

**The Nineteenth
ARGYLL BIRD REPORT
with Systematic List for the year
2002/2003**

Edited by
Tom Callan

Assisted by
Paul Daw

Systematic List by
Paul Daw
assisted by **Bob Furness (seabirds)**
and **Tom Callan**

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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 features. These meetings are held in conveniently central locations on the mainland. 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 and field trips, and articles and shorter items by members and others.

Website

www.argyllbirdclub.org

Honorary Secretary: Katie Pendreigh, The Whins, Ferry Road, Tayinloan, PA29 6XQ.
Tel 01583 441359 E-mail: katiependreigh@aol.com

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Sue Furness, The Cnoc, Tarbet, G83 7DG.
Tel. 01301 702 603 E-mail: r.furness@bio.gla.ac.uk

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Editor of <i>The Eider</i> (newsletter)	Dr Steve Petty, Craigielea, Kames, Tighnabruaich PA32 2AE

Other useful addresses

S.O.C. Recorder for Argyll:

Paul Daw, Tigh-na-Tulloch, Tullochgorm, Minard, Inveraray PA32 8YQ.

Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) Organiser for Argyll: Dr Malcolm Ogilvie, Glencairn, Bruichladdich, Isle of Islay PA49 7UN.

B.T.O. Representatives for Argyll:

North Argyll, Mull, Coll, Tiree & Morvern: **Sue Dewar**, Auchnacroish House, Torosay, Craignure, Isle of Mull, Argyll PA65 6AY

Islay, Jura and Colonsay: **Dr Malcolm Ogilvie** (address above).

Argyll South, Bute and Gigha : **Richard Allan**, An Grianan, Easdale Road, Isle of Seil, Oban, PA34 4RF

R.S.P.B. Conservation Officer, Argyll & Bute: Roger Broad, 6 Birch Road, Killearn, Glasgow G63 9SQ

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EDITORIAL

The last Argyll Bird Report was introduced with an apology for the late appearance of the 2001 report and I am afraid an even more humble apology is due for the delay in the production of this. As usual most of the work for this, as in the past, has fallen on our esteemed recorder Paul Daw without whose enormous efforts we would have been further behind. Invaluable assistance was given by Mary Gregory, Jane Mitchell and Morag Rea in the processing of data and by Bob Furness in the preparation of the Systematic List. Many thanks are also due to Jim Dickson who has taken on the role of Secretary of the Argyll Bird Records Committee and dealt with all the processing of rare bird records. I have also helped with the data and the preparation of the List and, from this, I have a very clear understanding of the debt we owe to Paul.

During the work on this report Paul has also been heavily involved with the forth coming book on the birds of Argyll – not to mention coaching a new editor. Hopefully, under less of a load we should not be so late with the next report. You will notice that for the first time the report covers two rather than the usual one year. This should help us to catch up and the next report will be for 2004 and 2005 i.e. two years as is this one; allowing us to become even more up to date.

Once again may I make a plea on records. We are very dependant, not just on the records, but on their being submitted as soon as possible after the year end or sooner if you prefer. Paul is more than happy to give advice on the form we prefer the records should take. He even has a simple template for inputting records on computer. I know you all watch birds but I also know that you do not all submit records. Common birds are just as important as the Booted Warblers or the Semipalmated Plovers of this world: in some ways more so. How else are we to gauge what is happening to the vast majority of the birds we see. Some recording areas are particularly poorly covered such as Cowal and North Argyll.

I feel very strongly that our report is important for existing and particularly new members. This year you will see that we have introduced an index which hopefully should make the report much easier to use for the majority of our members. Any other suggestions would be very welcome.

Finally, this being my first attempt and at fairly short notice of editing the Argyll Bird Report, may I apologise if it does not match up with the impeccably high standards of our previous editor Clive Craik. May I send him thanks from us all for his many years of service.

Tom Callan
Editor
October 2006

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Systematic list for 2002-2003

Paul Daw

Tigh-na-Tulloch, Minard, Inveraray, Argyll, PA32 8YQ

Tel. 01546 886260

e-mail: monedula@globalnet.co.uk

INTRODUCTION

The systematic list below includes entries for 215 species recorded in Argyll during 2002 and 220 species recorded in 2003 (*cf* average 213 species during the years 1993 – 2001). Two of these species, *viz.* Ferruginous Duck and Forster's Tern are additions to the Argyll list, which now totals 328 species (NB this includes Yellow-legged Gull which, since October 2005, has been treated by the BOU as a separate species).

For the information of readers we have included at least a status summary in the text of all species on the Argyll list except those in Category B (see beginning of the systematic list).

To save space we have dispensed with the month by month Ornithological Review for this issue.

BIRD RECORDING IN ARGYLL

Advice to contributors

When submitting records, sightings should be listed in Voous order (as in this report) and should include the following details:

Species name. The commonly used English name is usually sufficient (*British Birds* – List of English Names), but scientific (Latin) name is helpful if reporting sub-species.

EURING Code No. - if possible (helps to speed up computer input).

Date. Please give exact date whenever possible (rather than 'June' or 'Spring') as this makes the record much more valuable and enables us to relate it to other records received.

Grid reference if known. The six figure ref. is preferred, but a four figure ref. is often sufficient.

Location name. Used in conjunction with the above to avoid ambiguity (e.g. there are umpteen Loch Dubhs in Argyll) but mistakes can also occur with grid refs!

Number of individuals. Precise number whenever possible or, failing this, an estimate. Even a rough estimate is more useful than 'many', 'large flock', 'several' or 'few', which are too subjective to have much value.

Sex and age - if known

Other interesting comments are always welcome e.g. indications of breeding, behaviour, food, interactions with other birds/animals etc. Individual anecdotes add value to what can otherwise be rather a 'dry' report.

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: j.dickson@tiscali.co.uk. Please use the standard form (available from Jim Dickson, Paul Daw or the club website www.argyllbirdclub.org). They will be judged locally by the Argyll Bird Records Committee (whose members are listed on p. 3), sent on to the *Scottish Birds* Records Committee (SBRC), or sent on to the *British Birds* Rarities Committee (BBRC), as appropriate.

The list below details rare species whose occurrence in Argyll needs to be fully documented. It is made up of the ABRC list of Argyll rarities and the SBRC list of Scottish rarities (those considered by SBRC marked #). UK rarities assessed by BBRC require the same treatment and are marked in the following Systematic List with an asterisk (*) where they have already occurred in Argyll. 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.

List of SBRC and ABRC species and sub-species 2006.

Black-necked Grebe	Green-winged Teal
Cory's Shearwater#	Red-crested Pochard
Great Shearwater#	Ring-necked Duck
Balearic Shearwater	Ferruginous Duck#
Eurasian Bittern (Bittern)	Wilson's Storm-petrel#
Night Heron#	Surf Scoter (except adult males) *
Little Egret	Smew
Great White Egret#	Ruddy Duck
Purple Heron#	Honey-buzzard
White Stork	Black Kite#
Eurasian Spoonbill (Spoonbill)	Montagu's Harrier#
Bean Goose	Goshawk
European White-fronted Goose (race <i>albifrons</i>)	Rough-legged Buzzard#
American Wigeon#	Red-footed Falcon#
	Hobby

Common Crane
Avocet
Stone Curlew#
Little Ringed Plover
Kentish Plover#
American Golden Plover#
Temminck's Stint
White-rumped Sandpiper#
Pectoral Sandpiper
Buff-breasted Sandpiper#
Red-necked Phalarope (**away from
traditional breeding areas**)
Long-tailed Skua (**except adult**)
Mediterranean Gull
Sabine's Gull
Ring-billed Gull#
Yellow-legged Gull#
Roseate Tern
Black Tern
White-winged Black Tern#
Little Owl
Alpine Swift#
European Bee-eater
Wryneck
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker#
Short-toed Lark#
Wood Lark#
Shore Lark
Red-rumped Swallow#
Richard's Pipit
Tawny Pipit#
Red-throated Pipit#
Water Pipit#
Common Nightingale#
Bluethroat

Cetti's Warbler#
Aquatic Warbler#
Marsh Warbler#
Reed Warbler
Icterine Warbler
Melodious Warbler#
Barred Warbler
Lesser Whitethroat
Dartford Warbler#
Subalpine Warbler#
Greenish Warbler#
Pallas's Leaf Warbler#
Yellow-browed Warbler
Radde's Warbler#
Dusky Warbler#
Firecrest
Red-breasted Flycatcher
Bearded Tit
Marsh Tit
Willow Tit
Crested Tit
Eurasian Nuthatch
Red-backed Shrike
Woodchat Shrike#
Rose-coloured Starling#
European Serin#
Common Redpoll – all races (formerly
race of Redpoll)
Arctic Redpoll#
Scottish Crossbill
Common Rosefinch
Hawfinch
Cirl Bunting#
Ortolan Bunting#
Little Bunting#

INTERPRETATION OF THE SPECIES ACCOUNTS

As agreed by the Argyll Bird Club Committee the English and scientific names as shown in 'The *British Birds* list of Western Palearctic Birds' (Jul 2006) are used in the species accounts below. To avoid confusion, where there are changes, the 'old' name is shown in brackets after the 'new' name. The sequence of species follows the order in the same list.

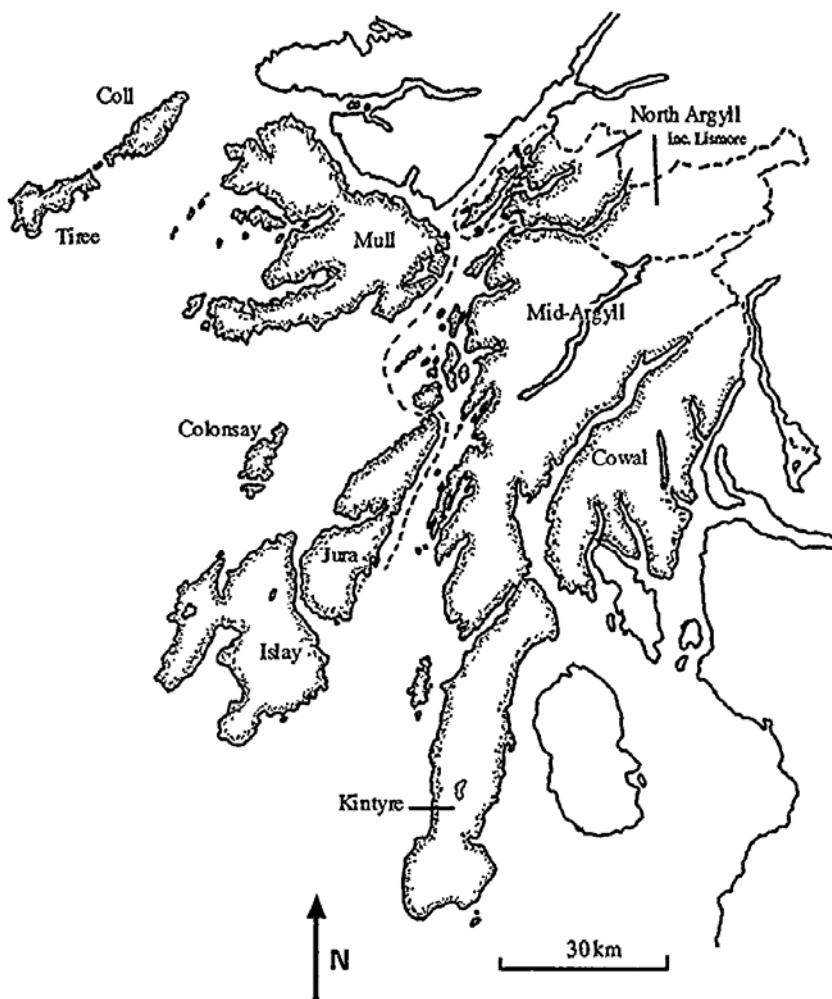
Each species heading in the report contains the following information:

Common name- new (old)	Scientific name	Gaelic name	EURING code
e.g. COMMON RAVEN (RAVEN)	<i>Corvus corax</i>	Fitheach	1572

Each heading is followed by a summary of the bird's known status and distribution within Argyll (*see* species status categories – below), together with any other relevant information. The information regarding sites of national or international importance for wintering/passage birds is taken from Musgrove, A. J. *et al.* (2001) *The Wetland Bird Survey 1999-2000: Wildfowl and Wader Counts*. 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. Significant 2002 and 2003 records are then listed in approximate chronological order. For scarcer species, records for 2002 or 2003 may be followed by late records or recent acceptances from earlier years.

For the purposes of this report, Argyll is divided into 10 areas, which are named on the accompanying sketch map. Because very 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 is no longer considered as a separate area and records are included with those from Kintyre. Note that, for the moment at least, boundaries of the Argyll recording area remain unchanged despite local government reorganisation in 1996.

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 me), 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.



Map showing the recording areas of Argyll used in this report

Place names

An attempt has been made to ensure that all place names in the systematic list feature on the 1:50,000 (Landranger Series) Ordnance Survey maps. An exception is The Laggan (Kintyre) which refers to the roughly triangular area west of Campbeltown, bordered by the B843, the A83, and Machrihanish Bay. Campbeltown Airport (previously RAF Machrihanish) is in this area. The Machrihanish Seabird Observatory (SBO) is situated at Uisaed Point on the western outskirts of Machrihanish (NR628209). In Mid-Argyll, Kilmichael Glen extends north-eastwards from Kilmichael Glassary at NR8593. On Mull, the Mishnish Lochs are the series of lochs extending from NM4652 to NM4853.

On Islay, the term 'Loch Gruinart' may refer to the Royal Society for Protection of Birds (RSPB) reserve at Loch Gruinart, or to parts of the loch lying outside the reserve. When a distinction has been made by the observer and when presenting counts of breeding pairs within the reserve, the abbreviation '**RSPB L. Gruinart**' is used throughout. The same applies to the use of the terms 'Moine Mhor' and 'Moine Mhor National Nature Reserve (NNR)' (Mid-Argyll); I have used the former term to cover an area extending west to the landward edge of Loch Crinan and north to Barsloisnoch.

The following places are mentioned frequently in the text and are cited as shown in the first column. The relevant recording area is shown in the second column and a four figure Grid Ref. is given in the third. Where the location is a large feature (such as many of the sea lochs) the Grid Ref. is conventional and refers to approximately the centre of the feature.

Add Estuary	Mid-Argyll	NR8093
Arднаve L.	Islay	NR2873
Balephetrish Bay	Tiree	NM0047
Campbeltown L.	Kintyre	NR7220
Dunoon	Cowal	NS1776
Frenchman's Rocks	Islay	NR1554
Gigha	Kintyre	NR6449
Gott Bay	Tiree	NM0546
Holy Loch	Cowal	NS1681
Iona	Mull	NM2625
L. a' Phuill	Tiree	NL9541
L. Awe	Mid-Argyll	NN0016
L. Bhasapol	Tiree	NL9747
L. Caolisport	Mid-Argyll	NR7475
L. Crinan (incl. Add Estuary)	Mid-Argyll	NR7994
L. Don	Mull	NM7332
L. an Eilein	Tiree	NL9843
L. Feochan	Mid-Argyll	NM8623
L. Fyne	Mid-Argyll	NR9386
L. Gilp	Mid-Argyll	NR8685
L. Gruinart	Islay	NR2868
L. Indaal	Islay	NR2961
L. na Keal	Mull	NM5038

L. Riaghain	Tiree	NM0347
L. Scridain	Mull	NM4525
L. Sween	Mid-Argyll	NR7484
Machrihanish SBO (Seabird Observatory)	Kintyre	NR6220
Moine Mhor (National Nature Reserve)	Mid-Argyll	NR8192
Oban	Mid-Argyll	NM8529
Oronsay	Colonsay	NR3489
Otter Ferry	Cowal	NR9284
Outer L. Etive (i.e. Connel Br. to Taynuilt)	North Argyll	NM9434
Sanda Islands	Kintyre	NR7204
Sorobaidh Bay	Tiree	NL9942
Sound of Gigha	Kintyre	NR6749
Sound of Jura	Mid-Argyll	NR6480
Tayinloan (jetty)	Kintyre	NR6946
Taynish NNR (National Nature Reserve)	Mid-Argyll	NR7384
Treshnish Isles	Mull	NM2842

All other locations are given as a place name followed by the recording area in italics e.g. Minard *Mid-Argyll*. Occasionally, where the locality is not well known, a qualifier may be added in brackets, e.g. Kintallan (Tayvallich), *Mid-Argyll*.

Tables

Tables 2.1 to 7.2 are derived chiefly Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) goose counts. Tables 1, 8.1-19.2 and 29.1-40 are based principally on data from the Wetland Birds Survey (WeBS), The Islay Bird and Natural History Report 2002 and John Halliday's (SNH) Moine Mhor NNR and Loch Crinan Bird Reports 2002 & 2003, although higher counts have been included where available. Tables 20.1 -27.2 & 40.1-43.2 are based on the Argyll Raptor Study Group monitoring summaries produced by R. A. Broad.

Figures in these tables for 'Loch Gruinart' represent the total for the RSPB Reserve at Loch Gruinart (in particular the area of flooded fields) and Loch Gruinart proper (below high water mark). There were no WeBS counts at these sites from Jun to Sep. 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 Taynuilt. '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. For certain species numbers on Tiree may be higher, at any given time, elsewhere on the island: where available appropriate counts are cited in the main text. No WeBS counts were received for Holy Loch, in fact very little information at all was forthcoming for this important site. For this reason no information for Holy Loch appears in any of the tables.

Special studies carried out in 2002 and/or 2003

Regular monitoring of species and groups of species in Argyll was badly affected by access restrictions due to Foot and Mouth disease (FMD) in 2001; examples are the goose counts

carried out by SNH, the monthly wildfowl and wader counts (WeBS) at several sites and the monitoring of breeding birds of prey by members of the Argyll Raptor Study Group. Other single-species studies, either new in 2001 or continued from previous years, are referred to in the species accounts.

Seven further multi-species studies are summarised here to avoid repetition of details in the species accounts.

(1) Breeding Birds Survey (BBS)

The BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey (BBS), which started in 1994, gives all birdwatchers a chance to take part in important survey work. 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. **New recruits are always needed for the BBS.** If you think you might be interested but are not sure how much time it would take or how expert you need to be, or would like to know the location of the squares needing coverage, please contact your local BTO Representative (see p. 3 for details) or Mike Raven at the BTO, National Centre for Ornithology, The Nunnery, Thetford, Norfolk, IP24 2PU, (01842) 750050 or e-mail: Mike.Raven@bto.org.

A total of 13 squares were surveyed in Argyll during 2002. They were located in *Colonsay* (NR3588, NR3895), *Cowal*, (NS0392), *Kintyre* (NR6829), *Mid-Argyll* (NM9000, NM9409, NN0615, NR7684, NR7770, NR7992 & NR8888) *Mull* (NM3021) and *N Argyll* (NM9244). A total of 10 squares were surveyed in Argyll during 2003. They were located in *Colonsay* (NR3588, NR3895), *Cowal*, (NS0392), *Kintyre* (NR6829), *Mid-Argyll* (NM9000, NM9409, NR7770, NR7992 & NR8888) and *N Argyll* (NM9244).

(2) 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 since 1962 and from 1990 onwards two plots in the Tainish National Nature Reserve *Mid-Argyll*, one in 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 will no longer be supported nationally. However a core of about 50 high priority sites will continue to be supported and fortunately the two Tainish plots are among them. Because of the detailed nature of this survey and the continuity of the work (over 10 years now) at Tainish, the data provided are particularly significant for Argyll.

(3) 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*. **For further details see: Craik, J. C. A. (2002 and 2003). Results of the mink-seabird**

project in 2002 and 2003. Privately Published (copies available from Dr J. C. A. Craik, Dunstaffnage Marine Laboratory, Oban, Argyll PA37 1QA.).

(4) Systematic sea-watching at Machrihanish SBO (*Kintyre*) [E. J. Maguire].

Movements of seabirds, wildfowl and waders past this site are monitored regularly during certain months of the year. With a few exceptions, all individual birds flying past when the hide was manned are identified and logged. During 2001 a total of 1,076 hours observations were undertaken on 135 days from Jun to Nov. **In the systematic list below, all records relating to Machrihanish SBO have been provided by E. J. Maguire.**

More comprehensive data for Machrihanish SBO can be found in Maguire (2002).

(5) Woodland Bird Survey. During 2003 and 2004 a total of 250 or so, mostly broadleaved woods in England, Scotland and Wales first surveyed in for the RSPB between 1982 and 1986 were revisited to get a more precise fix on where the species found in this habitat stand today in terms of distribution and population. In 2003, 16 of the 38 woods first visited in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* in 1985 were surveyed as part of the first phase of this work. Reference is made in the appropriate species accounts below to this preliminary data and the early indications it gave of population trends in our woodlands. The survey, carried out jointly by the British Trust for Ornithology and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, was completed in 2004 by which time 29 of the woods had been surveyed. The full results of the survey will be quoted in the forthcoming *Birds of Argyll* book.

(6) A constant effort ringing site (CES) is operated at Aros Moss (Laggan) *Kintyre* by Neil Brown and the following species accounts include data from his 1997-2002 report (Brown, N. (2002) *An Ornithological Survey of the Constant Effort Site at Aros Moss, Kintyre 1997-2002* Privately Published).

Categories of the British list (as revised by the BOURC – Oct 2005):

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 Crane, Great Snipe and Pallas's Sandgrouse) 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).

(A dozen or so species have been recorded in Argyll which fall into this category although it appears that reporting of such species has been very patchy in the past. **Readers of this report are encouraged to submit records of any apparently escaped birds they see.**)

Species status, categories: definitions

Resident	Resident and normally sedentary.
Breeding	Breeding and wintering ranges may differ.
Summer visitor	Breeds unless otherwise stated.
Passage migrant	Birds passing through en route to breeding grounds or winter quarters.
Winter visitor	Includes species that are also resident but whose numbers are augmented by immigrants during the winter months.
Introduced	Introduced species recorded in Argyll that may or may not breed here.
Vagrant	Five or fewer records since 1980.
Site of national importance	Sites of national importance in Great Britain (as defined by The Wetland Bird Survey).

Symbols and abbreviations

- * Description required by BBRC
- ABR *Argyll Bird Report*
- ABRC Argyll Bird Records Committee
- Ad(s) Adult(s)
- ARSG Argyll Raptor Study Group
- AOB apparently occupied burrows
- AON apparently occupied nest-sites

AOS	apparently occupied sites
approx.	approximately
b/-	brood of...young
BBRC	<i>British Birds</i> Rarities Committee
BBS	Breeding Birds Survey
BOURC	British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology
ca	<i>circa</i> = approximately
c/-	clutch of...eggs
cf	confer = compare
CBC	Common Birds Census
CES	Constant Effort (ringing) Site
excl.	excluding
FMD	Foot and Mouth Disease
inc.	including
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
juv./juvs.	juvenile/juveniles
L.	Loch
max.	maximum (the highest of 2 or more counts at a given locality during the period being analysed)
misc.	miscellaneous
NCC	Nature Conservancy Council
NEWS	European Non-estuarine Coastal Waterfowl Survey
NNR	National Nature Reserve
n/r	not recorded (in tables of counts, where no count was made)
pr./prs.	pair/pairs
RSPB Loch Gr.	Loch Gruinart RSPB Reserve
SAMS	Scottish Association for Marine Science
Sd.	Sound
SBO	Seabird Observatory
SBR	<i>Scottish Bird Report</i>
SBRC	<i>Scottish Birds</i> Records Committee
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
Ts.	Territories
TIARG	Treshnish Isles Auk Ringing Group
WeBS	Wetland Bird Survey

The species accounts are summaries derived from the information in the Argyll Bird Club database. In recent years this has contained somewhere in the region of 14,000 records annually, from a variety of sources. More detailed information from this source is available from the Argyll Bird Recorder (contact details above).

The following species are on the Argyll list but have not been recorded since 1st January 1950 (Category B): **Red-crested Pochard, Wilson's Storm Petrel, White-faced Petrel*, American Bittern*, Sora*, Little Crake*, Great Snipe* and Pallas's Sandgrouse*.**

ARGYLL BIRD RECORDS 2002/3

MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor* Eala

0152

Widespread but uncommon breeding species, both inland and at sheltered coastal locations. Absent from Colonsay. Emigration from some breeding localities in winter, when flocks gather at favoured localities.

Jan-May. 2002 At Oban Harbour *Mid-Argyll* the highest count was 60 (incl. 4 juvs.) on 6th Feb while the peak WeBS count on *Tiree* was 32 on 4th Mar.

2003 On *Tiree* 60 were counted at various sites on 2nd Apr. There were no counts from Oban Harbour *Mid-Argyll*.

Breeding. 2002 Twenty pairs were observed in the Argyll part of the SAMS study area. Of these, 4 pairs had large young in late summer or later (1+1+3+2 = 7 large young). Another 11 pairs had no young in late summer; 5 of these 11 were known to have laid. Another 4 pairs were known to have laid and one pair with an unused nest were not seen in late summer so their outcome was unknown. Thus breeding success lay between ca 0.5 – 0.8 large young/pair. There were seven nesting pairs on *Tiree* and breeding pairs were also recorded from *Coll, Islay, Jura, and Gigha Kintyre*.

2003 In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area; 12 pairs were seen with no young and 6 were seen with large (3,4) or medium sized (1,1,3,4) in late summer. Another 4-6 pairs had eggs or small young when last seen but the outcome was unknown.

Jul-Dec. 2002 The peak WeBS count on *Tiree* was 47 on 14th Oct and 36 (incl. 3 juvs.) were in Oban harbour on 3rd Dec. The only other locations with more than 20 birds were: Outer L. Etive (23 on 8th Sep), L. Sween (23 on 19th Nov) and Holy L. (21 on 20th Sep).

2003 An all island count on *Tiree* on 20th Oct found 52 birds and 33 (incl. 4 juvs.) were in Oban harbour on 3rd Nov.

BEWICK'S SWAN *Cygnus columbianus* Eala-bheag

0153

Rare winter visitor. Less than annual, with records in 10 of the last 19 years. Thirteen of the 15 records during 1980-96 were in Kintyre or Islay.

None in 2002.

Three adults seen at Ardnave L. on 13th Nov 2003 were the first Bewick's Swans recorded in Argyll since 1996.

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus* Eala-fhiadhaich

0154

Common on passage; smaller numbers winter. 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.

Jan-Apr. 2002 Numbers on the four main freshwater lochs on *Tiree* peaked at 121 on 14th Jan [Table 1.1]. Smaller numbers were reported through the winter from sites in *Coll, Colonsay, Islay, Kintyre, Mid-Argyll* and *Mull*. Counts of 20 or more birds came from: Bowmore, L. Indaal (21 on 20th Jan), Tayvallich *Mid-Argyll* (23 flying over on 16th Mar) and Totronald *Coll* (40 flying over on 2nd Apr).

2003 Numbers on *Tiree* peaked at 186 (an all island count) on 17th Jan [Table 1.2]. Smaller numbers were reported through the winter from sites in *Coll, Cowal, Islay, Jura, Mid-Argyll, Mull* and *North Argyll*. Counts of 20 or more birds came from:

Ardnave L. (57 on 14th Mar), Gortan, L. Indaal (23 on 23rd Mar), L. Don (25 flying N on 27th Mar) and Totamore *Coll* (30 on 3rd Apr).

Summering birds. 2002 Single immature birds were reported in Jun from Colonsay, Gigha *Kintyre* and 2 birds were at Coul *Islay* on 13th Jun. Some 6 birds summered on *Tiree* in 2002 and 4 in 2003.

Sep-Dec. 2002 The *Tiree* WeBS count of 321 on 22nd Oct included 307 on L. a' Phuill (a record count for this site) and the SNH Goose Count on *Islay* on 24th Oct found a total of 79 birds. Other counts of 20 or more birds included: 40 at Machrihanish SBO on 23rd Oct, 28 on Oronsay on 29th Oct and 59 at the Ulva Lagoons (L. Sween) on 2nd Nov.

2003 Numbers on *Tiree* peaked at 221 (an all island count) on 6th Nov. Other counts of 20 or more birds included: 29 at Rockside L. Indaal on 23rd Oct, 35 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 24th Oct, 32 at Ardnave L. on 25th Oct, 26 at L. Gorm *Islay* on 26th Oct and 44 at Ulva Lagoons (L. Sween) on 2nd Nov.

Among a party of 35 at An Fhaodhail *Tiree* on 26th Nov were several with Icelandic rings including a family ringed at Lake Myvatn in Aug 2003.

Table 1.1. *Maximum monthly counts of Whooper Swans on Tiree in 2002.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tiree	121	80	73	40	6	6	6	46	4	321	265	198

Table 1.2. *Maximum monthly counts of Whooper Swans on Tiree in 2003.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tiree	186	95	72	60	4	4	4	4	4	124	221	113

BEAN GOOSE *Anser fabalis* Muir-ghèadh

0157

Vagrant last recorded Kintyre Oct 1992.

2002 Two were seen flying down the Sound of Jura past Craignish Point *Mid-Argyll* on 4th Oct [J. Dickson]. This record was accepted by ABRC as 'race not determined'.

2003 Five birds first seen at Cornabus *Islay* on 22nd Nov remained on the island into 2004. Accepted by ABRC as being of the race *fabalis* (Taiga Bean Goose).

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus* Gèadh-gorm

0158

Variable numbers on passage, with occasional large flocks. Relatively few winter.

Jan-Apr. 2002 Apart from six migrants at L. Bhasapol on 30th Apr no more than one or two birds were reported: from *Coll*, *Islay* and *North Argyll*.

2003 Up to 3 birds were recorded, usually among flocks of other species, at various locations on *Islay*, *Mid-Argyll* and *Tiree*.

May-Aug 2002 Single birds on *Mull* (Jun) and on *Tiree* (Jul).

2003 Up to 5 birds at various locations on *Coll*, *Islay* and *Mull* during May.

Sep-Dec 2002 Apart from 90 migrants at RSPB L. Gruinart on 17th Oct; all other reports which came from *Islay*, *Kintyre* and *Tiree* were in single figures.

2003 On 19th Sep large numbers were seen at various sites including: 14 at Balevullin *Tiree*, 55 at The Reef *Tiree*, 80 over The Roundhouse *Coll*, total of 346 flying over *Islay*, 125 over *Oronsay*, 12 past Machrihanish SBO and 25 over the Add Estuary. All were flying east or south. Apart from 41 flying S at Machrihanish on 6th Oct and 10 on *Tiree* on 8th Dec records for the remainder of the year, from *Colonsay*, *Islay*, *North Argyll* and *Tiree*, were all in single figures.

Winter visitor. Birds are of the Greenland race A. a. flavirostris, apart from occasional vagrants of the European race A. a. albifrons. Argyll holds about 50% of the world population of the Greenland race in winter, mainly on Islay. Rhunahaorine(Tayinloan), Kintyre, Islay, Tiree, Machrihanish, Coll and Keills/Isle of Danna (Mid-Argyll) are sites of international importance for wintering birds. A small introduced population breeds on the Rhinns of Islay.

Jan-May. 2002 The co-ordinated count in late Mar/early Apr produced a total of 14,095 birds in Argyll [Table 2.1]. In *Kintyre* birds were at The Laggan (1,039), Clachan (38) and Tayinloan (1,280), and in *Mid-Argyll* at Danna (98), Keills (170), Ulva (104) and Moine Mhor (27) [SNH Goose Project]. The main departure from *Islay* took place on 13th – 15th Apr but 29 were still present at RSPB L. Gruinart on 1st May.

2003 The co-ordinated count in late Mar/early Apr produced a total of 15,787 birds in Argyll [Table 2.2]. In *Kintyre* birds were at The Laggan (1,501), Clachan (250) and Tayinloan (1,200), and in *Mid-Argyll* at Danna (6), Keills (236) and Ulva (47) [SNH Goose Project]. Returning birds were passing through *Tiree* 11th – 18th Apr but there were still 50 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 1st May.

Breeding. 2002 The only breeding season record involved an introduced pair with 5 young at Easter Ellister *Islay* on 27th May.

2003 The Easter Ellister *Islay* birds were seen with a brood of young on 7th Jun. A single, presumably injured bird, was on *Tiree* during Jul and Aug.

Sep-Dec 2002 Returning birds arrived on *Islay* quite early with 45 at Rockside on 27th Sep and 240 at Kilchoman by 30th Sep. The co-ordinated count carried out in Dec gave a total of 17,288 birds in Argyll [Table 3.1]. The *Kintyre* birds were at The Laggan (1,301), Tayinloan (1,450), Clachan (177) and Gigha (67). All but 22 (at Moine Mhor) of the 409 counted in *Mid-Argyll* were on the Tayvallich peninsula [SNH Goose Project].

2003 The first arrivals were three very early birds at Danna Island *Mid-Argyll* on 10th Sep but the first arrivals were not seen on *Islay* until 19th/20th Sep. The co-ordinated count carried out in Dec gave a total of 15,609 birds in Argyll [Table 3.2]. The *Kintyre* birds were at The Laggan (1,377), Tayinloan (1,156) and Clachan (215). All but 23 (at Moine Mhor) of the 400 counted in *Mid-Argyll* were on the Tayvallich peninsula [SNH Goose Project].

Table 2. *Numbers of White-fronted Geese in Argyll areas in spring.*

2.1 - 30th Mar to 2nd Apr 2002.

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
2,357	399	45	705	1,076	164	47	9,194	108

2.2 - 29th Mar to 2nd Apr 2003

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
3,058	289	33	605	1,040	n/c	n/c	10,677	85

Table 3. *Numbers of White-fronted Geese in Argyll areas in winter.*

3.1 - 7th to 11th Dec 2002.

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
2,928	409	1	582	1,093	n/c	22	12,253	0

3.2 – 8th to 10th Dec 2003.

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
2,748	400	0	370	740	79	0	11,272	0

LESSER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE* *Anser erythropus* Geadh-bhlàr-beag 0160
Vagrant last recorded Islay March 1986.

None in 2002 or 2003.

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser* Gèadh-glas 0161

Increasing breeding population. Some of those on Colonsay, Mull, Tiree and Coll may be native birds that have colonised from the Outer Hebrides, while birds of introduced origin breed in Mid-Argyll. Tiree, Coll, Machrihanish, Moine Mhor, Rhunahaorine(Tayinloan) Kintyre, Colonsay, Islay and Clachan are sites of international importance for wintering birds of the Northwest Scotland population of this species. Migratory flocks also reported from most areas.

Jan-Apr. 2002 In early Apr, the SNH co-ordinated goose count recorded a total of 3,124 birds in Argyll, of which 65.3% were on *Tiree* [Table 4.1]. Numbers on *Tiree* peaked at 3,168 on 12th Feb and 108 were on Outer L. Etive on 10th Feb.

A female present in the Heylipol *Tiree* area from Feb to Apr had been ringed as a gosling at Hraerekslaekur, Iceland on 21st Jul 1999 and had spent subsequent winters in the Moray Firth and on Orkney. This is the first time an Iceland Greylag Goose has been confirmed on *Tiree*.

2003 An all island count on *Tiree* found 3,203 birds on 13th/16th Jan. Other counts of over 100 birds included 175 in the Add Estuary on 6th Jan, 138 at the head of L. Feochan *Mid-Argyll* on 1st Feb, 256 at Moine Mhor on 17th Feb and 150 flying N over Appin *North Argyll* on 5th Mar.

In spring the SNH co-ordinated goose count recorded a total of 3,625 birds in Argyll, of which 59.4% were on *Tiree* [Table 4.2].

Breeding. 2002 In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area: 10 nests were found on the Kilmaronag Islands (L. Etive) on 21st May (4 clutches [5,4,3,2 eggs], 5 hatched nests, one predated nest). Three clutches were found on the Abbot Isles (L. Etive) on 10th May (8,7,3 eggs), and 12 ads. with 42 young there on 22nd Jun. A clutch of 6 eggs was on E. an Ruisg (L. Feochan) *Mid-Argyll* on 18th May; and a clutch of 4 eggs was on Glas Eilean (Sd. of Mull) on 6th May. Two ads. with 12 large young ran to cover on Eilean na h-Eairne (Sd. of Jura) on 10th Jul and 3 ads. with 7 fully grown young were by Eilean Gamhna (L. Melfort) *Mid-Argyll* on 17th Jul. Three ads. were present at Carraig an Daimh (Sd. of Jura) on 2nd Jun, and 3 ads. were at Sgat Mor (L. Fyne) on 26th May. Single pairs (probably the same pair) were at Sgat Beag and Eilean Buidhe (L. Fyne) on 26th May.

A survey on *Tiree* in Jul found 110 broods of young comprising 403 goslings. On *Coll* a total of 12 pairs with broods at two locations were seen on 27th/28th May. Eighteen pairs were counted by the RSPB on *Islay*, and at least 5 families with young were seen in the Aros-Fishnish area of *Mull* in Jun. Recorded in 3 of 13 BBS squares (23%).

2003 In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area nests were found on islets in L. Etive (11 nests), L. Feochan (2) and L. Fyne (1). Broods of various stages were seen: E. Mor (Dunstaffnage) *Mid-Argyll* (1 + 2 young), Sgeir mhic Chomhain (Sd of Mull) 1,3), Reisa Mhic Phaidean (Sd. of Jura) (3,5,11), E. na Cille (Sd. of Jura) (17 birds [ad +

juvs]), Garmony *Mull* 35 birds behaving as 3 or 4 families), Liath-sgeir Mhor (Sd. of Jura) (10 birds) and Carraig an Daimh (Sd. of Jura) (7 birds). Larger flocks (>10 birds) seen outside the breeding season were: 138 grazing at the head of L. Feochan *Mid-Argyll* 1st Feb; 24 at L. an na Beithe (N. Connel) *N. Argyll* on 20th Oct; and 16 at L. Feochan *Mid-Argyll* on 11th Oct.

A survey on *Tiree* in Jul found a minimum of 155 broods of young with a mean size of 3.75 goslings and 18 pairs with a total of 53 young were seen on *Colonsay* in Jun with at least 3 more broods on *Oronsay*. Recorded in 2 of 10 BBS squares (20%).

