowal* (1), *Islay* (2), *Mid-Argyll* (11), and *North Argyll* (2). At the Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* long running CBC site there were 11 Ters. (long term average = 3 Ters.). No reports were received from *Coll*, *Colonsay*, *Jura*, *Kintyre* or *Mull*. At Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* a pr was seen carrying food to young on 25 Jun.

Autumn The only report was of 1 at Balephuill *Tiree* on 15 and 17 Sep.

BARRED WARBLER *Sylvia nisoria*

A rare passage migrant: sixteen records: all have been in autumn and the majority on Tiree.

Autumn A juvenile-first-winter was at Balephuill *Tiree* on 6-7 Sep [John Bowler]. Record was accepted by the ABRC.

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca* Gealan-coille Beag

A rare/scarcely passage migrant in both spring and autumn: most recent records have been from the islands.

Autumn One was seen and photographed at Balephuill *Tiree* on 3-4 Oct [John Bowler, Jim Dickson].

'SIBERIAN' LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca blythi*

Recently reinstated as a race and not currently assessed. DNA analysis can be used to separate from the Central Asian race S. c. halimodendri. One showing characteristics of this race was at Balephuill Tiree in Oct 2014.

No records.

COMMON WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis* Gealan-coille

A summer visitor with numbers fluctuating from year to year: breeding is most widespread in low lying areas, particularly in coastal scrub.

Spring/breeding The first arrival was of 1 at Ensay burn mouth *Mull* on 22 Apr, followed by 2 at Tobermory *Mull* on 23 Apr, with no more noted until a singing male at Crinan Ferry *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Apr, 1 at Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 30 Apr, singles at Cullipool and Toberonochy (Luig) *Mid-Argyll* on 2 May, 5 singing males at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 2 May, 1 at Danna (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 3 May, 1 at Balephuill *Tiree* on 6 May and 1 at Aird (Loch Beag) *Mid-Argyll* on 6 May. Thereafter arrivals were more numerous and widespread with birds recorded through to end of Jul from sites in: *Coll* (1), *Colonsay* (39 Ters. with 1 Ter. on Oronsay), *Cowal* (3), *Islay* (22 island sites with 21 Ters. at RSPB Loch Gruinart), *Kintyre* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (27), and *Mull* (18). At the Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* long running CBC site there were 8 Ters. No reports were received from *Jura* or *North Argyll*.

Autumn Reports of up to 12 birds during Aug to 17 Sep from breeding areas at sites in: *Coll* (1), *Colonsay* (1), *Islay* (4) *Mid-Argyll* (2) and *Mull* (2). A single migrant was at Balephuill *Tiree* on 22 Sep.

SUBALPINE WARBLER *Sylvia cantillans*

A vagrant: one record; a bird of the 'eastern race' S. c. albistriata was at Balephuill, Tiree on 28 May 2012.

No records.

COMMON GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia* Ceileiriche-leumnac
RED LIST *A summer visitor: breeding locally in open habitats with dense ground vegetation, including young conifer plantations. Numbers fluctuate from year to year.*

Spring/breeding The first arrival was a singing male at Cnoc Amata (Mulindry) *Islay* on 13 Apr followed by singles at Portnahaven *Islay* on 16 Apr, at the Moine Mhor and Feamoch *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Apr, at Ormsary *Mid-Argyll* on 20 Apr, at Loch Tralaig *Mid-Argyll* on 20 Apr, at Glenastle (The Oa) *Islay* on 20 Apr, at Beinn Mhor (The Oa) *Islay* on 21 Apr and 3 singing males were at Cairnbaan *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Apr. Thereafter reports became more numerous and widespread. Singing birds were at sites in: *Colonsay* (13 Ters.) *Cowal* (1), *Islay* (13 island sites with 6 Ters. at RSPB Loch Gruinart), *Mid-Argyll* (19), *Mull* (5), and *Tiree* (2) including a fledged juv at Balephuill on 18 Jul. No reports were received from *Coll*, *Jura*, *Kintyre* or *North Argyll*. At the Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* there were 0 Ters. (long term average = 3 Ters.).

Autumn The only one report was of 1 on Kerrera *Mid-Argyll* on 15 Aug.

BOOTED WARBLER *Iduna caligata*

A vagrant: two records; one at Balemartine, Tiree on 20 Sep 1998 and one at Balephetrish, Tiree on 31 Aug to 2 Sep 2006.

No records.

ICTERINE WARBLER *Hippolais icterina*

A rare passage migrant: four records; on Islay 28 Aug 1976; at Taynuilt in Jun 1984; on Tiree in Jun 1987 and on Islay on 4 to 5 Sep 1993.

No records.

MELODIOUS WARBLER *Hippolais polyglotta*

A vagrant: two records; one at Totronald, Coll on 8 Jun 2012 and one at The Glebe, Scarinish, Tiree on 18 Sep to 4 Oct 2014.

No records.

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* Uiseag-oidhche

A locally common summer visitor: breeding in suitable habitats.

Spring/breeding The first arrival was a single at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 21 Apr, then 1 at Bellanoch *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Apr, 1 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 23 Apr, 1 at Balephuill *Tiree* on 24 Apr. There were fewer arrivals until 1 May when they became more numerous and widespread, with singing males at sites in *Coll* (5), *Colonsay* (widespread), *Islay* (31), *Kintyre* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (18), *Mull* (11), *North Argyll* (1) and *Tiree* (6). At the Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* long running CBC site there were 3 Ters. (long term average = 8 Ters.). No reports were received from *Cowal* or *Jura*. Birds were numerous at many sites, with a count of 10 singing males at Loch Bhassapol *Tiree* on 18 Jun. Birds were observed feeding young from 25 Jun.

Autumn Birds were noted in several areas until late Aug, then the only reports received came from *Tiree*, with 4 juvs at Balephuill on 13 Sep, up to 3 there until 21 Sep, and the last report was of 1 at Sorobaiddh Bay on 26 Sep.

BLYTH'S REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus dumetorum*

A vagrant: two records; one at Carnan Mor, Tiree on 3 Jun 2008 and one at Balephuill, Tiree in Sep 2011.

No records.

MARSH WARBLER *Acrocephalus palustris*

RED LIST A rare passage migrant: three records; one at Balephuill, Tiree on 8-10 Jun 2007, one at Carnan Mor, Tiree on 28 May 2012 and one at Mannal, Tiree on 28 May 2014.

See note under Eurasian Reed Warbler below.

No records.

EURASIAN REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

A rare visitor in spring and summer: nine records; seven from the islands and two from Aros Moss, Kintyre.

Spring One was at Balephuill Tiree on 15 May [John Bowler]. Record was accepted by the ABRC.

Summer/autumn A bird trapped at Aros Moss Kintyre on 9 Jul was identified as a Eurasian Reed Warbler, but with some features of Marsh Warbler noted later, it was then re-assessed by the SBRC and they concluded that it was likely a Marsh Warbler. As a positive identification was lacking, it was finally treated as an unstreaked *Acrocephalus* Eurasian Reed/Marsh Warbler.

CEDAR WAXWING *Bombycilla cedrorum*

A vagrant: One record; a juvenile was at Vaul, Tiree on 21 to 29 Sep 2013. Only two previous UK records: Noss, Shetland on 25-26 Jun 1985 and in Nottingham from 20 Feb to 18 Mar 1996.

Spring An adult male was seen briefly and photographed at The Glebe (Scarinish) Tiree on 10 Jun [Keith Gillon]. Record was accepted by the BBRC.

A remarkable record for Tiree so soon after the previous record there. However 2015 saw a small influx to the UK and Ireland with single birds on the Scilly Isles on 2-20 Jun, Co. Claire, Ireland on 3-4 Jun and one found dead in Pembrokeshire, Wales on 27 Jun.

BOHEMIAN WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulous* Canarach-dearg

An irruptive winter visitor in varying numbers: not seen every year but some large influxes have occurred recently.

Winter/spring One was found freshly dead in a garden at Bowmore Islay on 22 Mar.

Autumn/winter Two were seen in Bowmore Islay on 13 Nov, 1 was seen with a flock of Fieldfares and Redwings at Balephuill Tiree on 21 Nov and a group of 7 were seen at Bowmore Islay on 22 Dec.

EURASIAN NUTHATCH *Sitta europaea*

A rare but increasing visitor: currently spreading north in Scotland. All records required please.

Winter/spring Up to 2 birds were at Ardkinglass House and gardens Cowal on 15 Jan and 25 May. Singles were reported at Glencruitten House (Oban) Mid-Argyll on 1-6 Feb, at Drimfern Mid-Argyll on 27 Mar and at Glen Forsa (Pennygowan) Mull on 19 Apr.

Summer/breeding There were no confirmed reports of breeding.

Autumn/winter One was at Pennyghael Mull on 8 Jul and 21 Sep. Singles were reported at Carsaig House Mid-Argyll on 26 Jul, at Keillmore Mid-Argyll on 17 Aug, at feeders at Arrochar (Snackshack) Cowal on 7 Sep and in woodland at Ormsary Mid-Argyll on 26 Oct.

EURASIAN TREECREEPER *Certhia familiaris* Snaigear

A widespread and fairly common resident: rare on Tiree and Coll.

Winter The first record of the year was one at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 16 Jan. Other winter records were at sites in *Cowal* (1), *Islay* (5), *Kintyre* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (1) *Mull* (1) and *North Argyll* (2). Small groups of three birds were seen on *Islay* at Gruinart on 26 Mar and Ballygrant on 30 Mar.

Spring/breeding A pair noted at Colonsay House *Colonsay* on 25 Apr suggested that a breeding territory was possibly being established. There were two records of fledged young at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 21 May and Aros Park *Mull* on 31 May where 5 birds were seen together. A family of 5 birds were also seen at Laphroaig *Islay* on 2 Jun indicating successful breeding. Other records from suitable habitat suggest probable breeding and these were from sites in *Islay* (6), *Kintyre* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (7), *Mull* (10) and *North Argyll* (3). An unexpected sighting of a single bird feeding on barn walls was reported from Balephuill *Tiree* on 29 Jun. There were no records from *Coll* or *Jura*.

Autumn/winter Reported from sites in: *Colonsay* (1), *Islay* (6), *Mid-Argyll* (2) and *Mull* (4) and *North Argyll* (1).

WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes* Dreathann-donn

A common resident breeder in all areas: numbers often decline following hard winters; additional birds winter on the islands.

Birds were probably widespread and numerous in all recording areas, although not always reported for all areas throughout the year.

Breeding 36 pairs were reported as nesting in Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. Records of fledged young included: Balvicar (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Jun, on *Tiree* at Balephuill on 24 Jun and Carnan Mor in Jul and Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 10 Jul.



Wren *Mid-Argyll* (Jim Dickson)

COMMON STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris* Druid

RED LIST A *common resident on: Coll, Islay, part of Kintyre, and Tiree: less common on most of the mainland. Flocks containing juveniles appear in many parts in late summer and numbers are boosted by immigration in winter from north-west Europe.*

Winter Reported from all areas except *Coll*. Larger flocks (100 or over) were widespread but mainly on the islands. On *Tiree* there were 600 at Loch an Eilein on 19 Jan and 2 Feb, 350 at The Reef on 27 Jan, followed by 950 at Balephetrish Bay on 19 Feb. On *Colonsay* the Oronsay flock was 350 on 24 Jan. Smaller numbers were evident on *Islay* with the flock at Kilchoman reaching 160 on 6 Mar. At High Ballevain (Campbeltown) *Kintyre* 100 on 7 Feb was the biggest mainland flock reported.

Breeding From Apr to Jun breeding birds were widely reported from all areas. An adult feeding young was reported at Barcaldine *North-Argyll* on 10 May, and the first reported fledglings were on 18 May at Port Mor *Colonsay*. The mass fledging on *Tiree* started a little later on 31 May. From early Jul, flocks of adults with juveniles built up widely with the largest aggregations on *Islay* with 200 at Bruichladdich and 200 at Loch Gruinart on 4 Jul, and 265 at The Reef *Tiree* on 15 Jul.

Autumn/winter Moderate flocks of up to 100 birds in autumn were recorded from all areas except *Coll* and *Jura*. From Aug onwards some substantial flocks built up, probably including migrant birds, with some notable examples: 340 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 11 Oct, on *Islay* 450 at Loch Gorm on 14 Sep and 2,000 at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 17 Nov and in *Kintyre* 400 were at Machrihanish SBO and 700 at the Laggan during Aug. Numbers on *Tiree* were substantial too, building up at Ruaig from 500 on 17 Aug to 1,600 on 21 Sep. *Tiree* numbers remained high through to the end of the year with 1,000 at Loch an Eilein on 8 Dec.



Common Starlings *Tiree* (Jim Dickson)

ROSY STARLING (ROSE-COLOURED STARLING) *Sternia bergii* Druid-dhear
A rare summer and autumn visitor: has occurred more frequently in recent years.

Autumn An adult, probably a female, was in the Machir Bay/Kilchoman area *Islay* on 20 Aug to 15 Oct [Richard Scott *et al.*]. Record was accepted by the ABRC.

WHITE-THROATED DIPPER *Cinclus cinclus* Gobha –uisge

AMBER LIST A *widespread resident breeder but scarce on Islay and generally absent from: Coll, Colonsay and Tiree.*

Winter/spring 6 were at Knock Mull on 9 Jan, 3 were at Barnlongart House *Kintyre* on 8 Feb, reports of 1-2 birds from (6 sites) in *Mid-Argyll* and *Cowal*, (3 sites) on *Mull* and (2 sites) on *Islay* and *North Argyll*.

Breeding Birds were present in suitable habitat: on *Islay* at Lower Killeyan (The Oa), where a family group of 5 on 20 May, Bridgend to Woollen Mill (River Sorn) and the Sound of Islay. Also on *Mull* (4 sites), in *Mid-Argyll* (7 sites) and *North Argyll* and *Cowal* (2 sites).

Autumn/winter Most reports were of single birds spread throughout Argyll, with sightings of 5 from Knockrome *Jura* on 16 Oct, 3 at Knock *Mull* on 18 Oct and singles present Connel *Mid-Argyll* in Sep-Nov.

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus* Dubh-chreige

RED LIST A *summer visitor; breeding very locally in upland areas but declining in numbers: more widespread, though still very scarce, on migration.*

Spring Only 2 reports: a male at Gobagrennan *Kintyre* on 13 Apr and 2 (m +f) were at Tom a' Chaorainn (Eredine) *Mid-Argyll* on 1 May.

Breeding/summer Birds were reported from 3 sites: 1 at Balliemore (Kerrera) *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Jun, a breeding pair at Allt Coire an t-Sith *Cowal* on 19 Jul and 1 at Ardtun *Mull* on 19 Aug. Most Argyll breeding pairs are likely to be in highland glens of *North Argyll* and any future records would be valuable to monitor this decreasing breeding species.

Autumn Singles were at Glen Cannel *Mull* on 14 Sep and at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 10 Oct.

COMMON BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula* Lon-dubh

A widespread breeding species: common and locally abundant resident. There is immigration in winter and noticeable autumn passage in some years with some remaining during winter.

Winter/spring In late winter birds were widely reported in small numbers from all areas. Counts of 10 or more included: 20 at Coalyard (Gortan) *Islay* on 16 Jan and 12 at Loch Clach a' Bhuaile *Islay* 6 Mar.