Aug-Dec. 2002 The 438 birds counted at RSPB L. Gruinart on 13th Aug were nearly all recently arrived. In early Dec the co-ordinated goose count produced a total of 4,897 in *Argyll* [Table 5.1]. Of this total 74.6% were on *Tiree* and all the *Mid-Argyll* birds were at Moine Mhor [SNH Goose project]. At *Oronsay* Farm 125 were counted on 31st Dec.

2003 On *Islay* 597 were counted at RSPB Traigh Gruinart on 15th Aug and 740 were counted in the L. Gorm/L. Gruinart area on 26th Aug. Elsewhere 240 were feeding on barley on *Oronsay* on 17th Sep and numbers at Outer L. Etive peaked at 137 on 12th Oct.

In Dec the co-ordinated goose count produced a total of 4,074 in *Argyll* [Table 5.2]. Of these 85% were found on *Tiree* [SNH Goose project].

Table 4. *Numbers of Greylag Geese in Argyll areas in spring.*

4.1 - 30th Mar to 2nd Apr 2002.

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
0	132	49	752	2,040	95	n/c	56	0

4.2 – 29th Mar to 2nd Apr 2003.

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
690	0	0	675	2,154	0	0	16	90

Table 5. *Numbers of Greylag Geese in Argyll areas in winter.*

5.1 - 7th to 11th Dec 2002.

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
659	155	0	477	3,516	0	0	62	28

5.2 – 8th to 10th Dec 2003.

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
0	0	0	411	3,465	116	74	8	0

SNOW GOOSE *Anser caerulescens* Gàadh-bàn 0163
A small introduced population breeds on Coll and on Mull, wintering mainly on Coll. Stragglers among wintering Greenland Whitefronts on Islay and Tiree may have a wild origin.

Jan-Mar. 2002 A blue-phase bird was seen with other geese at various sites on *Islay* from Jan to early Apr and 34 were counted on *Coll* on 21st Jan.

2003 A blue-phase bird was again seen with other geese at various sites on *Islay* from Jan to early Apr. The peak count on *Coll* was 30 on 4th Feb.

Breeding. 2002 The introduced population on *Coll* was counted at Port na Luing on 13th Jul when 26 adults were found with 4 broods of young.

2003 Four juvs. were at Port na Luing *Coll* on 11th Jul with 25 adults.

Oct-Dec 2002 A blue-phase bird was again seen at various sites on *Islay* during Nov and Dec and 30 at Port na Luing *Coll* on 13th Dec included a single juv.

2003 A blue-phase bird was once again seen at various sites on *Islay* from Oct to Dec and 24 were at Port na Luing *Coll* on 23rd Sep.

On 6 July 2002, at Port-na-Luing Coll, 34 Snow Geese were rounded up and fitted with white darvic leg rings each bearing a unique two-letter code as well as a BTO ring. To date, none of these birds have been re-sighted anywhere away from the west end of Coll. Please report any sightings to John Bowler, RSPB Tiree at John.Bowler@rspb.org.uk.

SNOW GOOSE /ROSS'S GOOSE *Anser caerulescens/rossii*

A goose with Greylags at Craighens *Islay* on 1st Sep 2002 showed characters of both Lesser Snow and Ross's Goose and was apparently a hybrid [TapR/MAO]. Such hybrids are known to occur in the wild.

GREATER CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis* Gèadh-dubh

0166

Resident population on Colonsay introduced in 1934. Regular breeding, since 1992, in Mid-Argyll. Now in increasing numbers. Occasional 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

Jan- Apr. 2002 From early Jan to early Apr 'small' or 'medium-sized' birds, possibly of the vagrant race *parvipes* or *minima/hutchinsii* (now considered to belong to the separate species Lesser Greater Canada Goose), were reported from various locations on *Islay*. Twenty were seen in fields at Kiloran *Colonsay* on 29th Mar.

2003 There were the usual reports from *Islay* at this time of possible vagrant birds of various races. At L. Nell (nr Oban) *Mid-Argyll* 23 were present on 29th Mar. A 'large' bird was on Tiree Jan to Feb 2002 and Dec 2002 to Jan 2003.

Breeding. 2002 In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area pairs were seen at 10 small islands during May - early Jun. These included Tucker's islet (L. Craignish) (nest + c/6 on 9th May), Eilean Inshaig (L. Craignish) (nest + c/7 on 9th May), E. Glas (Lismore) (pr. + 1 small young on 8th May), 5 ads. and 6 medium young (nr. E. Mor, Dunstaffnage on 25th Jun) and a hatched nest on E. an Ruisg (L. Feochan) on 18th May. Pairs. with no proof of breeding were at Liath-sgeir Mhor Sd. of Jura (2 prs. on 27th May), E. nan Caorach (Lismore) *North Argyll* (pair on 8th May), Eilean Aoghainn (L. Fyne) (pair on 12th May), E. Dubh (Lynn of Lorn) *North Argyll* (pair on 21st May) and E. Mor (McCormaic Is.) *Mid-Argyll* (pair on 2nd Jun). At an eleventh island (E. Gamhna, L. Melfort) a family of 8 fully grown birds were seen on 5th Aug.

Other pairs with broods of young were reported on *Colonsay*, and at Connel *North Argyll*. Also reported in *Mid-Argyll* at Blarghour (L. Awe), Ardfern (*Mid-Argyll*), Gallachaille (L. Sween) and L. Ederline (*Mid-Argyll*).

2003 In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area nests were found on islands in L. Feochan (3), L. Craignish (2) and L. Etive (2). Pairs with broods were seen at E. Mor (Dunstaffnage) (at least 5 broods of 3x6, 2x5 young), at Linne Mhuirich (L. Sween)

(4 medium sized young), at Liath-sgeir Mhor ,Crinan, Sound of Jura (4 medium sized young) and at E. Gamhna (L. Melfort) (at least 3 large young). Breeding on the islands at the north end of Lismore *North Argyll* was suggested by a pair showing breeding behaviour on Inn Island on 15th May and a flock of adults and flying young (25 birds) on E na Caorach on 22nd July.

Further pairs with broods of young were reported on *Colonsay*, and at *Garmony Mull*.

Aug-Dec. 2002 The maximum count in the Add Estuary was 107 on 3rd Aug, 48 in fields at Lephinmore (L. Fyne) *Cowal* on 22nd Aug, 17 on *Oronsay* on 23rd Aug and 32 at East L. Fada *Colonsay* on 14th Sep. Small or medium-sized birds, possibly vagrants, were again reported from *Islay* from Oct to Dec.

2003 Numbers at the Add Estuary are still rising with 125 there on 13th Aug while counts on *Oronsay* peaked at 65 on 3rd Oct. Once again small or medium-sized birds, possibly vagrants, were reported from *Islay* in Oct and Nov.

[LESSER CANADA GOOSE *Branta hutchinsii*

What were formerly the races minima and hutchinsii of Canada Goose are now included with this new species. Although there have been many claims over the years of birds of this type, especially on Islay, there are currently no acceptable records.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis* Cathan

0167

Very large numbers of birds from the Greenland population winter on Islay, and smaller numbers elsewhere. Islay, Tiree, Coll, Keills/Isle of Danna (Mid-Argyll) and Colonsay are sites of international importance for wintering birds of the Greenland population of this species. A few birds occasionally summer. A few introduced birds also breed on the Rhinnis of Islay

Jan-May. 2002 On 31st Jan an all-island count for *Islay* produced a total of 29,264. A similar count on *Tiree* on 15th Jan found a total of 2,132, and the peak count on *Oronsay* was 515 on 5th Feb. The SNH co-ordinated goose count on 30th Mar to 2nd Apr recorded an Argyll total of 35,796 birds (*cf* 32,501 in 2000 and 38,269 in 1999). As usual, the great majority (32,829 or 91.7%) were on *Islay* [Table 6.1].

2003 On 13th Jan an all-island count for *Tiree* produced a record total of 2,786 birds and 634 were counted on *Oronsay* on 23rd Jan. The co-ordinated goose count from 29th Mar to 2nd Apr 2003 recorded an Argyll total of 40,884. Again the great majority (36,367 or 89%) were on *Islay* [Table 6.2].

Summering birds. 2002 Two birds remained on *Tiree* Jun to Sep.

2003 A single bird was at L. Gruinart in late Jun to early Jul.

Sep-Dec. 2002 The first returning birds were 4 at L. Gruinart on 17th Sep. Heavy passage of small flocks was still taking place through *Tiree* during northerly winds on 16-19th Oct with totals of 100 birds on 16th and 108 in 6 flocks on 17th.

By the time of the co-ordinated count in Dec *Islay* had 35,544 birds (*cf* 34,829 in 2001) which accounted for over 89% of the Argyll total of 37,594 (*cf* 37,403 in 2001) [SNH Goose Project, Table 7.1].

2003 The first returning birds were 10 at Craighens L. Gruinart on 20th Sep. The Dec co-ordinated goose count Argyll total was 43,391 with 38,538 (or 88.8%) of these on *Islay* [Table 7.2]. The count of 2,796 on *Tiree* constituted another new record total for the island.

Table 6. *Numbers of Barnacle Geese in Argyll areas, in spring.*

6.1 - 30th Mar to 2nd Apr 2002.

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
0	420	0	579	1,968	n/c	410	32,419	0

6.2 – 29th Mar to 2nd Apr 2003.

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
0	400	0	994	2,613	n/c	510	36,367	0

Table 7. *Numbers of Barnacle Geese in Argyll areas, in winter.*

7.1 - 7th to 11th Dec 2002.

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
79	384	0	808	2,569	n/c	141	33,544	69

7.2 – 8th to 10th Dec 2003.

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
102	370	0	792	2,796	n/c	793	38,538	0

BRENT GOOSE *Branta bernicla* Gàadh-got

0168

Passage migrant, uncommon in spring but sometimes in considerable numbers in autumn. Very few winter. Most birds seen in Argyll are of the light-bellied race B. b. hrota, which breeds in Greenland and arctic Canada, wintering mainly in Ireland. Birds of the dark-bellied race B. b. bernicla occur occasionally, and there has been one record of the Black Brant B. b. nigricans.

The following records all refer to the light-bellied race *B. b. hrota*.

Jan-Apr. 2002 A flock of up to 13 birds was seen around L. Indaal during Jan and Feb and a single was seen with Barnacle Goose on *Tiree* from Jan to Apr. Passage migrants during Apr included: 25 at L. Indaal on 12th, 20 at Eatharna *Coll* on 14th, 19 at Port Ellen *Islay* on 17th, 28 at L. Indaal on 22nd, 23 at L. Gruinart on 26th and 50 at Sorobaidh Bay *Tiree* on 28th.

2003 A flock of up to 18 birds was seen around L. Indaal during Jan and Feb. The only spring migrants reported were 30 in L. Gilp on 26th Apr with 12 remaining there until 28th Apr.

Jun. 2002 Unusually, single birds were reported on Iona and *Tiree* in early Jun.

Sep-Dec. 2002 The first of autumn was a single bird on Sanda Island on 17th Aug. On 30th Aug 60 were seen flying over *Coll* and 13 were at L. Gruinart. After this flocks were recorded at L. Gruinart until early Oct including: 70 on 3rd Sep, 55 on 19th Sep, 36 on 26th Sep, 129 on 29th Sep, 58 on 30th Sep, 40 on 1st Oct and 87 on 3rd Oct. A flock of 16 were present in L. Indaal during Dec. Elsewhere: 3 were in L. Gilp and one in L. Scridain on 2nd Oct, 2 were in L. Crinan from 4th to 12th Oct, 2 were at Baugh *Tiree* on 7th Oct and 3 at Middleton *Tiree* on 11th Dec.

2003 The first autumn migrants were 5 at Gott Bay on 5th Sep. Later in Sep, 10 were at Frenchman's Rocks on 9th, 200 at Balephetrish Bay on 15th, 12 at L. Gruinart

on 16th, 95 flying SW at Hynish Tiree on 17th, 29 at L. Gruinart on 18th, 6 flying S at Machrihanish SBO on 19th, approx. 100 over Tobermory Mull and 25 at L. Gruinart on 25th, 45 at L. Gruinart on 27th and 51 at L. Gruinart on 30th. Records in Oct included: 4 flying W at Balevullin Tiree and 206 at L. Gruinart on 3rd; 7 at Machrihanish SBO on 5th; 4 at Whitehouse Tiree and 28 at L. Gruinart on 6th Oct and 18 at L. Gruinart on 9th. The only flocks reported after this were 11 flying S at Machrihanish SBO on 6th Nov and 10 at L. Indaal on 27th Dec. Single birds were on Mull and Tiree in Nov and Dec.

RED-BREASTED GOOSE* *Branta ruficollis*

0169

Vagrant. An adult on Islay, first seen on 27th Oct 2001, is the only previous record.

2002 The bird found at L. Gruinart in Oct 2001 remained in the L. Gruinart area until 3rd Apr. What was presumed to be the same returning individual was seen again at L. Gruinart on 18th Oct remaining until the end of the year.

2003. The L. Gruinart individual remained in the area until 9th Apr. What was again presumed to be the same returning bird re-appeared on 10th Nov and remained in the L. Gruinart area until the end of the year. All the above records have been accepted by BBRC [T. ap Rheinallt, A.W. Reed et al.]

COMMON SHELDUCK (SHELDUCK) *Tadorna tadorna* Crà-ghèadh

0173

Widespread breeding species especially on sandy coasts. The majority are absent from mid-Aug to late Oct when they migrate to moulting grounds.

Jan-May. 2002 Besides those at L. Indaal and L. Gruinart [Table 8.1], counts of 20 or more were made at L. Don (max 32 on 21st Jan), the Strand Colonsay (max 38 on 13th Feb) and 26 at Tiree WeBS sites (15th Apr).

2003 Besides those at L. Indaal and L. Gruinart [Table 8.2], counts of 20 or more were made at L. Don (max 32 on 31st Jan), Salum Bay Tiree (30 on 1st Feb), L. Sween (WeBS count 81 on 16th Feb – by far the highest count recorded here), L. a' Phuill (max 28 on 27th Mar) and L. Crinan (max 26 on 27th Apr).

Breeding. 2002 On Islay 11 pairs bred at L. Gruinart, 4 bred at Ardnave and one at Smaull. Eight broods totalling 46 young were found on Colonsay and pairs with young were seen on Iona, Machrihanish SBO, L. Crinan, Otter Ferry, on Tiree at Baugh, Miodar and Crossapol and nr. Langa Quarry Kintyre.

2003 A pair with 6 newly hatched ducklings beside Corran Lunga was the first record on the Treshnish Isles since 1976. On Colonsay 28 pairs were found and 5 broods totalling 31 young seen. Twelve pairs were considered likely to have bred at L. Gruinart and a min. of 5 pairs bred on Sanda Island. Elsewhere on Islay, pairs with young were seen at Bruichladdich, Bridgend and Ardlarach. Pairs with young were seen: on Tiree at Balephetrish Bay, Miodar and An Fhaodhail; and at L. Crinan, Machrihanish and Laggan Mull.

Aug-Dec. 2002 There was no discernable gap in records during the late summer. Away from Islay [Table 8.1] the only count of more than 20 birds was 24 at L. Don on 28th Dec.

2003 Records during Aug and Sep mostly related to juvs. One at Gott Bay on 8th Dec was the first seen on Tiree since Sep. There were no counts of more than 20 birds away from Islay.

Table 8.1 *Maximum monthly counts of Shelduck at two sea-lochs on Islay in 2002.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	133	185	189	10	22	22	61	6	7	8	98	135
L. Indaal	46	42	48	51	58	37	20	11	0	3	14	45

Table 8.2 *Maximum monthly counts of Shelduck at two sea-lochs on Islay in 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	204	288	124	167	44	54	127	41*	16	30	76	50+
L. Indaal	40	41	46	60	101	29	10	9	0	0	16	39

* mostly juvs.

MANDARIN DUCK (MANDARIN) *Aix galericulata* 0178
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.

2002 Single pairs were reported on L. Eck Cowal during Apr. Up to three birds (2 males and a female) were reported throughout the year at both the N and S ends of L. Awe.

2003 A pair were seen at An Lodan (L. Awe) in Jan and Feb and 2 males with 2 females were at the same site on 21st Oct. It is thought that the L. Awe birds derive from birds kept in an ornamental wildfowl collection.

EURASIAN WIGEON (WIGEON) *Anas penelope* Glas-lach 0179
Scarce and local breeding species. Common passage migrant and winter visitor to all areas.

Jan-Apr. 2002 Other than those listed in Table 9.1, the only sites with counts of 100 or more were Outer L. Etive (max 156 on 13th Jan) and L. Don with 200 in 21st Jan.

2003 Other than those listed in Table 9.2, the only sites with counts of 100 or more were: Campbeltown L. (126 on 3rd Jan), Outer L. Etive (max 144 on 5th Jan) and L. Laich *North Argyll* with 130 in 11th Jan.

Breeding. 2002 Three pairs were on L. Tulla *North Argyll* on 19th Jun with a brood of 2 young. A pair were seen with 7 juvs. at L. Crinan on 1st Jul and a pair were present at L. Gruinart in the breeding season but no young were seen.

2003 At least three pairs were present at L. Gruinart in Jun and a pair were on L. Bhirceapol *Tiree* on 21st Jun. In neither case were young seen.

Sep-Dec. 2002. The only other sites reporting counts of 100 or more were: L. Gilp (160 or more on 2nd Oct), L. Sween (max 189 on 8th Dec), L. Don (max 150 on 14th Nov) and Outer L. Etive (max 115 on 8th Dec).

2003 The first returning birds at L. Crinan were on 26th Jul - an unusually early date. The only other sites reporting counts of 100 or more were: L. Sween (max 102 on 14th Oct), L. Gilp (310 or more on 21st Nov) and Outer L. Etive (max 124 on 14th Dec).

Table 9.1 *Maximum monthly counts of Wigeon at two sea-lochs on Islay, L. Crinan and Tiree in 2002 (i.e. all sites which regularly held 100+ birds in the winter months).*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	244	238	295	50	6	2	0	0	45	180	457	345
L. Indaal	171	165	121	11	1	0	0	2	970	380	385	297
L. Crinan	54	94	n/r	5	0	0	4	0	260	578	283	212
Tiree	325	398	348	71	4	0	0	29	329	361	530	350

Table 9.2 *Maximum monthly counts of Wigeon at two sea-lochs on Islay, L. Crinan and Tiree in 2003 (i.e. all sites which regularly held 100+ birds in the winter months).*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	351	452	391	133	9	6	4	6	12	501	864	252
L. Indaal	147	145	101	6	0	0	0	0	720	400	410	395
L. Crinan	139	40	n/r	0	0	0	4	10	319	432	517	188
Tiree	345	203	172	45	6	2	1	12	254	336	407	385

AMERICAN WIGEON *Anas americana*

0180

Vagrant. Six or more previous Argyll records, all since 1989 and all of single males. Recent records in the Loch Craignish/Loch Crinan area have been attributed to a single returning individual.

2002 What was presumed to be our faithful returning male was first seen with Eurasian Wigeon at Crinan Ferry *Mid-Argyll* on 26th Oct. A male at L. Craignish *Mid-Argyll* on 28th Dec was presumably the same bird.

2003 A male at L. Feochan during Mar was possibly the L. Crinan individual as there were no sightings from there at the time. Once again a male was in L. Crinan from 17th Sep until at least mid-Oct. This is the fifth year that it is presumed that the same individual has returned to this site.

All the above records have been accepted by SBRC (J. Halliday, W. Jackson, J. Dickson *et al.*).

GADWALL *Anas strepera* Lach-ghlas

0182

Scarce but regular on passage and in winter, with most recent records from Kintyre, Islay, Mid-Argyll and Tiree. Breeding confirmed on Tiree and probable on Islay 1986 - 1994.

Jan-May. 2002 Up to 4 were seen regularly at RSPB L. Gruinart from Jan to Apr with 6 (2 male/4 females) on 7th Apr. A pair at Balephetrish *Tiree* on 1st May was not seen subsequently.

2003 Two were seen on L. a' Phuill on 2nd Jan and a 1st winter male first seen at Lochan Ceann a' Choin (nr. Ford) *Mid-Argyll* on 28th Jan remained until 31st Mar. Up to 4 were seen regularly at RSPB L. Gruinart from Jan to Mar with a peak count of 8 on 26th Apr. A pair at L. Bhasapol on 26th May were not seen subsequently.

Breeding. 2002 A pair were at RSPB L. Gruinart in May and early Jun but with no evidence of breeding.

2003 A pair were at RSPB L. Gruinart during May and another with young were reported on the Gruinart Floods on 21st Jun.

Jul-Dec. 2002 Two moulting birds were on L. a' Phuill on 22nd Jul and 4 were at Gartnatra (L. Indaal) on 29th Sep. Two were on L. a' Phuill on 14th Oct, with 4 there on 8th Nov, and 6 were seen from the Tiree ferry SW of *Coll* flying W on 19th Oct. Up to 4 were seen on the floods at RSPB L. Gruinart from Oct to Dec.

2003 A female was on L. a' Phuill on 2nd and 8th Oct and a pair was seen there from 20th – 26th Oct. Two adults were at RSPB L. Gruinart on 20th Oct and a male was again seen at Lochan Ceann a' Choin *Mid-Argyll* on 26th Dec.

EURASIAN TEAL (TEAL) *Anas crecca* Crann-lach 0184
Widespread but uncommon breeding species. Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Jan-Apr. 2002 Apart from those listed in Table 10.1, the only sites with counts of 100 or more were Kilfinan Bay *Cowal* (130+ on 20th Jan), and L. Don (max 200 on 21st Jan).

2003 The highest counts away from the sites listed in Table 10.2 were 80 at Balliemore *Cowal* on 12th Jan and 60 at Canal Loch *Coll* on 4th Feb.

Breeding. 2002 On *Islay*, an estimated 21 pairs bred at RSPB L. Gruinart, 4 bred at Ardnave and one bred at Kilnave. Pairs also bred on *Colonsay*, at several sites on *Tiree* and at L. na Machrach Moire *Kintyre*.

2003 On *Islay*, an estimated 31 pairs bred at RSPB L. Gruinart and pairs also bred at L. na Beinne and Laraichean Buidhe. Breeding pairs were found at 6 sites on *Tiree*, several on *Colonsay* and at RSPB *Coll* (2 pairs).

Aug-Dec. 2002 Apart from those listed in Table 10.1, the only site with a count of 100 or more was Kilfinan Bay *Cowal* with 400+ on 3rd Nov.

2003 Apart from those listed in Table 10.2, the only sites with counts of 100 or more were L. Don (100 on 30th Dec) and Balliemore *Cowal* (approx. 100 on 31st Dec).

Table 10.1 *Maximum monthly counts of Teal at two sea-lochs on Islay, Loch Crinan (Mid-Argyll) and Tiree in 2002.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	880	794	821	6	2	n/r	12	n/r	700	2095	1519	1160
L. Indaal	140	75	71	27	1	n/r	0	25	122	136	140	149
L. Crinan	85	143	n/r	15	0	n/r	0	6	0	60	160	130
Tiree	246	312	314	42	8	4	4	262	550	258	355	448

Table 10.2 *Maximum monthly counts of Teal at two sea-lochs on Islay, Loch Crinan (Mid-Argyll) and Tiree in 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	1690	1485	768	339	12	n/r	n/r	100	550	2140	2646	2012
L. Indaal	125	68	69	30	0	0	0	10	60	111	131	16
L. Crinan	160	41	0	0	0	1	0	0	40	100	34	173
Tiree	338	259	65	25	10	17	11	105	200	127	330	420

The majority of birds counted at RSPB L. Gruinart were on the flooded fields.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL *Anas carolinensis*

0184.2

Rare visitor from North America with nine or more accepted records since 1980, mostly on Islay. Some records may well involve returning individuals.

2002 - 2003 The male at Bruichladdich *Islay* from 2001 remained in the area until on 18th Jan 2002 and the other male, first seen at RSPB L. Gruinart on 25th Nov 2001, remained there until 30th Mar 2002. A male on a pool near Heylipol Church *Tiree* on 1st Jun 2002 remained until the following day.

A male found at RSPB L. Gruinart on 4th Nov 2002 remained there until 30th Mar 2003. On *Tiree* a male first seen at L. Bhasapol on 26th May 2003 was later seen at The Reef on 4th Jun 2003. A male found at RSPB L. Gruinart on 12th Nov 2003 remained until the end of the year.

All the above records have been accepted by ABRC (G. Jackson, T. ap Rheinallt, J. Bowler, P. Morris, A. W. Reed *et al*)

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos* Lach-riabhach

0186

Common breeding, passage and wintering species.

Jan-Apr. 2002 Other than those listed in Table 11.1, the only count exceeding 50 came from Oban Harbour (63 on 2nd Mar).

2003 Other than those listed in Table 11.2, the only count exceeding 50 came from Lochan Luing (Tayinloan) *Kintyre* (ca 100 on 12th Jan).

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 2 of 13 BBS squares (15%). In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area 11 nesting Mallard were found at 9 sites mostly small islands in sealochs. At least 25 pairs were present on *Tiree* in Apr, an estimated 64 bred at RSPB L. Gruinart and four broods totalling 39 young were found in Oban. Broods of young were also seen on Oronsay and *Colonsay* as well as on L. Awe and at several other sites on *Islay*. A pair on Sgeir an Eirionnach on 23rd Jun was an unusual record for the Treshnish Isles.

2003 Recorded in 3 of 10 BBS squares (30%). In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area 12 nesting Mallards were found at 9 sites mostly small islands in sealochs. An estimated 80 pairs bred at RSPB L. Gruinart, at least 4 bred on Sanda Island and at least 11 broods of young were seen on *Tiree*. Adults with young were also seen: in *Mid-Argyll* at L. Awe, L. Leathan and Lerags (nr Oban) and at Bishop's Glen *Cowal*.

Aug-Dec. 2002 Other than those listed in Table 11.1, the only counts of 50 or more came from L. Caolisport (max. 320 on 31st Dec), L. Gorm *Islay* (50 on 30th Sep), L. Sween (62 on 6th Oct) and An Lodan (L. Awe) (100 on 13th Nov).

2003 Other than those listed in Table 11.2, the only counts of 50 or more came from L. Sween (max. 95 on 21st Sep), Lachlan Bay *Cowal* (60 on 21st Sep), Balliemore *Cowal* (60 on 21st Sep) and L. Caolisport (max. 282 on 6th Dec).

Table 11.1 *Maximum monthly counts of Mallard at two sea-lochs on Islay, Loch Crinan (Mid-Argyll), Outer Loch Etive (N Argyll) and Tiree in 2002.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	113	28	39	n/r	n/r	n/r	6	10	n/r	309	118	140
L. Indaal	89	118	17	15	15	27	30	28	125	50	85	161
L. Crinan	15	22	n/r	1	0	2	0	145	20	47	13	16
L. Etive	111	36	54	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	79	68	132	110
<i>Tiree</i>	24	75	32	19	23	15	42	192	349	138	195	146

Table 11.2 *Maximum monthly counts of Mallard at two sea-lochs on Islay, Loch Crinan (Mid-Argyll), Outer Loch Etive (N Argyll) and Tiree in 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	123	199	48	67	109	16	34	6	3	177	178	274
L. Indaal	107	125	35	14	14	30	22	24	81	63	48	119
L. Crinan	2	16	n/r	6	7	n/r	12	60	29	50	6	15
L. Etive	169	100	31	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	129	134	121	107
Tiree	140	53	83	91	14	57	234	304	357	157	26	73

BLACK DUCK* *Anas rubripes*

0187

Vagrant. The only Argyll record concerns one found at Loch a' Phuill (Tiree) in Jun 2001.

None in 2002 or 2003.

PINTAIL *Anas acuta* Lach-stiùireach

0189

Very scarce breeding species. Scarce passage migrant. Winter visitor, regular only on Islay and Tiree.

Jan-Jun. 2002 The highest count on *Tiree* was at L Riaghain where 4 were present on 14th Jan. None were reported away from *Islay* and *Tiree*.

2003 Up to 8 were at L. Riaghain during Jan and Feb. One was reported at the head of L. na Keal on 14th and 17th May and a female was at Machrihanish SBO on 3rd Jun.

Breeding. 2002 Attempted breeding was suspected on *Tiree* where a pair was present in Apr and May. No young were seen and the nest was presumed to have failed.

2003 Breeding was suspected at two sites on *Tiree* although no young were seen. Birds were also present during the breeding season at RSPB L. Gruinart and may have bred there.

Jul-Dec. 2002 The count of 69 in L Indaal on 5th and 17th Nov was a new record total for *Islay*. From Aug to Dec birds were present at two sites on *Tiree*, with a peak count of 8 at L. a' Phuill on 30th Sep.

2003 A total of 17 were seen flying W in 1.75 hrs. at Ardnave Point on 4th Oct. Up to 3 were seen at various sites on *Tiree* from Jul to Dec. A female in L. Crinan from 21st to 23rd Oct was a first recorded here and a drake was present at Machrihanish from mid-Nov to the end of Dec.

Table 12.1 *Maximum monthly counts of Pintail at two sea-lochs on Islay in 2002.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	8	10	2	11	0	0	0	0	0	3	5	7
L. Indaal	11	20	0	2	0	0	0	0	18	23	69	41

Table 12.2 *Maximum monthly counts of Pintail at two sea-lochs on Islay in 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	13	11	14	9	n/r	7	0	0	5	26	10	7
L. Indaal	12	19	44	0	0	0	0	0	8	35	31	49

GARGANEY *Anas querquedula*

0191

Rare summer visitor and passage migrant. Bred in Kintyre in 1994 and on Islay in 1997.

2002 Many more records than usual: with a pair on St Mary's L. (L. Awe) on 21st Apr, a drake at Balephetrish *Tiree* on 15th May, a pair on 16th May and a male on 20th May at Canal L. *Coll*, a pair at Barrapol *Tiree* on 27th May, a drake at The Reef *Tiree* on 6th Jun and an immature at L. a' Phuill on 29th Aug. In addition, a pair was present at RSPB L. Gruinart from 28th Apr to 15th Jul but with no evidence of breeding.

2003 A pair was on a pool at Moss *Tiree* on 27th May and a female/juv. was at Loch a' Phuill on 18th Aug. Once again a pair was present in the breeding season at RSPB L. Gruinart but with no evidence of breeding.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL* *Anas discors*

0192

Vagrant. Only two or three previous records, all adult males; one on Tiree in 1986, one on Tiree in May 1998, and (possibly the same) one on Islay, also in May 1998.

None in 2002 or 2003.

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

0194

Scarce breeding species. More numerous as passage migrant and winter visitor although largely restricted to Islay and Tiree.

Jan-Apr. 2002 The only records away from *Islay* and *Tiree* [Table 13.1] were: a male at L. Crinan on 24th Mar and 14th Apr, a male at Killean *Kintyre* on 17th Apr and up to 3 on Oronsay during Apr.

2003 The only record away from *Islay* and *Tiree* [Table 13.2] was a pair at Pennyghael *Mull* on 8th Apr.

Breeding. 2002 A female with a brood of 10 on 18th May constitutes the first known breeding record for Oronsay. Twelve pairs are thought to have bred at RSPB L. Gruinart and at least five broods of young were found on *Tiree*.

2003 Six pairs are thought to have bred at RSPB L. Gruinart and at least five broods of young were found on *Tiree*.

Sep-Dec. 2002 The only records were those from *Islay* and *Tiree* [Table 13.1].

2003 The only records were those from *Islay* and *Tiree* [Table 13.2].

Table 13.1 *Maximum monthly counts of Shoveler at Loch Gruinart (Islay) and on Tiree in 2002.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	64	90	92	2	24	24	4	0	4	51	83	85
Tiree	21	22	13	12	8	4	9	6	10	22	26	35

Table 13.2 *Maximum monthly counts of Shoveler at Loch Gruinart (Islay) and on Tiree in 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	60	50	63	27	10	12	n/r	2	2	30	63	92
Tiree	22	26	13	28	9	4	5	8	6	15	20	20

COMMON POCHARD (POCHARD) *Aythya ferina* Lach-mhàsach 0198
Winter visitor in small numbers. No confirmed breeding in recent years.

Jan-May. 2002 Recorded from Jan to 5th Mar mostly on *Islay* and only in single figures. The highest counts were at L. Ballygrant (10 on 2nd Jan and 17th Feb) and L. Skerrols (10 on 4th Feb). Elsewhere, a male was at L. an Eilein on 4th Jan, 6 were at L. nan Geadh *Kintyre* on 9th Feb, 2 were at L. Restil *Cowal* on 14th Feb and 6 were at L. Leathan *Mid-Argyll* on 17th Feb.

2003 Unusually large numbers (for Argyll) occurred from Jan to early Mar. The WeBS count on *Tiree* found 21 on 8th Jan, 15 at Kilchurn Castle (L. Awe) on 20th Feb ; on *Islay*, numbers at L. Ballygrant peaked at 34 on 17th Feb and 20 were at L. Skerrols on 9th Mar. In addition groups in single figures were at various sites in *Mid-Argyll* and *Kintyre*. Twelve were reported from Ardmarnock Estate Pond *Cowal* on 14th Apr and a single was at RSPB L. Gruinart on 8th May.

Jul-Dec. 2002 Recorded on *Islay* from 21st Oct to the year's end, mostly in single figures. The highest counts were at L. Gorm (max. 17 on 4th Nov) and L. Ballygrant (37 on 27th Dec). On *Tiree* numbers at Loch a' Phuill peaked at 9 in late Nov and 2 were at L. Riaghain in Nov and Dec. In late Dec a small influx may have occurred in *Mid-Argyll* when there were singles at An Lodan (L. Awe) and L. Leathan (Kilmichael) on 27th, 12 at L. nan Druimnean (nr Kilmelford) and 9 at L. Nell (nr Oban) on 28th.

2003 An early drake was at L. Bhasapol on 21st Jul but then there were none until 2 at L. Gorm *Islay* on 5th Oct. Numbers on *Islay* and *Tiree* did not exceed single figures during Oct but there were 10 at L. Skerrols *Islay* on 1st Nov and 18 at L. Bhasapol on 6th Nov. The highest counts thereafter were: 20 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 15th Nov, 12 at Ardmarnock Estate Pond *Cowal* on 6th Nov, 38 on *Tiree* (incl. 31 at L. Bhasapol) on 19th Dec and 26 at L. Finlaggan *Islay* on 29th Dec. Up to 3 were at various sites in *Kintyre* and *Mid-Argyll* in Nov and Dec and a drake was at Totamore *Coll* on 6th and 15th Dec.

RING-NECKED DUCK *Aythya collaris* 0200
Vagrant. First accepted record in Argyll 1982, with 7 further records to 2001
None in 2002 or 2003.

FERRUGINOUS DUCK *Aythya nyroca* 0202
Vagrant. The only Argyll record concerns one found at Loch a' Phuill (Tiree) in Apr 2003.

2003. A male was found with Tufted Ducks at L. Bhasapol *Tiree* on 21st Apr. It was seen again frequently until 29th Apr, often in the company of a male Tufted Duck. [J. Bowler et al.]. This record has been accepted by BBRC. It is the first for Argyll and the first in Scotland since 1992.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula* Lach-thopach 0203
Scarce breeding species. Common winter visitor.

Jan-Apr. 2002 Other than those listed in Table 14.1 the only sites with counts of 10 or more birds were: on *Islay*, Easter Ellister (16 on 20th Jan), L. Skerrols (18 on 4th Feb) and L. Ballygrant (max. 30 on 17th Feb) ; in *Mid-Argyll*, Dubh Loch (Glen Shira) (10 on 31st Mar) and L. Leathan (Kilmichael) (12 on 2nd Apr).

2003 Other than those listed in Table 14.2 the only sites with counts of 10 or more birds were: on *Islay*, Easter Ellister (30 on 16th Feb), L Ballygrant (max. 74 on

7th Mar), L. Allan (22 on 17th Feb), L. Skerrols (20 on 9th Mar) ; RSPB L. Gruinart (11 on 24th Mar) and in *Mid-Argyll*, Lochan Taynish (11 on 3rd Jan) and L. Seil (17 on 11th Jan).

Breeding. 2002 On *Islay* broods of young were seen at Easter Ellister, L. Finlaggan, and L. Gorm with pairs present at Ardnave L. and RSPB L. Gruinart although no young were seen. On *Tiree* pairs with young were seen on L. an Eilein and L. Bhasapol.

2003 On *Islay*, broods of young were seen at Ardnave L. and L. Gorm with pairs present at RSPB L. Gruinart although no young were seen. On *Tiree* 2 pairs with young were seen on L. Bhasapol.

Sep-Dec. 2002 Other than those listed in Table 14.1 the only sites with counts of 10 or more birds were: on *Islay*, L. Gorm (max. 30 on 15th Nov) and L Ballygrant (max. 19 on 23rd Sep) ; in *Mid-Argyll*, Dubh Loch (Glen Shira) (14 on 11th Nov) and L. Seil (17 on 28th Dec).

2003 Other than those listed in Table 14.2 the only sites with counts of 10 or more birds were: on *Islay*, L. Gorm (max. 45 on 21st Sep), RSPB L. Gruinart (17 on 16th Oct), L. Skerrols (22 on 29th Dec), L. Finlaggan (13 on 29th Dec) and L Ballygrant (max. 25 on 29th Dec). Elsewhere there were 19 at Totamore *Coll* on 19th Nov and 12 at L. Leathan *Mid-Argyll* on 26th Dec.

Table 14.1 *Maximum monthly counts of Tufted Duck at Ardnave Loch (Islay) and at the four main freshwater lochs on Tiree in 2002.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Ardnave Loch	3	n/r	n/r	20	n/r	2	n/r	n/r	27	24	24	9
Tiree	123	135	111	112	23	8	2	4	25	60	122	133

Table 14.2 *Maximum monthly counts of Tufted Duck at Ardnave Loch (Islay) and at the four main freshwater lochs on Tiree in 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Ardnave Loch	4	2	10	n/r	12	4	2	2	n/r	22	n/r	n/r
Tiree	168	173	103	100	16	18	20	n/r	29	99	144	178

GREATER SCAUP (SCAUP) *Aythya marila* Lach-mhara 0204
Winter visitor and passage migrant. Large numbers at Loch Indaal (Islay), which is a site of national importance for wintering birds, but scarce elsewhere. Occasionally summers.

Jan-May. 2002 The only records away from L. Indaal [Table 15] were all in May: one off Sanda Islands on 8th, single males at L. Riaghain on 15th and at L. a' Phuill on 21st and 26th.

2003 The only record away from L. Indaal [Table 15] was one off Sanda Island on 28th May.

Summering birds. 2002 A pair was on L. Gorm *Islay* on 13th Jun.

2003. None reported.

Jul-Dec. 2002 The only records away from L. Indaal [Table 15] were: singles on *Tiree* from Sep to Dec with 2 on Loch a' Phuill on 27th Oct, one in the Sound of Gigha on 7th Oct and 2 with Goldeneyes on L. Torr *Mull* on 3rd Nov.

2003 Records away from L. Indaal [Table 15] were as follows: on *Islay* there were singles at RSPB L. Gruinart on 30th Aug and 15th Oct, 16 flying S off Frenchman's Rocks on 9th Sep and two on L. Gorm on 5th Oct; Machrihanish SBO 10 flying S. on 16th Sept and 7 also flying S. on 9th Oct, one on L. Scridain, *Mull* on 18th Jul and 4

flying W. off Balevullin *Tiree* on 3rd Oct with singles elsewhere on the island from Oct to Dec.

Table 15 *Maximum monthly counts of Scaup at Loch Indaal (Islay) in 2002 and 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
2002	1150	945	410	241	54	0	0	41	143	325	725	715
2003	754	755	380	301	6	0	0	16	191	387	777	990

LESSER SCAUP* *Aythya affinis*

0205

Vagrant, first recorded on Islay in Nov 1998.

None in 2002 or 2003.

COMMON EIDER (EIDER) *Somateria mollissima* Lach-Lochlannach

0206

Resident breeding bird common on all suitable coasts. Large flocks of moulting drakes and first-year birds gather at some sites during Jun to Aug. Winter counts at Otter Ferry (Loch Fyne) regularly exceed the qualifying level for a site of national importance. Many Argyll breeding birds apparently winter in the Firth of Clyde.

Jan-Jun. 2002 Counts of over 100 away from L. Indaal [Table 16] included: 2,080 off Otter Ferry on 27th Jan, 180 off Hynish *Tiree* on 2nd Feb, 102 off Oronsay on 24th Feb and 282 off Saulmore Point (L. Etive) on 3rd Apr.

2003 Counts of over 100 away from L. Indaal [Table 16] included: 1,470 at Otter Ferry on 5th Jan, 120 at Hynish *Tiree* on 2nd Feb and 200 near the fish farm on L. Scridain on 12th Apr.

Breeding. 2002 In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area, nesting Eider were observed on 21 small islands. At the largest colony 356 nests were counted in an incomplete count and a mark-and-record exercise suggested that over 461 pairs were present. The next 6 largest sites held *ca* 70, 44, 27, 10-20, 19 and 10 nesting birds. The remaining 14 held 5 or fewer. Several islands could not be counted in 2002 because of poor weather in May and early Jun. On *Colonsay* 22 broods totalling 64 young were seen in Jun and 14 nests were located on Oronsay. Broods of young were also recorded at many sites, in *Cowal*, *Islay*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Tiree* and *Mull* (inc. Treshnish Isles).

2003 In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area *ca* 116-128 nesting Eiders were counted at 22 sites. These did not include the three largest colonies – Burnt Islands (Kyles of Bute) *Cowal*, Sgat Mor and E. Aoghainn (both in L. Fyne) – nor 12 much smaller colonies none of which were visited on suitable dates. The three largest colonies counted were islets with 28, 26 and 15 nesting females. Most of the other 19 sites counted held four or fewer nesting females. Approx. 1,000 birds were at the breeding colony on the Burnt Islands (Kyles of Bute) *Cowal* although no precise count was made. On *Colonsay* 29 broods totalling 80+ were seen in Jun and 11 broods totalling 30+ were located on Oronsay. Around the coast of *Cowal* from L. Striven to Sandbank 19 broods totalling 44 were found on one day in Jun. Broods of young were also recorded at many other sites, in *Cowal*, *Islay*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Tiree* and on *Mull* (inc. Treshnish Isles).

Autumn Eider Survey 2002 The co-ordinated count of Eider in the Firth of Clyde, which took place as usual in Sep, gave a total of 3,409 for the Argyll part of the area. (N.B. this includes all those counted in L Long, some of which will belong with the Clyde area); (*cf* 4,677 in 2001, 4,087 in 2000 and 5,519 in 1999). Numbers were generally down on previous years and there were low levels in the Firth of Clyde as a whole (C. Waltho).

Much higher counts were achieved for at least one key site in Argyll earlier in the year (see above).

2003 The co-ordinated count of Eider in the Firth of Clyde, which took place as usual in Sep gave a total of 3,393 for the Argyll part of the area. (N.B. this includes all those counted in L Long, some of which will belong with the Clyde area) (*cf* 1999-2003 mean of 4255). Numbers were generally similar to 2002 but down on earlier years (C. Waltho). Higher counts were achieved for at least one key site in Argyll earlier in the year (see above).

Jul-Dec. 2002 Counts of over 100 away from L. Indaal [Table 16] included: 810 at Otter Ferry on 21st Jul, 353 at Blairmore (L. Long) *Cowal* on 26th Jul, 160 at Heanish *Tiree* on 21st Sep, 140 at Hynish Bay *Tiree* on 29th Sep, 350+ in Ardgaddan Bay (Loch Fyne) *Cowal* on 3rd Nov, 300+ in Campbeltown L. on 16th Nov and 1,130 from Otter Ferry to Kilfinan Bay *Cowal* on 17th Nov.

2003 Counts of over 100 away from L. Indaal [Table 16] included: 294 at Traigh Bhaigh *Tiree* on 6th Aug, 905 at Otter Ferry on 8th Aug, 434 at Blairmore (L. Long) *Cowal* on 20th Aug (max. for year), 160 at Heanish *Tiree* on 21st Aug, 170 at Hynish Bay *Tiree* on 17th Sep, 1,114 from Otter Ferry to Kilfinan Bay *Cowal* on 12th Oct and 253 in L. Creran (off Barcaldine) *North Argyll* on 9th Nov.

Table 16 *Maximum monthly counts of Eider at Loch Indaal (Islay) in 2002 and 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
2002	80	152	119	162	120	165	168	221	214	162	130	165
2003	91	101	130	200	161	179	180	200	211	139	122	151

KING EIDER* *Somateria spectabilis*

0207

Vagrant. Eleven Argyll records dating back to 1889, all of single males. The most recent was in Ardmucknish Bay (N Argyll) in 2000.

2002 A male was seen in Dunstaffnage Bay *Mid- Argyll* on 6th Apr [I. A. Dillon, B. A. L. Howlett] This record has been accepted by BBRC. (What was presumably the same bird had also been reported off Tobermory *Mull* on 27th Mar and in the mouth of L. Etive on 3rd Apr. It was regularly reported at Dunstaffnage until 7th May).

2003 An adult male was seen with Common Eider approx 1.5km N of Toward Point *Cowal* on 25th May. It was seen there again on 17th Jun and nearby, off Innellan, on 21st Jun [J. T. M. Towill]. This record has been accepted by BBRC.

HARLEQUIN DUCK* *Histrionicus histrionicus*

0211

Vagrant. The only Argyll record concerns one on Islay in Oct 1987.

None in 2002 or 2003.

LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis* Eun-buchainn

0212

Uncommon winter visitor, most frequent in Sound of Gigha (Kintyre), Islay, Coll and Tiree. Usually marine but occasionally seen on inland lochs. Occasional summer records.

Jan-May. 2002 Apart from 10 in Hynish Bay *Tiree* on 1st Mar all records were in single figures. There were; up to 3 in L. Indaal from Jan to Mar, 2 in Balephetrish Bay on 17th Feb, 8 in the Sound of Gigha on 9th Feb, 7 off Tayinloan (jetty) on 17th Mar and 8 in Dunstaffnage Bay *Mid-Argyll* on 20th Apr. A late male was in Dunstaffnage Bay on 10th May.

2003 Numbers peaked in the Sound of Gigha at 16 on 15th Mar and in Feall Bay *Coll* at 12 on 5th Feb. Up to 4 were in L. Indaal from Jan to Mar and there were 5 at Traigh Bhagh *Tiree* on 10th Jan and 4 in Balephetrish Bay on 2nd Apr. Elsewhere singles were off Aros *Mull* in Jan and two were in Outer L. Etive from Jan to Mar. Two late birds, an immature male and a female, were in L. Gilp on 25th May.

Oct-Dec. 2002 Apart from 11 in the Sound of Gigha on 30th Oct all records were in single figures. Numbers in L. Indaal rose to 6 in Dec and 4 were in Hough Bay *Tiree* on 24th Nov. Three were in Feall Bay *Coll* in Oct and Dec, 2 in West Loch Tarbert *Mid-Argyll* on 26th Oct, a single female off Aros *Mull* from 15th Oct to 12th Dec, 2 at Traigh nan Gilean *Tiree* on 15th Dec, one in L. Feochan (nr Oban) on 28th Dec and a pair were in Hough Bay *Tiree* on 29th Dec.

2003 *Coll* had by far the highest counts with 26 in Feall Bay on 17th Nov falling to 18 on 4th Dec and 12 in Crossapol Bay on 19th Dec. No more than 4 were in L. Indaal from Oct to Dec and 2 were off Hough *Tiree* on 20th Dec. The remaining records were all of single birds: at Loch an Eilein *Tiree* on 23rd Oct, Loch na Keal on 27th Oct, West Loch Tarbert *Mid-Argyll* on 10th Nov and Loch a' Phuill on 27th Oct and 4th Dec.

COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra* Lach-bheag-dhubh 0213
Very rare breeding species in Islay, Mid-Argyll and N Argyll. Present throughout the year in the Sound of Gigha (Kintyre) and at Loch Indaal (Islay). Scarce winter visitor elsewhere.

Jan-Jun. 2002 Numbers at L. Indaal [Table 17] were again lower than in past years with a peak of only 67 on 3rd Mar. The only count from the Sound of Gigha was approx. 20 off Tayinloan (jetty) on 17th Mar and 10 flew S at Machrihanish SBO on 25th May. Elsewhere: singles were at Liath Eilean (L. Fyne) *Mid-Argyll* on 6th May, Calgary *Mull* on 25th May and two were at Blarghour (L. Awe) *Mid-Argyll* on 18th May.

2003 Away from L. Indaal [Table 17] a flock of 15 were off Traigh Bhaigh *Tiree* on 10th Jan, a single female at Balephuill Bay *Tiree* on 13th Apr, and 2 at Braevallich (L. Awe) *Mid-Argyll* on 12th May.

Breeding. 2002 Seven males and 5 females were at the regular breeding site on *Islay* on 21st May. A single pair bred at a site in *Mid-Argyll* and a female with a half grown chick together with other adults possibly with young were at a site on *Jura* in Jun.

2003 Two pairs and 2 males were at the regular breeding site on *Islay* on 19th May and breeding was suspected elsewhere on *Islay*.

Jul- Dec. 2002 The peak count in the Sound of Gigha was 315 on 26th Jul with 165 there on 7th Oct. Elsewhere, away from L. Indaal [Table 17], 12 were off Garmony *Mull* on 8th Jul and one was in Hough Bay *Tiree* on 24th Nov.

2003 Away from L. Indaal [Table 17] : up to 3 were reported off Frenchman's Rocks on various dates from Aug to Oct; Machrihanish SBO had 10 on 7th Jul, 18 on 18th Aug and one on 16th Sep. From the *Islay* ferry 4 were seen north of Gigha *Kintyre* on 25th Aug, two were off The Green *Tiree* on 9th Nov and three were in West Loch Tarbert *Mid-Argyll* on 10th Nov.

Table 17 *Maximum monthly counts of Common Scoter at Loch Indaal (Islay) in 2002 and 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
2002	38	58	67	37	28	39	49	51	83	70	37	41
2003	42	52	59	21	29	23	27	43	62	63	49	38

SURF SCOTER *Melanitta perspicillata*

0214

Rare. At least 13 Argyll records, mostly in spring.

None in 2002 or 2003.

VELVET SCOTER *Melanitta fusca* Lach-dhubh

0215

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Most often on the west coast of Kintyre and at Loch Indaal (Islay), rare elsewhere. Occasional summer records.

2002 Six were seen in the Sound of Gigha on 9th Feb with up to 8 seen regularly from 27th Jul to the end of Oct. Single females were in Claggain Bay *Islay* on 7th Nov and in L. Indaal on 9th Nov.

2003 The only records came from the Sound of Gigha where there were 9 on 8th Jan, 14 on 26th Mar and 9 on 10th Dec.

COMMON GOLDENEYE (GOLDENEYE) *Bucephala clangula* Lach-bhreac

0218

Common winter visitor. Birds regularly present in all areas from early Oct to late Apr. Occasional summer records.

Jan-Apr. 2002 The highest count was 165 at L. Caolisport on 5th Feb. Other than those in Table 18.1, the only sites with counts of 10 or more were: Port Ellen *Islay* (max. 32 on 9th Jan), L. Melldalloch *Cowal* (12 on 18th Mar), L. Leathan *Mid-Argyll* (max. 12 on 26th Mar) and L. Feochan *Mid-Argyll* (17 on 1st Apr). The last reported were 3 at L. Indaal on 14th Apr.

2003 The highest count was 187 at L. Caolisport on 4th Feb. Other than those in Table 18.2, the only sites with counts of 10 or more were: Port Ellen *Islay* (max. 65 on 16th Jan), L. na Keal (29 on 10th Feb), L. Gilp (57 on 12th Feb), Furnace (L. Fyne) (max. 90 on 12th Feb and L. Leathan *Mid-Argyll* (max. 18 on 8th Apr). The last of winter was seen at L. an Eilein on 30th April.

Summering birds. 2002 Two females were reported in Port Ellen Bay *Islay* on 30th May and one was there on 29th Jul.

2003 No records of summering birds.

Sep-Dec. 2002 The first returning birds were two at L. Gorm *Islay* on 24th Sep. Other than those in Table 18.1, the only sites with counts of 10 or more birds were: L. Ba Mull (20 on 18th Oct), Machir Bay *Islay* (20 flying over on 24th Oct), Ardentinnny to Sandbank *Cowal* (20+ on 18th Nov), Furnace (L. Fyne) 72 on 26th Dec and Ormsary (L. Caolisport) (100+ on 28th Dec).

2003 The first returning bird was at L. Gorm *Islay* on 21st Sep. Other than those in Table 18.2, the only sites with counts of 10 or more birds were: L. Leathan *Mid-Argyll* (max. 18 on 16th Oct), West Loch Tarbert *Mid-Argyll* (12 on 10th Nov) and L. Caolisport (143 on 6th Dec).

Table 18.1 *Maximum monthly counts of Goldeneye in Loch Indaal (Islay), Outer Loch Etive (N Argyll), Loch Sween (Mid-Argyll) and at the four main freshwater lochs on Tiree in 2002.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Oct	Nov	Dec
Loch Indaal	12	11	7	3		10	10	9
Loch Sween	24	17	26	n/r		0	28	39
Loch Etive	22	29	23	n/r		1	8	12
Tiree	64	48	30	12		8	52	51

None were reported at these sites from May to Sep.

Table 18.2 *Maximum monthly counts of Goldeneye in Loch Indaal (Islay), Outer Loch Etive (N Argyll), Loch Sween (Mid-Argyll) and at the four main freshwater lochs on Tiree in 2003.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Oct	Nov	Dec
Loch Indaal	11	11	12	2		20	9	12
Loch Sween	25	24	n/r	n/r		0	16	32
Loch Etive	21	26	19	n/r		0	3	3
Tiree	55	36	20	4		35	51	53

None were reported at these sites from May to Sep.

SMEW *Mergus albellus* Sìolta-bhreach

0220

Rare winter visitor. Last recorded L. Seil (Mid-Argyll) in Jan 2000.

None in 2002 or 2003.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator* Sìolta-dhearg

0221

Common resident breeder. Large moulting flocks gather at some sites during Jul-Aug. Loch Indaal (Islay) is a site of national importance for wintering birds.

Jan-Apr. 2002 The only count of 20 or more, away from the sites listed in Table 19.1, was at Gott Bay *Tiree* (24 on 14th Apr).

2003 The only counts of 20 or more, away from the sites listed in Table 19.2, were 32 off Tainish Point *Mid-Argyll* in Jan and 24 at Gott Bay *Tiree* in Apr.

Breeding. 2002 In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area evidence of breeding was found at only 2 sites (E. an Ruisg *Mid-Argyll*, L. Feochan and E. Inshaig (Ardfern) *Mid-Argyll*, L Craignish) of over 50 visited. This is some indication of how closely female Red-breasted Mergansers sit and how difficult the nests of this relatively common species are to find. There were also several reports of adults with recently hatched young from sites in *Kintyre, Mid-Argyll, Mull* and *Tiree*.

2003 In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area evidence of breeding was found at only 5 sites. See comment above. There were also reports of adults with recently hatched young from Sanda Island, *Coll, Mid-Argyll, Mull & Tiree*. A pair with a brood of 18 young were seen in L. Crinan on 18th Jun.

Jun-Dec. 2002 An impressive total of 395 in the Sound of Gigha on 26th Jul would have been composed of moult flocks. Away from the sites listed in Table 19.1, the only other counts of 20 or more were: 22 in Dunstaffnage Bay *Mid-Argyll* on 10th Jun, 32 in Gott Bay on 9th Jul, 85 in L. Caolisport on 16th Sep and 23 at the head of L. na Keal on 16th Sep.

2003 Away from the sites listed in Table 19.2, the only other counts of 20 or more were: 22 in Gott Bay on 16th Jun, 30 at Otter Ferry on 6th Sep, 22 in L. na Keal on 9th Sep, 50 from Otter Ferry to Kilfinan Bay *Cowal* on 12th Oct, 20 in Crossapol Bay *Tiree* on 18th Oct, 21 in West Loch Tarbert *Mid-Argyll* on 10th Nov and 40 in L. Caolisport on 6th Dec.

Table 19.1 *Maximum monthly counts of Red-breasted Merganser at two sea-lochs on Islay, Loch Crinan (Mid-Argyll) and Loch Sween (Mid-Argyll) in 2002.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	7	3	5	2	n/r	n/r	21	16	31	21	4	8
L. Indaal	33	40	27	40	40	36	124	172	123	90	68	59
L. Crinan	7	4	n/r	7	6	2	23	4	33	32	13	17
L. Sween	16	7	19	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	8	26	21

Table 19.2 *Maximum monthly counts of Red-breasted Merganser at two sea-lochs on Islay, Loch Crinan (Mid-Argyll) and Loch Sween (Mid-Argyll) in 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	1	8	11	2	n/r	n/r	20	n/r	n/r	4	3	n/r
L. Indaal	40	38	31	47	31	41	98	138	101	68	57	57
L. Crinan	n/r	3	n/r	5	n/r	18	2	6	50	8	n/r	10
L. Sween	27	13	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	14	20	33

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser* Siolta 0223
Scarce breeding species, mainly in Cowal, Mid-Argyll, Mull and N Argyll. More widespread in winter but only in small numbers.

Jan-Apr. 2002 Six were on L. Ba Mull on 10th Feb. Elsewhere: up to 4 were seen in *Mid-Argyll* at Lagganbeg (R Euchar), L. Crinan, L. Feochan, L. Gilp, L. Leacann (Auchindrain) *Mid-Argyll*, L. Leathan (Kilmichael) *Mid-Argyll*, L. Tralaig (N of Kilmelford) *Mid-Argyll*, Muckairn (L. Etive) and Taynuilt (L. Etive); on *Mull* at Aros, L. Don, L. Sguabain (Glen More), L. Spelve, Mishnish Lochs and Pennycross (L. Scridain) and in *Cowal* at Castle Lachlan and L. Melldalloch.

2003 Five were on Ardnahoe L. *Islay* on 11th Mar. Elsewhere on *Islay* singles were seen on the R. Laggan at Cluanach and Bridgend. In *Mid-Argyll* up to 4 were seen at: the Add Estuary, An Lodan (L. Awe), Barre Beithe (L. Awe), Black Lochs, Kilninver (R Euchar), L. Ederline (Ford) Loch Awe, L. Gilp, L. Leacann (Auchindrain) *Mid-Argyll*, L. Leathan, L. na Druimnean (Kilmelford), L. Nell and Lochan Ceann a' Choin (nr Ford); on *Mull* up to 4 were at Harmony Point (N end of Scallastle Bay), L. Don and Salen ;in *Cowal* 2 were at Blairmore (Loch Long) and 2 in Bishop's Glen (Dunoon). One was on L. Garasdale *Kintyre*.

Breeding. 2002 A female at Blarghour (L. Awe) with 10 small young on 18th May was the only confirmed breeding record. Some of the young were seen riding on the parent's back.

2003 A pair was seen landing in a tree with a large hole nr. Ballimeanoch Farm (L. Awe) on 6th May. A female with 12 young was on the R. Add (nr. Dunadd) *Mid-Argyll* on 8th May, a female with b/12 was on L. Awe nr Ardanaisig Hotel on 22nd May and a female with 5 1/3 grown young was on the R. Euchar at Lagganbeg *Mid-Argyll* on 16th Jul.

Jun-Dec. 2002 Eight were seen in the Add Estuary on 31st Aug. Elsewhere: up to 6 were seen in *Mid-Argyll* at Dalavich (L. Awe), Kilchurn Castle (L. Awe), Kilmartin Burn, Kintraw (L. Craignish), L. an Losgairn Mor (nr Kilmelford), L. Crinan, L. Feochan and L. Leacann; on *Mull* at L. Ba, L. a' Chumhainn, L. Don and the Mishnish Lochs and in *Kintyre* on Machrihanish Water.

2003 Six were on Holy Loch *Cowal* on 11th Oct. Elsewhere: up to 4 were seen in *Mid-Argyll* at the Add Estuary, Braevallich (L. Awe), Glen Lonan lake, L. Caolisport, L. Etive, L. Feochan and at Minard (L. Fyne); on *Mull*, at L. Don and L. a' Chumhainn, and finally at Machrihanish SBO.

RUDDY DUCK *Oxyura jamaicensis* 0225
Vagrant. Four previous accepted records: a female at Loch na Beiste(Mid-Argyll), Clachan (Kintyre) on 15th May 1984 and males on Tiree on 8th and 13th May 1987, at Loch Crinan (Mid-Argyll) on 25th Oct 1993 and at Claddach Loch (Islay) on 12th May 1999.

None in 2002 or 2003.

RED (WILLOW) GROUSE *Lagopus lagopus* Coileach-fraoich 0329
Sparsely distributed resident breeding bird.

Records on *Coll* in the winters of 2002 and 2003 were the first for the island in many years but derived from birds introduced for shooting purposes in 2001/2002 [JB]. Birds were also released on *Colonsay* in Sep 2003 [DCJ].

Breeding. 2002. A survey in central *Kintyre* (between Carradale and Glenbarr - approx. 1,670 hectares) found cock grouse at a mean density of 6.9 per km² [Central Kintyre Habitat Management Plan, Scottish Power]. Breeding was confirmed at 2 sites on *Mull* and birds were present in the breeding season at 6 sites on *Islay* and 4 sites in *Mid-Argyll*.

2003. Recorded in 2 of 10 BBS squares (20%). A survey in central *Kintyre* (between Carradale and Glenbarr - approx. 1,670 hectares) found cock grouse at a mean density of 7.2 per km² [Central Kintyre Habitat Management Plan, Scottish Power]. Breeding was confirmed at 2 sites on *Islay* and birds were present in the breeding season at 3 sites on *Jura* and 3 sites in *Cowal*.

PTARMIGAN *Lagopus muta* Tàrmachan 0330
Vary localised resident breeding bird, generally above 800m. All records required.

No records in 2002

2003 A single bird was seen at 760m on Aonach Eagach (nr. Stob Ghabhar) *North Argyll* on 11th Feb and a pair were strutting noisily on the ground at the same site on 20th Oct. At least one was on Ben Cruachan *North Argyll* on 30th May and feathers and droppings were also seen in the area. One still in winter plumage was at 800m near the summit of Ben More *Mull* on 15th Apr.

BLACK GROUSE *Tetrao tetrix* Caoileach-dubh 0332
Scarce and local resident breeding bird. Numbers apparently in steep decline: all records required.

Breeding. 2002. In the course of the Black Grouse Project 83 cocks were counted at leks in *Mid-Argyll* and *Kintyre* and a male was seen during the breeding season at a site in the Rhinns of *Islay*.

2003. In the course of the Black Grouse Project 97 cocks were counted at leks in *Cowal*, *Kintyre* and *Mid-Argyll* (incl. Knapdale). Elsewhere up to 6 birds were seen at 3 sites on *Jura*. Recorded in one of 10 BBS squares (10%), (*cf* 1 of 15 in 1999).

The only other records involved 3 greyhens in Glen Orchy *North Argyll* on 23rd Mar 2002 and 5 (3 males/2 females) in Fearnoch Forest *Mid-Argyll* on 1st October 2003.

CAPERCAILLIE *Tetrao urogallus* Capall-coille 0335
Very rare resident. Small population Mid-Argyll, and known to have bred Cowal in 1993 but no recent records in either locality.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa* Cearc-thomain-dhearg-chasach 0358
Birds (some hybrids with Chukar A. chukar) 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.

2002 Widely reported on *Islay* throughout the year, including 8 at Corarry Hill on 10th Feb and 10 at Island Farm on 12th Apr. The only other area with records was *Cowal* (e.g. 8 at Kilfinan Bay on 20th Jan) where hundreds were released on the Otter Estate during the previous year.

2003 Again widely reported on *Islay* throughout the year, including 14 at Kilmeny on 29th Jan, 11 at Blackpark on 25th Oct and 10 at Mid Carrabus on 9th Nov. The only record away from *Islay* was an apparent pair at Ardchnonell *Mid-Argyll*, which were seen on 30th Jun and again in July.

GREY PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix* Cearc-thomain 0367
Very localised distribution. Introductions, which take place in several areas, do not appear to result in self-sustaining populations. All records required.

On *Coll*, a covey of five birds was seen at Cliad in Sep 2002 and up to 2 birds were present in the Totronald/Crossapol area in Apr 2003. These will be the result of introductions made in 2001-2003 [JB]. There were also reports of one or two birds on *Islay*, in May and Nov 2003.

COMMON QUAIL (QUAIL) *Coturnix coturnix* Gearradh-gort 0370
Rare and irregular summer visitor.

2002 One was heard singing in a hay meadow at Heylipol *Tiree* on 13th Jun but not subsequently. On *Islay* at least one male was singing at Neriby on 9th/10th Jul and another was singing at Gartachossan on 10th Jul.

No records in 2003.

COMMON PHEASANT (PHEASANT) *Phasianus colchicus* Easag 0394
Long-established, widespread and common resident breeding bird. Birds also annually reared and released on some estates.

During the 2002-2003 birds were reported from all areas except *North Argyll*. Widely released as a game bird in many areas, sometimes in very large numbers.

GOLDEN PHEASANT *Chrysolophus pictus* 0396
An introduced population existed at Gruline (Mull) but is now probably extinct.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

RED-THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata* Learga-ruadh

0002

Widely distributed but scarce breeder. Also winter visitor and passage migrant.

Jan-Apr. Reported widely, in small numbers, around islands, in sea lochs and along the coast. The largest counts were at L. Indaal where there were 17 on 10th Feb 2002 and 32 on 14th Apr 2002, 16 on 16th Feb 2003 and 27 on 19th Apr 2003. Counts from the Kennacraig to Islay ferry gave totals between 5 and 20 birds. Other relatively large counts include 7 on L. na Keal on 1st Jan 2002, 9 in Hynish Bay *Tiree* on 2nd Feb 2002, 8 in Gott Bay, *Tiree* on 13th Apr 2002, 9 in L. Sween on 23rd Mar 2003, and 8 displaying together at Leargybreck (Craighouse) *Jura*, on 23rd Mar 2003.

Breeding. In 2002 there was wet and windy weather that probably affected breeding success; of 13 pairs at sites in *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll* and *N Argyll* only 1 pair successfully raised young. However there were successful pairs reported on *Mull* and *Islay*. On 26th Jul 2002 there were 14 birds present in the Sound of Gigha, which is early for aggregations on the sea but fits with the poor breeding success resulting in birds abandoning breeding lochs early. In 2003, some pairs apparently failed to return, but of 10 pairs at sites in *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll* and *N Argyll* 4 pairs successfully raised young.

Sep-Dec. In 2002 the largest counts reported in autumn or early winter were from Crossapol Bay, *Coll* (19 on 16th Sept), Sound of Gigha (18 on 16th Sept and 16 on 31st Oct), *Tiree* (9 on 1st Oct), L. Indaal (13 on 6th Oct, 23 on 7th Nov and 18 on 8th Dec) and L. Caolisport (10 on 6th Dec). In 2003 the first obvious migration was reported on 22 Aug when over 4 birds per hour passed southwards by Frenchman's Rocks. A similar rate of movement was reported at the same site on 14th Sept, but these were the only seawatching records of substantial numbers. L. Indaal again held the largest numbers in early winter with 7 on 26th Oct, 20 on 15th Nov and 19 on 15th Dec. One at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree*, on 4th and 19th December was the first freshwater record from the island for decades.

BLACK-THROATED DIVER *Gavia arctica* Learga-dhubh

0003

Very scarce breeder in Mid and North Argyll. Scarce in winter but more numerous on passage. Loch Caolisport is a site of national importance for wintering birds.

Jan-Apr. Reported widely, in small numbers, around islands, in sea lochs and along the coast. The only reports of double figures were from L. Caolisport where there were 19 on 27th Feb 2002 and 12 on 12th Jan 2003.

Breeding. A poor season in 2002; from 8 monitored sites only 5 pairs bred (4 on rafts), and only a single chick was fledged. Pairs were reported from two other sites in Argyll, with possible breeding at one of those. In 2003 there was low occupancy at several of the eight monitored sites. Only 4 out of 5 summering pairs laid eggs (all on rafts) but breeding success was good with 3 successful pairs fledging 4 chicks.

Sep-Dec. Counts of 42 birds on 4th Sept 2002 and 45 birds on 30th Oct 2002 in Sound of Gigha are exceptionally large concentrations for Argyll. There were also 7 on L. Indaal on 6th Oct 2002, and 8 on L. Caolisport on 9th Dec 2002. The only count of more than 5 birds reported in Sep/Dec 2003 concerned 13 in L. Caolisport, on 6th Dec

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer* Muir-bhuachail

0004

Numerous visitor, both in winter and on passage. Birds in breeding plumage regularly recorded Apr to mid Jun. Pre-migratory gatherings occur off some coasts in late Apr and early May. A few individuals summer. Loch Indaal (Islay), Loch Caolisport (Mid-Argyll) and Lochs Beg & Scridain (Mull) are important sites for wintering birds.

Jan-May. Birds were reported from all coastal areas of Argyll, but especially from sea lochs and coasts of *Islay*, *Mull*, *Colonsay*, *Coll*, *Tiree* and *Kintyre*. The largest counts in 2002 were from L. Indaal, with 74 on 14th Apr and 50 on 12th May, West L. Tarbert *Kintyre*, with 32 on 21st Jan, and Crossapol Bay *Coll*, with 38 on 8th May. Fewer were reported in 2003, with the highest numbers 68 at L. Indaal on 19th Apr, and 38 in the Sound of Gigha, on 26th Mar.

Jun-Aug. Reported, mostly in ones or twos, from *Kintyre*, *Mull*, *Colonsay*, *Coll* and *Tiree*, with most of these birds in summer plumage.

Sep- Dec Widely reported, but mostly in small numbers. There were larger numbers seen in 2002 than in 2003, with largest counts 48 in the Sound of Gigha on 30th Oct 2002, 29 at Eilean Traighie (West Loch Tarbert) *Mid-Argyll*, on 14th Nov 2002, 22 at L. Indaal, on 17th Nov 2002, and 20 at *Tiree* on 1st Dec 2002. . One at Loch a' Phuill, on 8th December 2002 was the first ever recorded from freshwater on the island.

WHITE-BILLED DIVER* *Gavia adamsii* Learga-bhlàr 0005
Vagrant seen on only five occasions, all since 1986, and most recently on Mull in 2000.

A bird in adult plumage was seen briefly on 15th May 2003 between Iona and Staffa [B. Harrington, R. Johnson, L. Potter and others]. This record has been accepted by BBRC.

PIED-BILLED GREBE* *Podilymbus podiceps* 0006
Vagrant. The only Argyll record concerns one found at Loch Peallach (Mull) in Jun 1998.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis* Spàg-ri-tòn 0007
Breeds locally in small numbers. Widespread in sheltered coastal waters in winter. Winter counts in outer Loch Etive (N Argyll) currently exceed the qualifying level for a site of national importance.

Jan-Apr. In 2002 numbers in L. Etive peaked at 29 on 10th Feb. The highest number seen elsewhere was 8 at L. Don on 21st Jan.

In 2003 the L. Etive count peaked at 28 on 15th Jan. The most seen elsewhere were 8 between Lachlan Bay *Cowal* and Otter Ferry on 10th Jan.

Breeding. Adults with young were reported from three lochs on *Islay* in 2002 with nesting also reported from Bishop's Glen (Dunoon) *Cowal*, and from the Mishnish Lochs *Mull*. In 2003 breeding pairs were reported from L. Finlaggan *Islay*, Lerags (nr Oban) *Mid-Argyll* and L. Cholla *Colonsay*.

Aug-Dec. Winter numbers on L. Etive reached 30 on 17th Nov in 2002 and 11 were present on L. Peallach *Mull* on 15th Sep. In 2003 the winter peak count on L. Etive was 26 on 16th Nov. Twenty-two were counted during the WeBS counts on L. Sween on both 16th Nov and 15th Dec.

During 2002-2003 there were records from all the Argyll recording areas except *Jura*.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus* Gobhlachan-lapanan 0009
Uncommon winter and passage visitor, with 2-6 records annually since 1984. Recorded in all months except Jun.

2002 Three sightings, all on *Islay*. Singles on L. Indaal on 25th Oct and 27th Dec and on Ardnave L. on 13th Nov.

2003 A single on L. na Keal *Mull* on 9th Sep was the only record.

RED-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps grisegena* Gobhlachan-ruadh 0010
Scarce winter and passage visitor. Of 23 records during 1980-2000, 20 were during the period Sep-Mar, with one each in Apr, May and Jun.

2002 One was reported close inshore off Grasspoint *Mull* on 7th Oct and a single bird was seen in L. Indaal on 16th Nov.

There were no records in 2003.

SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus* Gobhlachan-mara 0011
Regular winter and passage visitor to sea lochs and sounds. Occasionally on inland waters. Loch Indaal (Islay) is a site of national importance for wintering birds and numbers in the Sound of Gigha (Kintyre) and Loch na Keal (Mull) currently exceed the qualifying level for a site of national importance.

Jan-Apr. The largest counts were at L. Indaal, with 21 birds on 13th Jan 2002, and 22 on 12th Jan 2003. At L. na Keal, there were peak counts of 15 on 1st Jan 2002 and 3 on 10th Jan 2003. No data from the Sound of Gigha. There were very few records from Apr.

May-Jul. No summer records received.

Aug-Dec. The first autumn records of this species were in early Sept in each year. Remarkably consistent peak numbers were reported from L. Indaal where there were 31 birds on 6th Oct, 25th Oct, 8th Dec and 27th Dec 2002 with 30 birds on 11th Oct 2003 and 27 on 15th Dec 2003. At L. na Keal, there were 13 on 24th Oct 2002, 12 on 16th Dec 2002, and 18 on 2nd Dec 2003. The highest single count was from the Sound of Gigha, where there were 51 birds on 30th Oct 2002. There were no other counts from this site to indicate whether numbers remain consistently high or show a short-lived passage peak. . One at Loch Bhasapol *Tiree*, on 3 December 2003 was the first from the island since 1999.

BLACK-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps nigricollis* Gobhlachan-dubh 0012
Rare passage migrant and winter visitors. Last recorded in Argyll in 1990 at Loch Ederline Mid-Argyll, and only 5 recorded between 1980 and 1990.

No records in 2002.

2003 One was found on Gruinart Floods *Islay*, on 19th Oct 2003, and seen in this vicinity on several occasions up until 29th Oct. On 2nd Dec one was seen together with Slavonian Grebes on L. na Keal. This bird remained for at least two days. Both records have been accepted by ABRC.

FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis* Eun-crom 0020
Common but localised breeding species in all areas except Cowal and N Argyll. Large numbers on passage off western headlands.

Jan-Apr. Up to 1000 present at Ceann a' Mhara, *Tiree* in Mar-Apr 2002 and again in 2003.

Breeding. Count of 139 pairs on RSPB reserve on *Coll* in 2002. On the Treshnish Isles, counts of 349 AOSs in 2002 and 458 in 2003 on Lunga, 100 AOSs in 2002 and 65 in 2003 on Sgeir a Chaisteil, and breeding confirmed on Fladda. On Sanda Islands 480 AOSs in 2002. Numbers of sites increased slightly on *Colonsay* from 2001 to 2002 but hardly changed between 2002 and 2003.

Jul- Dec. On 7th Sept 2002 120 flew west in one hour past Balevullin, *Tiree*. Similar counts at the same site in 2003 recorded about 200 per hour flying west in late Aug and on several dates throughout Sept.

CORY'S SHEARWATER *Calonectris diomedea* 0036
Rare passage migrant. Six accepted Argyll records before 2002, involving a total of eight birds, mostly in Aug or Sep.

One flew south past Frenchman's Rocks, on 29th Aug 2002 – only the fourth record for Islay and the first in Argyll since 1997 [T. ap Rheinallt]. The record was accepted by SBRC.

One was recorded at Machrihanish SBO on 8th Sept 2003 [E. J. Maguire]. This record was also accepted by SBRC.

GREAT SHEARWATER *Puffinus gravis* Fachadh-mòr 0040
Rare passage migrant, mostly in autumn .