Summer/breeding Birds were noted breeding from all areas of Argyll. The first bird reported singing was in Feb with the first chicks noted in Apr and fledged young in May. Counts of 10 or more came from 3 sites on *Islay* with a max of 17 at Gruinart on 11 May and 2 sites on *Mull* with a max of 12 on Iona on 20 May.

Autumn/winter Throughout this period birds were widely reported in small numbers. Groups of 10 or more were only reported as follows: 30 (all males) in a garden near Port Charlotte *Islay* on 30 Oct, 25 at Balephuill *Tiree* on 11 Nov and 12 at Loch Finlaggan *Islay* on 21 Dec.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris* Liath-thruisg

RED LIST A *passage migrant and winter visitor: abundant in autumn but relatively few remain in winter or pass through in spring*

Winter/spring Fewer large flocks were noted in this period than in 2014, with 3 reports of 50 or more (cf 9 in 2014) included: 50 at Grainel *Islay* on 16 Jan, 50 at Balole *Islay* on 27 Jan and 60 at Sanaigmore *Islay* 4 Mar. In spring, only low numbers were reported, usually less than 10, with the last report of 6 at Machrins *Colonsay* on 4 Apr.

Autumn/winter The first reports were 6 birds at Rhunahaorine *Kintyre* and unspecified numbers at Drimfern *Mid-Argyll* both on 13 Oct. There were 23 reports from around Argyll of 100 or more birds between 16 Oct and 19 Nov. Numbers remained low until a large arrival in late Oct, then 500 at Ensay Burn mouth *Mull* on 17 Oct, 600 at Kinnabus (The Oa) *Islay*, 2,500 at the Laggan *Kintyre*, 400 at Barsloisnoch *Mid-Argyll* all on 29 Oct, 615 on *Tiree* on 30 Oct, 800 at the Laggan *Kintyre* on 1 Nov, 200 Erasiad *Islay* on 3 Nov, 800 at Campbeltown *Kintyre* on 7 Nov, 140 at Colachla (nr Millhouse) *Cowal*, 1,000 at Drumlemble *Kintyre* and 800 at the Laggan *Kintyre* all on 11 Nov. Some of these flocks contained other thrush species, particularly Redwings.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos* Smeòrach

RED LIST A *widespread and common resident breeding species with some locally bred birds departing in the autumn. There is a noticeable autumn passage, with other birds arriving for the winter.*

Winter/spring Widely reported in low numbers. Larger flocks included: 8 at Kilmartin *Mid-Argyll* on 18 Jan, 14 at Coshandrochaid (nr Tayvallich) *Mid-Argyll* on 1 Feb with 5 there on 15 Mar, mixed in with fieldfares.

Summer/breeding There were over 200 records of breeding, or presumed breeding birds in all areas of Argyll. An early predated egg was noted at Balephuill *Tiree* on 9 Apr. The first young in nest noted was at Lochbuie *Mull* on 28 Apr. 20-30 singing males were on *Tiree* on 31 May. 69 singing birds or pairs were reported from various sites around *Islay* on 10-13 May.

Autumn/winter On *Islay* 7 at Kinnabus (The Oa) *Islay*, otherwise only low numbers reported (1-2 birds) suggesting resident birds.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus* Sgiath-dhearg

RED LIST A *passage migrant and winter visitor: abundant in autumn but relatively few remain during winter. Occasional individuals are recorded in late spring or summer. The species bred on Mull in 1991 but there have been no subsequent breeding records.*

Winter/spring There were regular reports during Jan to Apr. Flocks of 50 or more included: 600 around *Tiree* on 13-14 Jan, 300 there on 16-17 Feb and also on 16-17 Mar, and 85 were at Killinochonoch *Mid-Argyll* on 24 Feb. Last spring /summer record was a bird singing in Glen Orchy *North-Argyll* on 29 May.

Autumn/winter The first arrival was of single bird at Balephuill *Tiree* on 1 Oct, followed by generally small numbers. Main arrivals occurred in mid-Oct into Nov with flocks including the first notable arrival of 200 at Rhunahaorine *Kintyre* on 13 Oct, then 600 at Treshnish *Mull* on 17 Oct, 300 at Balephuill *Tiree* on 24 Oct (seen to drop out of sky from great height into trees at 15:00 hrs), 400 at Clachadow (Glen Lonan) *Mid-Argyll* on 24 Oct, 1000 at The Rhinns *Islay* and 650 at Drimvore *Mid-Argyll* both on 25 Oct, 670 at Peninver *Kintyre* on 27 Oct, 1000 on *Tiree* and 800 on *Islay* on 28 Oct and 1,500 at the Laggan *Kintyre* on 29 Oct. Similar numbers were noted into Nov but a decrease noted in Dec.



Redwing *Mid-Argyll* (Jim Dickson)

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus* Smeòrach-mhòr

RED LIST A *widespread but thinly distributed resident breeding species. On Coll and Tiree it is only an occasional visitor. Flocks are sometimes seen on passage.*

Winter/spring During Jan to Feb, reports of 5 or more birds included: 5 at Auchagoyle *Cowal* on 19 Jan, 10 at Colachla (nr Millhouse) *Cowal* on 13 Feb, 11 at Glen Ralloch (Tarbert) *Mid-Argyll* on the 13 Feb and 6 at Sliabh Riabhach *Colonsay* on 27 Feb. A total of over 12 birds recorded from *Islay* in this period. A single migrant was at Balemartin *Tiree* on 2 Apr.

Breeding/summer Pairs were noted / territories held, with presumed breeding from late Feb at 'sites' in: *Colonsay* (8), *Cowal* (6), *Islay* (12), *Kintyre* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (15) *Mull* (11) and *North Argyll* (9 sites, with 5 Ters. in Glen Orchy). In *Cowal* a flock of 24 were at Corra (nr Otter Ferry) on 18 Jul and good numbers of juvs were in a flock of 47 birds at Drimvore *Mid-Argyll* on 31 Jul.

Autumn/winter From Aug onwards flocks of 10 or more included: 28 at Barr Iola *Cowal* on 10 Aug, 12 at Knock *Mull* on 23 Aug, 15 Drimfern *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Sept, 14 at Quinish House *Mull* on 29 Sept, 38 at Auchnaskeioch (nr Melldalloch) *Cowal* on 6 Oct, 18 at Crinan Ferry *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Oct, 13 at Ensay Burn Mouth *Mull* on 13 Oct and 15 at Dalvore (Moine Mhor) *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Nov. A single migrant was at Carnan Mor *Tiree* on 28 Oct.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata* Breacan-glas-sgiobalta

RED LIST A *summer visitor breeding widely, but sparsely, in mature woodlands; particularly where there are gaps in the canopy or along edges. Regular passage migrant on the islands.*

Spring The first arrivals were noted at Cairnbaan *Mid-Argyll* on 4 May, at Clachan Bridge *Mid-Argyll* on 8 May, at Carskiey *Kintyre* on 9 May and at Loch Beg *Mull* and RSPB Loch Gruinart on 12 May. There was an obvious arrival on 14 May with 5 at Balephuill and 1 at Scarinish on *Tiree*, plus singles at Loch Beg *Mull* and at Kilchoman *Islay*. Birds were more widespread in the rest of May with additional records from sites on *Mull* (2), *Colonsay* (2), *Islay* (4), *Mid-Argyll* (5) and *Cowal* (2).

Breeding Possible, probable or confirmed breeding birds were recorded in Jun-Aug from sites in: *Cowal* (2), *Mid-Argyll* (15), *North Argyll* (1), *Islay* (8), *Jura* (1), *Mull* (7) and *Coll* (1). At the Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* long running CBC site there were 3 Ters. Up to 12 passage birds were recorded on *Tiree* in Jun with the last at Barrapol on 19 Jun. There were no records from *Colonsay*. Adults were observed feeding young at Grasspoint *Mull* on 4 Jul, whilst fledglings were noted at Coshandochaid *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Jul, at Aros Park *Mull* on 18 Jul, at Scarisdale Point *Mull* on 26 Jul and at Port Askaig *Islay* on 1 Aug.

Autumn Passage birds in Sep included singles at Caliach and Beinn na Sgiathaig *Mull* on 9 Sep and at Toberonochy, Luing *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Sep, whilst late birds were at Balephuill *Tiree* on 7 Oct and at Gortantaoid *Islay* on 13 Oct.

EUROPEAN ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula* Brù-dhearg

A widespread and common resident breeder: a migrant only on Tiree. Small numbers now breed regularly on Coll. Autumn passage is noticeable on the islands with many migrants over-wintering.

Winter/spring In late winter, birds were widespread in all areas but the highest counts were of just 6 from the Bridgend Hide *Islay* on 4 Mar and 4 at Ardachy, Loch Etive *North Argyll* on 12 Feb. The last bird was noted on *Tiree* on 6 May with no birds present there in the breeding season.

Breeding Records of possible to confirmed breeding were from sites in: *Coll* (3), *Mull* (52), *Colonsay* (13), *Islay* (13), *Jura* (2), *Mid-Argyll* (26), *Cowal* (7), *Kintyre* (6) and *North Argyll* (5), the latter including the highest total to date of 9 singing males at the Cruachan Power Station study site on 21 Apr, although this could have included some late wintering birds.

Autumn/winter Birds were widespread in all areas in winter. The first returning passage bird on *Tiree* was early on 15 Jul with high counts of 7 at Balephuill on 7 Oct, 7 at Balemartine on 10 Oct and at least 15 around the island on 1 Oct. High counts elsewhere included 9 at Bridgend Woods *Islay* on 31 Oct.

COMMON NIGHTINGALE *Luscinia megarhynchos* Spideag

RED LIST A vagrant: four records; one on Islay in April 1973; one at West Loch Tarbert, Kintyre in May 1989; one at Balephuill, Tiree on 2 May 2004 and one at Vaul, Tiree on 8 Sep 2011.

No records.

BLUETHROAT *Luscinia svecica*

A rare passage migrant: five records; a female in Kintyre in May 1975; and males of the red-spotted race 'svecica' on Coll in 1994, on Colonsay in 2009 and on Tiree in 2009; also a first-winter on Tiree in Oct 2010.

No records.

RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula parva*

A rare passage migrant: ten records; on Islay in Nov 1974 and Oct 1975, Colonsay and Gigha in 2010, two singles on Tiree in Oct 2012, and two in Jun and two Sep/Oct on Tiree in 2014.

No records.

COLLARED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula albicollis*

A vagrant: an adult male was at Carnan Mor Tiree on 27 May 2014.

No records.

EUROPEAN PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca* Breacan-glas
RED LIST *A scarce summer visitor and passage migrant breeding very locally in oak woods in parts of the mainland and possibly Mull. An increase in the breeding population in recent years was attributable to the Argyll Bird Club nest-box scheme but numbers have declined; possibly due to Pine Marten predation of boxes, with no confirmed breeding records in recent years. Rare but near-annual on passage on the islands, especially Tiree.*

Spring There were just two reports in spring, a male at Kilninver *Mid-Argyll* on 20 May and a male that flew across the road at Barochreal *Mid-Argyll* on the same date.

Breeding No records.

Autumn An immature at The Glebe (Scarinish) *Tiree* on 1 Sep was a typical autumn passage record and was followed by single immatures at The Mull of Oa *Islay* on 7 Sep and at Balinoe camp-site *Tiree* on 19-20 Sep.

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochuros* Ceann-dubhan

RED LIST *A less than annual passage migrant: most records have been in spring (late Mar to May) or late autumn (Oct to mid-Nov).*

Spring No records.

Autumn/winter A first-winter was at Meningie on the south side of Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 7-16 Nov [John Bowler].

COMMON REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* Ceann-dearg

AMBER LIST *A summer visitor: locally common in open woodland. It is a scarce passage migrant on: Coll, Colonsay, Islay and Tiree.*

Spring First arrivals were at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 17 Apr, at Scallastle and Craignure Golf Course *Mull* on 18 Apr, at Taynish House *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Apr and at Lower Glenastle Loch (The Oa) *Islay* on 20 Apr. These were followed by arrivals at Goirtein Croft *Cowal* on 22 Apr, Loch Ba *Mull* and Glenure *North Argyll* on 24 Apr, at Brainport Bay *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Apr and at Knoch *Mull* on 29 Apr. A female at Balephuill *Tiree* on 6 May was clearly still on passage.

Breeding Birds were fairly widespread from likely breeding locations in May-Jun with records from 10 sites in *Mid-Argyll* and 2 sites on *Mull*. A record high total of 12 Ters. was recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (long term average = 7 Ters). Birds were still present at Rhudle *Mid-Argyll* on 20 Jun but unlike in 2014, there were no confirmed breeding records.

Autumn Only one report: a juvenile at Laggan Bay *Mull* on 21 Jul.

BLUE ROCK THRUSH *Monticola solitarius*

A vagrant: one record; a first summer male present at Skerryvore, Tiree on 4 to 7 Jun 1985 and found dead on 8 Jun. Accepted as the first record of a genuinely wild bird in Britain.

No records.

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra* Gocan

RED LIST *A sparse but widespread, summer visitor*

Spring First early arrivals were arrivals at Chapel of Kilbride *Cowal* on 9 Apr and Coire na Beath *Mull* on 11 Apr. More typical arrivals were at Dalvore (Moine Mhor) *Mid-Argyll* on 18 Apr, 3 at The Oa *Islay* on 19 Apr, Ardmor Point *Islay* on 23 Apr, Tibertich *Mid-Argyll* on 24

Apr and Gruline House *Mull* on 26 Apr, with widespread arrivals thereafter in the last week of April and in early May. Elsewhere, by the end of May, further records had also been received from sites in: *Tiree* (1), *Coll* (2), *Cowal* (1) *Mull* (9), *Islay* (5), *North Argyll* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (5) and *Kintyre* (1) but none from *Colonsay*.

Breeding Possible or probable breeding was recorded at sites in: *Mull* (8), *Colonsay* (4 Ters.), *Islay* (22) including 7 pairs at RSPB Loch Gruinart, *Jura* (1) *Mid-Argyll* (4) and *North Argyll* (2). Confirmed breeding was recorded at Bolsay *Islay* where families were seen on the moor on 23 Jun and at Duiletter *North Argyll* on 15 Jul where a male was seen with 2 juvs. 2 juvs were also seen at Loch na Cille *Mid-Argyll* on 16 Aug and 4 juvs were at Crinan Ferry *Mid-Argyll* on 30 Aug.

Autumn Birds were still widespread in Sep including 1 at Fennachochan, Lismore *North Argyll* on 5 Sep, a group of 10 birds at Barr Iola *Cowal* on 13 Sep, groups of up to 4 birds at 5 sites on *Islay* including singles at the Mull of Oa and Saligo on 14 Sep, 1 at Cullnadalloch *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Sep, 1 at Glen Cannel *Mull* on 14 Sep and an extremely late bird at Allt nam Breac, Salen Forest *Mull* on 7 Nov.

EUROPEAN STONECHAT *Saxicola torquatus* Clacharan

A widespread resident, but some leave breeding areas during winter. Numbers can decline dramatically after severe winters.

Winter/spring To the end of Mar, single birds and pairs were noted at sites in: *Tiree* (5), *Mull* (2), Oronsay *Colonsay* (1), *Cowal* (2), *Islay* (12), *Jura* (3), *Mid-Argyll* (3) and *Kintyre* (1). There were no records from: *Coll* and *North Argyll*.

Breeding Presumed breeding pairs were recorded at sites in: *Tiree* (15 sites involving 19 pairs), *Coll* (4), *Mull* (21), *Colonsay* (36 territories), *Islay* (33) including 16 pairs at Loch Gruinart, *Jura* (1), *North Argyll* (3), *Mid-Argyll* (15) and *Kintyre* (8). There were no records from *Cowal*. The first fledglings were noted on 27 May at Balephuill *Tiree*, with successful breeding also noted elsewhere on *Tiree* including a second brood at Balephuill on 27 Jul. Successful broods were noted widely on *Islay* in May-Jul at Bolsay, Loch Gorm, Saligo, Dun Nosebridge, Gartbreck and Loch Skerrols, as well as at Moine Mhor *Mid-Argyll*. 10 were counted at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 16 Aug and 9 at Machir Bay *Islay* on 13 Sep.

Autumn/winter From Oct to Dec birds were recorded at sites in: *Mull* (2), *Islay* (30), *Mid-Argyll* (2), *Cowal* (2) and *Tiree* (scattered singles and pairs around the island). There were no unusually high counts with the highest being of 10 birds around *Islay* on several dates in Oct.

NORTHERN WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe* Brù-gheal

A common summer visitor; and passage migrant.

Spring The first bird was early on 6 Mar at Kilchoman *Islay* but there was then a short gap before the next arrivals at Claddach *Islay* on 15 Mar, at Sorisdale *Coll* on 17 Mar, on *Jura* on 18 Mar, near Dervaig *Mull* on 19 Mar, at Iona *Mull* and Carradale *Kintyre* on 20 Mar, at West Hynish *Tiree* on 21 Mar and at Loch na Cille *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Mar. Birds were noted more generally thereafter to the end of Apr at sites in: *Tiree* (6), *Coll* (4), *Cowal* (4), *Mull* (20), Oronsay *Colonsay* (1), *Islay* (21), *North Argyll* (2), *Mid-Argyll* (6) and *Kintyre* (7). Higher counts were: 20 at Loch na Keal *Mull* on 8 Apr, 15 at West Hynish *Tiree* on 15 Apr including a colour-ringed bird and 10 at Langamull *Mull* on 26 Apr.

Breeding Confusion can arise where some birds will have started breeding while others are still on migration. From May to end Aug records of possible/probable breeders were noted at sites in: *Tiree* (5), *Coll* (4), *Mull* (35), *Colonsay* (7), *Islay* (27), *Jura* (1), *North Argyll* (3), *Mid-Argyll* (18), *Kintyre* (5) and *Cowal* (3). Numbers remained stable at Ben Cruachan *North Argyll* where 5 breeding pairs were recorded, the same as in 2013 and 2014. The first fledged young were

noted at Rubha Hanais *Tiree* on 7 Jun and successful breeding was widespread on the island. Elsewhere fledged birds were noted at Kilbride, Seil *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Jun, at Aoradh *Islay* on 16 Jun, at Baile Mor, Iona *Mull* on 24 Jun and on Lunga *Mull* at the end of Jun (TIARG). Probable passage birds included 25 at Totronald RSPB *Coll* on 6 May, 25 together at Balephuill *Tiree* on 7 May and 34 at Lagavulin *Islay* on 10 May.

Autumn Only small numbers (8 or less) were seen at sites in: *Tiree* (8), *Coll* (2), *Mull* (11), *Colonsay* (2), *Islay* (19), *Jura* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (1) and *Kintyre* (2). The last of the year was a late bird at Uiskentuie *Islay* on 1 Nov.

‘GREENLAND’ WHEATEAR *Oenanthe. o. leucorhoa*

A scarce passage migrant: probably under-recorded.

Spring The first of spring was at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 22 Apr followed by 2 at Loch a’ Phuill *Tiree* on 26 Apr and then 6 around *Tiree* on 29 Apr. There were 3 more singles on *Tiree* on 2-14 May, plus singles at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 11 May and at Feall Bay *Coll* on 25 May.

Autumn The first report in the autumn was of 1 at Laine Sgeir *Mull* on 13 Aug followed by 1 at Hynish *Tiree* on 19 Aug. There were then regular sightings around *Tiree* including peaks of 30 around the island on 14 Sep and of 10 on 21 Sep with the last at West Hynish on 24 Oct. Elsewhere there were reports of 1-2 birds at 5 sites on *Mull* on 22 Aug-7 Oct and of 3 singles at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 10-24 Sep.

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis* Gealbhoonn-nam-preas

AMBER LIST A widespread resident breeder although nowhere numerous. It is scarce on *Coll* and *Jura* and does not breed on *Tiree*. Recent observations would suggest that birds are quite frequent in pre-thicket/thicket conifer plantations as well as in more traditional habitats. Increased numbers in autumn presumably relate to migrants.

Winter To the end of Mar 1-5 birds were reported from all areas apart from *Coll* and *Kintyre* (where they were probably present). Largest numbers reported were not necessarily flocks, but counts in an area.

Breeding Birds were recorded in all areas except *Jura*, and probably bred in all areas. Confirmed breeding included an adult with faecal sac on 20 May at Cruachan Visitor Centre *North Argyll* and fledged young at Connel *Mid-Argyll* on 2 Jun.

Autumn/winter From Aug-Dec 1-4 birds were reported from all areas except *Kintyre*, *Jura*, *Colonsay* and *Coll*.

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus* Gealbhoonn

RED LIST A resident breeding bird commonly associated with human habitation. Distribution is rather localised in sparsely inhabited areas. Larger flocks gather in late summer and autumn where traditional agriculture persists.

Winter/spring There were reports from all areas except *Coll*, *Jura* and *Kintyre*. Flocks of over 20 were noted on *Islay*, *Colonsay* and *Tiree*. At Oronsay Farm *Colonsay* numbers peaked at 26 on 8 Feb. On *Tiree* the largest aggregation was 60 at Baugh on 1 Jan, and during Jan flocks of 60 at Balephuill, 40 at Kenovay and 40 at Balephetrish took the island total to 140.

Summer/breeding Reported from all areas except *Jura*. First fledglings were reported on 5 May at Torr an Sgrithinn (Lochbuie) *Mull*. First fledglings were noted at Balephuill *Tiree* on 11 May, 17 days earlier than last year. Post breeding flocks then began to build, with 50 at Balephuill on 14 Jul, and 100 at Port Charlotte *Islay* on 16 Jul.

Autumn/winter Reported from Aug onwards from all areas except *Coll*, and *Jura*. Sightings of 20 or more included: 30 at Sleidmeall (Ardnave) *Islay* on 1 Aug, 40 at Port Charlotte *Islay* on 3 Aug, 30 at Connel *Mid-Argyll* on 21 Aug and 30 at Fidden *Mull* on 27 Aug. At Oronsay Farm *Colonsay* numbers peaked at 93 on 28 Aug. The largest flocks were on *Tiree* with 220 noted at Ruaig on 1 Sep, and numbers at Balephuill consistent around 60 through to Dec.

EURASIAN TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus* Gealbhoonn-nan-craobh

RED LIST *Nowadays mostly a very scarce migrant but after a gap of nearly 30 years breeding took place on Islay in 2009.*

Spring/summer On *Islay* 2 were at Kinnabus (The Oa) on 16 Apr, 1 was at RSPB Loch Gruinart reserve on 7 and 15 May, 4 were at Coullabus Wood on 29 Jul and 1 was at Portnahaven on 13 Aug. On *Mull* 1 was at Tiroran on 1 May, 1 was at Treshnish farm on 29 May and increased to 3 on 29 May with the last single there on 7 Jun. On *Tiree* 1 was at Balephuill on 3 May gradually increasing to 5 on 14-28 May and 9 were at Milton on 24 May with 10 there on 25-27 May.

WESTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava flavissima* Breacan-buidh

RED LIST *A scarce passage migrant: birds of the Blue-headed race M. f. flava occur from time to time, and there have been at least two records of the Grey-headed race M. f. thunbergi (in 1985 and 2005).*

No records.

CITRINE WAGTAIL *Motacilla citreola*

A vagrant: one record; a first-winter bird was at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree on 27 to 29 Sep 2012.

No records.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea* Breacan-baintighearna

RED LIST *Widespread resident breeding species, although does not breed on Tiree and Coll; some emigration in winter.*

Winter/spring Singles were recorded in: *Islay*, *Jura*, *Mid-Argyll*, and *Mull* in Jan and Feb. Birds were more widespread and numerous in Mar with: 2 at Kilmartin *Mid-Argyll* on 15 Mar, 1 at Ellerick (Glen Creran) *North Argyll* on 18 Mar, 1 at Benmore Garden *Cowal* on 19 Mar, and 3 at the Woollen Mill *Islay* on 22 Mar.

Breeding/summer Pairs were reported at several sites in: *Cowal*, *Mid-Argyll*, and *Mull* but breeding was only confirmed at the Woollen Mill *Islay* and Cruachan Power Station *North Argyll*.

Autumn/winter Reports of 1 or 2 birds were received from all areas except: *Coll* and *North Argyll*. Single birds were at Balephuill *Tiree* on 10 and 13 Oct, and at Kirn (Dunoon) *Cowal* on 21 Oct.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba yarrellii* Breac-an-t-sil

A widespread and common breeder: absent from many areas in winter. Returning birds generally arrive in late Feb to early Mar and depart Aug-Oct.

Winter/spring Recorded from all areas. Larger groups included 34 at Lochan Luing *Kintyre* on 17 Jan, 15 roosting in a reed bed at Balephuill *Tiree* on 24 Mar, 10 at Loch na Cille *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Apr, and 13 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 19 Apr.

Breeding/summer Recorded in all areas with breeding confirmed in: *Cowal, Islay, Mid-Argyll, Mull, North Argyll* and *Tiree*. Notable gatherings included 120 at The Laggan *Kintyre* on 1 Jul and 47 at Smelly Corner (Bridgend) *Islay* on 26 Jul.

Autumn/winter Recorded in all areas except *Jura*. There were some large passage gatherings from Aug through to Sep: 37 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 21 Aug, 20 at Meningie *Tiree* on 27 Aug, 36 at Calgary *Mull* on 30 Aug, 30 at Machir Bay *Islay* on 7 Sep, at least 12 roosting on one boat in Dunstaffnage Bay *Mid-Argyll* on 8 Sep with more on other boats, 35 at Drimvore *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Sep, 35 at Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 23 Sep, and 60 coming to roost at the waterworks at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 25 Sep. Numbers declined during Oct and, after 16 at Loch Gorm *Islay* on 2 Nov, only single figure reports were received.



‘White’ Wagtail *Tiree* (John Bowler)

‘WHITE’ WAGTAIL *Motacila alba alba*

A passage migrant, usually recorded in spring: extent of autumn passage obscured by identification difficulties. May have bred.

Winter/spring Reported from all areas except: *Cowal, Jura*, and *North-Argyll*. First arrivals were 2 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 2 Apr followed by singles at Ormsary *Mid-Argyll* on 6 Apr and Loch an Eilein *Tiree* on 8 Apr. Daily passage at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* was noted from 16 Apr. A flock of 18 was at Sorobaiddh Bay *Tiree*, on 18 Apr and 24 were at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 26 Apr. Daily passage at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* peaked at 37 on 28 Apr. A flock of 59 was at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 28 Apr and most of a flock of 200 birds roosting in gorse at Heylipol *Tiree* on 30 Apr were this species. Small numbers were reported up to 18 Jun.

Autumn/winter Autumn passage at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* started on 13 Aug and continued almost daily in small numbers throughout Sep. Elsewhere: 18 were at Machir Bay *Islay* on 7 Sep, 6 were at Drimvore *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Sep, and 25 were at Craighens (Gruinart) *Islay* on 17 Sep. The final record was from Uiskentuie *Islay* on 1 Nov.

RICHARD’S PIPIT *Anthus richardi*

A vagrant: three records; singles on Islay, on 28 Sep 1971 and 10 Sep 1973 and on Colonsay on 18 Oct 2013.

No records.

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis* Riabhag-choille

RED LIST *A summer visitor breeding commonly on the mainland: also widespread on Jura and Mull, but very scarce on Islay.*

Spring An early bird was at Ormsary *Mid-Argyll* on 8 Apr, followed by several reports on 18 Apr from south east *Mull* and Loch Avich and Dalvore *Mid-Argyll*, and on 19 Apr from Otter Ferry *Cowal* and Brainport Bay (Minard) *Mid-Argyll*. Singing males were reported widely across: *Cowal*, *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull*, and *North Argyll* from 21 Apr and a migrant was at Balephuill *Tiree* on 9 May. One was noted calling in flight over Balephuill *Tiree* on 9 May and 5 were found in Claggain Wood *Islay* on 13 May.

Breeding/summer Eight Ters. were recorded at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. Breeding was confirmed at Cruachan Power Station *North Argyll*. The last singing bird was noted at Taynish NNR on 23 Jun.

Autumn A bird was at Cruachan Power Station *North Argyll* on 13 Aug. The last record was of one at Loch Ba *Mull* on 24 Aug.

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis* Snàthag

AMBER LIST *An abundant breeding species: most leave higher ground and some islands in winter, and significant flocks occur on passage. Those wintering in Argyll occur mainly in coastal and low lying localities.*

Winter/spring Larger flocks included: 35 at Killail *Cowal* on 15 Jan, 15 at Toberonochy (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 31 Jan, 70 at Balephuill *Tiree*, 45 at Kilmartin *Mid-Argyll* on 30 Mar, 70 at Lochbuie *Mull*, 40 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 27 Apr, and 60 at Strone Farm *Cowal* on 1 May.

Breeding/summer Birds were reported during the breeding season from all areas. Breeding was confirmed from: *Colonsay*, *Cowal*, *Mid-Argyll*, *North Argyll*, and *Tiree*.

Autumn/winter Flocks were noted from mid-Jul onwards with: 50 on 21 Jul rising to 120 on 27 Jul at The Reef *Tiree*, 200 in a field with seed heads at Port Mor *Islay* on 9 Aug, 120 at Drimvore *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Aug, 60 at Carnon Mor *Tiree* on 13 Sep, 28 at Glen Cannel *Mull* on 14 Sep, 40 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 26 Sep, and 100 at Carskey *Kintyre* on 1 Oct. Flock sizes started to decline in mid-Oct although 45 were at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 7 Nov. Thereafter most reports were in single figures.

RED-THROATED PIPIT *Anthus cervinus*

A vagrant: one record; at Tobermory, Mull on 7 May 1975.

No records.

EURASIAN ROCK PIPIT *Anthus petrosus petrosus* Gabhagan

A common resident breeding species on coasts, sea lochs and islands with some emigration and passage in autumn: scarce passage and winter visitor elsewhere.

Winter/spring Single figure reports were received from all areas. 20 were reported from RSPB The Oa *Islay* on 4 Jan, 12 were at West Hynish *Tiree* on 17 Jan, 20 were at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 17 Jan, and 10 were at Sgeir a'Chaisteil (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* on 7 Apr.

Breeding/summer Breeding was confirmed from: *Cowal*, *Kintyre*, *Mull*, and *Tiree*. Notable counts were: 20 at Langamull *Mull* on 1 May, 14 at Frenchman's Rocks *Islay* on 22 May, and 20 at Inch Kenneth *Mull* on 27 Jun.

Autumn/winter Reports included: 40 at Laggan Point *Islay* on 15 Oct, 12 at Kilbride (Seil Island) *Mid-Argyll* on 24 Oct, 16 at Traigh Nostaig *Islay* on 1 Nov, and 20 at Gialum Bay (Gigha) *Kintyre* on 19 Dec. One seen on the loch shore at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 11 and 30 Nov was unusual.