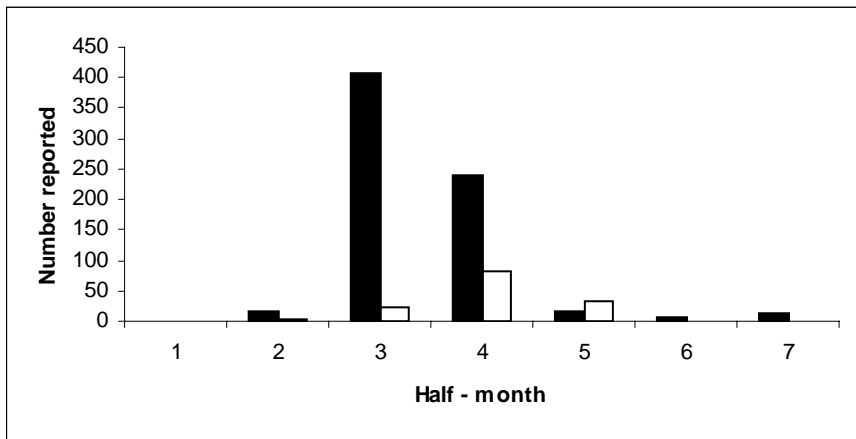
No acceptable records of this species for 2002 or 2003.

SOOTY SHEARWATER *Puffinus griseus* Fachadh-dubh 0043
Passage migrant almost exclusively recorded Jul-Oct. Sometimes in large numbers, off headlands, during Aug-Sep.

Aug-Oct. In 2002 this species was reported from 11th Aug to 28th Oct, with the peak passage occurring in late Aug and early Sept. Most records came from *Islay* (especially from Frenchman's Rocks), *Tiree*, *Coll*, *Colonsay* and ferries between these islands and mainland. On 29th Aug total of 379 birds flew south past Frenchman's Rocks. This is the highest count of the species ever made in Argyll.

In 2003, birds were reported from 8th Aug to 10th Oct, with the largest number 41 passing west off *Tiree* in 75 minutes on 5th Sept. Passage was earlier and stronger in 2002 than in 2003 (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Numbers of Sooty Shearwater seen in each half-month from late July (1) to late October (7) in 2002 (black bars) and 2003 (white bars).



MANX SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus* Fachadh-bàn 0046
Breeding colonies confirmed only on Sanda (Kintyre) and Treshnish Isles (Mull). Large numbers on passage, especially during Aug-Sep.

Mar-May. The first records of the year were on 17th Mar 2002 (seen from Salen Mull) and 23rd Mar 2003 (seen from the ferry between Kennacraig Kintyre and Port Ellen Islay). In May 2002 flocks of ca. 500 birds were seen off Urvaig Tiree, and off L. Eatharna, Coll.

Breeding. Sanda Islands colony estimated at 250 AOBs in 2002 and 2003 (the same number as in 2001). Small numbers of presumed breeding birds were seen on land at night on Lunga Treshnish Isles. A raft of 1500 birds was seen off the Garvellachs Mid-Argyll, on 21st Jun 2002, while rafts of up to 4000 birds were seen on several dates in Jun 2003 off Tiree, especially around Ard Mor.

Jul-Sep. Largest numbers on autumn passage were seen in 2002 from late Jul to late Aug and in 2003 from early Aug to late Sept. Highest counts in 2002 were 6000 in 3 hours passing Frenchman's Rocks on 13th Aug and 6000 in 5 hours on the 29th. In 2003 there were 10,000 in 6 hours passing Frenchman's Rocks, on 19th Aug, 4500 in 5 hours passing Machrihanish SBO on 8th Sept and 1500 in 1 hour passing Balevullin Tiree, on 22nd Sept. There were very few seen in 2002 after mid-Sept, with the last two reports of this species from Islay on 8th Oct and from Tiree on 16th Nov. In 2003 the passage was heavier and continued later through Sept than in 2002, but with few records after early Oct. An exceptionally late bird was seen from Islay on 30th Dec.

BALEARIC SHEARWATER *Puffinus mauretanicus* 0046.3
A regular passage migrant since 1992 (Aug-Dec) but in very small numbers. Usually seen with Manx Shearwaters.

Most records come from Machrihanish SBO, Frenchman's Rocks, Hynish Tiree or the Kennacraig to Islay ferry with dates ranging between 8th Aug and 10th Sept in 2002 and 3rd Aug to 21st Sept in 2003. In 2002 there were about 9 to 11 birds seen, and in 2003 about 30 to 37. Most were singles associating with other shearwater species, though 8 were seen with a large flock of Manx Shearwaters off Machrihanish SBO on 8th Sept 2003.

NORTH ATLANTIC LITTLE SHEARWATER* *Puffinus baroli* 0048
Vagrant. The only accepted Argyll record is one seen at Frenchman's Rocks, Islay on 30th Jun 1974.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

EUROPEAN STORM-PETREL (STORM PETREL) *Hydrobates pelagicus* Pàraig 0052
Summer visitor. The only known large breeding colonies are on Sanda Islands, (Kintyre) and Treshnish Isles (Mull). Breeding birds first come ashore in late May or Jun. Most sightings away from breeding colonies are during Jul-Sep.

Breeding. On Sanda Islands in 2002 the colony was still thought to hold about 200 AOBs (as in 2001). On the Treshnish Isles, 478 birds were caught by mist net in two consecutive nights at Village and Boulder Beach, Lunga at the start of Jun 2003.

Jul-Sep. Peak numbers passed Machrihanish SBO during Aug 2002 and 2003. Small numbers were reported on various dates from late Jun to first week of Oct in 2002 and 2003 from many of the Argyll islands, coasts and ferries.

LEACH'S STORM-PETREL (LEACH'S PETREL) *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* Gobhlan-mara 0055

Scarce, but regular in autumn off western headlands following strong westerlies.

May. None in 2002. Only one spring record, of 6 birds heading south past Machrihanish SBO, on 13th May 2003.

Aug-Nov. Only 4 birds seen in 2002 on dates from 13th Aug to 6th Nov: 2 near *Colonsay*, 1 at Machrihanish SBO and 1 from the Kennacraig to *Islay* ferry. In 2003 about 44 birds were seen on dates from 9th Sept to 10th Oct: 38 from Machrihanish SBO, 4 from *Islay* and 2 from *Tiree*.

NORTHERN GANNET (GANNET) *Morus bassanus* Sùlaire 0071

The nearest breeding colonies to Argyll are Ailsa Craig (40 km east of Mull of Kintyre) and the Shiant Isles (140 km north of Mull). Common inshore from Apr to Oct, and often seen high up sea-lochs. Infrequently reported Nov/Dec.

Jan-Jun. Reported from 1st Jan in 2002 and 2003 in small numbers, especially from areas such as *Tiree*, *Colonsay*, *Islay*, *Mull* and the *Kintyre* coast, but can be seen throughout the coast of Argyll even up to the heads of the longest sea lochs. The areas further from open sea seem to be used less in winter than in summer and autumn. Numbers increase towards mid-summer with groups of tens of birds reported in May-Jun in many locations.

Jul-Oct. Numbers reported increased to a peak in Aug in 2002 and in late Sept and early Oct in 2003. Many of the birds seen in Jul-Sept were reported to be fishing close to the coast. The largest passage reported was of over 1000 birds per hour passing *Balevullin Tiree*, in the first few days of Oct 2003. Very few were reported after the end of Oct in 2002 or 2003.

GREAT CORMORANT (CORMORANT) *Phalacrocorax carbo* Sgarbh 0072

Breeds in Cowal, Gigha, Jura, Kintyre, Mid-Argyll, Mull and N Argyll. Less numerous than Shag. Small numbers occur on some inland waters. 71 chicks were colour ringed at 3 sites (3 letter code, green on white) during 1999. Please report date and place of any sightings to C. Craik (jcac@dml.ac.uk).

Jan-Apr. Widely distributed on sea lochs and islands. Largest counts: 38 at Blairmore, L. Long *Cowal* on 5th Mar 2002, 20 at Sanda Islands on 7th Apr 2002, 36 at Blairmore L. Long *Cowal* on 4th Feb 2003.

Breeding. 2002 In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area, 155 pairs were noted breeding at 4 sites (colony size 13 – 85 pairs). The productivity of the 30 pairs at one of these sites was not monitored. At the other 3 sites 125 pairs fledged 187 young. At Sanda Islands 22 AONs were counted (*cf*28 in 2001).

2003 In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area 145 nests were counted at 5 sites (colony size 16 – 64 prs). At the time of these counts in late May/early Jun *ca* 241 large young were counted and most of the remaining nests held eggs or small young. At Sanda Islands 20 AONs were counted in 2003.

Jul-Dec. Widely distributed especially on sea lochs. Largest counts were 40 at Glas Eilean (L. Fyne) *Mid-Argyll* on 24th Sept 2002, 30 at Rubha Beag (Kilfinan Bay) *Cowal* on 6th Oct 2002, 25 at Blairmore, L. Long *Cowal* on 15th Oct 2002 and 30 at Bagh Sean-ghairt (Ormsary) *Mid-Argyll* on 30th Nov 2003.

SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* Sgarbh-an-sgumain 0080
Very common resident breeding on the coast and on islands in sea lochs. Widespread in winter but rare inland at all times.

Jan-Apr. Counts of 50 or more were reported from: Goirtein Croft(L. Fyne) Cowal (57 on 7th Jan 2002), Beinn Feall Coll (276 on 26th Jan 2002), Balephuill Bay Tiree (200 on 2nd Jan 2003), and Ceann a' Mhara Tiree (60 on 5th Apr 2003).

Breeding. 2002 Counts at colonies included 116 pairs on RSPB reserve on Coll, 259 AONs at Lunga Treshnish Isles, 27 AONs at Sgeir a' Chaisteil Treshnish Isles, 600 AONs at Sanda Islands, 35 AONs at Pigs Paradise Colonsay and 8 AONs at Uragaig Colonsay. On Sanda Islands, 121 study nests held 312 eggs, hatched 189 chicks and fledged 159. In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area 249 pairs were noted breeding at 6 sites (colony size 9 – 104 prs); several tens of pairs bred at a seventh site. Productivity was monitored at 3 of the sites where 186 pairs fledged about 231 young. Herring Gull and Great Black-backed Gull predation on eggs affected breeding success at Ruadh Sgeir Sound of Jura and at Corr Eilean (McCormaig Islands) Mid-Argyll. Predation by mink was not observed at the above sites but was severe at Eilean Aoghainn (Loch Fyne) Mid-Argyll.

2003 There were 60 nests visible at Ceann a' Mhara Tiree on 5th Apr 2003. Other reports of breeding numbers included: 792 nests on Sanda Islands, 14 nests at the SW end of Calve Island Mull, 308 AONs on Lunga and 17 on Sgeir a' Chaisteil Treshnish Isles. In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area Shag were found breeding at 8 sites. No count was made at one of these; E. Aoghainn (L. Fyne) Mid-Argyll. Ca 326-406 pairs were counted at the other 7 (colony size 15 to ca 70-100 pairs) and good numbers of large young were present at all 7 sites during the summer.

Aug-Dec. Widely distributed around Argyll islands and sea coasts with smaller numbers in sea lochs. Many counts of 100 or more were reported. The largest flocks were in Gunna Sound Tiree: in 2002 850 birds were feeding on 21st Aug, 438 were present on 9th Sept and 820 on 16th Sept ; in 2003 there were 1400+ on 14th Jul and 900 on 11th Aug. A count of 400 at Gunna Island Coll, on 1st Jul 2003 included 90% juvenile or immature birds. Large counts in 2002 were of 110 seen from the Oban to Craignure Ferry on 20th Sept, 100+ on Eilean Beag Jura, on 28th Sept, 375 in Sorobaidh Bay Tiree, on 17th Dec and 520 at Urvaig Tiree, on 18th Dec. In 2003 large counts were: 260 at Ceann a' Mhara Tiree on 20th Jul, 300 in Balnahard Bay Colonsay on 13th Sept, 120 in Feall Bay Coll on 5th Nov and 398 at Coll on 17th Nov.

ASCENSION FRIGATEBIRD* *Fregata aquila*

Vagrant. An immature bird was found exhausted at Loch a' Phuill on Tiree on 9 July 1953 and died later. This is the only record of this species in the Western Palearctic.

EURASIAN BITTERN (BITTERN) *Botaurus stellaris* Chorra-ghràin 0095

Vagrant to Argyll. Only four records since 1980: one at Dervaig (Mull) Jan-Mar 1982, one near Rhunahaorine Point (Kintyre) on 4th Dec 1982, one at Dervaig (Mull) on 23rd Dec 1983 and one found dead at Appin (North Argyll) on 19th Sep 1999.

None in 2002 or 2003.

NIGHT HERON *Nycticorax nycticorax* 0104

Vagrant. Only three acceptable records: two in the nineteenth century and reports of an adult on Coll (Apr 1987) and on Tiree (Apr-Jun 1987), probably the same individual.

None in 2002 or 2003.

SNOWY EGRET* *Egretta thula*

0115

Vagrant. One found at Balvicar (Mid-Argyll) on 5th Nov 2001 was subsequently seen at various locations in Argyll until 13th Jun 2002. No previous British records.

None in 2003. See Argyll Bird Report 18 for a full account of 2001/2002 sightings.

LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta* Corra-gheal-bheag

0119

No Argyll records prior to 1958 but several since, mostly in spring and autumn. Could be seen more frequently now that breeding colonies have become established in southern England and Ireland.

One reported flying off high to SW over Port Charlotte Islay, on 8th May 2002.

In 2003 an adult in full breeding plumage was seen in Sorobaidh Bay Tiree on 18th Apr and was the first record of this species for Tiree. Presumably the same bird was seen on L. Bhirceapol Tiree on 21st Apr and was present there until 2nd May (record accepted by ABRC). On 3rd May a bird (perhaps the same one seen on Tiree?) was seen at RSPB L. Gruinart Islay, and was present there until at least 6th May.

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

0121

Vagrant. Only four previous Argyll 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 and one on Tiree in May & Jun 2000.

An adult in breeding plumage was found at L. a' Phuill Tiree on 28th May 2002. It flew off early on the following morning but was found again at the lochans nr. Cnoc Bhirceapol on 1st Jun. Although it was still present there on 2nd Jun it was not seen subsequently. This record has been accepted by BBRC [C. Robson, J. Bowler and G. Carr]. No records in 2003.

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea* Corra-ghritheach

0122

Widespread resident, breeding in all areas.

Jan-Apr. 2002 A count of 53 birds at L. Allan Islay on 2nd Jan was the largest gathering so far reported on the island. Elsewhere, 13 were roosting near Seal Cottage Oronsay and 12 were in Outer L. Etive on 2nd Mar.

2003 The largest counts were 20 in Outer L. Etive on 5th Jan and 16 at L. Allan, Islay on 17th Feb.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 2 of 13 BBS squares (15%). At L. Breac Colonsay, 10 nests with 29 eggs produced 16 young and three nests at Eilean nan Ron Oronsay produced 4 or more young.

2003 Recorded in 2 of 10 BBS squares (20%). On Colonsay 12 young were fledged from 14 nests at L. Breac and there were two nests at West L. Fada. Three nests at Eilean nan Ron Oronsay produced 6 or more young. Other active heronries were located at Fishnish Mull (min. 5 nests) and Eilean Aoghainn (West L. Tarbert) Mid-Argyll (approx. 15 nests).

Jul-Dec. 2002 Counts of 10 or more were made at: Add Estuary Mid-Argyll (16 on 31st Jul), Outer L. Etive (max. 23 on 17th Nov), L. Sween (max. 11 on 6th Oct), Gorten Mull (15 on 20th Sep) and Bridgend (L. Indaal) Islay (16 on 8th Aug). At least 10 adult and juvenile appeared on Tiree (where they do not breed) on 1st Jul.

2003 Counts of 10 or more were made at: RSPB L. Gruinart (10 on 17th Jul) and Outer L. Etive (max. 19 on 14th Sep).

During 2002 and 2003 there were records from all the Argyll recording areas.

- WHITE STORK** *Ciconia ciconia* 0134
Vagrant. Only three accepted records: at Benderloch, North Argyll in Apr 1971, on Islay in Apr/May 1978 and at Campbeltown, Kintyre in May 1978.
 None in 2002 or 2003.
- GLOSSY IBIS*** *Plegadis falcinellus* 0136
Vagrant. Six Argyll records, 1901-1958.
 None in 2002 or 2003.
- EURASIAN SPOONBILL** *Platalea leucorodia* 0144
Vagrant. Seven Argyll records: the most recent of these involved four juveniles on Islay in 1998.
 None in 2002 or 2003.
- HONEY-BUZZARD (HONEY BUZZARD)** *Pernis apivorus* 0231
Very rare passage migrant. Seven accepted records since 1980; the last at Ledaig Point N Argyll in 1999.
 No acceptable records in 2002.
 2003 One was seen flying south over Creag Mhor, RSPB L. Gruinart on 22nd Jun, during a period of SE winds [C. McKay]. This record has been accepted by ABRC.
- BLACK KITE** *Milvus migrans* 0238
Vagrant. The only Argyll record concerns one at Vaul (Tiree) on 16th May 1997.
 None in 2002 or 2003.
- RED KITE** *Milvus milvus* Clamhan-gobhlach
 0239
In an attempt to re-introduce this species to Scotland Red Kites have been released in Highland Region since 1989 and Central Scotland since 1996. Genuine vagrants have occurred in the past, but most recent Argyll records involve these birds. All records are requested, ideally with details of presence or absence of wing tags.
 2002 One seen on Tiree 1st-3rd Aug had been ringed as a chick on the Black Isle, Highland in Jun 2002 and had made an exceptionally early movement away from its natal area. Singles were reported on Mull flying towards Eorsa on 12th Sep, near Dervaig on 18th Sep and near Calgary on 10th Oct. There were several reports of one in the Dervaig area at the end of Dec.
 2003 One was seen at dusk near Dervaig on 21st Feb. In spring, singles were seen near the Rare Breeds Farm, Oban on 14th Apr and in the Pennyghael area Mull on 16th May. Singles were reported in autumn at L. Beg Mull on 21st Oct and near Tarbert Kintyre on 26th Oct. Wing tags were present on the latter bird but the colour could not be discerned.
- WHITE-TAILED EAGLE** *Haliaeetus albicilla* Iolaire-mhara 0243
Formerly resident breeder in Argyll. A re-introduction programme involving the release of 82 birds on Rum between 1974 and 1985, and 59 in northern Scotland between 1993 and 1998, has been successful in establishing breeding pairs in the wild. All records are requested, ideally with details of age, activity and presence/absence of wing tags.

Breeding. 2002 In Scotland, 26 territorial pairs were located and breeding confirmed at 23 sites. Eight successful pairs (including some on Mull) fledged 12 chicks. [RAB]

In addition to those on *Mull* (min. 12 individuals) wandering or dispersing birds were reported on the islands as follows: *Colonsay* (one in Jun), *Jura* (sightings in 4 months), the Garvellachs (in May), *Kerrara Mid-Argyll* (Feb and Nov) and *Tiree* (in Feb, May and Sep). On the mainland, records included a sub-adult seen in Glen Aray *Mid-Argyll* (May). An imm. which had been ringed on Skye in 2000 was found very freshly dead near Kilmelford *Mid-Argyll* on 1st May 2002 and had been poisoned with carbofuran (see Golden Eagle for additional illegally killed raptors near Kilmelford); one near Port Appin (Jun), two near Loch Awe (Jun) and a juvenile between Kennacraig-Tarbert *Kintyre* (Nov) [RAB]. Most such records refer to immature birds but an adult was seen chasing gulls at Carsaig *Mid-Argyll* on 18th Sep.

In September 2002, Carlton D'Cruze pleaded guilty at Sefton Magistrates Court to taking and being in possession of wild birds eggs. Amongst a large collection including a range of eggs from some of our rarest species were eggs of White-tailed and Golden Eagles from *Mull*. He received a six month custodial sentence that was reduced to 5 months on appeal [RAB].

2003 In Scotland, 31 territorial pairs were located and breeding confirmed at 25 sites. Sixteen successful pairs (including several on *Mull*) fledged 26 chicks. With double the number of chicks fledging than in the previous best year (13) it is anticipated that there will be a further increase in sightings of wandering immatures in Argyll from 2004 [RAB].

In addition to breeding birds on *Mull* a good scatter of wandering/dispersing birds were reported in Argyll. As usual most were on the islands including *Mull* (minimum of 12 individuals), Lismore *North Argyll* (Dec), Scarba *Mid-Argyll* (Oct), *Jura* (minimum of 5 individuals with records in 8 months) and *Islay* (Feb, Mar and Nov). On the mainland, records included 2 at Loch Feochan *Mid-Argyll* (Jan) and singles at Loch Melfort *Mid-Argyll* (Apr) and Scammadale *Mid-Argyll* (Sep). Reports in Oct included 2 in Appin *North Argyll* and singles at Loch Etive and Butterbridge (Glen Kinglas) *Cowal* and in Nov one was seen at Crinan *Mid-Argyll*[RAB].

MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus* Clamhan-lòin 0260
Scarce but now more or less annual passage migrant, with records in every year but one since 1986. Most records Apr-Jun.

2002 A female was seen at several sites on *Islay*, 22nd- 24th May. Possibly the same bird was at RSPB L. Gruinart, 26th Jun. A female was at Moine Mhor NNR, 6th Aug.

2003 For the first time since 1992 there were no confirmed records during the year.

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus* Brèid-air-tòin 0261
Sparse but widespread breeding species. A survey in 1998 produced an estimate of 66-189 breeding pairs (at 95% confidence levels) in Argyll and Bute.

Jan-Apr. 2002 Few were at the two roosts at Moine Mhor *Mid-Argyll* with max. 4 in Feb. The roost at RSPB L. Gruinart had max. 6 on 26th Mar (1 male/5 ring-tails). Elsewhere, hunting birds were widely reported from Oronsay and from *Coll, Islay, Kintyre, Mid-Argyll, Mull, N Argyll* and *Tiree*.

2003 No more than 2 were at the two roosts at Moine Mhor *Mid-Argyll*. No reports were received for the roost at RSPB L. Gruinart. Elsewhere, hunting birds were

widely reported from Oronsay and from *Coll, Cowal, Islay, Jura, Kintyre, Mid-Argyll, Mull and Tiree*.

Breeding. 2002 Breeding success of monitored territories is summarised in Table 20.1 A full survey of *Mull* was commissioned by SNH and carried out by Paul Howarth. 28 sites (previously known breeding sites) and other suitable areas were checked. 22 sites were occupied (no bigamous pairings were identified). The breeding outcome was established at 13 sites of which 7 failed (6 at egg and one at small young stage) and 7 successful pairs fledged 14 young. Breeding was judged to have been successful at 2 other sites and the outcome was unknown at 7 sites. The large number of failures at apparently occupied sites was thought to have been due to weather and other natural factors. Breeding was also confirmed in one area of *Jura* – outcome unknown and there was an unconfirmed report of a pair with fledged young on *Coll*. [RAB].

Table 20.1 *Outcome of monitored Hen Harrier territories in Argyll in 2002.*

Area	Sites checked	Territories occupied	Ts. where eggs laid	Ts. known to have fledged young	Min. no. of young fledged	No. of young per successful territory
Mull	28	22	13	6	14	2.33
Islay ¹	8	8	?	4	10	2.50
Mainland ²	10	3	2	0	0	-
Cowal ³		8	6	3	8	2.66
Total		41	21	13	32	2.46

¹ Displaying birds recorded in 2 areas but no young reared and 4 of the 6 prs at Loch Gruinart RSPB Reserve were successful and reared 10 young.

² Excluding Cowal. Several previous sites continue to be unoccupied; out of 3 occupied sites, one held displaying bird in May but no subsequent evidence of breeding; 2 pairs laid and failed.

³ Figures include 2 pairs thought to have nested and failed early in season.

2003 Several known sites in *Mid-Argyll* and north *Kintyre* remained either unoccupied or attracted adults that did not stay to breed. Where pairs were present elsewhere, good weather during the breeding season coupled with reports of high vole numbers allowed them to have a very productive and successful season. Few monitored breeding attempt ended in failure. Productivity was consistently high in all areas.

Table 20.2 *Outcome of monitored Hen Harrier territories in Argyll in 2003.*

Area	Sites checked	Ts. occupied	Ts. where eggs laid	Ts. known to have fledge young	Min. no. of young reared	No. of young per successful territory
Mull ¹		31	24	19	55	2.89
Islay		5	5	5	15	3.00
Jura		2	2	2	7	3.50
Mainland ²	9	5	2	2	7	3.50
Cowal ³		11	10	10	29	2.90
Bute		5	5	5	14	2.80
Total		59	48	43	127	2.95

¹ Summary of survey carried out by PH under contract to SNH. Most of *Mull* surveyed except for 2 known sites. 31 sites occupied; 24 nests located; 19 successful pairs fledged 55 young. No evidence of bigamy. One pair had a first year male.

² Excluding Cowal. Several sites surveyed by John Holliday remained unoccupied. Not included in the above table is a pair present at one additional site where the behaviour indicated that it was successful although the brood size is not known.

³ One pair failed at the large young stage – predated (fox?). One pair successfully fledged b/6.

A summering, non-breeding ringtail (probably female) was recorded on *Colonsay* in May and June.

Aug-Dec. 2002 The Moine Mhor roosts recorded a max. of 9 birds in Oct but the roost at RSPB L. Gruinart peaked at only 3 in Nov. There were also widespread reports from *Coll*, *Colonsay* (inc. Oronsay), *Islay*, *Kintyre*, *Sanda Islands*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull*, and *Tiree*.

2003 The Moine Mhor roosts hit a new low in Dec when only a single bird was present. At least 11 were seen flying to roost at L. Gruinart on 13th Nov. There were widespread reports elsewhere, from *Coll*, Oronsay, *Islay*, *Jura*, *Kintyre*, *Sanda Islands*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull*, and *Tiree*.

NORTHERN GOSHAWK (GOSHAWK) *Accipiter gentilis* Glas-sheabhag 0267
Status uncertain. Last confirmed reports were in Cowal and on Mull in 1993.

Unconfirmed reports. No acceptable records in 2002 or 2003.

EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK (SPARROWHAWK) *Accipiter nisus* Speireag 0269
Widespread, resident breeding species.

During 2002 and 2003 birds were reported from every area of Argyll except *North Argyll* (although they were presumably present there too). Up to 2 birds wintered in both years on *Tiree* – a new development. Prey species recorded in Argyll during the year included: Woodcock (!), Feral Pigeon, Pied Wagtail, Blackbird, Song Thrush and Starling. Unsuccessful attempts were made to catch Oystercatcher, Lapwing (caught but escaped), Redwing, and Great Tit.

Breeding. 2002. At least 2 pairs present on *Coll* but no evidence of nests or young and at least one occupied territory on *Colonsay* - outcome unknown. In Glenbranter study area, *Cowal* 3 nests fledged a total of 13 young (DA) and elsewhere on *Cowal* 2 successful nests each fledged about 4 young (AF) - per RAB.

2003.

Colonsay: at least 3 occupied sites but breeding outcome not known.

Table 21. *Outcome of monitored Sparrowhawk territories in Cowal in 2003 [RAB].*

Cowal	Ts. occupied	Ts. where eggs laid	Ts known to have fledged young	Min. no. of young fledged	No. of young per successful territory
Fully monitored	2	2	2	7	3.5
Brood size unknown	4	4	4	Brood size not known	
Outcome unknown	1	1	Outcome not known		

COMMON BUZZARD (BUZZARD) *Buteo buteo* Clamhan
Resident breeding bird, common in all areas.

0287

Numerous records were received from all Argyll areas during 2002 and 2003 and up to 6 birds could often be seen in the air together.

Breeding. 2002. Recorded in 3 of 13 BBS squares (23%).

Table 22.1 *Outcome of monitored Common Buzzard territories in Argyll in 2002.*

Area	Sites checked	Ts. occupied*	Ts. where eggs laid	Ts. known to have fledged young	Min. no. of young fledged	No. of young per successful territory
Tiree ¹		3	3	1	1+	-
SW Mull ²	35	27	14	12	16	1.33
Colonsay ³		21	14+	9	[19]	2.11
Islay ⁴		6	6	5	8	3.00
Cowal ⁵	23	?	?	5	5	1.00
Cowal ⁶		?	30	20	?	?
Total	58	57	67	52	49	1.53*

[] = presumed to have fledged

* = calculated from sample of 32 sites where brood size known.

¹ No survey but 3 pairs located plus one suspected. Of 3 pairs known to have laid eggs one fledged at least one chick.

² Of 27 occupied sites 13 were not followed up for breeding success.

³ Productivity better than in recent years probably due to higher rabbit numbers and reasonable weather. 52 nests/territories checked – evidence of occupation inconclusive at 2 sites and 21 sites were occupied (9 occupied sites with young, 5 sites failed, outcome unknown at 7 sites).

⁴ Only sites where outcome accurately known included.

⁵ Glen Branter study area has held up to 23 pairs in previous years many were thought to be non-breeding in 2002, many more failed and only 5 were successful rearing one chick each. Poor success thought to be due to combination of poor vole numbers and bad weather during hatching period.

⁶ In contrast to Glen Branter at least 20 pairs fledged one or two chicks each; 4 sites definitely failed; outcome unknown for 6 sites [DCJ/RAB].

Breeding. 2003 Recorded in 4 of 10 BBS squares (40%).

Table 22.2 *Outcome of monitored Common Buzzard territories in Argyll in 2003.*

Area	Sites checked	Ts. occupied	Ts. where eggs laid	Ts. known to have fledged young	Min. no. of young fledged	No. of young per successful territory
SW Mull	34	31	16	15	19	1.26
Colonsay	53	27	8	8	14	1.75
Islay	6	6	5	3	5	1.66
Cowal ¹	33	33	9	8	17	2.12
Total	155	126	67	61	108	1.77

¹ Excluding Glen Branter Study Area, not all occupied territories were followed up, hence the sometimes large difference between “territories occupied” and “territories where eggs laid”.

Clutch size: The mean clutch size for 2 nests on *Colonsay* was 3.0

Hatching date: Estimates for 5 nests on *Colonsay* (using wing length growth curves) gave a mean date of 16 May.

Brood size: Mean brood size was 1.88 on *Colonsay* (8 broods) and 1.90 on Bute (28 broods). [DCJ/RAB]

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD *Buteo lagopus* Bleidir-molach 0290
Scarce winter visitor. Seldom recorded in recent years; most recently on Islay in 1988 and on Tiree in 1997.

No acceptable records in 2002 or 2003.

GOLDEN EAGLE *Aquila chrysaetos* Iolaire 0296
Scarce resident breeding species. Immatures tend to wander and may be recorded in areas where breeding does not occur.

During 2002 and 2003 birds were reported away from the breeding areas, in winter, from every area of Argyll except *Tiree*.

Breeding. 2002 A very poor year with productivity reaching its lowest figure since these summaries began. No broods of two were raised at any of the monitored sites. [RAB].

Table 23.1 *Outcome of monitored Golden Eagle territories in Argyll in 2002 (with 2001 for comparison).*

Year	Sites checked	Ts. occupied	Ts. where eggs laid	Ts. known to have fledged young	% of occupied Ts. that fledged young	Min. no. of young fledged	No. of young per successful territory
2002	62	57	36	15	26.3%	15	1.00
2001	54	54	27	18	33.3%	21	1.16

Figures include one new site identified in S. Argyll and another new site in N Argyll.

An immature apparently carrying a tail mounted radio antenna was resident at a site in S Argyll. One large chick died in the nest before fledging in S Argyll and another large chick apparently disappeared from a nest (taken?) in N Argyll.

Of two immature birds found dead in the Kilmelford area, one had been poisoned (carbofuran) and the other was considered to be suspicious [RAB].

Breeding. 2003 The information in Table 23.2 is a summary from the **2003 National Survey** and includes data collected by RSG members and by RSPB staff and contractors. All known territories were visited except one (not included in table below). This site is a historical territory which is now >80% under forestry, has not been occupied in recent years and is presumed still to be vacant. A similar data set from the 1992 national survey is provided for comparison [RAB].

Table 23.2 *Outcome of surveyed Golden Eagle territories in Argyll in 2003 and 1992.*

National Survey	Sites checked	Ts. occupied	Ts. where eggs laid	Ts. known to have fledged young	Min. number of young reared	No. of young per successful territory
2003	100	80	52	29 (30)	30 (31)	1.03 (1.03)
1992	96	84	59	27	28	1.03

Table 23.2 Notes

() = figure includes chick half grown on last visit.

1. Three chicks removed under licence (2 Mull, 1 Cowal), from broods with twins, subsequently fledged as part of the Reintroduction Project in Ireland. If all 3 had remained and fledged in Argyll the total number of young reared in 2003 would have been 33 (34) and the number of young/successful territory would have been 1.13.
2. Occupied territories 2003: 75 territories held pairs and 5 held single birds.
Occupied territories 1992: 82 territories held pairs and 2 held single birds.
3. Four additional territories have been identified since the 1992 National Survey (1 on north mainland, 1 on south mainland and 2 on the islands). In only one case is it certain that the territory has been recently established in the intervening period.
4. The figures include a clutch that was laid and incubated by a pair in immature plumage. The clutch subsequently failed.

Table 23.3 *Golden Eagle: Summary information 1996-2002*

Year	Ts. checked	Ts. occupied	Ts. where eggs laid	Ts. known to have fledged young	% of occupied Ts. that fledged young	Min. no. of young fledged	No. of young/successful pair
2002	62	57	36	15	26.3	15	1.0
2001	54	54	27	18	33.3	21	1.16
2000	62	59	28+	19	32.2	22	1.15
1999	61	57	28	16	28.0	17	1.06
1998	61	54	?	22	40.7	27	1.22
1997	58	53	?	25	47.1	31	1.24
1996	57	54	37+	25	46.2	29	1.16

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus* Iolaire-iasgaich

0301

Summer visitor. Very scarce breeding species. Occurs more widely on passage.

Apr-May. 2002 None was reported until 14th Apr when one was fishing in the Add Estuary. Passage migrants were reported at: Ulva Ferry *Mull* on 17th Apr, L. Spelve *Mull* and Machrihanish Water *Kintyre* on 7th May, L. Assapol *Mull* on 16th May, Glenbarr *Kintyre* on 19th May and at Arrochar *Cowal* (fishing in L. Long) on 25th May.

2003 The first was at L. Scammadale *Mid-Argyll* on 1st Apr. Passage migrants were reported at: Aros *Mull* on 5th Apr, L. Frisa *Mull* on 14th Apr, Mishnish Lochs *Mull* on 17th Apr and Killypole L. (nr. Machrihanish) on 20th Apr.

Birds were reported during the summer at various sites: on *Mull* during Jun and Jul, at Machrihanish Water *Kintyre* from 18th to 28th Jun, in Bishop's Glen *Cowal* on 23rd and 27th Jun and in L. Feochan *Mid-Argyll* on 8th Jul. A ringed bird which was found dead on The Strand *Colonsay* on 4th Jul had been ringed as a pullus near Elgin, Moray on 19th Jul 2001.

Breeding. 2002 Both pairs that failed completely appeared to have been the result of bad weather at the egg/small chick stage [RAB].

2003 The population increased with the addition of 2 new pairs. While most pairs were successful productivity was lower than usual as a result of small brood sizes [RAB].

Table 24. *Outcome of monitored Osprey territories in Argyll in 1999-2003.*

Year	Territories occupied	Territories known to have fledged young	Min. no. of young fledged	No. of young per successful territory
2003	7	6	9 ¹	1.50
2002	5	3	6 ²	2.0
2001	5	5	10	2.0
2000	4	4	9	2.25
1999	4	4	9(10)	2.25

¹ Brood size: b/1 x 3, b/2 x 3.

² Broods of 1,2 and 3 fledged [RAB].

Jul-Oct. 2002 Passage migrants were reported at: RSPB L. Gruinart on 20th Aug, Machrihanish Water *Kintyre* on 2nd Sep and L. Scridain *Mull* on 3rd Oct. A very late bird was reported from L. Feochan *Mid-Argyll* on 11th Dec.

2003 Passage migrants were at: Barcaldine *North Argyll* on 22nd Aug, Loch a' Phuill on 24th Aug (**first record for Tiree**), L. Don on 24th Aug, RSPB L. Gruinart also on 24th Aug (and again on 26th Aug) and at Holy Loch on 30th Aug. Late birds were at Machrihanish SBO on 1st Oct and at L. Beg *Mull* on 6th Oct.

COMMON KESTREL (KESTREL) *Falco tinnunculus* Clamhan-ruadh 0304
Widespread but uncommon breeding bird. Population in some areas appears to fluctuate from year to year. Emigration from some areas in autumn (e.g. Mull) and immigration to others.

There were records from all Argyll recording areas during both 2002 and 2003. Away from known breeding areas, birds were present on Tiree during Jan–Mar and Aug–Dec. A noticeable increase in records during Sep 2002 included 3 together at L. Gruinart on 22nd and a total of 13 records on Sanda Island during the month.

Breeding. 2002 and 2003 Breeding success of monitored territories is summarised in Tables 25.1 and 25.2.

Table 25.1 *Outcome of monitored Kestrel territories in Argyll in 2002.*

Area	Ts. checked	Ts. occupied	Ts. known to have fledged young	Min. no. of young fledged	No. of young per successful territory
Colonsay ¹		1	1	1	1.00
Islay ²		3	3	5	1.66
Cowal ³		8	5	?	?
Total		12	9	6	1.50*

*figure calculated from 4 pairs where brood size accurately known.

¹ First successful breeding for several years.

² Data only includes sites where breeding outcome accurately known.

³ Of 8 occupied sites, 3 failed but 5 pairs successfully fledged young although exact brood size only known from one site. Many usual nest sites were unoccupied. For the first time one *Cowal* pair used a 'long' nest box designed for Barn Owls and successfully reared 5 young [RAB].

Table 25.2 *Outcome of monitored Kestrel territories in Argyll in 2003.*

Area	Ts. checked	Ts. occupied	Ts. where eggs laid	Ts. known to have fledged young	Min. no. of young fledged	No. of young per successful territory
Islay ¹	3	3	3	3	6	2.0
Islay ²	1	1	1	Outcome not known		
Colonsay	1	1	1	Outcome not known		
Cowal ¹	1	1	1	1	5	5.0
Cowal ²	10	10	10	10	Brood size unknown	
Cowal ²	5	5	5	Outcome not known		

¹ Fully monitored

² Data incomplete

RED-FOOTED FALCON *Falco vespertinus*

0307

Vagrant. The only Argyll record concerns one at Machariorch (Kintyre) on 19th August 1990.