'SCANDINAVIAN' ROCK PIPIT *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

A Rock Pipit sub-species. Rare visitor but true status in Argyll is still unclear. Only two accepted records, from Mull on 13 May 2011 and at Machrihanish SBO, Kintyre on 18 May 2014.

Spring One, in summer plumage, was at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 1 Apr [Jim Dickson]. Record was accepted by the ABRC.

WATER PIPIT *Anthus spinoletta*

AMBER LIST A vagrant: only one accepted Argyll record; at West Hynish, Tiree on 19 Nov 2013.

No records.

BUFF-BELLIED PIPIT *Anthus rubescens*

A vagrant: one record; a first-winter bird at Ruaig, Tiree on 27 Sep 2012.

No records.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla* Breacan-caorainn

An uncommon winter visitor in varying numbers: there have been a few summer records.

Winter/spring A winter of scarcity with few reports from just 3 areas. In *Cowal* there was 1 in Dunoon on 31 Jan. On *Tiree* there was one at Kenovay on 14 Feb. On *Islay* there were records of up to 2 from Kilchoman and the neighbouring area from 1 Jan to 15 Mar.

Autumn/winter The first record of the autumn was on *Tiree* with a single at Balephuill on 6 Oct, increasing to 2 on 4 Nov with 2 more on 17 Nov. There were 3 at Peninver *Kintyre* on 27 Oct, a single at Salen *Mull* on 28 Nov, and the highest count of 12 was on Dunoon golf course *Cowal* on 2 Nov. In *Mid-Argyll* there was a single at the Moine Mhor cross roads on 25 Oct, and another at Connel on 20 Nov. On *Islay* the first one was at Loch Skerrols, Bridgend on 16 Oct, while 7 were found at Rockside on 28 Oct. The single at Kilchoman on 3 Nov could easily be the same one seen at the adjacent Rockside on 4 Nov. The last record was 2 at Bruichladdich on 20 Dec.

COMMON CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs* Breacan-beithe

An abundant resident breeder: except on Coll (breeds only in very small numbers) and Tiree. Foraging flocks gather outwith the breeding season when numbers are augmented by winter visitors.

Winter/spring Reported from all areas except *Kintyre*, *Coll* and *Jura*. The largest counts were on *Islay* with 85 at Kilchoman on 24 Jan, 200 at the Woollen Mill (Bridgend) on 15 Feb, and a peak of 85 at Loch Clach a' Bhuaile (Kilchoman) on 2 Mar. In *Mid-Argyll* notable flocks included 50 at Ford on 4 Jan, 70 at Cairnbaan on 18 Jan and 85 at Drimfern (Glen Aray) on 19 Feb. In *Cowal* 70 were at Corra Farm (Otter Ferry) on 10 Jan. The flock on Oronsay *Colonsay* peaked at 20 on 25 Jan.

Summer/breeding Widespread and recorded in all areas. Some flocks still around in Apr included 20 at Balvicar (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Apr, and 32 at Torr an Sgrìthinn (Lochbuie) *Mull* on 3 May. Likely breeding in all areas including *Coll* but not *Tiree*, where 2f were present at Balephuill on 17 Apr but disappeared until autumn. The first fledglings were noted at RSPB Loch Gruinart woodland walk *Islay* on 21 May. Other fledglings were reported from Connel *Mid-Argyll* on 24 Jul and at Cruachan Visitor Centre *North Argyll*.

Autumn/winter Reports were widespread, and from all areas except *Jura* and *Coll*. Counts of 40 or more from *Mid-Argyll* included a peak of 60 at Cairnbaan on 22 Oct, 40 at Blackmill Bay (Luing) on 7 Nov, and 67 at Tayvallich on 22 Dec. In *Cowal* 50 were at Corra Farm on 27 Aug. On *Islay* the largest flock was of 102 at Kinnabus (The Oa) *Islay* on 4 Dec. The small flock on Oronsay *Colonsay* peaked at 20 on 2 Dec, and on *Tiree* the peak was 12 at Balephuill on 13 Oct. There were 18 caught and ringed at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* during the autumn.

HAWFINCH *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* Gobhach

RED LIST *A rare visitor: 22 records between 1953 and 2014.*

No accepted records. (*See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.134-135*).

COMMON ROSEFINCH *Erythrina erythrina*

A scarce to rare visitor which may have bred: 24 records between 1989 and 2014, mostly in May and Jun however more frequent reports of juveniles in the autumn recently.

No records. (*See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.134-135*).

A disappointing no show after a record five birds in 2014.

EURASIAN BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* Corcan-coille

AMBER LIST *A widely but thinly distributed resident. Scarce or absent on most of the islands apart from Islay and Mull. Flocks occur in winter.*

Winter/spring Early year records from *North Argyll* (1 site), *Mid-Argyll* (13 sites), *Cowal* (2 sites), *Mull* (4 sites) and *Islay* (5 sites) were all in single figures except for a report of 40 on 21 Jan at Inverliever Forest *Mid-Argyll*, and 12 in Bridgend Woods *Islay* on 11 Feb.

Breeding Presence noted across all areas except *Kintyre*, *Jura*, *Colonsay*, *Coll* and *Tiree*. The first report of fledged young was at Bridgend *Islay* on 26 Jun. Later summer sightings of juvs came from *Mid-Argyll* and *Islay*.

Autumn Records were from *Islay* (8 sites), *North Argyll* (3 sites), *Mid-Argyll* (9 sites), *Mull* (5 sites) and *Cowal* (7 sites). All sightings were in single figures, with the highest being 6 at Kirnan Farm (Kilmichael Glen) *Mid-Argyll* on 16 Oct, 6 at Largiemore *Cowal* on 26 Oct and 6 at Strone *Cowal* on 4 Nov.

EUROPEAN GREENFINCH *Chloris chloris* Glaisean-daraich

A locally common resident and partial migrant: with fewer breeding on the islands than on the mainland. Small groups are widespread outside the breeding season.

Winter/spring Early year records were generally in single figures from all areas except *Mull*, *Coll* and *Colonsay*. A few groups of 10 or more were seen with 10 at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 17 Jan, 18 at Cairnbaan *Mid-Argyll* on 17 Feb, 10 at Corra Farm (Otter Ferry) *Cowal* on 26 Mar, and 20 at Bowmore *Islay* on 26 Mar. Single figures only were on *Tiree*, peaking at 7 at Balephuill on 13 Feb.

Breeding Reported present in all areas except (surprisingly) *Cowal* and *Kintyre*. Confirmed breeding (fledged young) first reported from Connel *Mid-Argyll* on 17 May, then 2 fledglings on the RSPB Woodland Trail, Aoradh *Islay* on 21 May, and 1 at Milton *Tiree* on 31 Jul.

Autumn/winter Reported present in all areas except *Coll*, mainly in single figures. Only a few post-breeding flocks of note (with 10 or more) included 22 at Kintallen (Tayvallich) *Mid-Argyll* on 4 Aug, 12 at Kinnabus (The Oa) *Islay* on 18 Oct, 20 at RSPB Aoradh *Islay* on 17 Nov, and 11 at Achnacroish (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 28 Nov. 9 were caught and ringed at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* over the autumn.



European Greenfinch *Mid-Argyll* (Jim Dickson)

COMMON LINNET *Linaria cannabina* Gealan-lìn

RED LIST A *sparsely distributed partial migrant, breeding mainly on Islay, Tiree, and in Kintyre. Flocks occur locally in some areas in autumn with most reports from Colonsay, Islay, and Kintyre.*

Winter/spring No reports until 2 at Ganavan (Oban) *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Feb, birds ‘present’ on *Islay* in Mar, 2 at West Hynish *Tiree* on 21 Mar, then low numbers reported in all areas from Apr (except *Jura*) with higher counts of 26 at Kilchoman *Islay* on 18 Apr and 100 at Ballinaby *Islay* on 26 Apr.

Breeding Recorded as present, mostly in single figures, from all areas except *Jura*. Some larger flocks were still about, not having settled to breed. On *Islay* 74 were at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 14 May. First fledged young reported on 24 Jun at Balephuill *Tiree*. In Jul some flocks over 10 likely to be post-breeding families grouping together, such as 15 on 7 Jul at Beinn nan Gudairean (Scalasaig) *Colonsay* and 14 on 8 Jul at Ardnave *Islay*. Later flocks were more substantial, with 100 on 18 Jul at Bridgend *Islay*, 50 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 19 Jul and 95 at Ulva Lagoons (Tayvallich) *Mid-Argyll* on 25 Jul.

Autumn/winter Reports came from all areas except *Coll*, *Cowal*, *Kintyre*, *Jura*, and *North Argyll*. Substantial flocks grew through Aug, declined in Oct and disappeared during Nov. Peak counts included: 50 at Oronsay farm *Colonsay* on 26 Sep, 100 at Kintra *Mull* on 18 Aug and 90 at Bardrishaig (Luìng) *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Oct. On *Islay*: 100 at Port Mor on 9 Aug, 150 at Gruinart on 12 Aug, 150 at Kilchoman on 21 Sep and 150 at Kinnabus (The Oa) on 1 Oct. On *Tiree*: 150 at Balinoe on 19 Sep, 150 at Balemartine on 3 Oct and 180 at Kilkenneth on 5 Oct, with the last of the year being 11 on The Reef on 30 Nov.

TWITE *Linaria flavirostris* Gealan-beinne

RED LIST A *local resident, mainly in coastal areas on the mainland and islands; winter flocks may comprise resident and migrants birds.*

Winter/spring Reported from all areas apart from *Coll, Cowal, Jura* and *Mid-Argyll*. The first report was 30 at Kinnabus (The Oa) *Islay* on 4 Jan. The largest flocks were also on *Islay* with 200 at Machir Bay on 17 Feb, 150 by Loch Gorm on 21 Feb and likely the same flock at Ballinaby on 26 Feb. On Oronsay *Colonsay* 36 on 8 Jan, rising to 45 on 12 Jan, tailing off to 34 on 2 Mar. *Tiree* held several groups of up to 20 but 45 were at Sandaig on 14 Jan, and 40 at Loch a'Phuil on 8 Feb. On *Mull* there was a 'small flock' at Lochbuie on 12 Jan. In *Kintyre* there were 20 at Tayinloan on 17 Jan, but the first 2 didn't appear at Machrihanish SBO until 13 Mar. In *North Argyll* 1 was seen at the head of Loch Creran on 17 Mar. Late flocks included 40 at The Oa *Islay* on 6 Apr, 45 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 16 Apr and 30 at Haunn *Mull* on 25 Apr.

Breeding The first fledged young were seen at Carnan Mor on *Tiree* on 28 Jun. After this family groups began to form into small flocks e.g. 20 at Balephuill on 21 Jul.

Autumn/winter Reported in all areas except *North Argyll, Cowal* and *Jura*, with the largest flocks found on *Islay, Tiree* and *Colonsay*. As usual the best area on *Islay* is The Oa, where numbers peaked at 680 on 16 Dec. Elsewhere on *Islay* significant flocks included 150 at Bun-an-uillt (Loch Gruinart) on 12 Aug and 145 at Machir Bay on 27 Sep. On *Colonsay* 150 were at Balnahard on 8 Oct and 28 at Oronsay on 12 Oct. On *Tiree* several flocks of 100+: however The Reef flock peaked at 190 on 8 Oct. On *Mull* there were 25 at Balmeanach, Gribun on 21 Sep and 30 at Treshnish Point on 9 Oct. In *Mid-Argyll* there 40+ at New Danna on 30 Aug, and 20 at Blackmill Bay (Luining) on 12 Sep. In *Kintyre* there were 18 on Gigha on 17 Oct, and 40 at Tayinloan Jetty on 31 Oct. Also in *Kintyre* the **Machrihanish SBO Twite Study** continued catching and colour-ringing birds during autumn, with 41 new captures in Aug, 53 in Sep, 16 in Oct and 21 in Nov. *See the ringing report for results of movements.*

LESSER REDPOLL *Acanthis cabaret* Dearcan-seilich

RED LIST A *locally common partial migrant, breeding locally: numbers fluctuate from year to year. Post breeding flocks gather from July and most birds move south for the winter.*

Winter/spring First reports were 2 at Corra Farm (Otter Ferry) *Cowal* on 20 Feb and 'present' at Lurignish (Appin) *North Argyll* on 18 Mar, then 1-3 birds in Mar at sites in *Islay, Kintyre, Mid-Argyll, Mull* and *Tiree*. There was a small increase during Apr, with 4 at The Lodge *Coll* on 24 Apr and 14 at Loch Frisa *Mull* on 29 Apr.

Summer/breeding Reported as present in single figures in all areas. Successful breeding must have taken place widely, but none was confirmed.

Autumn/winter Reported from all areas except *Jura* and in single figures in Jul, thereafter 30 at Port Mor, Kildalton *Islay* on 9 Aug, 15 at Kintra *Mull* on 18 Aug, 40 at Connel *Mid-Argyll* on 1 Sep, 32 at Kinnabus (The Oa) *Islay* on 28 Sep, 10 at Carskiey *Kintyre* on 1 Oct and 35 at Crinan Ferry *Mid-Argyll* on 18 Oct.

COMMON REDPOLL *Acanthis flammea*

Includes Mealy Redpoll *C. f. flammea* & **Greenland Redpoll** *C. f. rostrata* (latter now sometimes known as *North-western Redpoll*, which includes *islandica*). *A scarce passage migrant: and irregular winter visitor.*

Spring/summer/breeding A lone NW (Greenland-type) at Hynish *Tiree* on 14 Jan was most unusual. At Balephuill *Tiree* 3 were there on 17-20 Apr, 2 on 1 May, 1 on 5-18 May, 1 on 2 Jun, 2 on 11-14 and 26-30 Jun, up to 4 in Jul with nesting suspected and 2 there until 9 Aug. Elsewhere on *Tiree*, 1 was at Loch an Eilein on 1 May and 3 were at The Glebe (Scarinish) on 14-17 Aug.

Three pairs, with one nest noted, were at Ballard *Coll* on 29 May [Alex Mackintosh]. One was at Treshnish farm *Mull* on 31 May [Anand Prasad].

Autumn Up to 2 ads and 4 juvs were at Balephuill *Tiree* on 16-28 Sep with 12 there on 29-30 Sep, 6 on 1-2 Oct, 12 on 3-4 Oct, 7 on 6-15 Oct, 2 on 24 Oct, 3 on 7 Nov, 1 on 11 and 16 Nov and 2 on 14 and 22 Nov. 1 was at Balemartine *Tiree* on 19 Oct, 6 at Meningie *Tiree* on 3 Oct and 3 at Vaul *Tiree* on 12 Oct.

A large NW (Greenland-type) was at The Glebe (Scarinish) *Tiree* on 3 Nov.

Several other reports were received of birds showing characteristics of this species however ideally good photographs are required, particularly for worn birds in late spring when 'Lessers' can be quite pale and look very similar to 'Mealies'.

ARCTIC REDPOLL *Acanthis hornemanni*

A vagrant: three records: two of the Scandinavian/Russian race *exilipes* (Coues's Redpoll) with one on Islay on 22 Sep 2001 and the other on Tiree on 23 Oct 2004 and one of the nominate Greenland/Arctic Canada race *hornemanni* (Hornemann's Redpoll) on Islay on 10 Apr 2012.

No records.

COMMON CROSSBILL (RED CROSSBILL) *Loxia curvirostra* Cam-ghob

An irruptive species: large numbers breed in good cone years but few stay when cones are scarce.

Winter/spring Widely reported, mostly in single figures from *Cowal* (6 sites), *Islay* (2 sites), *Mid-Argyll* (5 sites), *Mull* (2 sites) and *North Argyll* (1 site). The largest flock noted was 19 at Tom an t-Saoir (Inverliever Forest) *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Mar.

Summer/breeding A pair with fledged young were noted at Salachary *Mid-Argyll* on 9 May. Widely recorded as present across *Mid-Argyll* (3 sites), *Mull* (9 sites), *North Argyll* (1 site) and *Cowal* (1 site).

Autumn/winter Few reports, all in small numbers, from *Cowal* (1 site), *Mid-Argyll* (2 sites) and *Mull* (3 sites). An immature was on *Tiree* at Meningie on 12 Sep and 12 were at Corra Farm *Cowal* on 25 Dec.

EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis* Lasair-choille

A widely distributed resident but absent as a breeding species on Tiree with recent breeding on Coll and Colonsay. Flocks occur in autumn.

Winter/Spring Reported in single figures from all areas except *Mull*, *Colonsay*, *Coll*, *Jura* and *North Argyll*. Flocks of 10 or more included: 12 at Sandaig *Tiree* on 3 Jan, 15 at Tayinloan Jetty *Kintyre* 15 on 17 Jan, a peak of 24 in the Kilchoman area *Islay* on 14 Mar, and in *Mid-Argyll* 30 at Ormsary on 1 Jan, 10 at Ganavan on 12 Feb, and 11 at Ardrishaig on 6 Mar.

Summer/breeding Reported present from all areas. Some movements still taking place on 5 Apr as suggested by 31 caught at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre*, comprising 16 new birds and 15 retrapped, and a flock of 30 at Kilchoman *Islay* on 13 Apr, and 15 around Arinagour *Coll* on 26 Apr. First evidence of breeding was an occupied nest on 18 May at Baile Mor (*Iona*) *Mull*. The first fledged young were reported from Kintallen (Tayvallich) *Mid-Argyll*, with juveniles also reported from Kilchoman and Coullabus Plantation *Islay*, Balvicar Lagoons (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* and at Cruachan Visitor Centre *North Argyll*.

Autumn/winter As usual, autumn flocks were much larger and more numerous than earlier in the year, and birds were noted in all areas except *Jura*. Flocks over 40 were common through Aug and Sep. In *Cowal* there were 40 at Kilfinan on 23 Sep. On *Islay* there were 50 at Ardmore on 9 Aug, 40 at Maol Bhuidhe (by Gruinart) on 6 Sept, 147 at Kinnabus (The Oa) on 15 Sep, 50

at Machir Bay on 21 Sep and 70 at The Monument (The Oa) on 13 Oct. On Oronsay *Colonsay* the peak was 30 on 26 Sep, while on *Tiree* the peak flock was 40 at Vault on 1 Oct, with a peak for the island of 64 on 2 Oct. In *Mid-Argyll* there were 40 at Crinan Ferry on 12 Aug, 70 at Island of Danna on 4 Oct, and 40 at Achafolla (Luing) on 10 Oct. In *Kintyre* there were 40 at Machrihanish on 16 Sep, with 50 there on 22 Sep. At Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* 48 were ringed over the course of the autumn.

EURASIAN SISKIN *Spinus spinus* Gealag-bhuidhe

A locally common partial migrant: present in all areas apart from Coll and Tiree where it is an occasional visitor. Numbers fluctuate from year to year depending on cone crops.

Winter/spring Relatively few reports, mostly in single figures, from *Islay*, *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll*, and *North Argyll*. Larger flocks were of 50 at Barr Iola *Cowal* on 21 Jan, 18 at Stron na Ceardaich (Stonafian) *Cowal* on 5 Feb and 24 at Ardrishaig *Mid-Argyll* on 6 Mar.

Breeding/summer Recorded only in single figures from *Mid-Argyll*, *Cowal*, *Mull* and *Islay*. The only confirmed breeding was fledged juveniles at Corra Farm (Otter Ferry) *Cowal* from 4 Jun onwards. A single female was at Balephuill *Tiree* on 15 May.

Autumn/winter Reports from all areas except *Kintyre*, *Jura* and *Coll*. All records in single figures except 30 at Loch Ba *Mull* on 7 Sep. On *Tiree*, a single juv at Balephuill on 3-15 Oct, then a male on 21 Oct, and a peak of 4 males at Balephuill and a bird at Vault on 4 Nov.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis* Gealag-an-t-sneachda

RED LIST Occurring annually in varying numbers (on passage and in winter): along the coast and in the hills and has probably bred in North Argyll.

Winter/spring First report was 11 at Laggan Bay *Islay* on 3 Jan, then 5 were seen at Traigh an Luig strand *Islay* on 28 Feb and singles at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 19 Jan and (The Oa) *Islay* on 3 Apr. On *Jura* 1 was at the mouth of the Corran River on 19 Jan. On *Mull* 1 was at Gribun on 17 Jan, and 3 at Lochbuie on 22 Jan. 4 were on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 9 Jan, with 7 on 12 Feb then 1 on 6 Mar. 2 were at Totronald *Coll* on 2 Feb. On *Tiree* 2 were at The Reef on 21 Jan, with a late bird at Kilmoluaig on 20 May. In *Kintyre* 1 was at Tayinloan Jetty and 1 at Drumore (by Campbelltown) both on 13 Jan, with both seen again on 17 Jan. In *Mid-Argyll* 1 was at Kilmichael Glen on 17 Jan, 1 at Kilmartin and 4 at Portsonachan, both on 18 Jan. In *North Argyll* a single was seen at the head of Loch Creran on 17 Jan.

Autumn/winter The first report was 2 at Creagan (Loch Creran) *North Argyll* on 11 Sep. On *Jura* 2 were at Beinn an Oir on 22 Sep. On *Islay* 2 were at The Oa on 22 Sept, seen occasionally until 21 Nov, 1 was at Machir Bay on 28 Oct, 1 at Ardnave on 29 Sep, with 10 there on 22 Oct and 1 there on 2 Dec. On *Tiree* 2 were at Balephuill on 11 Sep, 1 at The Reef on 16 Sep, 1 at Scarnish on 24 Oct and the last 1 at Gott rubbish tip on 8 Dec.

LAPLAND BUNTING (LAPLAND LONGSPUR) *Calcarius lapponicus*

AMBER LIST A scarce passage migrant: recorded most frequently in autumn.

Winter/spring The only report was of a single female-type at Crossapol Point *Tiree* on 1 May.

Autumn/winter On *Tiree* there was 1 at Upper Kenovay on 21 Sep, 1 at Barrapol on 26 Sep and 1 at Balephetrish on 11 Oct. 2 were at Turnigil *Colonsay* on 27 Sep and 1 was at Keils *Jura* on 28 Sep.

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW *Zonotrichia albicollis*

A North American vagrant: One was near Otter Ferry, Cowal on 19 Jun 2014.

No records.

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella* Buidheag-bhealaidh

RED LIST A localised resident which is absent from Coll and Tiree and appears to be declining elsewhere. Currently, most birds breed near the coast. All records are welcome.

Winter/spring Most reports came from *Mid-Argyll* (10 sites) with 1-4 birds, but 6 were at Balvicar (Seil) on 5 Apr. In *Kintyre* (5 sites) a max of 5 were in gardens at Stewarton and Southend Jan-Mar. On *Islay* (8 sites) with 1-6 birds, however (at pheasant feeders) 20 at Scarrabus on 4 Mar and 10 at Loch Skerrols on 5 Mar. In *Cowal* 1 was at Colintraive on 4 Mar and a male at Corra Farm (Otter Ferry) on 6 Mar and 6 Apr. On *Mull* there were 3 sites with singles.

Breeding Present in small numbers in a few areas. A male with a newly fledged juv. was found at Feolin *Jura* on 8 Aug with other reports from: *Islay* (4 sites), *Mid-Argyll* (8 sites), *Kintyre* (2 sites) and *Mull* (10 sites). No reports from *Coll*, *Colonsay*, *Cowal*, *North Argyll* and *Tiree*.

Autumn/winter In *Mid-Argyll* (7 sites) held 1-3 birds: however 11 were at Blackmill Bay (Luing) on 24 Oct and 6 at Barraholm (nr Tayvallich) on 6 Dec. On *Islay* (5 sites) held 1-3 birds with 5 at Scarrabus on 31 Dec. *Mull* had 6 sites with 1-5 birds however 7 at Lochdon on 17 Nov, while 2 sites in *Kintyre* both had singles.

ORTOLAN BUNTING *Emberiza hortulana*

A vagrant: one record; at Craignuire, Mull on 9 and 10 May 2009.

No records.

RUSTIC BUNTING *Emberiza rustica*

A vagrant: five records; at Easter Ellister, Islay on 23 May 1980, one at Hynish, Tiree on 4 Jun 1987, singles at Balephuill Tiree on 21 May and 2-3 Jun 2014 and one on Iona, Mull on 27 May 2014.

No records.

LITTLE BUNTING *Emberiza pusilla*

A vagrant: two records; one found dead at Skerryvore Lighthouse (about 15 km south-west of Tiree), on 27 Sep 1985 and one at Milton, Tiree on 23 Oct 2007.

No records.

YELLOW-BREASTED BUNTING *Emberiza aureola*

A vagrant: one record; at Kenovay, Tiree on 5 Sep 1981.

No records.

COMMON REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus* Gealag-lòin

AMBER LIST A locally distributed resident breeder: while nowhere abundant, small flocks sometimes gather outwith the breeding season.

Winter/spring Most widespread and numerous on *Islay*, being regular at RSPB Loch Gruinart with peak counts of 64 on 16 Jan and 50 on 17 Feb, and numbers peaking at 37 at Ardnave on 20 Feb, 20 at Lower Kinnabus (The Oa) on 10 Mar and 50 at Ballinaby on 1 Apr, with only 1-2 at 6 other sites. A regular species on *Colonsay* at Oronsay Farm with a peak of 13 on 14 Jan. On *Tiree* it was present at 5 sites, with 10 around Balinoe on 8 Jan, 8 at Caolas on 13 Jan, 8 at Hynish on 17 Jan and 8 at Middleton on 17 Feb. On *Mull* the only report was 1 at Salen on 27 Mar. In *Cowal* 1 was at Stronafian on 5 Feb. In *Mid-Argyll* 1-2 were around Connel and

Dunstaffnage on 18-19 Jan, 3 were at Inverliever Forest on 21 Jan, 1 at Keilmore on 15 Mar and 8 at Balvicar (Seil) on 28-29 Mar.

Breeding Reported present from *North Argyll* (1 site), *Cowal* (1 site), *Kintyre* (3 sites), *Coll* (3 sites), *Islay* (9 sites), *Mid-Argyll* (9 sites) and *Mull* (9 sites). On *Colonsay* there were 3 Ters. on Oronsay and 28 Ters. on *Colonsay* reflecting more complete observer cover. On *Tiree* there were scattered pairs across the island; however 10 males were at Loch Bhasapol on 18 Jun and fledglings were noted on 31 Aug. There were no reports from *Jura*.

Autumn/winter Reports came from all areas except *Cowal* and *Coll*. Most were from *Islay*, with 18 sites, of which 10 sites were on The Oa, and all in single figures apart from 10 at Scarabus on 31 Dec. *Tiree* had higher counts of 8 at Meningie on 26 Sep and 6 at Sorobaidh Bay on 26 Sep. In *Mid-Argyll*, 1-2 birds were at 6 sites, with 4 at Dalvore (Moine Mhor) on 18 Oct. In *Kintyre* 5 were at Durry Loch (The Laggan) on 30 Sep and 1 at Tayinloan jetty on 29 Sep. Up to 3 were reported from Oronsay *Colonsay* through the period. On *Jura* 2 were at Knockrome on 16 Oct. Birds were noted as 'present' at 2 sites on *Mull* on 22 Sep and 3 Dec and 'present' at Shian *North Argyll* on 3 Oct.

BLACK-HEADED BUNTING *Emberiza melanocephala*

A vagrant: eight records; all of singles, during May to Jul, the last record being on Colonsay in Jun 2005.

No records.

CORN BUNTING *Emberiza calandra* Gealag-bhuachair

RED LIST *A former resident on Tiree and Coll but has recently become extinct. Last accepted report was in Aug 2006 on Coll.*

No records.

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD *Molothrus ater*

A vagrant: one record; at Ardnave Point, Islay on 24 Apr 1988 and was the first British record.

No records.

AMERICAN REDSTART *Setophaga ruticilla*

A vagrant: one record; a female or first-winter bird at Portnahaven, Islay on 1 Nov 1982. This remains the only Scottish record to date.

No records.

NORTHERN PARULA *Parula americana*

A vagrant: one record; a first-winter at Balephuill, Tiree on 25-29 Sep 2010. This remains the only Scottish record to date.

No records.

Escapes and Introductions

This section includes species which are not on the British list or whose occurrence in the UK is EXCLUSIVELY within Categories B, D or E (see definitions of categories on p.17). Other species, whose occurrence in Argyll arises partly or wholly from introduced birds which may not or do not form self-sustaining breeding populations, include White-fronted Goose, Snow

Goose, Barnacle Goose, Mandarin Duck, Red Kite, Red-legged Partridge, Grey Partridge and Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon). These are dealt with in the main systematic list.

Other Category E species recorded in Argyll include: Swan Goose, Ross's Goose, Emperor Goose, Ruddy Shelduck, Cinnamon Teal, Wood Duck, Muscovy Duck, Pelican sp., Flamingo sp., Harris Hawk, Indian Peafowl, Green Pheasant, Reeves Pheasant, Eagle Owl, Ring-necked Parakeet, Red-headed Bunting, Zebra Finch and White-rumped Munia.

MUSCOVY DUCK *Cairina moschata*

Category E. *Probably widespread in Argyll as farmyard birds, but often survive independently, but under-recorded.*

A smart male frequented the Furnace coast, Loch Fyne *Mid-Argyll* during the year.

List of Rejected Records, Pending Records and Records for which Details are Still Awaited.

Please note that the records below are listed for information purposes only, and do not form part of the data set for the years in question.

The following records of species on the ABRC, SBRC or BBRC lists have been rejected or found 'not proven' since the publication of ABR 26.

Species	Recording area	Date(s)	Committee
Black-necked Grebe	<i>Mull</i>	05/11/2015	ABRC
Hobby	<i>Kintyre</i>	16/04/2015	ABRC
Hobby	<i>Kintyre</i>	20/08/2015	ABRC
Hawfinch	<i>Cowal</i>	01/05/2015	ABRC
Goshawk	<i>Mid-Argyll</i>	06/07/2015	ABRC
Goshawk	<i>Mull</i>	11/05/2015	ABRC
Goshawk	<i>Mull</i>	18/08/2015	ABRC
Goshawk	<i>Tiree</i>	18/09/2015	ABRC
NW Redpoll	<i>Mull</i>	02/06/2015	ABRC
Caspian Gull	<i>Mid-Argyll</i>	17/01/2015 – into 2016	SBRC
American Herring Gull	<i>Mid-Argyll</i>	29/12/2014 - 04/03/2015	BBRC
American Herring Gull	<i>Tiree</i>	21/01/2015	BBRC

Most records are rejected not because the committee in question is convinced that a mistake has been made, but because the evidence provided is insufficient to establish the identification.