None in 2002 or 2003.

MERLIN *Falco columbarius* Mèirneal

0309

Scarce breeding species, possibly under-recorded. More widely distributed on passage and in winter.

Jan-Apr. 2002 and 2003 Apart from a male studying a Blue Tit nest box at Tayvallich *Mid-Argyll* on 17th Apr 2002 all records at this time were from the islands of *Coll*, *Colonsay* (inc. *Oronsay*), *Islay*, *Mull* and *Tiree*. On 2nd Mar 2002 two birds were seen to combine forces to catch a Sky Lark on *Tiree* while, elsewhere on the island, one had its prey snatched by a Peregrine Falcon!

Breeding. 2002 Table 26 shows breeding success of monitored territories.

Six of the sites checked were unoccupied (*Mid-Argyll*, *North Argyll*, *Islay* and *Cowal* 3). Bird(s) were present in 3 areas (*North Argyll* 2, *Islay* 1) in Mar/Apr but could not be located later in the season. A pair in *Kintyre* bred unsuccessfully.

No breeding records from *Cowal* [RAB].

Table 26. *Outcome of monitored Merlin territories in Argyll in 2002.*

Area	Ts. checked	Ts. occupied	Ts. known to have fledged young	Min. no. of young fledged	No. of young per successful territory
Argyll	7	4	0	0	0

Breeding. 2003 Little information reported. Four sites checked (one on *Islay*, one in *North Argyll* and 2 in *Cowal*) were all unoccupied.

Birds were present in 6 areas (*Tiree*, *Islay*, *Jura* (2), *Kintyre*, and *North Argyll*) but few sites were followed up. One pair had a brood of 5 well grown chicks on 24th Jun and agitated behaviour in late Jun-early Jul confirmed two other breeding attempts (*Jura* and *North Argyll*). A pair present in *Kintyre* in early May either failed or did not breed.

The site in *North Argyll* was previously unknown. On *Tiree*, although there was no evidence of breeding activity in 2003, the presence of an adult male and female in suitable breeding habitat, where the female was last seen on 16 Jun, is of interest. Merlins have not been recorded breeding on *Tiree* in any recent years [RAB].

Aug-Dec. 2002 and 2003 As in the earlier part of the year most records were from the islands of *Coll*, *Colonsay* (inc. Oronsay), *Islay*, *Mull* and *Tiree*. However presumed migrants were recorded at Machrihanish, Oban and Sanda Island during Aug-Sep and single birds were seen in winter at Otter Ferry, Moine Mhor NNR, Tayinloan, Rhugarbh (Appin) *North Argyll* and Achnabreck (Lochgilphead) *Mid-Argyll*.

HOBBY *Falco subbuteo* Gormag 0310
Rare visitor in spring and autumn.

No acceptable records in 2002 or 2003.

GYR FALCON* *Falco rusticolus* Seabhag-mhòr-na-seilg 0318
Vagrant. Several records prior to 1950 but only four recent accepted records, between 1973 and 1991.

A beautiful adult white-phase bird was seen in the Loch Gruinart/Loch Gorm area of *Islay* 22nd – 24th Feb 2002 [A. Kets, T ap Rheinallt *et al*]. This record has been accepted by BBRC. There were further, unconfirmed, reports on *Islay* of what was presumed to be the same bird, until 1st Apr.

PEREGRINE FALCON (PEREGRINE) *Falco peregrinus* Seabhag 0320
Sparsely distributed but widespread breeding species. Found throughout the year in all areas. Breeding recorded in fifty-two 10 km squares in Argyll in 1991 survey [RSPB *et al*.]

Outside the breeding season there were widespread records during 2002 and 2003 from all recording areas (incl. Oronsay and Sanda Island). Captured prey recorded included: Mallard, Teal, Ringed Plover, Black-tailed Godwit, Curlew, Common Gull (2), Puffin and Wood Pigeon. Also seen chasing other waders incl. Redshank and Greenshank. On 22nd Aug 2003 one was seen at Barcaldine *North Argyll* soaring in the same thermal as an Osprey. An immature found dead under power lines at Kilmoluaig *Tiree* on 8th Oct 2003 had been ringed as a nestling near Benbecula in June 2003.

Breeding. 2002 Good coverage was achieved in Argyll as a contribution towards the 2002 National Peregrine Survey[RAB].

Table 27.1 *Outcome of monitored Peregrine Falcon territories in Argyll during 2002 National Survey. Comparative data from the 1991 National Survey are shown in brackets. No data for breeding success available for the latter as few sites were followed up later in the season.*

Area	Ts. checked	Ts. occupied	Ts. known to have fledged young	Min. no. of young fledged	No. of young per successful territory
Mull	18 [18]	6 [11]	1	2	2.00
Islay	18 [19]	12 [16]	4	5	1.25
Jura	7 [7]	4 [7]	-	-	-
Misc. Islands	10 [8]	8 [7]	3	6	2.00
Mainland excl. Cowal	45 [41]	24 [29]	6	10	1.66
Cowal	22 [18]	15 [17]	4	9	2.25
Total	120 [111]	71 [87]	18	32	1.77

Breeding, 2003

Table 27.2 *Outcome of monitored Peregrine Falcon territories in Argyll during 2003.*

Area	Sites checked	Ts. occupied	Ts. where eggs laid	Ts. known to have fledged young	Min. no. of young fledged	No. of young per successful territory
Misc. Islands ¹	5	5	3	2	4	2.0
Islay	3	3	2	2	2	1.0
Mainland (excl. Cowal)	6	3	3	3	5	1.6
Cowal	7	6 ²	3	3	4	1.3
Bute	2	2	2	1	2	2.0
Total	23	19	13	11	17	1.54

¹ Colonsay: substantial increase in resident pairs – 2 breeding and 2 Failed/not breeding pairs in 2003.

² Tیره: information incomplete (not included in table above); breeding confirmed a minimum of one chick fledged.

² Occupation: 4 pairs and 2 singles. 3 pairs laid eggs and one either failed or didn't attempt to breed[RAB].

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus* Snagan-allt

0407

Scarce breeding bird, numbers augmented by passage migrants and winter visitors. Under-recorded.

Jan-Mar. 2002 Single birds reported from RSPB L. Gruinart and Totronald *Coll* and one was brought in by a cat at The Glebe *Tیره* on 4th Mar.

2003 Single birds reported from Aros *Mull*, Laphroaig *Islay*, Roundhouse *Coll* and Glen Garrisdale *Jura*. Two called from a reed-bed N of Tayinloan in Mar. Two more were brought in dead by cats on *Tیره* and one was found freshly dead at Connel Airfield *North Argyll* in Feb.

Breeding. 2002 Calling birds were heard during the breeding season from: 5 sites on *Tیره*, 5 sites on *Islay* (at least 10 calling birds), one site on *Coll* (2 birds) and one on *Colonsay* (2 birds).

2003 On *Islay* at least 8 pairs were considered to have bred at RSPB L. Gruinart and 5 pairs at Loch an Raoin (Bruichladdich). Calling birds were heard during the breeding season from 7 sites on *Tیره*, 3 on *Colonsay* and from Glendaruel *Cowal*.

Aug-Dec. 2002 On *Tیره* an immature was at a garden feeding station at Heylipol on 27th Aug and up to 3 were calling elsewhere on the island from Sep to Dec. On *Islay* an immature was found dead at L. Finlaggan on 12th Sep and birds were also reported from L. Indaal. Two were heard squealing at East Loch Fada *Colonsay* in Sep and at least 3 were calling from a marshy area near Mill Loch (Gigha) *Kintyre* on 17th Oct.

2003 One was flushed from a ditch at Laggan Bay *Mull* in Oct and one was seen flying between reed clumps at Lochan na Beithe (North Connel) *North Argyll* in Nov. Birds were also reported from *Coll* and *Tیره* in Nov and yet another cat victim was found at Baravullin (Benderloch) *North Argyll* on 27th Nov.

SPOTTED CRAKE *Porzana porzana* Traon-breac

0408

Rare and irregular summer visitor. First confirmed breeding record for Argyll in 1993.

2002 Birds were calling in Jun at single sites on *Coll* and *Tیره*.

2003 One was calling at a site on *Coll* on 3 dates in late May and another at RSPB L. Gruinart in Jun.

CORN CRAKE (CORNCRAKE) *Crex crex* Traon

0421

Localised summer visitor. Breeding mainly on Islay, Colonsay, Iona (Mull), Tiree and Coll. The first spring records in 2002 were at Friesland *Coll* on 18th Apr, at the Airport *Tiree* on 22nd Apr and on Oronsay on 23rd Apr. Arrival was slightly earlier in 2003 with birds at Cornaigmore *Coll* on 15th Apr, at Claddach *Islay* on 17th and at Heylipol *Tiree* on 18th Apr. Numbers of calling birds during the 2003 breeding season represent record totals in recent years for most of the areas censused, an encouraging indication of a recovery resulting from successful conservation measures. In addition, in 2003, at least one calling bird was reported from the Treshnish Isles [TIARG], two were heard on Staffa and one on Gigha. Last records were at Bridgend *Islay* on 29th Sep 2002 and at Balemartine *Tiree* on 18th Sep 2003. There were no mainland records in either year.

Table 28. Number of calling Corncrakes in Argyll areas, 1998-2003.

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Coll	40	48	53	62	74	90
Tiree	136	144	153	143	172	184
Mull	2	2	1	0	1	0
Iona	12	13	9	7	12	24
Colonsay & Oronsay	14	21	21	18	25	32
Islay	4	7	8	7	8	10
Total	208	235	245	237	292	340

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus* Cearc-uisge

0424

Localised resident breeding species.

Breeding. 2002 A pair with 3 juvs. on the Canal Loch. in Jun was an unusual breeding record for *Coll* and a pair with 3 tiny chicks was found at Balephetrish *Tiree* on 22nd Jul. A pair was nest building at Clonaig *Kintyre* on 27th Apr, one was at Scoor *Mull* in May and Jun and an adult with 2 immatures were on L. Ederline *Mid-Argyll* on 6th Sep.

2003 Confirmed breeding was reported from Lochan Tainish *Mid-Argyll*, Skipness *Kintyre* and RSPB L. Guinart. An adult was seen carrying nest material in the burn next to the Co-op car park in Oban on 25th May and one was on a pond at Lochdon on 13th Jun. Juvenile birds at two sites on *Tiree* in Aug/Sep suggested local breeding.

There were records at other times from several other sites in *Mid-Argyll* and *Islay* and 7 were seen on 3 small lochs on Gigha *Kintyre* on 17th Oct. The only record for *Colonsay* was at East L. Fada in Jun 2003 and there were no records in 2002 or 2003 from *Cowal*, *Jura* or *North Argyll*.

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

0429

Very scarce and irregular breeder and uncommon winter visitor.

Jan-Mar. 2002 The regular small flock on L. Bhasapol peaked at 8 on 14th Jan. A single bird was seen at L. Ederline *Mid-Argyll* on 6th Jan, 3 were on L. Nell *Mid-Argyll* on 4th Feb and one was on Durry L. (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 20th Mar.

2003 The L. Bhasapol flock peaked at 11 on 7th Feb and one was on Loch a' Phuill in early Jan. Elsewhere: one was on L. Ederline *Mid-Argyll* in Jan and Feb, 6

were on L. Nell (*Mid-Argyll*) on 8th Feb and 4 were on L. Ballygrant *Islay* in Feb. A pair at Kilmory Lake *Mid-Argyll* on 21st Mar were performing courtship display.

Summering birds. 2002 A pair were present on L. Assapol *Mull* on 18th May, one was on the floods at L. Gruinart on 25th Jun and one at L. Bhasapol on 22nd Jul.

2003. One was on L. Ederline (*Mid-Argyll*) on 25th May, one on L. Ballygrant (*Islay*) on 11th Jun and one on L. Poit na h-l (*Pottie Mull*) on 21st Jul.

Aug-Dec. 2002 The L. Bhasapol flock peaked at 16 on 16th Dec. Two adults and a well grown juv. on Mill Loch (Gigha) *Kintyre* on 17th Oct were of unknown origin. Two adults were on L. Poit na h-l (*Pottie Mull*) on 5th Oct, a single bird was on the floods at Loch Gruinart during Oct and Nov, 3 were at L. Ballygrant (*Islay*) on 27th Oct, with 6 there on 27th Dec, 6 were on L. Nell on 28th Dec and up to 3 were at L. a' Phuill, 8th Nov – 17th Dec.

2003 On 19th Dec the flock on L. Bhasapol peaked at 8 and one was on Loch a' Phuill. One was on Lochan na Beithe (nr Connel) *North Argyll* on 28th Aug, one on L. nan Cadhan *Islay* on 18th Oct, 2 on L. Skerrols *Islay* on 30th Oct and 4 on L. Ballygrant (*Islay*) on 29th Dec.

COMMON CRANE *Grus grus*

0433

Vagrant. Seven accepted records 1966-1995.

None in 2002 or 2003.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*

Gille-Brighde

0450

Widespread and common breeding species. Flocks congregate at favoured locations outside the breeding season.

Jan-Jun. 2002 Other than those in Table 29.1, the only sites with counts of 100 or more were: L. Gilp (max. 127 on 9th Jan), Gairletter Point *Cowal* (160 on 27th Feb), Tiriee (110 at Traigh Ghrianal on 23rd Feb and WeBS count 152 incl. 115 at Loch a' Phuill on 4th Mar), Otter Ferry *Cowal* (approx. 200 on 22nd Jun) and Oronsay (103 on 25th Jun).

2003 Sites with 100 or more birds included: Campbeltown L. (270 at 'Stinky Hole' on 3rd Jan), L. Gilp (max. 479 on 8th Jan), Holy L. (130 on 21st Mar) and Tiriee (WeBS count 139 on 27th Mar plus 56 at Traigh Bhagh).

Breeding. 2002 In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area, 94 pairs were noted breeding at 54 sites, mostly small islands in sea-lochs. The outcome of 47 pairs was unknown. Of the other 47 pairs, 25 (53%) were considered successful, because large or flying young were present (20 pairs) or adults alarmed (5 pairs). Twenty two pairs (47%) were unsuccessful, and at least 19 of these were at colonies where mink predation occurred. Elsewhere there were at least: 14 breeding pairs located on *Jura* on 2nd May as well as 22 on the Treshnish Isles, 18 at RSPB L. Gruinart, 28 at Ardnave, 99 at The Reef *Tiriee*, 55 on *Colonsay* and 28 on Oronsay.

2003 In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area, breeding was successful (at least one large young present in late summer) at nine of ten sites where mink had been removed [90% of breeding sites were successful]. They bred successfully at 14 of 25 sites where mink had not been removed [56% of breeding sites were successful]. This method of measuring breeding success at sites where one or more pairs attempted to breed is used because of the difficulty of counting all large young of this species! Breeding pairs noted elsewhere included 16 on the Treshnish Isles, 36 at Ardnave, 16 at RSPB L. Gruinart, 26 on Sanda Islands and 7 on Gunna Island *Coll*.

Aug-Dec. 2002 Other than those in Table 29.1, sites with 100 or more birds included: Machrihanish SBO (peak count 670 flying S on 10th Aug), Frenchman's Rocks

(123 flying S in 4.25 hrs on 15th Aug), Blairmore (L. Long) *Cowal* (max. 462 on 23rd Aug), L. Gilp (max. 231 on 16th Oct) and Campbeltown L. (250 at 'Stinky Hole' on 26th Oct).

2003 Other than those in Table 29.2 sites with 100 or more birds included: Otter Ferry (*ca* 500 on 29th Jul), Machrihanish SBO (peak count 415 flying S on 7th Aug), Campbeltown L. (383 at 'Stinky Hole' on 13th Aug and Otter Ferry (*ca*400 on 21st Sep). At RSPB L. Gruinart 494 'visible migrants' were counted on 30th Jul.

Table 29.1 *Maximum monthly counts of Oystercatcher at three sea-lochs, 2002.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	73	8	138	0	0	0	394	140	170	138	53	106
L. Indaal	388	490	601	572	468	424	379	390	406	377	416	467
L. Crinan	45	73	n/r	53	50	33	74	108	39	27	46	34

Table 29.2 *Maximum monthly counts of Oystercatcher at three sea-lochs, 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	151	91	303	237	109	145	170	347	219	130	127	97
L. Indaal	401	435	562	501	511	433	327	377	362	311	445	507
L. Crinan	26	65	n/r	48	33	61	n/r	52	26	56	63	33

AVOCET *Recurvirostra avosetta* 0456

Vagrant. Three accepted Argyll records: Loch Seil in September 1936, Mull 1977 and Kintyre 1986.

Three juveniles were seen from Machrihanish SBO flying S with Oystercatchers on 20th Aug 2002 [E. J. Maguire]. Our first since one at Southend on 15th May 1986. This record has been accepted by ABRC.

STONE-CURLEW *Burhinus oedicanus* 0459

Vagrant. The only previous record concerns one on Gruinart Flats (Islay) on 23rd-24th May 1997.

None in 2002 or 2003.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius* 0469

Vagrant. The only Argyll record concerns one on Islay in May 1983.

None in 2002 or 2003.

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula* Trilleachan-tràghad 0470

Widespread and common breeding species. Flocks of birds congregate at favoured locations outside the breeding season, especially on passage. Tìree is a site of international importance for wintering birds.

Jan-May. 2002 Counts on *Tìree* built up from 90 at Balephetrish Bay on 19th Jan to 240 passage birds on the Ruaig-Miodar Machairs on 4th May and reached a peak on 24th May when at least 750 were present on the island. Other counts of 50 or more birds included: 58 on The Strand *Colonsay* on 5th Apr, 86 at Traigh nam Barc *Colonsay* on 28th Apr and 50 at Crossapol Bay *Coll* on 8th May.

2003 Highest counts on *Tiree* were 93 at Vaul Bay on 3rd Jan, 164 Balephetrish Bay on 5th Feb, 172 at Loch a' Phuill on 15th Apr and 95 at Sorobaidh Bay on 19th Apr. The only count elsewhere of 50 or more birds was 80 at Loch Don on 7th Jan.

Breeding. 2002 On *Tiree* 57 pairs were counted on The Reef. Elsewhere, 46 were found on *Colonsay* (incl. Oronsay) (*cf* 30 in 2001), 18 at Ardnave and 6 on the Treshnish Isles.

2003 Twenty five pairs were found on *Colonsay*, 16 on Sanda Islands and 8 on the Treshnish Isles.

Jul-Dec. 2002 Highest counts on *Tiree* were 90 at Gott Bay on 16th Sep, 109 at Sorobaidh Bay on 26th Sep, 90 at Hough Bay on 2nd Nov and 120 at Balephetrish Bay on 7th Dec. Other counts of 50 or more birds included: 59 at Otter Ferry on 26th Aug, 103 at Traigh nam Barc *Colonsay* on 2nd Sep, 52 at Laggan Bay *Mull* on 26th Sep and *ca*100 at Tayinloan on 24th Nov.

2003 The 330 counted at RSPB L. Gruinart on 4th Aug were passage migrants as were 60 flying S at Machrihanish SBO on 17th Aug and *ca*400 at Traigh nam Barc *Colonsay* on 14th Sep. Other counts of 50 or more birds included: 119 at Loch a' Phuill on 9th Aug, 130 at Sorobaidh Bay on 27th Sep, 90 Vaul Bay *Tiree* on 29th Sep, 90 at Balephetrish Bay on 10th Nov, 87 at Breachacha Bay *Coll* on 17th Nov and 170 at Gott Bay on 19th Dec .

Table 30.1 *Maximum monthly counts of Ringed Plover at two sea-lochs on Islay in 2002.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	2	12	n/r	70	0	0	17	400	0	95	0	48
L. Indaal	70	70	29	101	117	38	29	90	90	71	37	72

Table 30.2 *Maximum monthly counts of Ringed Plover at two sea-lochs on Islay in 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	196	35	21	141	150	n/r	n/r	330	n/r	7	2	42
L. Indaal	51	79	28	95	98	42	30	165	87	68	38	101

KILLDEER* *Charadrius vociferus*

0474

Vagrant. The only Argyll record concerns one on Colonsay in January 1984.

None in 2002 or 2003.

DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus* Amadan-mòintich

0482

Scarce migrant, mostly in late Apr and May. Occasional breeding records in N Argyll.

The only records were: one with Golden Plovers at Fidden *Mull* on 29th April 2002 and a group of 5 photographed at Muasdale *Mid-Argyll* in April 2003.

AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis dominica*

0484

Vagrant. One previous Argyll record, of a juvenile on Tiree in Oct 2001.

The record of an adult on *Colonsay* on 3rd-5th Oct 1992 was reviewed by BBRC in 2004 and is now considered to have been an indeterminate American or Pacific Golden Plover (*British Birds* 97:578). The *Tiree* record (above) now becomes the first for Argyll.

A long-staying juvenile was at Ardnave L. *Islay* 21st Sep-2nd Nov 2003 (J. Dickson *et al.*). This record has been accepted by BBRC.

PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVER* *Pluvialis fulva*
Vagrant. One previous Argyll record, on Tiree in Oct 2000.
 None in 2002 or 2003.

0484.2

EUROPEAN GOLDEN PLOVER (GOLDEN PLOVER) *Pluvialis apricaria* Feadag 0485

Sparse but widespread breeding species. Upland afforestation has greatly reduced available breeding habitat in some areas. More numerous in winter and especially on passage.

Jan-May. 2002 Numbers on *Tiree* peaked on 2nd Apr when 3,100 were at The Reef a traditional spring gathering point [Table 31]. The highest number elsewhere was 580 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 20th Mar. Other sites with counts of 50 or more included: Oronsay (max. 179 on 20th Apr), RSPB L. Gruinart (131 on 20th Feb), *Colonsay* (148 at Traigh nam Barc on 31st Mar), Fiddin *Mull* (max. 350 on 13th Apr), Ardnave Point (136 on 11th Apr) and Arileod *Coll* (90 on 2nd May).

2003 Numbers on *Tiree* peaked on 9th Apr when 1,600 were at The Reef [Table 31]. Other sites with counts of 50 or more included: L. Indaal (180 on 12th Jan), RSPB L. Gruinart (max.200 on 9th Mar), Oronsay (143 on 18th Apr) and Arileod *Coll* (70 on 24th Apr).

Breeding. 2002 A pair was holding territory among Lapwings at The Laggan *Kintyre* on 24th May and another with one large young was at Meall Mhor (Knapdale) *Mid-Argyll* on 2nd Jun. Adults with chicks were present near Killiemor *Mull* on 1st Jul.

2003 Recorded in 2 of 10 BBS squares (20%). No other breeding records received.

Aug-Dec. 2002 Numbers on *Tiree* peaked on 14th Oct when 800 were counted although there were thought to be 1,000-2,000 in all on the island. High numbers were also recorded on *Islay* where estimated flocks of 1,500 were seen at L. Indaal on 6th and 30th Oct. Other sites with counts of 50 or more included: Head of L. Scridain (350 on 18th Sep), RSPB L. Gruinart (max. 980 on 30th Oct), L. Don (75 on 1st Nov), The Laggan *Kintyre* (90+ on 16th Nov), Arileod *Coll* (80 on 18th Nov) and Laggan *Islay* (380 on 9th Dec).

2003 Numbers on *Tiree* peaked in Nov when an all island count on 10th -12th found 3,447 birds. The highest counts on *Islay* were at L. Indaal, where there were 1,250 on 11th Oct, ca1,000 on 29th Oct and 420 on 15th Nov, and at RSPB L. Gruinart where numbers peaked at 388 on 22nd Oct. The only other sites with counts of 50 or more were L. Don (75 on 9th Sep), Headof L. Scridain (59 on 10th Sep) and Oronsay with 50 on 30th Dec.

Table 31 *Maximum monthly day-counts of Golden Plover on Tiree in 2002 and 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
2002	1200	1242	2600	3100	60	1	60	240	806	800+	550	500
2003	n/r	300	1600	1600	90	1	90	1300	1875	2882	3447	2328

The figures for Sep, Oct, Nov and Dec 2003 relate to all island counts.

Uncommon passage migrant, mostly to islands. A few winter, mainly on Islay.

Jan-May. 2002 A flock of 26 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 23rd Jan was the only count in double figures. The only other sites reporting birds were: L. Indaal (max. 3 on 20th Jan), Aros Moss *Kintyre* (one on 20th Mar) and The Strand *Colonsay* (one on 2nd Apr).

2003 The highest count was 23 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 17th Jan with 16 still there on 27th Jan. Elsewhere there were: 2 at L. Indaal and Tayinloan on 12th Jan, and singles at Balephetrish Bay on 11th Jan, L. na Cille (L. Sween) on 16th Feb, Heanish *Tiree* on 26th Apr and Arileod *Coll* on 8th May.

Aug-Dec. 2002 A flock of 8 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 23rd Jan was the largest number reported. The only other sites reporting birds were: L. a' Phuill *Tiree* (max 2 on 3rd Sep), L. Don (one on 1st Oct), L. Indaal (max. 5 on 6th Oct), Balephetrish Bay (one on 7th Dec) and L. na Cille (max. 2 on 8th Dec).

2003 The WeBS count at L. Indaal found 4 on 11th Oct and 15th Nov. RSPB L. Gruinart had 5 on 30th Dec. Unusually, there were 3 at L. Crinan on 15th Oct and 4 there on 23rd Nov. Elsewhere there were single birds at: Island of Danna (L. Sween) on 5th Sep, head of L. Scridain on 10th Sep, The Green *Tiree* on 9th Nov, Miodar *Tiree* on 10th Nov and L. na Cille (Loch Sween) on 16th Nov.

Localised breeder and widespread wintering species.

Jan-Apr. 2002 In addition to the WeBS counts *Tiree* had 700 at Heylipol on 24th Jan. Away from *Islay* and *Tiree* the only counts of 50 or more birds were at: Tayinloan (100+ on 1st Jan), Glen Forsa *Mull* (100+ on 6th Jan) and Oronsay (max. 77 on 26th Feb).

2003 In addition to the WeBS counts, *Tiree* had 480 at Kilmoluag on 16th Jan and 400 at The Reef on 24th Mar. Other flocks on *Islay* included 83 at Ardnave on 19th Feb and 120 at Coull Farm on 20th Feb. The only other count of over 50 birds was 90 at the RSPB Reserve *Coll* on 16th Jan.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 2 of 13 BBS squares (15%). On *Tiree* 316 pairs breeding on The Reef had many chicks on 5th Jun while at other RSPB reserves: 52 pairs were breeding on *Coll*, 191 at L. Gruinart, 123 at Ardnave, 18 at Smaull and 51 on Oronsay. Elsewhere 24 pairs were found on *Colonsay*, 6 at Lagganulva *Mull* and 4 -5 sitting females at Aros Moss *Kintyre* had downy young on 24th May .

2003 Recorded in 2 of 10 BBS squares (20%). At RSPB reserves, 40 pairs were breeding on Oronsay and 101 bred at Ardnave. Elsewhere: 26 pairs were found on *Colonsay* and 2 – 4 bred at; Toward *Cowal*, Glen Forsa *Mull*, Laggan Lodge *Mull* and Saulmore *Mid-Argyll*.

Aug-Dec. 2002 In addition to the WeBS counts *Tiree* had high counts at Heylipol (195 on 9th Sep), Hough (550 on 21st Sep), L. Bhasapol (400 on 23rd Sep), The Reef (500 on 28th Sep) and Crossapol (250 on 3rd Dec) while at least 1,170 were present in the west of the island on 12th Aug. Elsewhere there were 70 at Garvard *Colonsay* on 14th Sep and 180 at Breachacha Bay *Coll* on 27th Dec.

2003 In addition to the WeBS counts on *Tiree* there were: 600 at Heylipol on 9th Aug, 875 between Cornaig and Balephuill on 18th Aug and 450 at Kilkenneth on 26th Aug. Elsewhere there were: 160 at Port- na-Luing *Coll* on 15th Sep, 250 at Crossapol *Coll* on 2nd Nov and 140 roosting at Coul Dunes *Islay* on 6th Dec.

Table 32.1 *Maximum monthly counts of Lapwing at L. Gruinart Islay and at the four main freshwater lochs on Tiree in 2002.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L Gruinart	627	270	237	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	72	148	108	59
Tiree	436	1065	295	64	126	50	91	14	98	165	14	51

Table 32.2 *Maximum monthly counts of Lapwing at L. Gruinart Islay and at the four main freshwater lochs on Tiree in 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L Gruinart	202	300+	425	71	48	204	14	n/r	1	437	1266	261
Tiree	4	290	182	43	45	42	211	650	367	n/r	382	231

RED KNOT (KNOT) *Calidris canutus* Luatharan-gainmhic 0496
Uncommon passage migrant with main passage Aug-Sep. A few winter.

Jan-May. 2002 Most winter records were on *Islay* where there were: 9 at L. Gruinart on 13th Jan, 15 at L. Indaal on 19th Jan and 14 at L. Indaal on 3rd Mar. One was at Machrihanish SBO on 12th Mar. Spring records at L. Indaal included one on 14th Apr and 20 on 12th May while one in breeding plumage was at Ardnave on 31st May. On *Tiree*, one was at Sorobaidh Bay on 20th May, 3 at L. a' Phuill on 22nd May and 1 at The Green on 6th Jun.

2003 An unusually high count of 122 was made at L. Indaal on 16th Feb. L. Gruinart had 18 on 17th Jan and 50 on 14th May while Ardlarach *Islay* had 24 on 6th Feb. Only single figures were reported elsewhere including 5 at Ledaig Point *North Argyll* on 11th Jan.

Summer records. Unusually, there were Jun records in both years with one at Cornaig Bay *Tiree* on 6th Jun 2002, 6 at L. Indaal on 17th Jun 2002, 8 at Gartmain (L. Indaal) on 4th Jun 2003 and a flock of 40 in full breeding plumage at Hough Bay *Tiree* on 16th Jun 2003.

Jul-Dec. 2002 A returning migrant was at Machrihanish SBO on 27th Jul. Good numbers on autumn passage included: 31 (in breeding plumage) at L. Crinan on 3rd Aug, 27 at L. Indaal on 11th Aug, 38 at Machrihanish on 12th Aug, 14 flying past Frenchman's Rocks on 15th Aug, 27 at Gott bay *Tiree* on 29th Aug, and 61 (incl. only 3 adults) in the Add Estuary on 30th Aug. Smaller counts in Sep included: 16 at L. Indaal on 8th, 20 at Machrihanish on 12th and 18 at L. Gruinart on 16th. Good numbers remained at L. Indaal later in the year with 36 on 6th Oct, 50 on 17th Nov and 42 on 8th Dec. Apart from 34 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 25th Nov all remaining records, which came from, *Colonsay, Mid-Argyll, Mull* and *Tiree*, were in single figures. A Peregrine Falcon was seen to take one in the Add estuary on 12th Oct.

2003 The first migrants were 7 at Gartmain (L. Indaal) on 13th Jul and passage peaked early at Machrihanish SBO with 63 on 21st Jul. Small numbers were at L. Gruinart throughout August and 37 were counted there on 24th. Apart from 22 at Machrihanish on 17th and 22 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 22nd most other counts in Aug were in single figures. The highest numbers were seen in Sep when 80 were at RSPB L. Gruinart on 16th and 88 at L. Indaal on 27th. There were 50 at L. Indaal on 29th Oct and 29 remained on 15th Nov but there were none seen anywhere after this.

SANDERLING *Calidris alba* Luatharan-glas

0497

Main passage in late-Apr/May and in Aug. Some winter, mainly on Islay and Tiree. Occasionally recorded in summer. Tiree is a site of national importance for passage/wintering birds.

Jan-Jun. 2002 The highest counts on *Tiree* were: 250 at Balephetrish Bay on 5th Jan, 130 at Sorobaidh Bay on 9th Jan, 110 at Balephetrish Bay on 23rd Feb, 90 at Caolas on 24th Feb and 270 (peak passage count) at Sorobaidh Bay on 20th May. On *Islay*, 60 were at L. Gruinart on 13th Jan, 68 at Ardnave on 25th Feb and 50 at Gortantaoid on 6th Apr. Thirteen were at Feall Bay *Coll* on 8th May and 35 flew N past Machrihanish on 21st May. Many of the 70 birds at Hough Bay *Tiree* on 2nd Jun were in breeding plumage and other Jun records included 4 at Ardskenish *Colonsay* on 8th and 3 flying S past Machrihanish on 26th.

2003 Highest counts on *Tiree* were: 175 at Balephetrish Bay on 5th Feb, 180 at Traigh Bhagh on 9th Apr and 290 at Sorobaidh Bay on 19th Apr. On *Islay*, 66 were at L. Gruinart on 19th Jan and 30 at L. Indaal on 8th Mar while *Coll* had 23 at Feall Bay on 17th Jan and 41 at Cliad on 20th Feb. Passage migrants (many in breeding plumage) in May included: 70 at Hough Bay *Tiree* on 10th, 22 at L. Indaal on 10th, 150 at Sorobaidh Bay on 17th and 37 at Balephetrish Bay on 30th. Single figure counts were recorded on *Colonsay*, *Islay* and *Tiree* until mid-Jun.

Jul-Dec. 2002 Thirteen at Hough Bay *Tiree* on 13th Jul were presumably returning passage migrants. Numbers on *Tiree* increased rapidly thereafter with 85 at Traigh Bhagh on 29th Jul and 430 at Gott bay on 31st Jul. Good numbers were seen at Machrihanish SBO in Aug/Sep with a peak day count of 70 on 10th Aug. A flock of 200 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 19th Aug was a record count for the reserve and numbers at Gott Bay peaked at 250 on 28th Sep. Later in the year there were: 260 at Traigh Hough *Tiree* on 2nd Nov, 200 at Balephetrish Bay on 3rd Nov and 190 at Sorobaidh Bay on 28th Dec. The highest count elsewhere was 38 at Crossapol Bay *Coll* on 2nd Sep and smaller numbers were at sites in *Cowal* and *Mid-Argyll*.

2003 Return passage began on *Tiree* on 12th Jul with 6 at Traigh Bhaigh and 12 at Gott Bay. Twenty-five were heading S at Machrihanish SBO on 14th Jul with 27 passing Frenchman's Rocks on 20th Jul. Numbers on *Tiree* peaked at 341 at Gott Bay on 21st Jul while 64 on 17th Aug was the highest count at Machrihanish. Thereafter smaller numbers were reported on *Coll*, *Islay*, *Mull* and at Machrihanish until mid-Nov. Highest winter counts on *Tiree* were: 320 at Hough Bay on 8th Nov, 150 at Sorobaidh Bay on 25th Nov, 140 at Balephetrish Bay on 3rd Dec and 100 at Gott Bay on 19th Dec.

SEMPALMATED SANDPIPER* *Calidris pusilla*

0498

Vagrant. The only Argyll record was of four or more birds on Tiree and Islay in Sep 1999.

None in 2002 or 2003.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta* Luatharan-beag

0501

Scarce but annual passage migrant, with the majority of records in autumn.

Spring. Four records of single birds: at Ardalanish Bay *Mull* on 18th May 2002, L. Don on 23rd Apr 2003, Vaul *Tiree* (in full breeding plumage) on 12th May 2003 and at RSPB L. Gruinart on 29th May 2003.

Autumn. An immature at Ruaig *Tiree* on 13th Oct was the only 2002 record. In 2003 three were on Liath Eilean (off Island of Danna) *Mid-Argyll* on 21st Jul, 2 at The Strand *Colonsay* on 19th Aug and a single at RSPB L. Gruinart from 31st Aug to 2nd Sep.

TEMMINCK'S STINT *Calidris temminckii* 0502
Rare passage migrant with only four accepted Argyll records: one at Machrihanish, Kintyre in Jul 1974, a juvenile at Fidden, Mull in Sep 1985 and one at An Fhaodhail, Tiree in Aug 1992 and one at Loch Gruinart in May 2000.
None in 2002 or 2003.

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER *Calidris fuscicollis* 0505
Vagrant. The only Argyll record was of one at RSPB L. Gruinart in Aug 2000.
None in 2002 or 2003.

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER* *Calidris bairdii* 0506
Vagrant. Only two Argyll records, both on Islay, in 1979 and in Sep 1999.
None in 2002 or 2003.

PECTORAL SANDPIPER *Calidris melanotos* 0507
Less than annual transatlantic visitor with 13 accepted Argyll records during 1980-2000.
None in 2002. A juvenile was first seen at RSPB L. Gruinart on 22nd Aug 2003 and was seen on several occasions subsequently until 1st Sep [C McKay, T ap Rheinallt *et al*]. Another juvenile was at the same location from 18th to 19th Oct 2003 [M. Giles, M. A. Ogilvie, T ap Rheinallt *et al*]. Both records have been accepted by ABRC.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea* Luatharan-crom 0509
Scarce but more or less annual passage migrant, with most records in autumn.
A single bird in full winter plumage at Heylipol Tiree on 14th Jan 2002, following 2 there in Nov 2001. Although not unknown, winter records of this species in Scotland are few and far between.
Spring. One at Balephetrish Bay on 23rd May 2002 was the only spring record for 2002/2003.

Autumn. 2002 Two adults in breeding plumage were in the Add Estuary from 31st Jul to 5th Aug. On Islay, two were at Traigh Nostaig (Ardnave) on 2nd Aug and 6 juvs. were at Carnain (L. Indaal) on 10th Sep.

2003 The first was at Bowmore Islay on 17th Jul followed by two juvs. seen briefly at L. an Eilein on 26th Aug with two more at RSPB L. Gruinart on 27th Aug. On 30th Aug 2 were at Craigens (L. Gruinart), on 31st there were 2 in the estuary at L. Gruinart and one on the floods, and one remained until 2nd Sep. Two juvs. were at Loch a' Phuill on 6th Sep with 2 more there on 13th Sep. The last were 2 at Bridgend Merse (L. Indaal) on 15th Sep.

PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima* Luatharan-rìoghail 0510
Widely but sparsely distributed along rocky coasts from Oct to May. Tiree is a site of national importance for wintering birds.

Jan-May. 2002 The highest counts were: 35 at Traigh Ghrianaidh Tiree on 23rd Feb, 20 at Caolas Tiree on 24th Feb, 17 at L. Indaal on 3rd Mar, 14 at Kirn (Dunoon) on 17th Feb and up to 14 wintering at Machrihanish Jan-Mar. Only small numbers (3 or less) were found on Coll and Colonsay and Mid-Argyll. The last were 2 at L. Indaal on 12th May.

2003 By far the highest count was 56 at Kirn (Dunoon) on 29th Jan. Double figures were also recorded at Traigh na Gilean Tiree (22 on 1st Jan), L. Indaal (max. 11 on 12th Jan and 9th Mar), Hogh Bay Coll (12 on 19th Jan), Caolas Tiree (12 on 22nd Feb)

and Traigh Hogh *Tiree* (16 on 17th Apr). Apart from one at Ledaig Point North Argyll on 11th Jan and 5 at Southend *Kintyre* on 15th Mar the remaining records were from *Islay* and *Tiree* and in single figures. The last was one at Bruichladdich (L. Indaal) on 20th May.

Jul-Dec. 2002 Apart from L. Indaal (max. 23 at Gartnatra on 15th Nov) and Sandaig *Tiree* (max. 15 on 1st Dec) no sites held more than single figures. Five were on Sgeir na Maoile (between Crinan and Scarba) *Mid-Argyll* on 28th Sep but all the remaining records were on *Islay* or *Tiree*.

2003 Three at Ruadh Sgeir (Sd. of Jura) on 15th Jul were in breeding plumage. Apart from 12 at L. Indaal on 15th Nov and 15th Dec and 35 at Hough Bay *Tiree* on 6th Dec no other records exceeded 6 birds.

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina* Graillig

0512

Very localised breeding species. Numbers are generally highest on passage but large numbers winter on Islay and Tiree.

Jan-Jun. 2002 Numbers at L. Gruinart peaked at 950 on 13th Jan. Sites with counts of 50 or more, away from *Islay* included: Heylipol *Tiree* (65 on 22nd Jan), Otter Ferry (57 on 21st Feb), Loch a' Phuill (80 on 7th May), Balephetrish Bay (75 on 15th May), Turnigil *Colonsay* (58 on 15th May) and Sorobaidh Bay (max. 150 on 20th May). A count of passage birds around the coast of *Tiree* on 17th May totalled 235 birds.

2003 Numbers at L. Gruinart peaked at 940 on 19th Jan. Sites with counts of 50 or more, away from *Islay* included: L. Don (60 on 7th Jan), Salum Bay *Tiree* (70 on 21st Feb), Clachan Mor *Tiree* (240 on 27th Apr), Loch a' Phuill (108 on 25th Apr), Hough Bay *Tiree* (90 on 10th May), Head of L. Scridain (100 on 10th May), Sorobaidh Bay (max. 120 on 17th May) and Cliad *Coll* (50 on 25th May).

Breeding. 2002 A survey on The Reef *Tiree* on 5th/6th Jun found 46 presumed territorial pairs.

2003 A partial survey on The Reef *Tiree* on 15th May found 36 pairs and singing birds were noted elsewhere on the island. Three pairs at RSPB L. Gruinart and 3 at Ardnave were thought to have bred.

Jul- Dec. 2002 On 31st Jul there were 605 passage birds at Gott Bay and 181 in the Add Estuary. A total of 65 birds were counted flying S past Frenchman's Rocks on 15th Aug and numbers at L. Gruinart peaked at 1,500 on 19th Aug. Other counts of 50 or more included 55 at L. Don on 25th Oct, 55 at Sorobaidh Bay on 10th Nov and 70 at Balephetrish Bay on 7th Dec.

2003 Numbers at Loch a' Phuill increased from 55 on 7th Jul to 402 on 21st Jul. Unusually large numbers were recorded in Aug: RSPB L. Gruinart had 3,500 on 6th, 220 were at Miodar *Tiree* on 7th, 300 were at L. Don on 12th and 480 passed S at Machrihanish on 13th. Counts of 50 or more, later in the year, included: 60 at Hough Bay and 60 at Sorobaidh Bay both on 6th Dec, 250 feeding on The Strand *Colonsay* on 14th Dec and 210 at Gott Bay on 19th Dec.

Table 33.1 *Maximum monthly counts of Dunlin at two sea-lochs on Islay in 2002.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	950	183	0	2	79	0	115	1500	110	1146	496	1050
L. Indaal	119	198	51	60	69	14	57	210	60	71	132	165

Table 33.2 *Maximum monthly counts of Dunlin at two sea-lochs on Islay in 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	940	555	0	129	1350	30	1850	3500	350	114	540	685
L. Indaal	114	147	20	12	760	10	67	131	80	89	180	201

BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER* *Limicola falcinellus* 0514
Vagrant. The only Argyll record concerns one on Tiree in May 1994.
 None in 2002 or 2003.

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER *Tryngites subruficollis* 0516
Rare transatlantic visitor with only 8 accepted Argyll records, involving 11 birds, since 1980. One was in May, one in Jun and the remainder in Sep.
 None in 2002 or 2003.

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax* Gibeagan 0517
Scarce but annual passage migrant, more numerous in autumn.
Apr-Jun. 2002 A series of records at RSPB L. Gruinart began with 2 on 8th Apr and numbers peaked at 6 on 18th Apr. The last there were 4 on 21st Apr. One at Loch a' Phuill on 29th May was the only spring record elsewhere. Unusually, a reeve (female) was at Machrihanish SBO on 7th Jun.

2003 All records were in May on *Tiree*, with 2 at L. Bhasapol on 26th, 3 at Cornaigmore on 27th and one at The Reef on 29th.

Jul-Oct. 2002 Singles were at L. na Cuilce *Mull* on 7th Jul and at The Strand *Colonsay* on 9th Jul. Three were at L. Riaghain *Tiree* on 31st Jul and thereafter up to 4 were reported on *Islay* and *Tiree* on various dates in Aug and early Sep with a maximum of 8 at Loch a' Phuill on 29th Aug. Elsewhere, singles were at L. Beg *Mull* on 22nd Aug and Otter Ferry on 31st Aug and 2 were at Garvard *Colonsay* on 14th Sep. The last one was at L. Gruinart floods on 17th Sep.

2003 The first 2 were at RSPB L. Gruinart on 1st Aug. Birds were then present throughout Aug and early Sep with a maximum of 6 on 7th Sep. Similar numbers were seen on *Tiree* with maxima of 6 at Mannal on 18th Aug and 6 at Loch a' Phuill on 24th Aug. The only records away from *Islay* and *Tiree* were singles at the Add Estuary on 29th Aug and at Arileod *Coll* on 1st Sep. The last one was at Ruaig *Tiree* on 29th Sep.

JACK SNIPE *Lymnocyptes minimus* Gobhrag-bheag 0518
Scarce, but probably under-recorded, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Jan-Mar. 2002 Single birds were reported during Mar from: Aros Moss *Kintyre*, Fasachd *Coll*, Moine Mhor and Garvard *Colonsay*.

2003 One was seen at Balephetrish *Tiree* on 27th Jan and single birds were flushed on *Islay* between 21st Feb and 1st May at: Machir Bay, Ardnave, RSPB Loch Gruinart and RSPB Druim na h-Erasaid. Elsewhere a single was flushed at Moine Mhor.

Aug-Dec. 2002 Single birds were reported during Oct and Nov from: *Tiree* at Heylipol, Vaul and The Reef, from *Islay* at; Loch Gruinart and Machir Bay, and on *Coll* at Crossapol. Two were in Appin *North Argyll* on 14th Dec.

2003 Two were seen near L. Melldalloch *Cowal* on 31st Aug, and singles were reported, from Oct to Dec, at: The Reef *Tiree*, RSPB L. Gruinart and

Achnabreck (nr Lochgilphead) *Mid-Argyll*. At least 6 were reported shot by a party visiting *Tiree* in mid Nov and 3 were flushed near Kilfinan *Cowal* on 31st Dec.

COMMON SNIPE (SNIPE) *Gallinago gallinago* Naosg 0519
Widespread and locally common breeding species. More numerous on passage and as a winter visitor.

Jan-Apr. 2002 Up to 5 were reported at various localities: in *Colonsay, Islay, Kintyre, Mid-Argyll, Mull* and *North Argyll*. Larger numbers were reported on *Tiree* where 25 were at Cornaig on 10th Feb and 25 at Aros Moss *Kintyre* on 20th Mar.

2003 Larger flocks reported included: 17 at Dervaig Bridge *Mull* on 2nd Jan, 15 flushed at Vaul *Tiree* on 5th Jan and 25 at An Fhaodhail *Tiree* on 25th Feb.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 3 of 13 BBS squares (23%). On *Islay*, 60 pairs were found at RSPB L. Gruinart, 19 at Ardnave and 6 at RSPB Smaull. Around 50 pairs bred on the RSPB Reserve on *Coll*; 15 -20 drumming birds were recorded on Oronsay; 120 were chipping and drumming at the Reef *Tiree* on 5th Jun, ca 15 pairs bred on Lunga, Treshnish Isles and 2 pairs bred at Aros Moss *Kintyre*.

2003 Recorded in 3 of 10 BBS squares (30%). A minimum 67 pairs were recorded on *Colonsay*, 59 probably bred at RSPB L. Gruinart and 14 displaying males were found on Lunga, Treshnish Isles.

Aug-Dec. 2002 Small numbers were widely reported. Larger gatherings included: 13 at Tayinloan on 11th Sep, 20 at L. Gruinart floods on 13th Sep, 29 at Port na Luing *Coll* on 16th Sep, 35 at L. Bhasapol on 23rd Sep, 31 at Heylipol *Tiree* on 27th Sep, 30 at Port Wemyss *Islay* on 24th Oct, 15 flew over The Manse *Tiree* on 24th Oct, 120 were at Sorobaidh Bay *Tiree* on 27th Oct, 16 at Dervaig Bridge *Mull* on 1st Nov and 17 at Ardgaddan Bay *Cowal* on 3rd Nov.

2003 On 16th Sep ca200 landed in thick mist at Sandaig *Tiree*. Other larger gatherings included: 42 at Traigh Gruinart *Islay* on 24th Aug, 65 between Balemartine and Hynish *Tiree* on 28th Sep and 26 at L. Gruinart on 29th Oct.

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER* *Limnodromus scolopaceus* 0527
Vagrant. The only Argyll record concerns one on Islay in June 1986. There are also three acceptable records (1891-1973) of unidentified Dowitchers.

None in 2002 or 2003.

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola* Coileach-coille 0529
Widespread but under-recorded breeder. Numbers augmented in winter by visiting birds.

Jan-Mar. 2002 One or two birds reported from various sites in *Colonsay, Islay, Kintyre* and *Mid-Argyll*. Six were found at Ballimony *Islay* on 13th Mar.

2003 Seven were flighting at dusk at RSPB L. Gruinart on 12th Feb. Elsewhere, up to 4 reported from various sites in *Coll, Islay, Kintyre, Mid-Argyll, Mull* and *Tiree*, including two records of birds seen feeding in gardens during hard weather in Jan. One to 3 were recorded at five broadleaved woodlands in *Mid-Argyll* during the Woodland Bird Survey in Mar.

Breeding. 2002 Two roding birds were heard at Fearnoch Forest *Mid-Argyll*, 2 were roding at Bearnus (Ulva) *Mull* and 28 were heard in one hour on *Colonsay* on 14th Jun.

2003 Roding birds were recorded: at Fearnoch Forest *Mid-Argyll*, Scalasaig *Colonsay*, Bridgend Woods *Islay*, the L. Ballygrant area *Islay* (min. 4) and on

Jura. A nest was found at Taynish NNR and an adult with b/2 was found at Colonsay House Colonsay.

Sep-Dec. 2002 The most reported were 4 at Ballimony *Islay* on 5th Nov. Others were reported from various sites in *Coll*, *Colonsay*, *Islay*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull*, *North Argyll* and *Tiree*.

2003 Eight were flushed on the road from Otter Ferry to Strachur *Cowal* on 24th Oct and 9 were killed by a shooting party on *Tiree* over 5 days in mid-Nov. Elsewhere up to 3 were recorded at various sites in *Coll*, *Islay*, *Jura*, *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull* and *Tiree*.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa* Cearra-ghob 0532
Increasingly regular passage migrant, especially on Islay and Tiree, with occasional winter records. Scarce elsewhere.

Jan-Jun. 2002 One was at L. a' Phuill on 14th and 28th Jan with possibly the same bird at Sorobaidh Bay on 3rd Mar. One was at RSPB L. Gruinart Floods on 26th Feb. The first migrants appeared at RSPB L. Gruinart on 3rd Apr and birds were then seen regularly throughout Apr and the first half of May. Larger counts included: 30 on 18th Apr, 52 on 27th Apr, 23 on 28th Apr and 16 on 2nd May. On *Tiree* numbers increased from 14 at L. an Eilein on 3rd Apr to 98 at L. Bhasapol on around 20th Apr, followed by 58 at L. an Eilein on 23rd Apr and 32 there on 3rd May. Elsewhere up to 5 were seen on *Coll* and a flock of 19 in breeding plumage were in L. Gilp on 2nd May. 1-2 birds were at L. an Eilein on 3rd and 10th Jun.

2003 One was in L. Gruinart on 1st and 6th Jan. One at RSPB L. Gruinart on 18th Mar was probably an early passage migrant and birds were then reported regularly until Jun, mainly on *Islay* and *Tiree*. A colour ringed bird from The Wash was in a group of 6 at L. an Eilein on 1st Apr and the highest count for *Tiree* was 13 there on 8th May. There were similar numbers on *Islay* with 16 at L. Gruinart on 11th May the highest count. The only records elsewhere were 5 at L. Scridain and one at L. na Keal on 27th Apr. Five at RSPB L. Gruinart on 25th Jun were presumed to be returning migrants.

Jul-Oct. 2002 One was at Machrihanish SBO on 3rd Jul, 7 at L. an Eilein on 8th Jul and 13 at L. Gruinart also on 8th Jul. Thereafter birds were recorded regularly until late Sep, mostly on *Islay* and *Tiree* with high counts of: 35 at L. Indaal on 30th Jul, 28 at L. Gruinart on 15th Aug, 24 at L. a' Phuill on 26th Aug and 12 at L. a' Phuill on 9th Oct. Machrihanish SBO had a record count of 101 on 1st Sep. Elsewhere: 7 adults were at L. Crinan on 31st Aug with 2-4 juvs. daily during Aug, 4-8 juvs. in the Add Estuary 4th – 6th Sep, 14 at Arileod *Coll* on 16th Aug and one at Tayinloan on 26th Aug.

2003 After strong SE wind and rain 42 newly arrived birds were at RSPB L. Gruinart on 10th Jul. The great majority of the records that followed until late Sep were from L. Gruinart including 22 on 30th Jul, 27 on 3rd Aug and 18 on 24th Aug. A single late bird there on 14th Oct was being chased by a Peregrine Falcon. The relatively few records on *Tiree* included 39 at L. a' Phuill on 12th Aug and 18 there on 15th Sep; with the last bird also at L. a' Phuill, on 29th Sep. Elsewhere, Machrihanish SBO had 14 heading S on 17th Jul and 35 in off the sea on 28th Jul. Five were at Kinloch *Mull* on 23rd Jul and 7 were on Sanda Island on 9th Aug. A flock of 24 flying over the Add Estuary on 5th Aug was probably a record count for this site.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica* Roid-ghuilbneach

0534

Recorded throughout the year especially at passage times. Most frequent and numerous on the islands with smaller numbers on the mainland. Wintering birds most numerous on Islay.

Jan-Jun 2002 Away from Islay the only sites with 10 or more birds were: Calgary Mull (14 on 9th Jan), Hynish Tiree (16 on 2nd Jan), Sorobaidh Bay (max. 19 on 2nd April), L. a' Phuill (18 on 23rd May) and L. Don (max. 27 on 2nd Jun).

2003 Away from Islay the only other sites with 10 or more birds were: L. Don (14 on 7th Jan), Balephetrish Bay (14 on 13th Jan), Gott Bay (max. 25 on 6th Feb), and L. a' Phuill (10 on 21st May).

Jul-Dec. 2002 Away from Islay the only other sites with 10 or more birds were: Gott Bay (max. 29 on 14th Oct) and L. Don (max. 18 on 25th Oct).

2003 Away from Islay the only other sites with 10 or more birds were: Frenchman's Rocks (15 flying S on 18th Aug – rarely seen here), Gott Bay (max. 25 on 3rd Sep), Sorobaidh Bay (16 on 27th Sep) L. Don (max. 17 on 20th Oct) and Ardnave Point (24 on 27th Oct).

In both 2002 and 2003 smaller numbers were seen at sites in *Coll, Colonsay, Kintyre, Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll*.

Table 34.1 *Maximum monthly counts of Bar-tailed Godwits at two sea-lochs on Islay in 2002.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	200	133	47	80	80	100	97	98	98	95	3	252
L. Indaal	48	68	47	16	21	61	11	11	19	21	75	71

Table 34.2 *Maximum monthly counts of Bar-tailed Godwits at two sea-lochs on Islay in 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	340	230	198	93	67	111	112	111	117	43	142	241
L. Indaal	114	151	39	40	47	52	12	21	23	30	65	66

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus* Eun-Bealltainn

0538

Regular passage migrant in small numbers, mainly from late Apr to May and late Jul to early Sep. Summer records not infrequent.

Apr-May. 2002 Two were at Machrihanish SBO on 10th Apr and 11 at Aros Moss Kintyre on 14th Apr. Widespread records followed until late May including: 31 flying S at Machrihanish on 26th Apr, 27 flying W at Ardnave and 8 at L. Sween both on 27th Apr, 27 on Iona on 5th May, 16 at Crossapol Bay Coll on 8th May, 23 at Portnahaven Islay on 10th May, 23 on Oronsay on 18th May, 19 at Traigh Hough Tiree on 17th May, 18 at Breachacha Coll and 20 on Oronsay on 20th May.

2003 Two were on Sanda Island on 15th Apr with one at L. an Eilein on 16th Apr. Records were again widespread until late May including: 10 at L. Gruinart on 27th Apr, 10 at Heylipol Tiree, 4 on Oronsay on 28th Apr, one at South Shian North Argyll on 29th Apr, 22 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 4th May, one at Taynish NNR on 7th May, 20 at Ruaig Tiree on 12th May, 15 at Loch Clach a' Bhuaille Islay on 19th May and 25 at Crossapol Coll on 20th May.

Summering birds. 2002 Jun records included 2 at Glenacardoch Point *Kintyre* on 5th and 3 at Ardskenish *Colonsay* on 8th.

2003 One or two birds were seen during Jun at Machrihanish and on *Colonsay, Islay* and *Tiree*.

Jul-Sep. 2002 Smaller numbers in autumn began with 2 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 13th Jul followed by 9 heading S at Machrihanish on 19th Jul and 11 there on 30th Jul. Apart from 11 at The Reef *Tiree* on 28th Aug the remaining records, from *Coll, Colonsay, Islay, Kintyre* (incl Sanda Island), *Mid-Argyll* and *Mull* were in single figures.

2003 Four were on Gunna Island *Coll* on 1st Jul, one was on Oronsay on 7th Jul and 3 passage migrants were at RSPB L. Gruinart on 17th Jul. Most of the remaining records: from *Coll, Islay, Kintyre* (incl Sanda Island), *Mull* and *Tiree* were in single figures apart from; 22 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 1st Aug, 18 flying S past Frenchman's Rocks on 19th Aug and 14 at L. Don on 10th Sep. Seven late birds were at Machrihanish SBO on 19th Sep.

EURASIAN CURLEW (CURLEW) *Numenius arquata* Guilbneach 0541
Widespread and locally common breeding species. More numerous on passage and in winter.

Jan-Apr. 2002 Other than those in Table 35.1 the only sites with counts of 50 or more were: Crossapol *Tiree* (60 on 3rd Jan), L. a' Phuill (max. 83 on 11th Feb), Breachacha *Coll* (130 on 11th Feb) and Traigh Ghrianaid *Tiree* (210 on 23rd Feb).

2003 Other than those in Table 35.2 the only sites with counts of 50 or more were: Tayinloan (68 on 3rd Jan), Campbeltown Loch (68 on 3rd Jan), Machrihanish (170 on 14th Jan), Sandaig *Tiree* (76 on 21st Jan) and Sorobaidh Bay (80 on 22nd Feb).

Breeding. 2002 A nest with c/4 was found at Druim na h-Erasaid *Islay* on 17th May and an adult with 3 small young were at Kilnaughton *Islay* on 3rd Jun. RSPB L. Gruinart had 22 breeding pairs, with a further pair at Ardnave and 3 territories were identified at Aros Moss *Kintyre*.

2003 RSPB L. Gruinart had a probable 21 breeding pairs, a pair probably bred on the west moss at Loch Crinan and 2-3 territorial pairs were at Crackaig *Jura* on 5th May.

Jul-Dec. 2002 Other than those in Table 35.1, sites with counts of 50 or more included: Machrihanish SBO (peak day count of 140 on 8th Jul), Tayinloan (max. ca100 on 3rd Aug), Balemartine *Tiree* (78 on 3rd Sep), Balephuill *Tiree* (65 on 11th Sep), Sandaig *Tiree* (150 on 19th Sep), Crossapol *Tiree* (80 on 23rd Sep), The Reef *Tiree* (55 on 15th Oct), Holy Loch (max.76 on 17th Oct), Coul Point *Islay* (120 on 24th Oct), Campbeltown Loch (78 on 26th Oct), L. Caolisport (65 on 9th Dec) and Arileod *Coll* (61 on 21st Dec).

2003 Away from *Islay* sites with counts of 50 or more included: Port na Luing *Coll* (max. 80 on 11th Aug), Sanda Island (max ca100 during Sep), L. Don (59 on 9th Sep), L. a' Phuill (max. 75 on 15th Sep), Sandaig *Tiree* (100 on 22nd Sep), Crossapol *Tiree* (max. 90 on 29th Sep), The Reef *Tiree* (66 on 1st Oct), Balliemore (nr Otter Ferry) *Cowal* (max. 60+ on 12th Oct), Arileod *Coll* (115 on 4th Nov), Sorobaidh Bay (85 on 3rd Dec) and Tayinloan (max. 170 on 10th Dec).

Table 35.1 *Maximum monthly counts of Curlew at two sea-lochs on Islay in 2002.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	198	350	81	n/r	n/r	n/r	340	360	380	45	94	198
L. Indaal	333	245	171	70	41	39	212	417	501	411	361	495

Table 35.2 *Maximum monthly counts of Curlew at two sea-lochs on Islay in 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	188	312	198	99	15	180	344	396	344	247	112	121
L. Indaal	371	284	181	57	50	42	272	378	510	422	403	455

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus* Gearradh-breac 0545
Rare passage migrant, with only 18 or more records during 1980-2001: 2 in Apr, 3 in May, 2 in Jul, 5 in Aug, 4 or 5 in Sep and 2 or 3 in Oct.

The only record in either year was a single bird on Sanda Island on 15th Jul 2002.

COMMON REDSHANK (REDSHANK) *Tringa totanus* Cam-ghlas 0546
Localised breeder and widespread passage migrant and wintering species.

Jan-Apr. 2002 Other than those in Table 36.1 the only sites with counts of 20 or more were Otter Ferry (20+ on 3rd Feb), Traigh Ghrianaidh *Tiree* (38 on 23rd Feb) and L. an Eilein (39 on 1st May).

2003 The only other site apart from those in Table 36.2 with more than 20 birds was Otter Ferry with 30+ on 5th February.

Breeding. 2002 *Islay* had 98 breeding pairs at RSPB L. Gruinart, 28 at Ardnave, and 2 at RSPB Smaull. The Reef *Tiree* had 58 territorial pairs on 20th Apr, 7 were found on *Colonsay*, 13 pairs bred on Oronsay and 38 on the RSPB reserve on *Coll*. Breeding also occurred at L. Crinan and L. a' Chumhainn *Mull*. Recorded in 1 of 13 BBS squares (8%).

2003 At least 16 pairs were confirmed breeding on Oronsay, 11 were found on *Colonsay*, 113 were considered to have bred at RSPB L. Gruinart and 4 bred at Fiddin *Mull*. Recorded in 1 of 10 BBS squares (10%).

Jul-Dec. 2002 A watch at RSPB L. Gruinart picked up unexpected numbers of migrants, including flocks of 270 on 8th Jul and 156 on 10th Jul; both of which flew off to the SE. Other than those in Table 36.1, sites with counts of 20 or more included: L. Gorm (42 on 9th Jul), Otter Ferry (max. 39 on 20th Jul), Aros Estuary *Mull* (67 on 30th Jul), Add Estuary (58 on 30th Aug – possibly a record count here), L. Caolisport (max. 78 on 16th Sep) and L. Gilp (27 on 21st Nov).

2003 Once again large numbers of passage migrants were recorded at L. Gruinart including: 140 on 14th Aug, 165 on 23rd Aug and 232 on 24th Aug. Good numbers also seen at Machrihanish included 55 on 17th Jul and 110 on 21st Jul. Elsewhere, counts of more than 20 included: 47 at L. a' Phuill on 14th Jul, 22 at Hagh Bay *Coll* on 13th Aug, 47 in the Add Estuary on 21st Aug, 29 at Balevullin *Tiree* on 30th Aug, 27 at Holy Loch on 11th Oct, 50 at Otter Ferry on 12th Oct, 50 in L. Gilp on 21st Nov and 64 in L. Caolisport on 6th Dec.

Table 36.1 *Maximum monthly counts of Redshank at two sea-lochs on Islay, Loch Crinan (Mid-Argyll), and at the four main freshwater lochs on Tiree in 2002.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	51	68	22	n/r	n/r	n/r	270	80	40	28	6	31
L. Indaal	14	15	30	14	10	8	12	19	19	14	10	10
L. Crinan	29	28	n/r	17	0	2	0	5	0	0	12	5
<i>Tiree</i>	11	44	16	28	15	16	47	0	11	0	0	0

Table 36.2 *Maximum monthly counts of Redshank at two sea-lochs on Islay, Loch Crinan (Mid-Argyll), and at the four main freshwater lochs on Tiree in 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	91	40	70	84	n/r	30	120	232	79	67	38	62
L. Indaal	12	15	20	10	10	10	17	17	11	21	22	11
L. Crinan	22	9	n/r	1	1	0	6	20	2	4	56	24
Tiree	3	0	51	38	0	0	17	7	0	0	0	13

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia* Deoch-bhuidhe 0548
Very scarce breeding species (only in Mull and N Argyll in recent years). Small numbers on passage with a few birds wintering in some localities.

Jan-Jun. 2002 Winter (Jan-Mar) records in ones and twos came from: L. Gruinart, L. Caolisport, The Strand *Colonsay* and Machrihanish. Similar numbers were widely recorded during Apr and May at sites on *Islay*, *Mull*, *Tiree* and *Mid-Argyll*. Jun records included singles: at RSPB L. Gruinart, Heylipol and L. an Eilein *Tiree*; Machrins *Colonsay*, L. Gaineanhach (Ederline) *Mid-Argyll* and; 2 at Glenacardoch Point (nr Glenbarr) *Kintyre*.

2003 Single birds were reported Jan-Mar on *Islay* and *Mull* and at 3 sites in *Mid-Argyll*. Two were at L. Gruinart on 21st Jan. Apart from 2 at L. Don on 27th Jun all records Apr-Jun were of single birds on *Islay* and *Mull*. One calling on Lunga Treshnish Isles on the night of 25th Jun was the first documented record for the islands.

Breeding. 2002 Birds were heard in song at a site in *North Argyll* on 20th Apr and 12th May and a pair bred on *Mull*.

2003 No reports of breeding activity.

Jul-Dec. 2002 Larger numbers seen during return passage included: 10 flushed from The Strand islands *Colonsay* on 9th Jul, 4 at L. Bhasapol on 15th Jul, 5 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 17th Jul, 9 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 19th Jul, 5 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 24th Jul, 8 at L. Indaal on 8th Aug, 7 at L. a' Phuill on 26th Aug, 6 at L. Don on 1st Sep, 8 at L. Beg *Mull* on 18th Sep, 6 at The Strand *Colonsay* on 19th Sep, 8 at L. Don on 27th Sep and 4 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 5th Oct. Smaller numbers were recorded elsewhere on *Coll*, *Cowal*, *Kintyre* and *North Argyll*. Up to 3 were seen during Nov and Dec on *Islay*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull* and *Tiree*.

2003 The largest numbers reported during this period were: 9 at The Strand *Colonsay* on 8th Jul, 5 flying S at Machrihanish SBO on 18th Jul, 12 at L. a' Phuill (and 3 at L. an Eilein) on 21st Jul, 23 flying S past Machrihanish, including a flock of 10, also on 21st Jul, 6 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 27th Jul, 5 at Craignure Golf Course *Mull* on 27th Jul, 6 at Loch a' Phuill on 12th Aug, 8 in the Add Estuary on 22nd Aug, 6 at Loch a' Phuill on 12th Aug, 8 at L. Crinan on 31st Aug and 5 at L. Don on 8th Sep. Smaller number were recorded in *Coll* and *Cowal*. Up to 3 were seen during Nov and Dec in *Islay*, *Mid-Argyll* and *Mull* with 4 at L. Don on 30th Dec.

GREATER YELLOWLEGS* *Tringa melanoleuca* 0550
Vagrant. Two accepted Argyll records both on Islay: in October 1985 and May 2002.

One found at L. Gruinart on 11th May 2002 remained until 14th May. This species is much scarcer in Britain than the Lesser Yellowlegs [T. ap Rheinallt/ C. McKay *et al*]. This record has been accepted by BBRC.

None in 2003.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS* *Tringa flavipes* 0551
Vagrant. Two accepted Argyll records: at Loch Creran (N Argyll) in 1951 and at Ulva Lagoons (Mid-Argyll) in Oct 2000.

None in 2002.

One found at L. Gruinart on 25th May 2003 remained until 27th May [T. ap Rheinallt *et al*]. This record has been accepted by BBRC.

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus* Luatharan-uaine 0553
Scarce passage migrant. Recorded in 17 of the 22 years 1980-2001. Majority of records in autumn; very rare in spring.

2002 Single birds were at Bridgend Merse *Islay* on 8th Aug and at Port na Luing *Coll* on 9th Aug.

2003 Single birds were at RSPB L. Gruinart on 31st Jul and at Canal Loch *Coll* on 11th Aug.

NB The note in ABR 17 (for 2000) regarding one seen in an Argyll Breeding Bird Survey square in spring should be deleted. It derives from a transcription error when processing BBS data.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola* Luatharan-coille 0554
Scarce passage migrant. Recorded in 14 of the 22 years 1980-2001, with 11 of the 17 records in spring.

2002 An immature bird was seen feeding along a stream at Balevullin *Tiree* on 18th Sep before flying out to sea.

2003 Single birds were reported at RSPB L. Gruinart on 12th and 21st Jun and an adult was feeding in a small muddy pool at L. Fada *Islay* on 26th Jun. A good year for a species which is very scarce in Argyll. The dates of sightings were also interesting.

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos* Luatharan 0556
Widespread and common breeding summer visitor. Recorded once in mid-winter at Loch Sween in Jan 2000.

Apr-May. 2002 Early birds were at L. Don on 29th Mar, at L. Crinan (2) on 1st Apr and in Glen Lonan *Mid-Argyll* on 5th Apr. The main arrival was from 19th Apr onwards and by early Jun there had been records from all Argyll recording areas.

2003 The first was reported at Croig *Mull* on 30th Mar but the main arrival was not until 16th- 18th Apr. One at Tainish NNR on 16th Apr was the earliest ever record there. Birds were again widespread by early Jun.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 2 of 13 BBS squares (15%). A single territory was recorded in the coastal CBC plot at Tainish NNR (*cf* 3 in 2001). Probable breeding pairs were recorded: on Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil, Treshnish Isles, 30 territorial pairs were found on *Colonsay*, at least 6 were found breeding on *Coll* on 10th Jun, 7 were located between Otter Ferry and Lephinmore (L Fyne) *Cowal*. A pair with b/3 was found at the gravel pits on The Laggan *Kintyre* in Jun.

2003 Recorded in 2 of 10 BBS squares (20%). A single territory was again recorded in the coastal CBC plot at Tainish NNR. Two territorial pairs were at Hynish *Tiree*; alarming individuals were on Lunga, Fladda and Sgeir a' Chaisteil, Treshnish Isles; 7 were found between port Lamont and Inverchaolain *Cowal*, 29 were found on *Colonsay* and breeding was confirmed on Oronsay.

Jul-Sep. 2002 Passage birds were reported from early Aug with 11 in the Add Estuary on 3rd Aug and 17 fog-bound birds at Sandaig *Tiree* on 4th Aug. The latter included a pair with 2 recently fledged young – presumably local birds. Late migrants were at Gartnatra (L. Indaal) on 10th Sep and Sanda Island on 15th Sep.

A single bird at L. Feochan *Mid-Argyll* on 10th Dec was only our second ever winter record.

2003 Passage migrants in the Add Estuary peaked at 13 on 8th Aug with 4 still there on 18th Aug. The last record was of one at L. an Eilein in rain at midnight on 11th Sep.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER* *Actitis macularius* 0557

Vagrant. The only Argyll record concerns one at Loch Indaal (Islay) on 5th Jun 1984.

None in 2002 or 2003.

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres* Trilleachan-beag 0561

Widespread and common passage migrant and winter visitor, mainly from Aug to May. Tiree is a site of international importance for wintering birds. Summer records not unusual.

Jan-mid-May. 2002 Counts of 50 or more on *Tiree* included: 80 at Sandaig on 26th Jan, 111 at L. a' Phuill on 11th Feb, 84 displaying at An Fhaodhail on 12th Feb, 50 at Caolas on 24th Feb, 110 at The Reef on 4th Mar and 180 at Middleton on 3rd Apr. Other sites with peaks of 20 or more were Minard *Mid-Argyll* (max. 25 on 9th Feb), Ardrishaig (L. Gilp) (max. 25 on 20th Feb).

2003 Counts of 40 or more on *Tiree* included: 40 at Heanish on 25th Jan, 60 at The Reef on 1st Mar, 109 at Balephetrish Bay on 17th Apr and 60 at Ard Mor on 27th Apr. Other sites with peaks of 20 or more were: Ardalanish Bay *Mull* (40 on 16th Jan), Ardlarach *Islay* (31 on 6th Feb) and Dunoon (20+ on 23rd Mar).

Summering birds. 2002 Hough Bay *Tiree* had 35 on 3rd Jun most of which were in breeding plumage.

2003 Up to 5 were at various sites on *Tiree* during Jun.

Jul-Dec. 2002 Larger counts on *Tiree* included: 37 at Balephetrish Bay on 12th Aug with 62 there on 23rd Sep and 32 at Vault also on 23rd Sep. From Sep birds were widespread but apart from those in Table 37.1 the only sites with 20 or more were: Ardnave Point *Islay* (66 on 8th Sep), Tayinloan (30 on 17th Nov), Balephetrish Bay (45 on 7th Dec), Eilean Nostaig *Islay* (23 on 29th Dec) and Oban Esplanade (max. 37 on 31st Dec).

2003 On 17th Aug, 33 were counted flying S past Machrihanish SBO. Larger counts on *Tiree* included: 55 at The Green on 21st Sep, 40 at Gott Bay on 22nd Sep, 45 at Balephetrish Bay on 5th Nov and 22 at Scarinish Harbour on 15th Nov. Other sites with peaks of 20 or more were, L. Don (44 on 20th Oct), Oban Esplanade (max. 26 on 23rd Oct) and Minard *Mid-Argyll* (20 on 14th Dec).

Table 37.1 *Maximum monthly counts of Turnstone at two sea-lochs on Islay and at Otter Ferry (Cowal) in 2002.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	59	123	8	0	0	0	5	0	12	82	0	31
L. Indaal	37	61	32	33	3	0	9	11	12	30	51	61
Otter F'y	n/r	63	60+	26	1	0	5	30+	150	n/r	80+	n/r

Table 37.2 *Maximum monthly counts of Turnstone at two sea-lochs on Islay and at Otter Ferry (Cowal) in 2003.*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	67	25	36	1	0	0	0	61	52	36	6	5
L. Indaal	40	59	38	21	2	0	4	4	17	29	63	71
Otter F'y	60+	90+	58	n/r	n/r	n/r	60	n/r	40	n/r	40+	30+

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE *Phalaropus lobatus* Deargan-allt 0564
Very rare and irregular passage migrant and former very rare breeding species.
 None in 2002 or 2003.

GREY PHALAROPE *Phalaropus fulicarius* Liathag-allt 0565
Irregular passage migrant particularly associated with autumn gales. Rare in winter. All but 9 of 44 records during 1980-2000 were in the period mid-Sep to mid-Oct.

2002 One was flying S off Mannal Tìree on 9th Oct, one off Bowmore (L. Indaal) on 7th Nov and one reported at Machrihanish on 29th Dec.

2003 Birds seen in Argyll waters from the Oban-Barra ferry included: 4 on 30th Sep, 5 on 9th Oct and 2 on 14th Oct. Elsewhere, singles were reported as follows: Bruichladdich (L. Indaal) on 9th Mar, off Balevullin Tìree on 22nd Sep and 4th Oct; on the sea off Claddach Islay on 1st Oct, heading S at Machrihanish on 10th Oct and in Machir Bay Islay on 11th Oct.

POMARINE SKUA *Stercorarius pomarinus* Fasgadair-donn 0566
Scarce but annual passage migrant. Majority seen in autumn.

Only 8 birds reported in 2002. One flying SW between Mull and Coll on 14th May was the only spring record of the year. Two early autumn birds were seen from Grasspoint Mull, on 26th Jul. Three adults were seen from the Kennacraig to Islay ferry on 10th Sept and 2 immatures from the same ferry on 19th Sept.