The following records of species on the BBRC, SBRC or ABRC for 2015 or before are still in circulation or being reviewed around the relevant rarity committees. In some instances the decision has been delayed pending receipt of further details.

Species	Recording area	Date(s)	Committee
Macronesian Shearwater	<i>Kintyre</i>	07/09/2000	BBRC
American Herring Gull	<i>Tiree</i>	22/03/2007	BBRC
American Herring Gull	<i>Tiree</i>	07/05/2007	BBRC
Thayer's Gull	<i>Islay</i>	27/02-24/04/2014	BBRC

Details of the following claimed 2015 records of species on the BBRC, SBRC and ABRC lists have not been received.

Species	Place	Recording Area	Date(s)
Cackling & Todd's Canada Geese	Various	<i>Islay</i>	Various 2015
Hawfinch	Salen	<i>Mull</i>	04/06/2015
Hobby	Salen	<i>Mull</i>	02/07/2015
Common Rosefinch	Lochgilphead	<i>Mid-Argyll</i>	13/06/2015
Sabine's Gull	Oban-Coll-Tiree Ferry	<i>Coll/Tiree</i>	24/09/2015

Anyone who saw any of these birds is encouraged to send in details. The records will not be referred to again in future reports unless details have by then been forwarded to the ABRC, BBRC or SBRC.

Overland passage of Northern Gannets in South Argyll 2016

Eddie Maguire, Iomhar MacMillan, Rab Morton and Charlie Robertson.



Northern Gannets *Kintyre* (Eddie Maguire)

Introduction

During early August 2016 Machrihanish Seabird Observatory (MSBO) wardens Eddie Maguire and Iomhar McMillan suspected that many adult Northern Gannets *Morus bassanus* arriving over Machrihanish Bay from the east had almost certainly crossed over the Kintyre peninsula from Campbeltown Loch. Passage of small numbers crossing over from the Clyde to the Atlantic had already been established (Maguire, 2015), however, additional observations at Campbeltown Harbour would clarify how often this occurred, and how many birds were involved.

The MSBO warden Eddie Maguire arranged coordinated surveillance at Campbeltown. Rab Morton (RM) volunteered and Charlie Robertson (CR) was also recruited to the project. Surveillance at Campbeltown involved watching the behaviour of Gannets that were over the loch and logging the times of all overland crossings.

Almost immediately, both observers became aware that high-flying Gannets were the ones to watch and were far more likely to cross over the peninsula. Many of these high-fliers would initially set off for the east as if leaving the loch for the Kilbrannan Sound: however, they were watched returning over the harbour, although at considerably greater height, and continued flying west over the town for Machrihanish Bay. Utilising this previously unrecorded behaviour, both observers were soon able to predict, with some certainty, when a Gannet was about to cross overland. In addition, observers determined that absence of shoaling fish in Campbeltown Loch was perhaps a trigger that persuaded birds to set off 8 km overland for the west, although other visual factors, including the topography or the sight of plunge-diving Gannets off Machrihanish (Atlantic) may also be a stimulus.

Satellite tracking results from various Gannet colonies around Britain suggest these birds are almost certainly breeding adults on foraging expeditions from the Ailsa Craig colony 31km ESE of Campbeltown Loch.

Surveillance at Machrihanish was dependant on mobile phone contact with observers at Campbeltown Harbour. CR and RM promptly informed MSBO wardens when a Gannet set off high for the west. Primed with a known departure time, the wardens on the Atlantic coast of Kintyre successfully timed many birds arriving over Machrihanish Bay:

e.g. on 15th October CR contacted MSBO from Campbeltown Harbour at 11:24hrs and announced that an adult Gannet had just set off for the west high over the town. MSBO wardens located this individual arriving over the sand dunes at Machrihanish Bay at 11:33hrs. This bird had taken around 9 minutes to fly 8km west over the Kintyre peninsula. Gannets certainly lose height during the crossing although many can still be >150m ASL when they arrive over the bay.



Northern Gannets Kintyre (Eddie Maguire) showing full ‘bellies’ (see discussion)

Results

During August to October 2016 a total of **286** adult Gannets crossed overland from the head of Campbeltown Loch (Clyde) to Machrihanish Bay (Atlantic) on **53** days of observation (Table 1). Birds were seen crossing Kintyre on all days when observations were carried out in August (17 days) and September (25 days). The reduction in overland passage of adults at Campbeltown in October is consistent with the main fledging period on Ailsa Craig which occurs during mid-late September (Forrester *et al.* 2007); with the fledging of juveniles adults are no longer

required to provision the young, and birds commence dispersing to wintering grounds south of the breeding colony.

Table 1. Number of Northern Gannets flying 8km overland from Campbeltown Loch to Machrihanish Bay during August to October 2016. (N/O – No observations made on these dates; 0 – no birds seen crossing during observation period).

Date	August	September	October
1	1	15	3
2	N/O	5	0
3	N/O	10	0
4	N/O	1	1
5	N/O	3	1
6	N/O	5	0
7	N/O	5	4
8	13	7	0
9	N/O	N/O	1
10	N/O	2	1
11	N/O	8	0*
12	N/O	N/O	0*
13	3	16	0*
14	N/O	9	0*
15	19	8	6
16	6	10	0
17	5	11	2
18	2	8	1
19	2	4	2
20	2	3	0
21	N/O	N/O	0
22	N/O	2	0
23	N/O	N/O	0
24	1	N/O	1
25	6	2	0
26	3	4	0
27	3	3	0
28	7	5	0
29	11	6	0
30	7	9	0
31	11	-	0
Total	102	161	23

* On these October dates (11th - 14th / see **Table** above) many Gannets were foraging in Campbeltown Loch. CR commented: *‘large numbers of Mackerel were present in the loch so the Gannets were fully occupied. I would have been very surprised if any had crossed over the peninsula.’*

* On 14th October RM also remarked on the abundance of fish in the loch: *‘Apart from Gannets plunge-diving, Herring Gulls were noted catching small Mackerels, around 20 cm in length, in shallow water by the inner pontoon near the Tourist Information Centre’.*

On 23 September an adult was noted gaining such great height over the head of the loch that it was almost a dot in the sky before setting off for the west, and on 7 October four singles were flying so high to west that they were described as being ‘*virtually in the gods*’ by the observer (CR).

Discussion

So far, this research has revealed that only adult Gannets fly west over the narrowest part of the Kintyre peninsula, a distance of 8km, usually at great height, far more frequently and in far greater numbers than was previously documented (Maguire, 2015). Two additional aspects of the initial observations have been confirmed by these more detailed studies. Only adult birds made the overland crossing and no juveniles (ICY) or sub-adult birds were noted suggesting that this regular overland passage may be something which is ‘*learnt*’ rather than an innate characteristic of Gannets (although see below regarding migrating birds). It is also notable that no passage from west to east has been noted, suggesting that the birds crossing to the west at Campbeltown have recently dispersed on foraging expeditions from the breeding colony on Ailsa Craig.

Adult Gannets starting out on a foraging expedition from Ailsa are likely to be at minimal weight, look streamlined, and as we now know, have the ability to cross Kintyre from east to west. Conversely, birds that have been foraging successfully over the Atlantic may be too heavy to cross land. Personal observations by Eddie Maguire over many years has revealed that flocks travelling south off MSBO on the return trip to Ailsa are not streamlined; they have distended rear ends and look bloated. In view of the additional weight (in fish prey) these heavily-laden birds are carrying they do not appear to have the ability to commit to an 8km overland crossing and therefore rely on dynamic soaring (wave power) to return to the colony.

Other observations of overland passage in the UK have tended to relate to birds moving between the west and east coasts of Britain and probably relate to migrating birds rather than the overland foraging strategy that has been observed passing over Kintyre. Bob Furness recovered geolocators from 50 adult Gannets breeding on Bass Rock over several seasons and one of those shows a bird migration overland (*in litt.*). The tracks were determined by a combination of sea surface temperature and light intensity data, which for seabirds in European waters gives much more accurate location estimates than just using light intensity alone, because SST patterns are very strong in European waters. The one bird that clearly flew overland was an individual that wintered off West Africa and was unusually late returning north in spring. It flew past Cornwall, through the Irish Sea, then overland to the Bass, apparently from the Clyde to the Forth although the exact point of crossing is impossible to identify from the tracking data. But it certainly crossed from the northern Irish Sea to the Forth rather than going all the way round the coast.

David Jardine noted an adult Gannet appearing out of dense fog in September over Kielder village, Northumberland, mid-way between the North Sea and the Solway Firth, suggesting that this overland passage was a result of weather conditions rather than a regular migration route (*pers. comm.*). However, Taylor (1977) describes five instances of birds, mainly juveniles, but also of an adult, heading inland south west from the upper reaches of the Firth of Forth towards the Clyde in late August and September. One was also seen flying west over Glasgow (Bernie Zonfrillo *pers. comm.*)

So far, observations of migration across Scotland is insignificant compared to our current understanding of the remarkable number of birds (286 birds on 52 dates of observation) that crossed 8km overland at Campbeltown during August to October to gain access to foraging grounds in the Atlantic: more Gannets were verified crossing South Kintyre in a single day in August 2016 (19) than has ever been established crossing Scotland. The adult that recently crossed from the North Irish Sea to the Bass Rock (geolocator) is the only *verified* crossing and around 15 others are *presumed* to have crossed over many years. However, it is important to note that the finding in South Kintyre relates to Gannets regularly commuting across land as part of a foraging strategy, rather than migration. Gannets leaving the Clyde for the Atlantic attain great height before committing to the overland crossing. This was a significant discovery.

The frequency of the crossings at Campbeltown lends credence to the likelihood that other short overland passage routes may await discovery in Argyll. Therefore as Gannets are often seen high up other sea lochs (Ap Rheinnallt *et al.* 2007), similar observations in locations such as at upper Loch Fyne, West Loch Tarbert and Loch Gilp may prove instructive. It is important to note that foraging birds at the head of Campbeltown Loch cross overland only when they fail to find accessible shoaling fish. Surely this is the prime time to watch for high-flyers that may cross overland at other sea lochs in Argyll?

At present, verified overland passage by adult Gannets to access foraging grounds is confined exclusively to South Kintyre; the birds usually depart overland at great height, far more frequently, and in far greater numbers than was previously documented (Maguire, 2015). It would also be interesting to confirm if this overland passage has been noted in other parts of the British Isles with similar coastlines adjacent to Gannet colonies (e.g. Shetland). This project was a marathon enterprise and an important local study that delivered a unique contribution to Scottish ornithology. During 2017 the project will be extended with regular coordinated surveillance from March to October at both Campbeltown and MSBO.

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Egyptian Goose in South Kintyre on 22nd May 2015 **A new species for Argyll**

Eddie Maguire



Egyptian Goose *Kintyre* (Eddie Maguire)

During early March 2015, I made occasional visits to flood pools on grassland at Strath Farm, The Laggan in South Kintyre, Argyll. By mid-April, one of the floods, the east pool (NR 683197), developed into a significant marsh-like habitat with a classic muddy margin that had obvious potential to attract a variety of migrant waders and other wetland species. This prompted twice-daily visits to the area.

Some scarce and rare species were found and photographed from spring through to autumn/early winter including two male Red-necked Phalaropes (May), two Pectoral Sandpipers (July), a Wood Sandpiper (August) and single Little Gull (September) and Glaucous Gull (November).

During a brief visit there on 22nd May a late adult Whooper Swan was the only species present on the pool. I was about to leave when I noticed a movement in fairly tall grass just to the north of the pool. I scanned the area with binoculars and immediately found a striking goose-like pale head protruding from the tall grass. The bird had a rich brown patch around the eye and a pale bill. I knew immediately that it was an Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus*. It flew to the edge of the pool revealing large white wing patches, a dark patch on lower breast (indicating adult) and joined the Whooper.

The bird was a bit wary but the Whooper appeared totally unperturbed and the goose soon settled down. At this point I assumed (incorrectly) that it was probably an escape from a collection and I photographed it mainly because it was a beautiful bird and it was on my patch. I had no idea that Egyptian Goose was on the *Scottish List* so I did not take a detailed description and did not report the presence of the bird.

Two days later, I decided to do some research and while looking through Argyll Bird Report 2012 I discovered that this species is in Category E of the *Scottish List* and is considered by SBRC (since January 2013).

The realisation that I had photographed a potential first for Argyll was a big surprise!

I contacted Jim Dickson (Argyll Recorder) who informed me he had an old report of one at the Add Estuary although no description or other details had materialised.

Egyptian Goose is an African species with sustainable feral populations in SE England and in many W European countries. There have been ca. ten Scottish records since 2008 with some of these birds reaching Orkney and Shetland.

Before it was drained (well it is a farmer's field!) the Strath east pool attracted a fantastic variety of birds. For example, on 26th May, just four days after I photographed the Egyptian Goose there, Jim and I enjoyed amazing views and photographed two beautiful male Red-necked Phalaropes – an unprecedented spring mainland occurrence in Argyll.

This record was accepted by Scottish Birds Records Committee and becomes the first record of Egyptian Goose in Argyll.

Argyll Ringing Recoveries

Selected Highlights From 2014

Nigel Scriven

The individuals and groups that are involved in ringing birds in Argyll are many and varied, as is the range of birds ringed. There is no single Argyll ringing group to co-ordinate and collate ringing activities and the data generated. The information below is gleaned from the BTO on-line ringing report for 2015, which is a tiny selection from the vast quantity of information held on the national ringing database:

www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/ringing/publications/online-ringing-reports

Birds included in the report may include records from previous years that only found their way into the BTO database in 2015, and had not previously been reported. Details for Argyll are found listed under the 'area' of Argyll. It is from these that birds ringed, or later found in Argyll are selected. Criteria for selection include foreign recoveries, interesting movements within the British Isles, and age of bird. Distances are from point of original ringing, not where previously seen, if there were multiple sightings. *Please report all rings found to www.ring.ac*

Species/ Ring No.	Age & finding details	Date ringed date found	Location /distance/direction/ time difference
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MUTE SWAN *Widespread resident. At 20 years, this was a long-lived bird.*

Z70200	First-year	12-11-1995	Oban Bay North Argyll
	Freshly dead	12-07-2015	Campbeltown Kintyre 112km S 19y 8m 0d

WHOOPEE SWAN *Sad end to a well travelled bird (that would probably have been to Iceland every year between times)*

ZZ7883	Adult Male	12-12-2006	Martin Mere Lancs
	Caught by ringer	11-02-2011	Caerlaverock Dumfries & Galloway 155km
	Freshly dead	10-04-2015	Uig Coll 407km NW 8y 3m 29d hit wires

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Recovery of migrant bird*

ISR	Adult Female	21-04-2013	Andakill (Borgarfjarðarsýsla) Iceland
134729	ring only	25-01-2015	Port A'mhuilinn, Seil Mid-Argyll 1,273km SE 1y 9m 4d

GREYLAG GOOSE *Long-lived birds on Tiree until culled on the island*

5211630	Adult Female	06-07-1999	Loch Garradh A Chapail Tiree:
	Freshly shot	30-03-2015	Balinoe Tiree 2km 15y 8m 24d
5211931	Adult Female	11-07-2000	Loch An Eilein Tiree
	Freshly shot	12-11-2015	Crossapol Tiree 2km 15y 4m 1d

BARNACLE GOOSE *Two migrant recoveries*

NOS	First-year Fem	20-07-2011	Ny-Alesund Svalbard
CA45850	Freshly shot	01-04-2015	Cluanach Islay 2,669km SSW 3y 8m 12d
1290801	Adult Male	30-10-2008	Gruinart Farm Islay
	Freshly shot	15-10-2015	Fagurhlid, Landbrot, Vestur-Skaftafells Iceland 1,092km NW 6y 11m 15d

FULMAR *Breeding bird locally predated by raptor*

FR44185	Adult	17-06-2012	Soa, Iona Mull
	Dead	24-09-2015	Site Confidential nr Bunessan Mull
	(bird of prey)		12km E 3y 3m 7d

MANX SHEARWATER <i>Retraps of presumed breeding birds</i>			
EW	Adult	02-07-2010	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
50305	Caught by ringer	29-06-2015	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i> 0km 4y 11m 27d
EW	Adult	28-06-2010	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
50133	Caught by ringer	29-06-2015	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i> 0km 5y 0m 1d
<hr/>			
STORM PETREL <i>Some long-lived birds, and some long distance movements</i>			
2405648	Adult	26-06-1991	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	Caught by ringer	02-07-2015	Lunga, Treshnish Isles 0km 24y 0m 6d
2523942	Nestling	14-09-2011	Mousa Isle <i>Shetland</i>
	Caught by ringer	03-07-2015	Lunga, Treshnish Isles 496km SW 3y 9m 19d
2695934	Adult	21-08-2014	Fair Isle, <i>Shetland</i>
	Caught by ringer	01-07-2015	Lunga, Treshnish Isles 442km SW 0y 10m 10d
2679452	Adult	01-07-2015	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	Caught by ringer	06-08-2015	High Island <i>Galway</i> 409km SW 0y 1m 5d
2620182	Adult	24-07-2008	Twyness, North Ronaldsay <i>Orkney</i>
	Caught by ringer	03-07-2015	Lunga, Treshnish Isles 396km SW 6y 11m 9d
2684406	Adult	05-08-2013	Annagh Head, Bellmullet <i>Mayo Eire</i>
	Caught by ringer	02-07-2015	Lunga, Treshnish Isles 342km NE 1y 10m 27d
2511262	Adult	27-07-2006	Sanda Island <i>Kintyre</i>
	Caught by ringer	14-06-2007	Ponta de Almadena <i>Faro Portugal</i> 2,039km S 0y 10m 18d
<hr/>			
GANNET <i>Ailsa Craig living a long life before perishing in Argyll</i>			
1232130	Nestling	27-06-1986	Ailsa Craig <i>South Ayrshire</i>
	Freshly dead	27-05-2015	Brock, Gott Bay <i>Tiree</i> 175km NW 28y 11m 0d (storm)
<hr/>			
CORMORANT <i>A west coast to east coast movement</i>			
5230915	Nestling	07-06-2008	Eilean Na Cille Steep Islet, Sound of Jura:
	Unknown	30-04-2015	Pittenweem <i>Fife</i> 180km E 6y 10m 23d (ring only)
<hr/>			
SHAG <i>Some long-lived birds, and an interesting movement (also a long-lived bird)</i>			
1366980	Nestling	21-06-1999	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	Alive	28-06-2015	Lunga, Treshnish Isles 0km 16y 0m 7d colour rings
1378422	Nestling	26-06-2002	Lunga, Treshnish Isles
	Caught by ringer	02-07-2015	Lunga, Treshnish Isles 0km 13y 0m 6d
1267896	Adult Male	11-06-2002	Port Ban <i>Colonsay</i>
	Caught by ringer	12-06-2015	Port Ban <i>Colonsay</i> 0km 13y 0m 1d
1170737	Nestling	16-06-1984	Corr Eilean, Sound of <i>Jura</i>
	Unknown	02-03-2015	Bonehill, Tamworth <i>Staffordshire</i> 450km SE ring only 30y 8m 14d
<hr/>			
WHITE-TAILED EAGLE <i>Interesting where Argyll Birds wander</i>			
ZZ1013	Nestling	16-06-2004	Site Confidential <i>Argyll & Bute</i>
	Freshly dead	13-08-2015	L.A'bhraoin <i>Highland</i> 143km NNE 11y 1m 28d
ZY3385	Nestling	04-06-2014	Site Confidential, <i>Mull</i>
	Alive - colour marks seen	04-03-2015	Soulseat Loch <i>Dumfries and Galloway</i> 207km SSE 0y 9m 0d
	Alive - colour marks seen	28-03-2015	Bollihope <i>Durham</i> 339km SE 0y 9m 24d

HEN HARRIER *Demonstration of how far these birds roam*

EG79508	Nestling Male	29-06-2014	An Criap, Glendaruel Forest, Strachur
	Alive	03-01-2015	Poole Harbour <i>Dorset</i> 624km SSE 0y 6m 5d
	wing-tag seen		

BUZZARD *A young wanderer dies in first year*

GR62107	Nestling	11-06-2015	Loch Ard Forest <i>Stirling</i>
	Long dead	15-11-2015	near Clachan <i>Kintyre</i> 84km WSW 0y 5m 4d

GOLDEN EAGLE *Interesting movement from hatching to adult territory*

ZZ1504	Nestling	20-06-2008	Site Confidential, nr Carradale <i>Kintyre</i>
	Caught by ringer	30-11-2015	An Criap, Glendaruel Forest, Strachur <i>Cowal</i> 48km NNE 7y 5m 10d

OSPREY *Argyll bird sighted in wintering area*

1421522	Nestling	28-06-2012	Site Confidential, near Loch Awe <i>Mid-Argyll</i>
	Alive - colour marks seen	21-10-2015	Parc National de Oiseaux du Djoudj Senegal 4,534km SSW 3y 3m 23d

CORNCRAKE *Adult dies on migration on a late date*

EG59323	Adult Female	23-05-2012	Tottronald <i>Coll</i>
	Dead	26-10-2015	Saint Germain de Marencennes <i>Charente-Maritime France</i> 1,238km SSE 3y 5m 3d

OYSTERCATCHER *Long lived birds and interesting movements*

FV63800	Adult	29-09-1989	Dawlish Warren, Exe Estuary <i>Devon</i>
	Freshly dead (natural causes)	07-05-2015	Loch Gruinart <i>Islay</i> 613km NNW 25y 7m 8d
FP79978	Adult	04-02-2006	Whiteford Sands, Gower <i>Swansea</i>
	Dead	19-07-2015	Vaul Golf Course <i>Tiree</i> 570km NNW 9y 5m 15d
FR44139	Nestling	10-06-2003	Lagganbeg, Kilninver <i>Mid-Argyll</i>
	Freshly dead	08-06-2015	Kilchrenan <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 20km E 11y 11m 29d

CURLEW *Norwegian bird perishes on Tiree*

NOS	Nestling	27-06-2011	Kaffiholen, Ha Rogaland SW Norway
4102570	Dead	22-10-2015	Traigh Chornaig <i>Tiree</i> 784km WSW 4y 3m 25d

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *This well travelled bird has also been seen in Co Clare, N Yorkshire, Cambridgeshire and regularly at Cley, Norfolk*

POL	Adult	19-02-2007	Salinas de Alhos Vedros <i>Setúbal Portugal</i>
I010376	Alive - colour marks seen	19-04-2010	Oronsay <i>Colonsay</i> 1,941km N 3y 2m 0d
	Alive - colour marks seen	21-04-2013	Loch Gilp <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 1,946km N 6y 2m 2d

WOODCOCK *Sad end of this vulnerable and declining species*

EY79413	First-year	20-03-2014	Knocklearoch <i>Islay</i>
	Freshly dead	07-12-2015	Ardnahoe <i>Islay</i> 8km NNE 1y 8m 17d

PUFFIN *2 long-lived birds*

ES64269	Adult	01-07-1994	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	Caught by ringer	29-06-2015	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i> 0km 20y 11m 28d
ET52595	Adult	30-06-1997	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	Caught by ringer	30-06-2015	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i> 0km 18y 0m 0d

RAZORBILL *Some long-lived birds from Sanda and the Treshnish Isles*

T32330	Nestling	29-07-1986	Sanda Island <i>Kintyre</i>
	Unknown (ring only)	10-06-2015	Charmouth <i>Dorset</i> 536km SSE 28y 10m 12d
M97677	Nestling	22-06-1999	Sanda Island <i>Kintyre</i>
	Freshly dead	30-12-2015	W Bexington <i>Dorset</i> 547km SSE 16y 6m 8d
M97505	Adult	22-06-1999	Sanda Island <i>Kintyre</i>
	Freshly dead (leg only)	07-08-2015	Low Balyett <i>Dumfries and Galloway</i> 54km SE 16y 1m 16d
M85773	Adult	25-06-2000	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	Caught by ringer	30-06-2015	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i> 0km 15y 0m 5d
<hr/> GUILLEMOT <i>Interesting movement and long-lived birds</i>			
R24949	Adult	19-06-2004	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	Long dead	23-12-2015	Northton, Isle of Harris <i>Western Isles</i> 152km NNW 11y 6m 4d
T43865	Adult	20-06-1989	Port Ban, <i>Colonsay</i>
	Caught by ringer	15-06-2015	Port Ban, <i>Colonsay</i> 0km 25y 11m 26d
<hr/> COMMON TERN <i>Good foreign recoveries of Argyll birds</i>			
ST27040	Nestling	19-07-2013	South Shian, Benderloch <i>North Argyll</i>
	Caught by ringer	25-08-2015	Sandymount Strand, South Dublin Bay, Eire 360km S 2y 1m 6d
ST08227	Nestling	04-07-2012	South Shian, Benderloch <i>North Argyll</i>
	Dead	15-03-2014	Grand Popo Benin 5,621km S 1y 8m 11d
<hr/> BLACK-HEADED GULL <i>Great results from colour-ringing</i>			
EY21564	Nestling	16-06-2013	Broad Law, Moorfoot Hills <i>Scottish Borders</i>
	Alive - colour marks seen	02-10-2014	Balloch West <i>Dunbartonshire</i> 100km WNW 1y 3m 16d
	Alive - colour marks seen	02-01-2015	Ardishaig, <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 152km W 1y 6m 17d
	Alive - colour marks seen	13-01-2015	Balloch West <i>Dunbartonshire</i> 100km WNW 1y 6m 28d
	Alive - colour marks seen	28-12-2015	Balloch West <i>Dunbartonshire</i> 100km WNW 2y 6m 12d
<hr/> MEDITERRANEAN GULL <i>Great results from Polish colour-ringing make good stories</i>			
PLG - FN27458	Nestling	06-06-2004	Zastow Karczmiski, Wilkow <i>Lubelskie</i> Poland
	Alive - colour marks seen	31-03-2005	Farne Islands <i>Northumberland</i> 1,625km WNW 0y 9m 25d
	Alive - colour marks seen	15-04-2005	Port Seton Burn <i>East Lothian</i> 1,713km WNW 0y 10m 9d
	Alive - colour marks seen	25-04-2005	Farne Islands <i>Northumberland</i> 1,625km WNW 0y 10m 19d
	Alive - colour marks seen	28-01-2006	Meigle Bay, Skelmorlie <i>North Ayrshire</i> 1,832km WNW 1y 7m 22d
	Alive - colour marks seen	03-03-2009	Gourock <i>Inverclyde</i> 1,829km WNW 4y 8m 25d
	Alive - colour marks seen	23-03-2010	Paisley <i>Renfrewshire</i> 1,802km WNW 5y 9m 17d
	Alive - colour marks seen	18-03-2014	Lochgilphead, <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 1,868km WNW 9y 9m 12d
	Alive - colour	18-01-2015	Lochgilphead, <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 1,868km WNW 10y

	marks seen		7m 12d
PLG - FN27458	Nestling	06-06-2004	Zastow Karczmiski, Wilkow <i>Lubelskie</i> Poland
	Alive - colour marks seen	18-01-2015	Lochgilphead, <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 1,868km WNW 10y 7m 12d
PLG - FN16146	Nestling	11-06-2014	Wejdyki, Ryn, <i>Warminsko-Mazurskie</i> Poland
	Alive - colour marks seen	12-09-2015	Black Mill Bay, Luing, <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 1,747km W 1y 3m 1d
<hr/>			
COMMON GULL	<i>Short movement but long lived bird</i>		
EL43534	Nestling	14-06-2006	Airds Islet, Loch Etive, <i>Mid Argyll</i>
	Freshly dead injury	15-07-2015	Abbot's Isle, L Etive 4km 9y 1m 1d
<hr/>			
HERRING GULL	<i>Interesting movements</i>		
GC02329	Nestling	04-07-2006	Sanda Island, <i>Kintyre</i>
	Freshly dead	27-06-2015	The Wig, Loch Ryan <i>Dumfries and Galloway</i> 47km SE 8y 11m 23d
GN24872	Nestling	23-06-2007	Kilmaraonaig Islands, Loch Etive
	Alive - ring read in field	15-07-2015	Oban, <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 9km WSW 8y 0m 22d
GR22496	Nestling	25-06-2014	Badbea, Berriedale <i>Highland</i>
	Freshly dead	29-03-2015	Ormsary <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 282km SSW 0y 9m 4d
GN91321	Nestling	05-07-2012	Sanda Island, <i>Kintyre</i>
	Freshly dead	10-09-2015	Glasgow 111km NE 3y 2m 5d
<hr/>			
GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL	<i>Interesting movements</i>		
HT82927	Nestling	26-06-2013	Eilean Balnagowan, L Linnhe, Duror, <i>Highland</i>
	Freshly dead	07-06-2015	Eilean Dubh, L Craignish <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 56km SSW 1y 11m 12d
MA02256	Nestling	15-06-2014	Pladda, Arran <i>North Ayrshire</i>
	Freshly dead (pollution)	20-05-2015	Grogport, <i>Kintyre</i> 34km NW 0y 11m 5d
MA02269	Nestling	19-06-2015	Pladda, Arran <i>North Ayrshire</i>
	Long dead (in net or cage)	15-10-2015	Campbeltown, <i>Kintyre</i> 30km W 0y 3m 26d
<hr/>			
BARN OWL	<i>Doesn't normally move much after limited juvenile dispersal</i>		
GC89278	Nestling	10-08-2013	An Criap, Glendaruel Forest, Strachur <i>Cowal</i>
	Freshly dead (hit by car)	02-02-2015	Ardgartan <i>Cowal</i> 35km NE 1y 5m 23d
GR35337	Nestling	09-07-2014	An Criap, Glendaruel Forest, Strachur <i>Cowal</i>
	Freshly dead	01-05-2015	Ardpatrick <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 34km SW 0y 9m 22d
<hr/>			
SAND MARTIN	<i>An interesting direction of movement</i>		
Z656480	Adult	27-06-2015	Langa Quarry, Kilchenzie <i>Kintyre</i>
	Caught by ringer	31-07-2015	Powgavie, Inchtute <i>Perth & Kinross</i> 192km ENE 0y 1m 4d
<hr/>			
SWALLOW	<i>At 7 years a long-lived bird</i>		
X129123	First-year	27-07-2008	Pett Level <i>East Sussex</i>
	Unknown - ring	29-10-2015	Dunstaffnage Castle <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 736km NNW 7y 3m 2d
<hr/>			
WILLOW WARBLER	<i>A typical movement</i>		