In 2003 there were rather more records. In spring there were at least 18 birds seen, all between 13th and 24th May, 3 from Machrihanish SBO, 2 from Mull and the rest from the ferries from Oban to Coll/Tìree or Oban to Mull. In autumn there were 12 birds reported, on dates from 14th Aug to 6th Oct from Tìree, Islay and Machrihanish SBO.

ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus* Fasgadair 0567
The commonest skua in Argyll, regularly seen in small numbers near large seabird colonies. Small breeding colonies on Jura and Coll. Passage birds regular and widespread in spring and especially autumn.

Apr-Jun. Earliest spring birds were seen on 27th Apr 2002 and on 1st May 2003, with frequent records throughout May and Jun, mostly from the Oban to islands ferries, Tìree, Coll, Colonsay, Mull and Islay, and a few from Machrihanish SBO Kintyre.

Breeding. No information from breeding sites on Jura and Coll, but numbers were declining when counted in "Seabird 2000". One or two birds were seen almost daily in late Jun of both years at the Treshnish Isles, but there was no proof of breeding reported.

Jul-Nov. Many records in Jul-Aug in both years, particularly seawatching records from Islay, Tìree, Colonsay and Machrihanish SBO in most cases of single birds with only a few birds seen per day. Last records of the autumn were on 13th Oct 2002 and 4th Oct 2003.

LONG-TAILED SKUA *Stercorarius longicaudus* Fasgadair-stiùireach 0568
Scarce and irregular passage migrant, with accepted records in only 10 of the 22 years 1980-2001. Recorded in both spring and autumn off western coasts and islands.

None seen in 2002 but in 2003 there was one record of 4 birds on spring passage between *Coll* and *Tiree* on 24th May.

GREAT SKUA *Stercorarius skua* Fasgadair-mòr 0569
Uncommon passage migrant and summer visitor. Bred successfully on Treshnish Isles (Mull) in 1998 and 2000 and has also attempted to breed on Coll in recent years.

Apr-Jun. First birds reported on 5th Apr 2002 and 20th Apr 2003. Seen mostly off *Mull*, *Coll* or *Tiree*, in small numbers, often chasing kittiwakes or larger gulls. (These are late first dates compared to Shetland or Orkney where numbers are much larger).

Breeding. Seen displaying by Loch Ronard *Coll*, but no count of breeding numbers there reported. One pair bred on Lunga, Treshnish Isles in 2002 and 2003. On Fladda, Treshnish Isles two pairs bred.

Jul-Oct. Seen on many days of Aug/Sept, in ones or twos, mostly from *Islay* or *Tiree*. There were no autumn passage records from sea lochs or inland. In 2003 a total of at least 18 Great Skuas passed Machrihanish SBO on dates between 25th Jul and 3rd Oct, with the highest single day count of 6 on 21st Aug. Last records were on 8th Oct 2002 and 15th Oct 2003.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Larus melanocephalus* 0575
Vagrant. Only five records since 1980: one on Mull in 1992, a 1st winter bird at Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre) in 1995, a 2nd winter at Campbeltown Loch (Kintyre) in Nov 1998 a 1st summer at Machrihanish SBO in Apr 2000 and a 1st winter on Tiree in Oct 2000.

No records for 2002, although this species nested successfully for the first time not far away at Big Copeland, Co. Down, Northern Ireland.

In 2003 there were three reports of this species; an adult moulting into winter plumage was seen on the shore in Machrihanish village, *Kintyre*, on 13th, 15th, 17th and 19th Aug. On 19th Aug this bird was joined by a juvenile, which remained until 2nd Sept. An adult in winter plumage was reported at Machrihanish SBO on 17th Oct 2003 (EJM). These records have all been accepted by ABRC.

LAUGHING GULL* *Larus atricilla* 0576
Vagrant. Only three previous records: on Islay in 1974, on Coll in Nov 1998 and on Islay in Apr 1999.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

LITTLE GULL *Larus minutus* Crann-fhaoileag 0578
Irregular visitor, with records in all but 3 years since 1980. Typically seen Aug to Oct, but there are records for every month of the year.

Four records in 2002, with three first winter birds; one at Bruichladdich, *Islay*, on 4th Jan, one at Tarbert, *Kintyre*, on 3rd Feb, and one at Loch na Keal on 9th Mar. The 4th record was of two first summer birds at Machrihanish SBO on 27th Jun.

In 2003 there were reports of 4 or 5 individuals; a bird in adult winter plumage at Loch Gruinart on 13th Mar, a bird in first summer plumage at Loch Bhasapol on 28th May, a

bird in the Sound of Jura on 8th and 21st Jul at the same location and a bird in second winter plumage at Keillmore *Mid-Argyll*, on 17th Aug.

SABINE'S GULL *Larus sabini* 0579
Scarce and irregular passage migrant, mainly in autumn, with records in 13 of the 22 years 1980-2001. More frequent recently i.e. records in all but one of the last ten years.

A juvenile was seen on 9th Sept 2003 from Frenchman's Rocks (TapR), and another in juvenile plumage from Balevullin *Tiree*, on 7th Oct 2003 (JB). These records have been accepted by ABRC.

BONAPARTE'S GULL * *Larus philadelphia* 0581
Vagrant. Only two previous records: on Islay in Jun 1975 and in Sep 1975.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus* Faoileag-a'-chinn-duibh 0582
Patchily distributed resident breeder. Reduced or absent at some sites due to mink predation. Scarce in many areas in winter.

Jan-May. Flocks of about 50 birds were regularly present at the head of Loch Gilp, on RSPB Gruinart Floods, Loch Indaal, and Loch Crinan during the winter months. There was a count of 411 birds on *Tiree* on 15th May 2002.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 1 of 13 BBS squares (8%). In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area, *ca* 162 pairs were noted breeding at 8 sites (colony size 1 to 111 pairs). They produced about 115 fledged young (*ca* 0.71 young/pair). Almost all were breeding at sites where mink had been removed to protect breeding seabirds. There were about 246 AONs at Loch Bhasapol on 30th Apr.

2003 Recorded in 2 of 10 BBS squares (20%). In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area, 134 pairs were counted breeding at 7 sites (colony size 2 to 67 pairs) and productivity of 132 pairs was monitored at 6 of these. Although mink were controlled at some sites there was predation by Peregrine at one, by an unidentified predator at another, and by mink at one site at least, reducing the total number fledged to *ca* 56 (0.42 young/pair). First fledged chick on *Tiree* seen on 25th June.

Aug-Dec. Peak count of 300 at Killail, *Cowal*, on 15th Nov 2003.

Table 38. *Maximum monthly counts of Black-headed Gulls at two sea-lochs on Islay and at Loch Crinan (Mid-Argyll) in 2002 and 2003.*

2002	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	-	20	-	-	-	-	36	180	-	92	2	-
L. Indaal	12	7	62	49	39	32	59	27	43	66	17	15
L. Crinan	2	2	-	60	25	48	135	139	10	-	-	7
2003												
L. Gruinart	5	20	39	39	13	n/c	105	133	138	101	n/c	53
L. Indaal	16	16	60	61	101	40	48	38	53	55	30	19
L. Crinan	-	-	-	52	47	40	-	70	10	18	1	-

RING-BILLED GULL *Larus delawarensis*

0589

Scarce visitor from North America. There are records for every month of the year, from 14 of the 19 years since the first confirmed sighting in 1983.

Single records in 2002 and in 2003. A first winter bird first seen on 29th Dec 2001 was at Bowmore *Islay*, until at least 2nd Jan 2002 (record accepted by SCRC). One was seen with Common Gulls in Machir Bay *Islay*, on 11th Feb 2003 (record accepted by SBRC).

COMMON GULL *Larus canus* Faoileag-chumanta

0590

Widespread and common resident breeding species but reduced or absent at some sites due to predation by mink.

Jan-Apr. Apart from the counts in Table 39, the largest numbers reported were: 440 at Cornaigmore *Tiree* on 16th Jan 2002, 280 at Heylipol *Tiree* on 22nd Jan 2002, 450 at The Reef *Tiree* on 10th Feb 2002, 900 at Springbank Loch Indaal on 16th Feb 2002; 300 at Machir Bay *Islay* on 11th Feb 2003 rising to 400 on the 21st Feb and 220 at Sorobaidh Bay on 22nd Feb 2003.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 5 of 13 BBS squares (38.5%). In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area, *ca* 972 pairs were noted breeding at 36 sites (colony size 1 to 347 pairs). Productivity was monitored at 31 of these sites, where *ca* 939 pairs fledged *ca* 569 young (*ca* 0.61 young/pair). Most colonies in Argyll are small: counts include 41 pairs The Reef *Tiree*, 10 pairs Fladda Treshnish Isles, 76 pairs Sanda Islands, 11 pairs Oronsay Farm *Colonsay* and 35 pairs Tangy Loch *Kintyre*. About 50 pairs nested on the roof of Barcaldine Factory *N. Argyll*, in response to presence of mink on the ground at nearby traditional colony sites where gulls can no longer nest successfully.

2003 Recorded in 1 of 10 BBS squares (10%). In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area, *ca* 976 pairs were counted at 43 sites (colony size 1 – 315 pairs). At 39 of these sites where productivity was monitored, *ca* 954 pairs fledged *ca* 494 young (0.52 young/pair). Numbers increased at Fladda (Sound of Luing) *Mid-Argyll* to 11 pairs, at Sanda Islands to 82 pairs and at The Reef *Tiree* to 49 pairs.

Jul-Dec. In addition to the counts in Table 39, there were 500 at Rockside *Islay*, on 25th Sept 2002 and 160 at Hough Bay *Tiree*, on 8th Nov 2003. A partially leucistic first winter bird was seen at Balevullin Pools *Tiree*, on 20th Dec 2003. It had large white patches on its primaries near the wing tips (larger on one wing than the other) which were very striking in flight.

Table 39. *Maximum monthly counts of Common Gulls at Lochs Gruinart and Indaal (Islay) and at Loch Crinan (Mid-Argyll) in 2002 and in 2003.*

2002	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L. Gruinart	292	468	-	-	-	-	50	145	-	4	150	18
L. Indaal	201	290	161	248	171	130	111	279	300	90	116	131
L. Crinan	25	64	-	83	5	5	54	15	33	55	80	32
2003												
L. Gruinart	48	60	51	17	5	-	-	-	-	39	5	66
L. Indaal	170	285	306	260	121	79	81	223	237	38	67	102
L. Crinan	-	-	-	25	40	25	30	43	41	-	13	10

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

0591

Widespread breeding species, generally present from Mar to Sep. Some colonies much affected by mink predation. A few remain in winter.

Jan-May. The only reports of this species in Jan were a 2nd winter bird at Ballinaby Islay, on 27th Jan 2002, an adult on Colonsay on 1st Jan 2003, and a 2nd winter bird at Loch an Eilein on 11th Jan 2003. In Feb about six were reported in 2002 and seven in 2003. Much larger numbers were present in early Mar each year, representing a distinct arrival of birds from winter quarters further south. Largest reported numbers were 167 on Tiree on 15th Apr 2002 and 182 at Loch Bhirceapol Tiree, on 27th Apr 2003.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 3 of 13 BBS squares (23%). In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area, ca 726 - 826 pairs were counted breeding at 16 sites (colony size 1 to ca 200 prs). Productivity was monitored at 9 of these sites, where ca 576 - 626 pairs fledged ca 288 young. Reported colony sizes included: 40 pairs at Rubhachan Eoghainn, *Jura*, 40 pairs at Sliabh Allt an Rairbh W *Jura*, 60 pairs at Sanda Islands, 72 pairs at Ardnave, 53 pairs on East Buidhe (Kyles of Bute) *Cowal*, 150-200 pairs on Eilean na Cille, Sound of Jura, 150 pairs on Reisa mhic Phaidean (Sd. of Jura), 100 pairs on Eilean Gamhna, *Mid-Argyll and 150-200 pairs on E. Mor* (Dunstaffnage) *Mid-Argyll*.

2003 Recorded in 4 of 10 BBS squares (40%). In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area, breeding was noted at 16 sites. Counts were made at 15 of these, where ca 493 pairs fledged ca 246 young (0.50 young /pr). Colony size varied from 1 to ca 150 pairs, with 7 sites holding under ten pairs. Numbers are declining at the large mixed gull colony at Reisa mhic Phaidean (Sd. of Jura), which once held several hundred pairs of this species. For several successive years, gull productivity here has been low due to predation (e.g. in 2003 ca 100 pairs of Lesser Black-backs fledged ca 18 young). Mink are strongly suspected but their presence here in recent years has not been definitely established.

Sep-Dec. Good numbers were still present in Sept in both years with the last records being: 19 in Oct, 3 in Nov and 1 in Dec 2002; 11 in Oct 2003 and none later that year.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus* Faoleag-an-sgadain

0592

Widespread and abundant resident breeding species. Productivity at many colonies much affected by mink predation. Some evidence for immigration into Argyll in winter; colour-ringing studies have shown that some of these birds are from the Clyde and NE England.

Jan-Apr. Apart from data in Table 40, counts in excess of 200 birds came from Blairmore(Loch Long) *Cowal* (231 on 18th Feb 2002) and Loch Feochan *Mid-Argyll* (1050 on 1st Apr 2002).

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 5 of 13 BBS squares (38.5%). In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area, ca 6,009 – 6,212 pairs were counted breeding at 44 sites (colony size 1 to ca 700 pairs). Productivity was monitored at 43 of these sites, where ca 5,710 ± 102 pairs fledged ca 4,277 ± 30 young (ca 0.75 young/pair). Some 400-500 AONs were found on Reisa mhic Phaidean (Sound of Jura) *Mid-Argyll*, and 700 pairs at Bach Island (Kerrera) *Mid-Argyll* fledged 650 chicks. At the Burnt Islands (Kyles of Bute) *Cowal* some 671 pairs fledged 763 chicks. On the Sanda Islands there were about 855 AONs altogether, with 400 on Sanda, and 450 on Sheep Island.

2003 Recorded in 4 of 10 BBS squares (40%). Numbers on Sanda Islands were estimated at 610 AONs. In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area, ca 5,859 pairs were noted breeding at 46 sites (colony size 1 to ca 800 prs). Productivity was

monitored at 40 of these sites, where *ca* 5,849 pairs fledged *ca* 3,557 young (*ca* 0.61 young/pair). While some large colonies bred well (*ca* 0.8 to 1.0 young/pair), productivity at others has been low in recent years. For example, in 2003 on the three Burnt Islands (Kyles of Bute) *Cowal* (counted as one site above): 167 prs fledged 61 young, 283 fledged 220, and 95 fledged 9; mink predation was established on the first and last of these. On Reisa mhic Phaidean (Sound of Jura), *ca* 300 pairs fledged 55 young – see comment under previous species. Colonies thus affected by mink almost always disappear, and there are now many empty islands along the coast of Argyll and Lochaber that once held mixed gull colonies (mainly Herring Gull but always with a variety of other seabirds, wildfowl and waders).

Aug-Dec. Counts exceeding 200 not included in Table 40 were: 950 at Loch Feochan *Mid-Argyll* on 2nd Sept 2002 with 1200 at this site on 10th Dec 2003; 352 at Loch Gruinart on 15th Oct 2002, 227 at Loch a' Phuill on 18th Nov 2002 with 1250 at the same site (when frozen over) on 15th Dec 2002 and 2000 in Balephuill Bay *Tiree* on 19th Oct 2003.

Table 40. *Maximum monthly counts of Herring Gulls at Loch Indaal, Islay, and at Loch Crinan (Mid-Argyll) in 2002 and 2003.*

2002	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
L Crinan	115	157	-	36	10	9	36	21	50	94	5	27
L. Indaal	296	244	165	148	149	30	43	161	306	161	191	217
2003												
L Crinan	20	112	-	14	4	57	25	15	25	51	36	10
L. Indaal	262	238	201	102	151	27	37	117	197	151	201	195

YELLOW-LEGGED GULL *Larus michahellis*

0592.6

Vagrant. The only record previously accepted for Argyll concerns one on Tiree in Feb 1998. Since Oct 2005 the BOU has treated this former subspecies of Herring Gull as a separate species. The status of the so called 'Caspian' or 'Steppe' Gull Larus michahellis cachinnans is, at the time of writing, still under review.

One was seen on 1st and 7th Sept 2002 at Craighens, Gruinart, Islay (accepted by SBRC with the proviso that race/species *atlantis* was not ruled out) (TapR).

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucoides* Faoileag-liath

0598

Scarce but regular winter visitor, most frequent Jan-Mar.

Jan-Jun. There were exceptionally large numbers present in 2002, with at least 30 reported from a wide range of locations particularly in *Islay*, *Coll*, *Mull* and Oban harbour. Most were seen in Feb or Mar. Many were in first winter plumage but a few adults were also seen including one at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree*, on 8th April 2002. Three were together in Oban Bay on 23rd Feb 2002 (a first winter, a second year and an adult). By contrast, only one bird was seen in the first half of 2003; an adult on Bunnahabhain Bay *Islay*, on 1st April.

Oct-Dec. An adult was reported from Machrihanish SBO on 19th Oct 2002, and a bird in first year plumage at Dunstaffnage Point *Mid-Argyll*, on 29th Dec 2002. An adult was seen at Port Bharrapol *Tiree* on 7th Dec 2003 and another adult at Bunnahabhain *Islay*, on 30th Dec 2003.

GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus* Muir-mhaighstir
Scarce but regular winter visitor, most frequent Jan-Mar.

0599

Ten individuals were reported in 2002, one in Jan, one in Feb, 2 in Mar, 2 in Apr, 2 in May, one in Aug and one in Oct. These included birds in a variety of plumages from first year to adult, with most records coming from *Kintyre* (especially Machrihanish Water). There were nine records in 2003, also all of single birds with 2 in Jan, one in Feb, one in Mar, 2 in Oct, one in Nov and 2 in Dec. The distribution in 2003 was wider than in 2002, with records from *Islay, Tiree, Mull, Mid-Argyll* and *Kintyre*.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus* Farspag
Common and widespread resident breeding bird. Also occurs as passage migrant and winter visitor.

0600

Jan-May. The only sites with 50 or more were: Loch Crinan (50 on 1st Jan 2002, 50 on 13th Jan 2002 and 57 on 1st Feb 2002), Loch Feochan (134 on 18th Jan 2002, 268 on 1st Apr 2002, 231 on 11th Jan 2003 and 120 on 29th Mar 2003) and *Tiree* (68 on 15th Apr 2002, 53 on 8th Jan 2003, 54 on 27th Mar 2003 and 68 on 15th Apr 2003).

Breeding. Recorded in 3 of 13 BBS squares (23%) in 2002 and 2 of 10 (20%) in 2003. In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area in 2002, 485±18 pairs were noted breeding at 45 sites (colony size 1 to 72 pairs) including 19-20 single pairs. Productivity was monitored at 43 of these sites, where *ca* 472 ± 15 pairs fledged *ca* 454 ± 13 young (*ca* 0.96 young/pair). In 2003 *ca* 452 pairs were noted breeding at 41 sites (colony size 1 to *ca* 65 pairs). Productivity was monitored at 37 of these sites, where *ca* 438 pairs fledged *ca* 325 young (*ca* 0.74 young/pair).

On Fladda and Lunga (Treshnish Isles) 42 pairs nested in 2002, while there were 51 pairs in 2003 (34 on Lunga and 17 on Fladda). On Sgeir an Eirionnaich (Treshnish Isles) there were estimated to be at least 38 pairs in Jun 2003. On the Sanda Islands there were 36 AONs in 2002 and 30 AONs in 2003. There were 15 pairs nesting on Gunna Island *Coll* in 2003. An adult found freshly dead at Sgeir Cailach (Loch Creran) *North Argyll*, on 1st Jul 2003 had been ringed as a chick at a colony just off Lismore *North Argyll* in 1987 (so was 16 years old).

Aug-Dec. Counts of 50 or more came from: Loch Gilp (720 on 30th Dec 2002 with most on the local rubbish dump), Loch Feochan *Mid-Argyll* (70 on 2nd Sept 2002, 103 on 2nd Oct 2002, 120 on 15th Nov 2002, 80 on 1st Dec 2002, and 200 on 10th Dec 2003), Crarae Bay *Mid-Argyll* (62 on 8th Sept 2002 congregating around a fish farm), and sites on *Tiree* including Traigh Hough (60 on 2nd Nov 2002, 195 on 18th Nov 2002 and 110 on 6th Dec 2002), Loch a' Phuill (218 on 18th Nov 2002, 118 on 8th Dec 2002, 286 on 17th Dec 2002, 91 on 20th Oct 2003, 190 on 6th Nov 2003 and 125 on 4th Dec 2003) and Balephuill Bay (600 on 19th Oct 2003).

ROSS'S GULL * *Rhodostethia rosea*

0601

Vagrant. The only record concerns an immature at Frenchman's Rocks (Islay) on 15th August 1976.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla* Ruideag 0602
Normally strictly marine. Main breeding area on Colonsay, with other important colonies on Islay, Treshnish Isles (Mull) and Tiree. Rare in winter and very scarce inland.

Jan-Apr. 100 were counted in Loch Gilp on 1st Feb 2002. On the same date 1500 were counted flying south in one hour past Skipness *Kintyre*. On 3rd Feb 2002 a bird with 'reddish' legs was seen in Tarbert harbour *Kintyre*. There are occasional records of such birds, lacking the black pigment in the legs and feet, but they are abnormal black-legged kittiwakes and not specimens of the rare Pacific species the red-legged kittiwake *Rissa brevirostris* which not only has bright red legs but also has a much darker grey mantle and upper wing plumage, and a different head shape and jizz.

Breeding. There were counts of 986 pairs on Lunga Treshnish Isles in 2002 and 880 AONs on the same island in 2003. On Sanda Islands there were between 9 and 15 AONs in 2002 and 11 nests in 2003. At Urugaig *Colonsay*, there were 108 AONs in 2002 with birds seen on nest sites from 4th Apr. The mean clutch size at this colony in 2003 was 1.5 eggs, which was rather lower than in earlier years. There were 11 AONs at Eilean Mor *Jura* and 4 at Eilean Beag *Jura* in 2003. There were particularly large flocks of bathing kittiwakes on *Tiree* with 2150 on Loch Bhasapol on 25th Jun 2002 and 1500 at Loch a' Phuill on 22nd Jun 2003.

Jul-Dec. Very large numbers were reported in Sept and Oct in both years. For example, 2440 feeding near the Garvellachs *Mid-Argyll* on 1st Sept 2002, 'several thousand' seen from the Oban to Colonsay ferry on various dates in Sept and Oct, 'several thousand' seen from Machrihanish SBO on dates in Sept 2002 and 2003, and 4000 in Balephuill Bay *Tiree*, apparently feeding on small fish, on 19th Oct 2003. An albino kittiwake was seen at Frenchman's Rocks *Islay*, on 5th Oct 2002. Only a few kittiwakes were seen in Dec in each year.

IVORY GULL* *Pagophila eburnea* 0604
Vagrant, with only four confirmed records: on Islay in 1867, at Campbeltown in 1873, on Coll in 1969 and most recently at Ardnave Point (Islay) on 23rd & 24th Apr 2000.

No accepted records in 2002 or 2003.

BRIDLED TERN* *Onychoprion anaethetus* 0622
Vagrant. The only Argyll record concerns one present on Tiree in Jun/Jul 1994.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

LITTLE TERN *Sternula albifrons* Steàrnag-bheag 0624
Very scarce breeding species, confined to Islay, Tiree and Coll. Scarce passage migrant elsewhere.

Apr-May. The first spring record was on *Tiree* on 19th Apr 2002 and birds were seen through the rest of Apr on *Tiree* and *Coll*. In 2003, the first bird on *Tiree* was on 9th April and became widespread there during the month.

Breeding. On 17th May 2002 there were 89 at six sites on *Tiree*, including 31 AONs at The Reef. Numbers increased to 92 by 6th Jun 2002, with 63 AONs at four sites, including 48 AONs at The Reef. One pair nested at Traigh an Luig (L. Indaal) *Islay* in 2002, and two birds were at Ardskenish *Colonsay*, on 17th Jun 2002 but apparently not breeding there. A total of 37 young fledged from at least 59 AONs on *Tiree* in 2003. A further 10 AONs on Gunna *Coll* fledged 8 large chicks making 2003 the most successful breeding season for this species in Argyll for many years.

Jul-Aug. Most birds had left breeding areas by the end of Jul but there were late records on 21st Aug 2002 at Miodar *Tiree* and at Hynish *Tiree* on 10th Aug 2003. Apart from birds in these breeding areas a few were seen on passage in Jul 2003 from Machrihanish SBO but there were no autumn records away from breeding areas in 2002.

CASPIAN TERN* *Hydroprogne caspia* 0606
Vagrant. The only Argyll record concerns an adult seen between Ardpatrick Point and Gigha in Jun 1981.
No records in 2002 or 2003.

BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger* Steàrnag-dhubh 0627
Scarce and irregular passage migrant. Only 12 records 1980 – 2001.
No records in 2002 or 2003

WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN *Chlidonias leucopterus* 0628
Vagrant. The only Argyll record concerns one on Tiree in Sep 1999.
No records in 2002 or 2003

SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis* Steàrnag-mhòr 0611
Uncommon passage migrant. Very rare and irregular breeding species.
Jan-May. One was present in Oban harbour *Mid-Argyll* on 9th and 10th Jan 2003. Apart from that exceptional winter record the first in spring were on 29th Mar 2002 and 11th Mar 2003, at Machrihanish SBO.

Summering birds. Small numbers were reported throughout the summer. There were no confirmed records of breeding, although there is a suspicion that a pair may have nested on *Tiree* in 2003.

Jul-Nov. The last sightings were at Machrihanish SBO on 19th Oct 2002 and 1st Oct 2003.

FORSTER'S TERN* *Sterna forsteri* 0618
Vagrant.
One was present in Oban Bay and L. Feochan *Mid-Argyll* from 8th to 11th Jan 2003 [W. Jackson et al] (see *British Birds* Nov 2004).

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo* Steàrnag-chumanta 0615
Locally common summer visitor, considerably more numerous than Arctic Tern close to the mainland but less so on outer islands. Many colonies severely affected by mink predation and often unproductive where no trapping is undertaken.

Apr-May. The earliest recorded were on 5th Apr 2002 and 1st Apr 2003, rather earlier first records than in most recent years. Most of the Apr records came from *Tiree* or *Islay*.

Breeding. 2002 Counting in 2002 in the Argyll part of the SAMS study area was complicated by the early desertion of 3 large colonies with *ca* 379 pairs, which may have bred again in the area and so been counted twice. If this happened the study area total was *ca* 838 pairs at 14 colonies (size 3 – 421 pairs); (otherwise 1,217 prs at 17 sites). The true total probably lies between these two figures. Productivity was monitored at 12 of the 14 colonies, where *ca* 830 pairs fledged a total of 579-635 young (*ca* 0.70-0.76 young/pair). Of these, 701 pairs with 550 – 600 fledged young were at the three largest colonies. A total of

112 adults were present in the colony at Sgeir an Eirionnaich (Treshnish Isles) on 1st Jun 2002.

2003 In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area, *ca* 1,063 pairs were counted breeding at 16 sites (colony size 2 to 304 pairs). Breeding success was monitored at 15 of these sites, where *ca* 1,060 pairs fledged 571-642 young (*ca* 0.54-0.61 young/pair). At the end of May there was disturbance by two days of lighthouse work at Glas Eileanan (the largest Common Tern colony in Scotland and the second largest in the British Isles, an SSSI and SPA where this should not have happened!); no young fledged. There was predation by Peregrine at two sites and by unknown predators at two other sites. Mink control led to very successful breeding at six formerly mink affected sites. One of these was the specially adapted mussel farm raft at South Shian (L. Creran) *North Argyll*. A record 27 pairs bred here, and their exceptional productivity of 2.2 young fledged/pair shows what terns can achieve in Argyll when they are protected. A total of at least 650 adults were present in the colony at Sgeir an Eirionnaich (Treshnish Isles) on 1st Jun 2003.

Jul-Sep. Rather few were reported in autumn. The last records were on 14th Sept 2002 and 10th Oct 2003.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea* Steàrnag 0616
Summer visitor and localised breeding species. Many colonies severely affected by mink predation and often unproductive where no trapping is undertaken.

Apr-May. The records in Apr mostly came from *Coll, Tiree* and *Islay*, with the first of the spring on 5th Apr 2002 and 1st Apr 2003. About 500 birds were at *Tiree* on 15th May 2002.

Breeding. 2002 There were several colonies of 10-20 pairs on different parts of *Tiree* in addition to 128 AONs at Loch a' Phuill and at least 80 at Hough Bay. On *Coll* 15 or 16 pairs nested on the RSPB reserve. Thirty-eight were present in the colony on Sgeir an Eirionnaich (Treshnish Isles). Ignoring *ca* 160 pairs at 3 sites that deserted early and probably bred again locally, the total count in the Argyll part of the SAMS study area was *ca* 471 pairs at 12 sites (colony size 1 – *ca* 350 pairs). These fledged *ca* 343 – 366 young, of which 315 were at the largest colony. Both the study total and the largest colony total were the highest on record.

2003 There were several colonies of 10-20 pairs on different parts of *Tiree* in addition to 90 AONs at Loch a' Phuill and 50 at Salum with the total number of AONs estimated to be around 500. There were 75 AONs on *Gunna Island Coll*. In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area, *ca* 128 pairs were noted breeding at 13 sites (colony size 1 to 33 pairs). This was very low compared to 2002 when a single colony held *ca* 350 pairs. However productivity in 2003 was unusually high with a total of *ca* 134 fledged young (1.0 young/pair).

Jul-Nov. Few birds were seen in Sept or Oct, the latest records being on 5th Oct 2002 and 10th Oct 2003, both at Frenchman's Rocks *Islay*.

ROSEATE TERN *Sterna sandvicensis* Steàrnag-stiùireach 0614
Rare non breeding visitor. Last accepted record 2001.

No accepted records in 2002 or 2003.

COMMON GUILLEMOT (GUILLEMOT) *Uria aalge* Eun-dubh-an-sgadain 0634
Highly colonial, 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.

Jan-Apr. On 29th Apr 2002 on 2 km of shoreline *ca*20 were found dead between Creggans and Strathlachlan(Loch Fyne) *Cowal*. Small numbers were seen on nesting ledges in early Mar 2003, with much higher numbers on ledges by early Apr, but still some birds in winter plumage still present at sea.

Breeding. TIARG counted 6920 birds in the main Treshnish Isles colony at Harp Rock, Lunga on 1st Jun 2002 and 7050 on 1st Jun 2003. There were an estimated 3500 birds at Sanda Islands on 1st Jun 2002 and 3600 on 1st Jun 2003. On the monitoring plot at Uragaig *Colonsay*, there were 129 birds in 2002 and 143 in 2003 (*cf* 116 in 2001).

Oct-Dec On 1st Sept 2002 some 1400 birds were counted at sea between the Garvellachs and *Colonsay*. On 19th Sept 2002 there were about 1900 off Grasspoint *Mull*. On 27th Dec 2002, 775 were seen in a 2 hour seawatch from Port Wemyss *Islay*. Thousands were seen on 1st Sept 2003 from the Kennacraig to Islay ferry. Three birds ringed as chicks at Sanda Islands were found dead on the shoreline at the head of Loch Fyne *Mid-Argyll* in Sep 2003, along with about 30 un-ringed birds that were all in first year plumage and extremely emaciated. Several starving birds were also swimming close to the shore or lying on the beach.

Two birds ringed on Lunga Treshnish Isles as adults in 1997 and 1999 were found dead, as a result of the Prestige oil spill, on the coast of Spain in Jan 2003 and Dec 2002 respectively (TIARG).

BRÜNNICH'S GUILLEMOT* *Uria lomvia* 0635
Vagrant. The only Argyll record concerns one found dead at Loch Caolisport in 1969.
No records in 2002 or 2003.

RAZORBILL *Alca torda* Falc 0636
Locally common breeding species, although less numerous and with smaller colonies than Guillemot. Large numbers of passage migrants may be seen from headlands with smaller numbers regular in sea-lochs in winter.

Jan-Apr. No significant records.

Breeding. An estimated 3000 birds were present in breeding colonies on Sanda Islands in Jun 2002, and 3300 in Jun 2003. In Jun 2003 there were 1247 individuals on Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil Treshnish Isles. On the monitoring plot at Uragaig *Colonsay*, there were 37 birds in 2002 (*cf* 32 in 2001).

Sep-Dec At least 300 were present in Sound of Luing *Mid-Argyll* on 7th Sept 2003.

AUK sp. (GUILLEMOT/RAZORBILL)

Thousands of auks, mostly common guillemots, flew west past Balevullin *Tiree*, between mid-Sept and mid-Oct 2003, with peak counts of 7000 per hour passing west on 4th Oct 2003.

BLACK GUILLEMOT *Cephus grylle* Gearra-breac 0638
Common resident breeding species, on coasts and islands in sea lochs.

Jan-Apr. The largest spring counts were of 34 birds in Kiloran Bay

Colonsay, on 7th Apr 2002 and 30 birds at the same site on 6th Apr 2003, and of 25 birds at Rubha Rìghinn (Scarba) on 21st Apr 2003.

Breeding. 2002 In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area, adults were seen during the breeding season at 18 sites. Most of these involved only single birds or one to a few pairs, but there were 23 adults at Eilean nan Caorach (north of Lismore) *North Argyll* on 23rd Jul and ten at Fladda (Sound of Luìng) *Mid-Argyll* on 21st Jul. Breeding (eggs or chicks found) was confirmed at six of these sites, although the clutch at one site had been deserted when it was found. RSPB estimated that 35 pairs bred on *Coll* in 2002. At Sanda Islands 200 adults were counted in summer 2002 and breeding success was considered to be good.

2003 In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area, 75 adults were counted at 15 sites where breeding was suspected. One or more large chicks were found in nest caverns at five of these sites. The site with the highest adult count was Corr Eilean (Sound of Jura) where, on 8th Jul, 17 were counted on the sea. Ashore at least one adult had been recently killed and cached intact by mink.

Oct-Dec No significant records.

LITTLE AUK *Alle alle* Colcach-bheag 0647
Scarce and irregular winter visitor, usually seen during sea-watches or after severe gales.

One "wrecked" in a garden at Caolas *Tiree*, was in good shape, and was returned to the sea on 10th Jan 2002. Two individuals were reported close to *Islay* later in Jan 2002. In Nov and Dec 2002 about 20 birds were reported, mostly from *Islay* and *Tiree*. Several of these were picked up dead and all were identified as nominate race. Six birds were seen in Jan-Feb 2003, two in the Sound of Jura and four off *Tiree*. In mid-Oct 2003 10 were reported flying south past Machrihanish SBO.

PUFFIN *Fratercula arctica* Buthaid 0654
Very localised breeding species with main colonies on Sanda (Kintyre) and Treshnish Isles (Mull). Occasionally recorded in winter.

Apr-May. Very few were seen before May.

Breeding. At Sanda Islands there were about 300 adults in 2002 and 360 in 2003. At the Treshnish Isles there were estimated to be 787 AOBs on Lunga, 71 AOBs on Sgeir a' Chaisteil, and over 100 birds on Fladda in Jun 2003. At Staffa, *Mull* 270 birds were counted on 8th Jun 2003.

Jul-Dec Birds were seen on passage in Jul and Aug at many locations, but few were reported after the end of Aug, although there were occasional records through to and including Dec

A partial albino with white nape and collar was seen on Lunga (Treshnish Isles) in Jun.

ROCK DOVE / FERAL PIGEON *Columba livia* Calman-creige 0665
Resident breeder except in Cowal. Large flocks often gather on arable fields outwith breeding season. Genetic integrity of most populations now in doubt because of interbreeding with feral pigeons but those on the islands are probably nearest 'pure' Rock Dove. Feral Pigeons recorded from most areas, but no information on population size.

Jan-May. Higher counts in 2002 were all on the islands of *Tiree*, *Islay*, *Coll* and *Colonsay*. There were very few records all of <10 from adjacent areas. The maximum count for *Tiree* was 130 at Kenovay on 18th Apr with regular counts of 30-80 at a number of sites. The maximum count for *Islay* was 95 on 23rd Jan at RSPB Upper Smaull with 85 on 8th Jan at Lossit Farm, 40 on 26th Jan at Lyrabus, and 80 ('all wild type') on 16th Feb at

Sunderland. The maximum count for *Coll* was 48 at Roundhouse on 21st Jan with no other count exceeding 20. The maximum for *Colonsay* was 80 at Oronsay airstrip with 50-60 in the fields by Kiloran Bay on 1st Apr.

Significant counts of 40 and above in 2003 were again from the same islands as in 2002. The highest count for *Tiree* was 75 at Loch an Eilein on 21st Jan. The only count from *Islay* was 40 between Loch Gruinart and Bridgend on 8th Mar. On *Coll* the only count was of 63 at The Roundhouse on 5th Feb. On *Colonsay* the highest count was of 71 at Oronsay Farm on 2nd Feb with a number of counts of 40+ elsewhere throughout. Overall fewer records than in 2002.

Breeding. Present during the breeding season in 2002 in the areas above. In addition 6 or more were noted nesting at Meall a' Ghlamaidh Gigha *Kintyre* on 15th May. Breeding was also probable with small numbers at various sites: on Treshnish Isles, Sanda Islands and several sites on *Mull*. Recorded in 1 of 13 BBS squares (8%) in 2002 *cf* 1 of 10 (10%) in 2003.

Jul-Dec Significant flocks were smaller than last year with the maximum for 2002 being 137 at Roundhouse, *Coll* on 21st Dec. Flocks of over 40 were confined to *Tiree*, *Islay*, and *Colonsay*. In 2002 there were virtually no reports of **Feral Pigeon**. The 2003 post breeding flocks were similar to 2002 and Balephuil *Tiree* had the largest with 220 there on 13th Nov. Other flocks of over 40 were again confined to *Coll*, *Islay* and *Colonsay*. In 2003 there were reports of **Feral Pigeons** from *Cowal*, *Colonsay* and *Mull*.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas* Calman-gorm 0668
Very scarce and local resident. Only regularly reported in Mid-Argyll in recent years (with just one confirmed breeding record) but with other records from Colonsay, Cowal, Kintyre, and Mull in the past 10 years.