EVP906	First-year Fem	15-08-2014	Embley Wood <i>Hampshire</i>
	Caught by ringer	04-05-2015	Aros Moss <i>Kintyre</i> 567km NNW 0y 8m 19d
SEDGE WARBLER <i>A typical movement</i>			
D649802	1st-year	16-09-2014	Oxmoor Wood, near Runcorn <i>Cheshire</i>
	Freshly dead - cat	12-07-2015	Scalasaig, <i>Colonsay</i> 377km NW 0y 9m 26d
BLACKBIRD <i>A Scandinavian bird wintering in Argyll</i>			
NOS	Full-grown Male	15-04-2013	Knapstad, Hobol <i>Ostfold Norway</i>
7476431	Alive - ring read in field	25-12-2015	Connel <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 1,027km WSW 2y 8m 10d
SONG THRUSH <i>An interesting recovery</i>			
RL03917	Full-grown Male	11-03-2013	Mill Lane Thetford <i>Norfolk</i>
	Caught by ringer	13-06-2015	Balvicar, Seil <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 596km NW 2y 3m 2d
DUNNOCK <i>Normally sedentary, this is quite a movement for the species</i>			
Y484416	Adult Male	05-09-2013	Lagganbeg, Kilninver, <i>Mid-Argyll</i>
	Freshly dead (hit glass)	11-02-2015	Lochgilphead <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 32km S 1y 5m 6d
TWITE <i>A small selection of movements from this colour-ringing study</i>			
Z156856	First-year Fem	18-03-2015	Connah's Quay <i>Flintshire</i>
	Alive - colour rings seen	20-06-2015	Black Mill Bay, Luing <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 369km NNW 0y 3m 2d
Z156866	First-year Male	18-03-2015	Connah's Quay <i>Flintshire</i>
	Alive - colour marks seen	20-06-2015	Black Mill Bay, Luing <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 369km NNW 0y 3m 2d (
L586011	First-year Fem	10-09-2014	Machrihanish <i>Kintyre</i>
	Caught by ringer	14-03-2015	Connah's Quay <i>Flintshire</i> 298km SE 0y 6m 4d
LESSER REDPOLL <i>Notable movement of this irruptive species</i>			
L230950	First-year Male	05-10-2012	Landguard Point, Felixstowe <i>Suffolk</i>
	Alive - ring read in field	15-06-2015	Treshnish Mull 713km NW 2y 8m 10d
GOLDFINCH <i>Wide-ranging movements of this mobile partial migrant</i>			
Z329591	Adult Female	08-05-2015	Calliburn Croft, nr Campbeltown <i>Kintyre</i>
	Caught by ringer	20-12-2015	Lower Basildon <i>West Berkshire</i> 532km SSE 0y 7m 12d
BLB	First-year Male	20-04-2013	Jonkershove <i>West-Vlaanderen Belgium</i>
13069624	Caught by ringer	18-04-2014	Calliburn Croft, nr Campbeltown <i>Kintyre</i> 756km NW 0y 11m 29d
SISKIN <i>This species regularly travels across Europe</i>			
D251322	First-year Male	24-04-2013	Lemington Hall, Alnwick <i>Northumberland</i>
	Freshly dead	23-05-2015	Pennyghael, Mull 284km WNW 2y 0m 29d

Recent Literature on Argyll birds

Here we present a brief bibliography in alphabetical order by author name, of recent publications that relate (directly or indirectly) to birds in Argyll, with a short description where considered appropriate. This bibliography adds to the one in Argyll Bird Report Volume 26. It includes new material not listed in the previous report but published by the end of 2016. Web pages where publications can be accessed are listed where appropriate.

Appleton, G.F. 2016. Spring records of black-tailed godwits in Scotland. Scottish Birds 36: 242-245. *Reports on the value of colour ring sightings to track movements of black-tailed godwits, as about 2% of the Icelandic black-tailed godwit population have been colour ringed. Thanks largely to John Bowler, Tiree has provided particularly valuable data with sightings of 63 different colour ringed individuals during spring migration. Perhaps surprisingly, only one of these 63 birds has been seen in Tiree in more than one spring, suggesting that birds stop over in Argyll primarily when conditions are adverse for continued migration rather than visiting the same sites each year.*

Balotari-Chiebao, F., Brommer, J.E., Ninimäki, T. and Laaksonen, T. 2016. Proximity to wind-power plants reduces the breeding success of the white-tailed eagle. Animal Conservation 19: 265-272. *Levels of disturbance were not enough to prevent white-tailed eagles from breeding close to wind turbines in Finland. However, breeding success of pairs close to turbines was reduced, possibly due to collision mortality. The work has relevance to Argyll, given the large proportion of the UK white-tailed eagle and the many wind farms in Argyll.*

British Birds 2016. News and Comment (November 2016). Results of the 4th National Survey of golden eagles in Scotland. British Birds November 2016. *British Birds editorial highlights that the 4th national survey of golden eagles, carried out in 2015, found 508 pairs of golden eagles in Scotland, a 15% increase from the previous national survey in 2003. Despite some continuing problems of persecution in particular areas, especially in the eastern Highlands, numbers now exceed the target of 500 pairs that was set as defining 'favourable conservation status'. Argyll remains an important area for golden eagles. Full details of the survey results are due to be published soon.*

Challis, A., Wilson, M.W., Holling, M., Roos, S., Stevenson, A. and Stirling-Aird, P. 2016. Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme Report 2015. BTO Scotland, Stirling. Available on-line at http://raptormonitoring.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/SRMS_Report15.pdf and associated data tables at http://raptormonitoring.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/All-SRMS-Species_2015.pdf *This annual summary of the Raptor Monitoring Scheme in Scotland provides results provided by the Argyll Raptor Study Group and others for Argyll and puts these in a national context for 2015.*

Fernandez-Bellon, D., Irwin, S., Wilson, M. and O'Halloran, J. 2015. Reproductive output of hen harriers *Circus cyaneus* in relation to wind turbine proximity. Irish Birds 10: 143-150. *The paper reports a study in Ireland which found no statistically significant effect of proximity to wind turbines on breeding success of hen harriers. The authors found a lower success of nests within 1 km of a wind turbine, suggesting that birds might be affected if breeding close to a turbine, but the difference was non-significant, and there was no difference in mean brood size*

in relation to distance. Although the study was carried out in Ireland, the work is relevant to Argyll given the importance of Argyll for the UK hen harrier population and the large number of wind farms in Argyll that are in or close to hen harrier breeding habitat.

Fourcade, Y., Richardson, D.S., Keiss, O., Budka, M., Green, R.E., Fokin, S. and Secondi, J. 2016. Corncrake conservation genetics at a European scale: The impact of biogeographical and anthropological processes. *Biological Conservation* 198: 210-219. *Corncrakes show very little genetic structure across the entire breeding range, although those in westernmost populations (e.g. Argyll) were very slightly differentiated from those in the main breeding range. The data suggest a possible net gene flow from eastern to western populations.*

Heuck, C., Herrmann, C., Schabo, D.G., Brandl, R. and Albrecht, J. 2016. Density-dependent effects on reproductive performance in a recovering population of white-tailed eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*. *Ibis* DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12444. *A 14-year study in NE Germany concluded that, to avoid increasing competition with conspecifics due to continued population recovery, breeding pairs seem to select increasingly suboptimal habitats. This will lead to breeding numbers reaching a limit set by the trade-off between distance to favourable foraging habitat and distance to neighbouring breeding pairs. This may apply also to the reintroduced population in Argyll.*

Hewson, C.M., Thorup, K., Pearce-Higgins, J.W. and Atkinson, P.W. 2016. Population decline is linked to migration route in the common cuckoo. *Nature Communications* 7: 12296. *Cuckoo decline in UK is linked to migration route. All tracked Scottish cuckoos used an easterly migration route associated with high survival, whereas many from England took a more direct route south but one where survival is poor. The differences in preference for migration route appear in part to explain why cuckoo numbers are declining fast in England but are more stable in Scotland.*

Jardine, D., Murray, S. and Jeavons, R. 2016. Kittiwakes on Colonsay, Inner Hebrides, 2016. *The Seabird Group Newsletter* 133: 13-14. *A complete count of Argyll's largest Kittiwake colony found a 46% decline in the number of apparently occupied nests since 2000.*

McGowan, R.Y., and McInerny, C.J. 2016. Scottish Birds Records Committee report on rare birds in Scotland, 2014. *Scottish Birds* 36: 99-120. *This report puts several Argyll rarity sightings (such as white-billed diver, glossy ibis, black kite, white-rumped sandpiper, yellow-legged gull, red-rumped swallow, melodius warbler, marsh warbler, and rustic bunting into a national context.*

Nager, R.G. and O'Hanlon, N.J. 2016. Changing numbers of three gull species in the British Isles. *Waterbirds* 39: 15-28. *The paper reports on the trends in breeding numbers of large gulls throughout the UK between 1969 and 2013. Herring gulls decreased considerably, great black-backed gulls decreased and lesser black-backed gulls increased until 2000 then decreased. However, changes varied among regions. Herring gull decrease was greater in the north and west of Scotland than in eastern Britain. Change in numbers showed evidence of density-dependence, smaller colonies tending to increase whereas larger colonies tended to decline.*

Pacheco, A. and Ferreira, O. 2016. Hydrodynamic changes imposed by tidal energy converters on extracting energy on a real case scenario. *Applied Energy* 180: 369-385. *This paper is not about birds, but in view of concerns about potential impacts of tidal turbines on marine birds it may nevertheless be of interest. It describes the hydrodynamics of the Evopod tidal turbine deployed in Sanda Sound, Kintyre, as measured in situ during turbine operation.*

Pearce-Higgins, J.W., Wright, L.J., Grant, M.C. and Douglas, D.J.T. 2016. The role of habitat change in driving black grouse *Tetrao tetrix* population declines across Scotland. *Bird Study* 63: 66-72. *Data from Argyll were included in this study but not presented separately. Populations across Scotland were most stable where unenclosed moorland included a patchwork of both rough grassland and heather. Declines were greatest where conditions had transitioned from pre-thicket to closed canopy woodland.*

Roos, S., Donald, C., Dugan, D., Hancock, M.H., O'Hara, D., Stephen, L. and Grant, M. 2016. Habitat associations of young black grouse *Tetrao tetrix* broods. *Bird Study* 63: 203-213. *In the Scottish Highlands female black grouse with young broods selected areas rich in wet flushes, grasses and Sphagnum mosses.*

Sansom, A., Evans, R. and Roos, S. 2016. Population and future range modelling of reintroduced Scottish white-tailed eagles (*Haliaeetus albicilla*). *Scottish Natural Heritage Commissioned Report No. 898*. *Reviewing detailed data on survival and breeding success, this report estimates that the population of white-tailed eagles in Scotland, which reached 98 pairs in 2014, could increase to over 200 pairs by 2025, with range expansion mostly along the west coast of Scotland. Possibly about one-quarter of this population will be in Argyll.*

Schmitt, S., Eaton, M. and Drewitt, A. 2015. The spotted crane in the UK: results of the 2012 survey. *British Birds* 108: 220-230. *A UK-wide survey in 2012 found 28 singing males at 11 sites, a 65% decline from numbers found in the previous national survey in 1999. The first reported in 2012 was on 2 and 3 May in Argyll (at Coullabus, Islay and the only record of the species in Argyll that year), and the last on 20 July in Somerset.*

Simonsen, C.E., Madsen, J., Tombre, I.M. and Nabe-Nielsen, J. 2016. Is it worthwhile scaring geese to alleviate damage to crops? – An experimental study. *Journal of Applied Ecology* 53: 916-924. *Experimental human scaring of geese showed a dose-response relationship between active scaring and field use of flocking geese. Although the experiments were carried out at a migration staging area in Norway, the results are relevant to issues of goose damage to crops in Islay and elsewhere.*

SNH 2016. Sound of Gigha Proposed Special Protection Area (pSPA) No. UK9020318 SPA Site Selection Document: Summary of the scientific case for site selection. <http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A2013184.pdf> *The document presents the case for the designation of this site for nonbreeding great northern divers, common eiders and red-breasted mergansers. The site is identified as the 2nd most important site for nonbreeding great northern divers in Scotland (and so the 2nd most important site in Europe) with a mean peak count of 505 birds.*

SNH 2016. Coll and Tiree Proposed Special Protection Area (pSPA) No. UK9020310 SPA Site Selection Document: Summary of the scientific case for site selection. <http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A2013178.pdf> *The document presents the case for the designation of this site for nonbreeding great northern divers and common eiders.*

Trask, A.E., Bignal, E.M., McCracken, D.I., Monaghan, P., Piertney, S.B. and Reid, J.M. 2016. Evidence of the phenotypic expression of a lethal recessive allele under inbreeding in a wild population of conservation concern. Journal of Animal Ecology 85: 879-891. *This paper investigates the genetics of blind chicks which have been found in the population of choughs onIslay and Colonsay; a consequence of the reduced gene pool in these small populations.*

Ward, R.M. 2015. Treshnish Isles Auk Ringing Group Report for 2015. http://www.tiarg.org/annual_reports/2015.pdf *The report presents observations and data collected in 2015 in this annual series. A team of 8 people were on the Treshnish Isles from 27 June to 4 July 2015 in the 37th expedition. Where relevant, data from this expedition report are included in this bird report under individual species accounts. The expedition report also includes records of mammals and Lepidoptera, ringing totals and ring recovery data.*

Wilson, M.W., Fernandez-Bellon, D., Irwin, S. and O'Halloran, J. 2016. Hen harrier *Circus cyaneus* population trends in relation to wind farms. Bird Study DOI: 10.1080/00063657.2016.1262815. *A study in Ireland concluded that, despite considerable spatial overlap between wind farms and the breeding distribution of hen harriers, evidence for a negative impact of wind farms on their population was weak.*

Wotton, S.R., Stanbury, A.J., Douse, A. and Eaton, M.A. 2016. The Status of the ring ouzel *Turdus torquatus* in the UK in 2012. Bird Study 63: 155-164. *A UK wide survey found an estimated 6348 ring ouzel territories in the UK in 2012, a non-significant decline of 29% since 1999. This species just clings on in the north of Argyll as a breeding species.*

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Great Spotted Woodpecker

Margaret Staley

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Argyll Bird Club
Scottish Charity Number SC008782

Founded in 1985, the Argyll Bird Club aims to promote interest in and conservation of Argyll's wild birds and their natural environment. The rich diversity of habitats in the county supports an exceptional variety of bird life. Many sites in Argyll are of international importance. The Club brings together people with varied experience, from complete beginners to experts, and from all walks of life. New members are particularly welcome.

Activities

Every spring and autumn there is a one-day meeting with illustrated talks and other activities. These meetings are held in conveniently central locations. Throughout the year there are field trips to local and more distant sites of interest.

Publications

The annual journal of the Club is the *Argyll Bird Report*, containing the Systematic List of all species recorded in the county during the year, together with reports and articles. The less formal quarterly newsletter, *The Eider*, gives details of forthcoming events and activities, reports of recent meetings, bird sightings, field trips, articles, and shorter items by members and others.

Website

www.argyllbirdclub.org

To apply for membership, please (photocopy and) complete the form below and send to our Membership Secretary: **Sue Furness**, The Cnoc, Tarbet, G83 7DG. Tel. 01301 702 603 E-mail: r.furness@bio.gla.ac.uk

I/We wish to apply for membership of the Argyll Bird Club.

Name(s):

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Please make cheques payable to "Argyll Bird Club". If you wish to pay by standing order, which reduces our administration and costs, please ask the Membership Secretary to send you the appropriate form.

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