Two records in 2002 with three seen at Dalvore *Mid-Argyll* on 4th September and a single seen at Kintra *Islay* on 26th Oct (the first on *Islay* since 1979).

A single seen at RSPB, Traigh Gruinart *Islay* on 19th Oct was the only record for 2003.

WOOD PIGEON *Columba palumbus* Calman-fiadhaich 0670
Common resident breeding species except in some areas, such as Mull, where more numerous in winter. Odd pairs breed on Coll, normally absent from Tiree.

Reported in small numbers (<10) during 2002-2003 from all Argyll recording areas including *Coll*, *Jura* and *Tiree*.

Jan-Jun. 2002 Flocks reported on *Islay* included 75 at Keills on 28th Feb and 30 at Laggan on 13th Mar.

2003 The only counts of more than 10 birds were 50 at Loch Melfort *Mid-Argyll* on 23rd Jan and 19 at Kiloran Bay *Colonsay* on 18th May.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 6 of 13 BBS squares (46%).

2003 Recorded in 5 of 10 BBS squares (50%). Found during the breeding season at 5 broadleaved woodlands in *Mid* and *North Argyll* during the Woodland Bird Survey.

Jul-Dec. 2002 The only flocks reported were: 18 at Sunderland *Islay* on 28th Sep, 25 at Tayvallich *Mid-Argyll* on 3rd Oct, 50 at Blarghour *Mid-Argyll* on 22nd Nov and ca70 at Rhugarbh (Appin) *North Argyll* on 8th Dec.

2003 The only flocks reported were 22 at Kiloran Bay *Colonsay* on 14th Sep and 65 at Tayvallich *Mid-Argyll* on 30th Oct.

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto* Calman-a'-chrios 0684
Sparse but widespread distribution throughout Argyll. Some island populations emigrate in winter.

Reported in small numbers (<10) during 2002-2003 from all Argyll recording areas including Oronsay and Sanda Island. The only sites with counts of 10 or more were: Ruaig *Tiree* (30 on 9th Jun 2002), Bruichladdich *Islay* (max. 45 on 15th Aug 2002), Imeraval *Islay* (17 on 12th Jan 2003), Lossit Farm *Islay* (10 on 17th Feb 2003), Hynish *Tiree* (10 on 1st Jun 2003) and The Camp *Tiree* (max. 18 on 15th Nov 2003).

TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur* Calman-tùchan 0687
Scarce but almost annual passage migrant (none in 2000). Majority recorded during May-Jun.

2002 There were records of juvs. at Port Charlotte *Islay* on 9th Sep and at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 1st Oct. One was at West Parkfergus (nr Machrihanish) *Kintyre* on 6th Nov.

2003 Singles were found at: Tobermory *Mull* on 9th May, Cornaig *Tiree* on 30th May and Sorisdale *Coll* on 22nd Sep; two were seen at Ballard *Coll* on 27th Sep.

COMMON CUCKOO (CUCKOO) *Cuculus canorus* Cuthag 0724
Common summer visitor. Main host species is Meadow Pipit.

Reported during 2002-2003 from all Argyll recording areas including on Iona, Oronsay and Sanda Island.

Apr-May. 2002 Two very early birds were at Ledmore (L. Frisa) *Mull* on 7th Apr and Saddell Glen *Kintyre* on 8th Apr. The next was not until 17th Apr at Bunnahabhain *Islay*; thereafter records were widespread from 19th Apr onwards.

2003 The first arrivals were at L. Frisa *Mull* on 6th Apr, Kilmartin *Mid-Argyll* on 14th Apr and Garvachy (Minard) *Mid-Argyll* on 16th Apr. There were then widespread reports from 20th Apr onwards.

Breeding. Recorded in 4 of 13 BBS squares (31%) in 2002 and 2 of 10 squares (20%) in 2003.

Jul-Aug. 2002 The last records were of juvs at RSPB L. Gruinart on 14th Jul and L. Crinan on 31st Jul.

2003 A late adult was at Kenovay *Tiree* on 15th Jul. Juvs. were reported from 22nd Jul to 23rd Aug at RSPB L. Gruinart, Moine Mhor, Glen Bellart *Mull*, Ballard *Coll* and The Roundhouse *Coll* with the last at RSPB L. Gruinart on 26th Aug.

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus* 0727
Vagrant. The only Argyll record is of one found dead near Southend, Kintyre in November 1950.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO *Coccyzus americanus* 0728
Vagrant. Only two Argyll records: one found dead on Colonsay in November 1904 and one found dying at Barcaldine, North Argyll in September 1969.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

Scarce breeding species, but probably under-recorded. Absent from Coll, Colonsay and Tiree. All records required.

After reported sightings during Apr–Jul 2002 a bird was found injured at Gallanach *Coll* on 4th Dec 2002 and, sadly, had to be put down. These were the first documented records for the island. On 26th Oct 2003 one was observed at Balephuill *Tiree* - the first record for the island since 1892. Birds were recorded from all other recording areas of Argyll during 2002-2003 except *Colonsay*.

Two were seen leaving a nest box together in Barcaldine *North Argyll* on 21st Nov 2003 and on various dates later in the year.

Breeding. 2002 As well as those shown in Table 40.1 there were reports of breeding attempts at Moine Mhor (successful), 3 sites on *Islay* and at least 4 on *Mull*.

Table 40.1 *Outcome of monitored Barn Owl territories in Argyll in 2002.*

Area	Territories occupied	Ts. where eggs laid	Ts. known to have fledged young	Min. no. of young fl.	No. of young per successful pair
N Argyll	1	1	1	4	4.00
Kintyre/ Knapdale (FE)	18	14	10	20	2.00
Kintyre ¹	20	15	14	41	2.92
Cowal ²	11	8	4	9	2.25
Islay	1	1	1	1	1.00
Mull		2	2	3	1.50
Total	54	42	30	75	2.50

¹ One successful repeat clutch of 8 eggs reared 6 young – only the second time since 1995 that a brood of 6 has been reared (both at same site).

² Many sites were unoccupied in 2002. Three sites were occupied but eggs not laid. Four sites failed at egg/small young stage (ARSG per RAB).

Breeding. 2003 As well as those shown in Table 40.2, a pair fledged 5 young from a nest box in a garden at Barcaldine *North Argyll* and there were reports of breeding from a third site on *Islay* and of a nest with young on *Mull*.

Table 40.2 *Outcome of monitored Barn Owl territories in Argyll in 2003.*

Area	Territories occupied	Ts. where eggs laid	Ts. known to have fledged young	Min. no. of young fl.	No. of young per successful pr
Kintyre/ Knapdale (FE)	21 ¹	21	15	45	3.00
Cowal	5	5	5	21	4.20
Islay	2	2	2	3	1.50
Total	28	28	22	69	3.13

¹ Kintyre: a pair was present and eggs laid at an additional site, but the outcome was unknown (not included in table) (ARSG per RAB). NB. FE = Forest Enterprise monitoring scheme.

EURASIAN SCOPS OWL *Otus scops*

0739

Vagrant. *The only Argyll record is of one found dead at Scarinish (Tiree) on 6th Apr 1997. Very rare in Scotland, most records being from the Northern Isles.*

No records in 2002 or 2003.

SNOWY OWL *Bubo scandiacus*

0749

Vagrant. *Four old records 1870-1892 are considered acceptable.*

No records in 2002 or 2003.

TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco* Comhachag-dhonn

0761

Widespread and common resident breeding bird, but absent from Tiree and Coll.

During 2002-2003 birds were reported from *Cowal, Islay, Jura, Mid-Argyll, Mull and North Argyll.*

Breeding. 2002 As well as those shown in Table 41.1 a nest with 2 young was found at Taynish NNR. On *Islay*, a pair fledged 2 young at RSPB L. Gruinart and a recently fledged juv. was found at Kilnaughton Wood.

Table 41.1 *Outcome of monitored Tawny Owl territories in Argyll in 2002.*

Area	Territories checked	Territories occupied	Ts. known to have fledged young	Min. no. of young fledged	No. of young per successful territory
Cowal ¹		16	1	1	1.0
Cowal ²		5	5	10	2.0
Total		22	7	13	1.85

¹ Glen Branter study area: very poor success of tawny owl was thought to be a result of very low vole numbers in spring (*cf* buzzards). Sites elsewhere in Cowal were more successful.

² (Excluding Glen Branter Study area): four artificial sites and one natural site (ARSG per RAB).

Breeding. 2003 As well as those shown in Table 41.2 an adult with 2 young were found at Kilnaughton Wood and an adult was seen feeding a juv. at Tullochgorm (Minard) *Mid-Argyll.*

Table 41.2 *Outcome of monitored Tawny Owl territories in Argyll in 2003.*

Area	Ts. occupied	Ts. where eggs laid	Ts. known to have fledged young	Min. no. of young fledged	Number of young per successful pair
Cowal	12 ¹	12	12	27	2.25

¹ 11 nest boxes and one natural site in a crag.

Breeding was also proved on Scarba, an infrequently visited island, where a single fledged chick was recorded on 21 June.

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus* Comhachag-adharcaiche

0767

Very scarce resident breeding bird and winter visitor, almost certainly under-recorded. All records required.

Breeding. 2002 At least one occupied site on *Colonsay* (adult seen carrying food) but no broods/calling young heard. Possible breeding activity was reported from two sites on *Mull*. None were seen in *Cowal* and no occupied nests were found.

Breeding. 2003 One occupied site on *Colonsay* fledged one chick, a pair was located on *Gigha Kintyre* with calling young heard and a pair, with at least 2 chicks, was found at a site on *Mull*.

The only other records were of one flushed in woods beside L. Awe on 27th Mar 2003 and one heard at Dunstaffnage *Mid-Argyll* on 19th Sep 2003.

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus* Comhachag-chluasach 0768
Widely but thinly distributed breeder and winter visitor. Numbers fluctuate and distribution varies with abundance of small rodents, especially field voles Microtus agrestis. Some emigration in autumn.

During 2002-2003 birds were widely reported on *Islay* and *Mull* and from at least 5 sites on *Jura* as well as from *Coll*, *Cowal* and *Kintyre*. A bird seen on *Tiree* during February 2002 died after hitting wires and a pair were seen hunting at dusk over The Reef on 1st Dec 2003. Single birds were seen hunting on Oronsay in Apr, May and Oct 2003. There were no records from *Mid* or *North Argyll* in either year.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in one of 10 BBS squares (10%), (*cf* none of 15 in 1999). There was an unconfirmed report of a pair with 3 fledged young on *Coll*. On *Islay*, a pair fledged 3 young at one site and birds were reported in the breeding season at several other sites. At least 4 sites on *Mull* recorded birds during the breeding season. Breeding not confirmed anywhere in *Cowal* in 2002 and 6 territories that are usually occupied were all vacant (ARSG per RAB).

2003 Breeding records given in Table 42.

Table 42 *Outcome of monitored Short-eared Owl territories in Argyll in 2003.*

Area	Ts. occupied	Ts. where eggs laid	Ts. known to have fledged young	Min. no. of young fledged	Number of young per successful pair
Islay	1	1	1	2 (3)	2.00+
Kintyre	3-4	?	?	?	-
Cowal ¹	4	4	4	9+	2.25+

Cowal¹ The figures in the table underestimate the breeding success in 2003, which markedly contrasts with the situation in 2002. The information for individual sites on Cowal show that one pair fledged b/5 and another hatched c/7 but although only two large young remained in the nest on the last visit there were signs that others had already left the nest. In one glen where one nest was proved to have fledged at least b/1 later information from the gamekeeper reported 15 in the glen in the late summer in 3 separate groups.

EUROPEAN NIGHTJAR (NIGHTJAR) Sgraicheag-oidhche *Caprimulgus europaeus* 0778

Very scarce and irregular summer visitor. Has bred in the past in Kintyre and Cowal.

Reeling birds were reported at Dervaig *Mull* on 7th May 2002 and near Dalmally *Mid-Argyll* on 26th Apr 2003. In neither instance were birds reported later in the year.

ALPINE SWIFT *Apus melba* Gobhlan-monaidh 0798
Vagrant. Two Argyll records: one at Largybaan, Kintyre in April 1993 and one on the Treshnish Isles in July 1994.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

COMMON SWIFT (SWIFT) *Apus apus* Gobhlan-mòr 0795
Summer visitor, breeding only very locally on the mainland. Wandering birds in summer and passage migrants may occur in all areas.

2002 One flying over Achamore House (Gigha) *Kintyre* on 15th May was the first of the year and the first in Dunoon appeared on 16th May. There were further records of up to 4 birds from *Coll, Cowal, Islay, Mid-Argyll, Mull* and *Tiree* until 10th Jul. Most of these would have been migrants. At Machrihanish SBO 18 flew in off the sea on 20th Jun. During the breeding season at least 10 were flying over Oban and 20 or more over Dunoon. Two were flying S over Machrihanish on 8th Aug and the last was seen flying towards land at L. a' Chnuic (Nr. Ardbeg) *Islay* on 2nd Oct.

2003 The first arrival was at Connel *Mid-Argyll* on 3rd May and one was at RSPB L. Gruinart on 11th May. Small numbers appeared in Dunoon from 14th May onwards and 3 were over Sanda Island on 31st May. On 6th Jun 25 were seen from the Oban-Craignure ferry, 27 flew in off the sea at Machrihanish on 26th Jun and 11 over Fladda on 25th Jun was an unprecedented number for the Treshnish Isles. Ten were over Salen *Mull* on 10th Jul but all remaining records were in single figures. The last was seen flying over Sanda Island on 26th Aug.

COMMON KINGFISHER (KINGFISHER) *Alcedo atthis* Biorra-crùidein 0831
Scarce but regular visitor. Most records are in autumn and winter, and may represent dispersing juveniles.

2002 Singles were seen flying W over the Sound of Mull (nr. Fishnish) *Mull* on 7th Jul and along the River Ba (nr. Gruline) *Mull* on 12th Jul. Later in the year singles were seen at: Ardkinglas House (L. Fyne) *Cowal* on 19th Sep and 30th Nov, Holy Loch on 26th Oct and L. Ba *Mull* on 30th Nov.

2003 One was seen again nr. Gruline *Mull* on 22nd Jan and one was over Holy Loch on 22nd Feb. Singles were seen later in the year at: Kilchurn Castle (L. Awe) *Mid-Argyll* on 17th Aug, Lochbuie *Mull* on 2nd Sep, Knock *Mull* on 3rd Sep, Killiechroan (Gruline) *Mull* on 30th Sep, Airds Bay (L. Etive) on 16th Nov and nr. Inveraray *Mid-Argyll* on 26th Dec. At least 2 birds were in the Lochgilphead/Crinan Canal area in the latter half of Sep and 2 were at Holy Loch on 11th Oct.

EUROPEAN BEE-EATER (BEE-EATER) *Merops apiaster* 0840
Vagrant. No Argyll records prior to 1958 and only 5 or 6 since: 2 near Ballygrant (Islay) in Jun 1981, one at Lochgoilhead (Cowal) in Jun 1986, one at Lochdon (Mull) in Jul 1993, one at Fidden (Mull) in May 1995, one at Glengorm (Mull) in Jun 1998 and (possibly the same) one at Tynacoille (Islay) also in Jun 1998.

No acceptable records in 2002 or 2003.

EUROPEAN ROLLER (ROLLER) *Coracias garrulus* 0840
Vagrant. Seven records 1887-1992, mostly in autumn.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

HOOPOE *Upupa epops* Calman-cathaidh 0846
Scarce passage migrant. Recorded in 13 of the 21 years 1980-2000 with a total of about 21 records: more often in spring than in autumn.

Single birds were present at Machrihanish from 6th-9th May 2002, near Claonaig Jetty *Kintyre* on 1st May 2003 and near Tireragan (Ross of Mull) *Mull* on 21st Jul 2003.

WRYNECK *Jynx torquilla* Geocair 0848
Very rare & irregular passage migrant. Only 6 records since 1980: one at Bousd (Coll) on 13th Oct 1984, one on Sanda (Kintyre) on 6th Oct 1987, one at Torlochan (Mull) on 9th/10th Jun 1991, one at Cairnbaan (Mid-Argyll) on 11th Sep 1997, one near Slockavullin (Mid-Argyll) from 4th to 6th Jun 1998 and the latest at Croig (Mull) on 14th Jun 2001.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis* Snagardach 0856
Rare, but recorded regularly in Cowal in recent years as well as in Mid-Argyll, Mull and N Argyll. Only confirmed breeding record Kintyre 1998. All records required.

None were reported during 2002 and the only 2003 record was of one calling in the Lochbuie area of *Mull* on 17th and 25th May.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major* Snagan-daraich 0876
Resident breeder, widespread on the mainland and Mull. Occasional records on Islay.

During 2002-2003 birds were widely reported from *Cowal*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull* and *North Argyll*. One was seen at *Kildalton Islay* on 20th Oct - the third year running for this location. There were no records in either year for *Kintyre*. Adults were seen feeding young with peanut scraps from garden feeders in *Cowal* and *Mid-Argyll*.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 1 of 13 BBS squares (8%). There were 2 territories in the CBC plots at *Taynish NNR Mid-Argyll*.

2003 Not recorded in any of the 10 BBS squares. There were 4 territories in the CBC plots at *Taynish NNR Mid-Argyll* (cf 1990-2003 average of 2). Found during the breeding season at 11 of 16 broadleaved woodlands in *Mid* and *North Argyll* during the Woodland Bird Survey.

Correction to 2000 data (ABR 17). On 24th Oct one was seen well at Loch Ballygrant *Islay*, the first record on the island since 1996. Should read "since 1998".

SKY LARK (SKYLARK) *Alauda arvensis* Uiseag 0976
Widespread breeding species, common in some areas. Many emigrate in winter, with remaining birds mainly in coastal and low-lying localities.

2002 Monthly maxima at RSPB L. Gruinart were: 150 on 22nd Jan, 253 at Aoradh on 26th Feb, 171 at Bushmill on 13th Mar, 82 at Grainel on 27th Sep, 65 at Grainel on 10th Oct and 52 at Gruinart Farm on 20th Dec. Other flocks of 50 or more birds reported included: 70 on Oronsay on 8th Jan, 100 at *Smaull Islay* on 22nd Feb, 112 on Oronsay on 26th Feb, 67 at Ardnave on 15th Mar, 50 at *Tayinloan* on 24th Mar, 107 at *Sanda Island* on 28th Sep and 170 on Oronsay on 29th Sep.

2003 Monthly maxima at RSPB L. Gruinart were: 36 on 17th Jan, 115 on 14th Feb, 172 on 22nd Mar, 112 at Aoradh on 1st Apr, 103 on 8th Sep, 90 on 24th Oct, 65 on 13th Nov and 89 on 1st Dec. Other flocks of 50 or more birds reported included: 70 on Oronsay on 30th Jan, 70 at *Salum Dunes Tiree* on 26th Feb, 60 at L. Gorm on 10th Mar, 132 (part of heavy

passage) at The Roundhouse *Coll* on 14th Mar, 70 on Oronsay on 2nd Apr, 150 on Oronsay on 23rd Sep and 65 at Rockside (L. Indaal) on 15th Oct.
On 18th Oct three birds landed on the Oban–Tiree ferry between *Mull* and *Coll* and two stayed on board until it reached *Tiree*.

Breeding. Widely reported during 2002-2003 from all Argyll recording areas during the breeding season although with relatively few records from *North Argyll*. Six pairs were thought to have bred on Sanda Island in 2003.

Recorded in 5 of 13 BBS squares (38%) in 2002 and in 3 of 10 squares (30%) in 2003.

SHORE LARK *Eremophila alpestris*

0976

Vagrant. Only one accepted record, of three birds on Islay in October 1976.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia* Gobhlan-gainmhich

0981

Summer visitor and passage migrant. Uncommon and localised breeding species. All breeding records required.

Apr-May. 2002 First arrivals were at RSPB L. Gruinart on 17th Mar and at Glen Forsa *Mull* on 20th Mar. Main arrival was from 26th Mar-4th Apr when further birds were reported from *Cowal*, *Islay*, *Mid-Argyll* and *Mull*. RSPB L. Gruinart had a count of 90 on 27th Apr. As part of the BTO Re-trapping Adults for Survival project 109 birds were ringed in Jun at Southend *Kintyre*.

2003 First arrivals were at Garmony Point *Mull* on 19th Mar and at Kilmartin *Mid-Argyll* on 21st Mar. Main arrival took place 10-15th Apr when birds were also reported from *Cowal*, *Islay*, *North Argyll* and *Tiree*.

Breeding. 2002 In *North Argyll* there were 296 holes (active no. not identified) at the large colony at North Connel sandpit including 20 (possibly unused) detached from the main group. At the Barcaldine (North Argyll) sand and gravel pit 132 holes were counted. Only 30 occupied holes were identified at the Kilmichael Glen (*Mid-Argyll*) colony (cf approx. 70 in 2001). Other active colonies were at: Ashfield (nr Achnamara) *Mid-Argyll* (20+ holes with 12+ pairs present), Scoor beach *Mull* (7 active holes), Kilvecuen beach (Ross of Mull) *Mull* (ca20 holes), Kilchiaran *Islay* (19 occupied holes), Dearg Abhainn (Barcaldine) *North Argyll* (10-20 prs), Langa Quarry (Laggan) *Kintyre* (ca 30 pairs), Gorten *Mull* (45 active holes), Crannich Quarry *Mull* (12 active holes). Small colonies (<4 holes) were also reported on *Mull* at Glen Aros quarry, River Ba mouth and Calgary.

A pair nested at L. a' Phuill; the first confirmed breeding record for *Tiree* since 1955, but 2 or more pairs at Torastan *Coll* on 16th May were not found subsequently.

2003 The North Connel *North Argyll* site had 202 apparently active holes on 11th Jul and there were 51 active holes at Gorten *Mull* on 23rd Jun. Approx: 12 active holes were found at the Little Eachaig River colony (nr Sandbank) *Cowal*, at least 3 of 20 holes at a forestry quarry by Abhainn a' Bhealaich (Eredine) *Mid-Argyll* were active on 5th Jul and there were 8-10 active nests in a bank above the Hydro road on the slopes of Ben Cruachan *North Argyll*. One pair fledged 2 young at Loch a' Phuill.

Aug-Sep. In 2002, the last were 10 at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 21st Aug, 3 at L. a' Phuill on 29th Aug and one at Kiloran *Colonsay* on 2nd Sep and in 2003 there were 2 flying S at Garra Eallabus (L. Gruinart) on 13th Sep.

BARN SWALLOW (SWALLOW) *Hirundo rustica* Gobhlan-gaoithe
Widespread common summer visitor and passage migrant.

0992

Mar-Jun. 2002 First arrivals were at: Balephetrish Bay on 27th Mar, Baugh Tiree on 28th Mar and L. Don on 3rd Apr. Main arrival was from 10th-16th Apr when birds were reported from *Cowal, Islay, Kintyre, Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll*. The only flocks of any size reported were 50 at L. Allan *Islay* on 28th Apr and 35 at Kiloran *Colonsay* on 17th May.

2003 Two very early birds were reported at the Mull of Oa *Islay* on 15th Mar. They were followed by: one at Scotnish Farm (L. Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 21st Mar, 2 at Tayinloan 28th Mar and one at Loch na Keal on 2nd Apr. The main arrival took place 15th-17th Apr after which birds were widespread. Individuals were seen over three of the Treshnish Isles (where they do not normally breed) in late Jun.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 5 of 13 BBS squares (38%).

2003 Recorded in 4 of 10 BBS squares (40%). Four pairs bred on Oronsay, some with 3 broods. Young were still being fed at nests at Crossapol Tiree on 12th Sep, at Balnahard *Colonsay* on 13th Sep and at Otter Ferry on 17th Sep.

Jul-Nov. 2002 A post breeding roost in emergent vegetation at L. Leathan (Kilmichael) *Mid-Argyll* on 1st Aug numbered at least 1,000 birds. Smaller gatherings included: ca200 in reeds at L. Bhasapol on 8th Aug, 50 at Heylipol Tiree on 25th Sep and 75 at Bridgend (L. Indaal) on 29th Sep. There were widespread reports of Swallows staying later than usual and 2 were still at Rhugarbh (Appin) *North Argyll* on 20th Oct while the last 2 young birds left Ballochgair (N. of Peninver) *Kintyre* on the morning of 28th Oct. Even more remarkable was a late brood of 3 birds that were found roosting in a heated bus (used as a greenhouse) at Vaul Tiree on 1st Nov. They were last seen there on 17th Dec (J. Bowler).

2003 A flock of 70-80 were reported at Ardnadrochit (L. Don) on 8th Sep and on 12th Sep a steady stream of Swallows (with a few House Martins) numbering some 250 flew due south over Otter Ferry, feeding as they went. Records were widespread until mid-Oct after which one was at Bowmore *Islay* on 1st Nov and a single late bird stayed around Arinagour *Coll* from 15th until at least 21st Nov.

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbicum* Gobhlan-taighe

1001

Summer visitor breeding commonly on the mainland. Less numerous on the islands and not recorded breeding on Tiree.

Apr-May. 2002 Early arrivals were at Kilninver *Mid-Argyll* on 6th Apr and Tiroran (Ardmeanach) *Mull* on 15th Apr. The main arrival took place from 24th Apr onwards including up to 8 birds on Tiree.

2003 The main arrival took place from 19th-23rd Apr with records from *Coll, Islay, Mull* and *North Argyll*.

Breeding. 2002 Not recorded in any of the 13 BBS squares surveyed. In June 2002 a pair nesting on the Backpacker's Lodge *Colonsay*, was the first confirmed breeding record for the island and three pairs nested at Lochdon, *Mull*, where there have been no recent breeding records. One or more pairs apparently nesting in Jul on cliffs at Singing Sands (near Port Ellen) *Islay* were the first cliff nesting birds recorded in Argyll in recent years.

2003 Recorded in 1 of 10 BBS squares (10%).

Aug-Sep. 2002 The last records were of single birds at Tayinloan on 7th Oct and Port Charlotte *Islay* on 21st Oct.

2003 The last records were of a single bird at Kilfinan *Cowal* on 7th Oct and 3 at Grasspoint *Mull* on 29th Oct.

RICHARD'S PIPIT *Anthus richardi* 1001
Vagrant. Only two Argyll records, both on Islay, one in September 1971 and the other in September 1973.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis* Riabhag-choille 1009
Summer visitor breeding commonly on the mainland. Also widespread on Jura and Mull, but very scarce on Islay.

Apr-May. 2002 An early arrival was at Tayinloan on 7th Apr and one was at Taynish NNR on 16th Apr. The main arrival took place from 19th-29th Apr when birds were recorded from *Islay, Mid-Argyll, Mull* and *North Argyll*.

2003 The first singing bird was heard at Taynish NNR on 15th Apr and there were records from elsewhere in *Mid-Argyll, Mull* and *North Argyll* by 23rd Apr.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 4 of 13 BBS squares (31%). Ten territories were found in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR. On *Islay*, the only records of singing birds were at Ardilistry Bay (NW of Ardbeg) woods on 26th May and at Ballimony (Rhinn's) plantation on 12th Jun. Singing birds were heard on *Jura* on 31st May.

2003 Recorded in 3 of 10 BBS squares (30%). Eight territories were found in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf average 11 territories 1990-2003). They were found in all 16 of the broadleaved woods in *Mid* and *North Argyll* re-surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey in 2003 (lower densities than in 1985). The only *Islay* record was from Claggain Bay (Kildalton) on 6th Jun.

Aug-Sep. The last record in 2002 was of 2 at Dunoon on 10th Sep and in 2003 one at Baugh *Tiree* on 25th Aug.

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis* Snàthag 1011
Abundant breeding species. Most leave the higher ground in winter, and significant flocks occur on passage. Those remaining in Argyll occur mainly in coastal and low-lying localities.

Jan-Apr. The only flocks of more than 40 birds reported during these months were: 47 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 28th Feb 2002, 45 at Balephetrish *Tiree* on 31st Mar 2003, 42 on Sanda Island on 15th Apr 2003 and 40+ nr Glengorm Castle *Mull* on 20th Apr 2003. On 15th Mar 2003 heavy passage was noted in the south of *Kintyre* with several flocks totalling over 200 birds flying N.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 6 of 13 BBS squares (46%). Eleven territories were found in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. Although a widespread breeding species on Treshnish Isles it was considered to be less numerous than Rock Pipit (TIARG).

2003 Recorded in 6 of 10 BBS squares (60%). Eleven territories were found in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf average 6 territories 1990-2003). On Sanda Island, 31 pairs were found and all the nests located produced young.

Aug-Dec. On 17th Sep 2002 an estimated 2,000 birds passed through the Sanda Islands. Other larger gatherings of autumn migrants included: 'hundreds' passing through L. Crinan on 2nd Aug 2002, ca100 at Kiloran Bay *Colonsay* on 15th Sep 2002, 130 at Middleton *Tiree* on 31st Aug 2003 and 71 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 13th Sep 2003.

RED-THROATED PIPIT *Anthus cervinus*

1012

Vagrant. The only Argyll record is of one at Tobermory, Mull in May 1975.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

ROCK PIPIT *Anthus petrosus* Gabhagan

1014.2

Common resident breeding species on coasts, sea lochs and islands with some emigration and passage in autumn. Scarce passage and winter visitor elsewhere.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 3 of 13 BBS squares (23%). One territory was found in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. At least 20 seen along the southern shore of L. Buie *Mull* on 12th Jun included 4 or more family groups.

2003 Recorded in 1 of 10 BBS squares (10%). No territories were found in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. On Sanda Island, 43 pairs were found and all the nests located produced young.

The only counts of 10 or more birds were: 13 at Ardnave *Islay* on 25th Feb 2002, ca20 at Calgary beach *Mull* on 3rd Mar 2002, 12 at Otter Ferry on 20th Jul 2002, 20 at Calgary beach *Mull* on 22nd Jan 2003 and 22 on a short stretch of beach at Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree* on 26th Oct 2003. One landed on the Mull-Tiree ferry off *Mull* on 18th Oct 2003 and later flew on to *Tiree*.

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava* Breacan-buidhe

1017

Scarce and less-than-annual passage migrant; recorded in 16 of the 22 years 1980-2001. Birds of the Blue-headed race M. f. flava occur from time to time, and there has been at least one record of the Grey-headed race M. f. thunbergi (in 1985).

No records in 2002. One flew over Knocklearoch (nr. Ballygrant) *Islay* calling on 19th May 2003 and an immature bird was found on Oronsay feeding with Pied Wagtails on 27th Aug 2003.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea* Breacan-baintighearna

1019

Widespread resident breeding species; some emigration in winter.

Breeding. During 2002-2003 confirmed breeding was reported from: Bridgend *Islay*, Ardkinglas *Cowal*, Backs Water (Laggan) *Kintyre* (2 pairs), Calgary *Mull*, Tullochgorm (Minard) *Mid-Argyll* and Taynish NNR. Pairs were also reported in the breeding season from several other sites on *Islay*, from Glen Nant (Taynuilt) *Mid-Argyll* and from *Jura*. No records from BBS squares.

Migrant birds passing through Sanda Island totalled 18 on 20th Sep 2002 and there were singles on *Tiree* on 10th Sep 2003 and 25th Oct 2003.. There were winter records (Dec-Feb) from *Coll*, *Islay*, *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll* and *Mull*.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba yarrellii* Breac-an-t-sil

1020

Widespread and common breeder. Emigration from most areas in winter. Returning birds generally arrive late Feb to early Mar; departure Aug-Oct.

Larger flocks of autumn migrants recorded during 2002 included: 250 at Machrihanish and 120 at Dunaverty Bay *Kintyre* on 4th Sep, 89 flying S over Otter Ferry on 21st Sep, 33 at Bunnahabhain *Islay* on 30th Sep. In 2003 there were: 40 at Balemartine *Tiree* on 30th Jul, 50+ at the Add Estuary on 5th Aug and 39 roosting in the plantation on Oronsay on 20th Sep.

There were winter records (mid-Nov-Jan) in both years from *Coll*, *Islay*, *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll*, *North Argyll* and *Tiree*, including 6 at Ardnave on 6th Dec 2002.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 4 of 13 BBS squares (31%). An estimated 40 pairs bred on *Tiree* and 7 bred in the field walls on Oronsay. An adult was seen feeding young on Lunga, Treshnish Isles where Pied Wagtails are only irregular breeders.

2003 Recorded in 2 of 10 BBS squares (20%). Six pairs bred on Sanda Island with mixed success and a pair again bred on Lunga, Treshnish Isles.

WHITE WAGTAIL *M. a. alba*

1020.1

Passage migrant, usually recorded in spring. Extent of autumn passage obscured by identification difficulties.

2002 The first spring migrant was at Gortantaoid (E of L.Gruinart) *Islay* on 6th Apr. Counts of 10 or more were reported from: Ardnave Point *Islay* (10 on 27th Apr), Machrihanish SBO (max.11 on 6th May), Oronsay (max. 19 on 6th May) and Ballinaby (N. of Loch Gorm) *Islay* (15 on 9th May).

The largest numbers in autumn were reported from Machrihanish Links (25 on 4th Sep), Dunaverty Bay *Kintyre* (20 on 4th Sep), Lochbuie *Mull* (25+ on 18th Sep) and Sanda Island (max. 80 on 18th Sep).

2003 Two at Machrihanish on 15th Mar were the earliest arrivals. The only counts of 10 or more reported were: 12 at Caolas *Tiree* on 18th Apr and 17 at the E end of Traigh Bhi *Tiree* on 1st May. A late spring bird was at Machrihanish SBO on 9th Jun and an even later individual was Hough Bay *Tiree* on 17th Jun.

Much smaller numbers were reported in autumn 2003. There was a maximum of 20 flying S at Machrihanish SBO on 5th Aug. Sanda Island had an Aug maximum of 2 on 26th and the only Sep record was of 6 on 27th.

Breeding. In 2003, an apparent family group (male and female *alba* accompanied by three juveniles) was seen on 1 July at Islandadd Bridge on the Crinan Canal (*cf* mixed pair at Cairnbaan in Jun 2000 - ABR 17).

WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus* Canarach-dearg

1048

Irruptive winter visitor in varying numbers; not seen every year.

2002 The only records in 2002 were 3 in a garden at Tobermory *Mull* on 31st Jan and an unexpected single bird outside the SNH office in Lochgilhead on 17th Apr.

2003 In Jan, one was on the RSPB reserve on *Coll* on 5th Jan, followed by 6 at Dalintober (Campbeltown) from 7th-17th, 2 at Innellan *Cowal* from 24th-25th and one in Campbeltown on 25th. On 29th Feb, one or more were seen near L. Nant (W. of Kilchrenan, L. Awe) *Mid-Argyll* and *ca10* were at the roadside near Inverinan on the west side of L. Awe.

A small influx occurred in Oct and Nov. On 14th Oct, 7 were reported from Lochbuie, 2 at L. Frisa and 4 at Fishnish, all on *Mull*. In Nov: one was on Iona on 1st, 2 near the railway station in Oban on 2nd and 6 passing through L. Don on 5th. Four were feeding on hawthorn at Largiemore (Nr. Otter Ferry) on 12th Nov with presumably the same birds again on 21st Nov.

DIPPER *Cinclus cinclus* Gobha-uisge

1050

Widespread resident breeder, though scarce on Islay and Colonsay and absent from Tiree and Coll.

Apart from Breeding records below: in 2002-2003 birds were also reported from *Cowal* (3 other locations), *Islay* (one other location), *Jura* (3 locations), *Mid-Argyll* (4 other locations), *Mull* (11 other locations) and *N Argyll* (3 locations).

Breeding. 2002 Nesting pairs were reported at: Gruline *Mull*, Connel *Mid-Argyll* and L. Torr bridge *Mull*; and young were being fed at Blarghour (L. Awe) on 13th May.

2003 Confirmed breeding took place at Knock (Gruline) *Mull*, Benmore Botanic Gardens *Cowal* and Bridgend *Islay*.

WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes* Dreathann-donn 1066
Very common resident breeder, although numbers fall following hard winters.

In Nov 2003, Wrens were widespread on *Coll* and *Tiree* and many birds showed features of the race *hebridensis*, the form found in the Outer Hebrides and probably *Skye*.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 7 of 13 BBS squares (54%). A record 85 territories were found in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. At least 14 pairs bred on Lunga, Treshnish Isles, mostly in the N half of the island.

2003 Recorded in 8 of 10 BBS squares (80%). A total of 56 territories were found in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf average 54 territories 1990-2003). On Sanda Island ca30 pairs were found breeding. They were found in all 16 of the broadleaved woods in *Mid* and *North Argyll* re-surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey in 2003 but at much higher densities (>90% increase) than in 1985, thanks no doubt to the intervening mild winters.

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis* Gealbhonn-nam-preas 1084
Widespread and common resident breeder, but very local on Coll and Jura and only a winter visitor to Tiree.

In 2002 there were a few winter records on both *Coll* and *Tiree*. Only one was recorded on *Tiree* in 2003 (on 8th Dec) but there was a small influx on *Coll* in Nov 2003 with 4 at The Lodge on the 15th and scattered records elsewhere. Birds were also present on *Jura* in Dec 2003. The 34 birds found at the north end of Gigha on 17th October 2002 must have been migrants.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 3 of 13 BBS squares (23%). A record total of 9 territories were found in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR. Birds were present during the breeding season on *Coll*, *Jura* and Lismore *North Argyll*.

2003 Recorded in 6 of 10 BBS squares (60%). A total of 7 territories were recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf average 4 territories 1990-2003). At least one pair bred at The Lodge *Coll*. They were found in only 3 of 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey in 2003. This confirms earlier findings that Dunnock are relatively scarce in this habitat.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula* Brù-dhearg 1099
Widespread and common resident breeder, but only rarely and sporadically on Tiree. Small numbers now breed regularly on Coll. Immigration in winter and noticeable autumn passage in some years.

Counts of: 30-50 on *Tiree* in mid-Sep 2002 and late Sep 2003, ca 100 on Sanda Island on 14th Sep 2002, 60 around Port Wemyss *Islay* on 20th Oct 2002 and 50 on Sanda Island on 23rd Aug 2003 were indications of autumn passage/winter immigration in these areas.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 9 of 13 BBS squares (69%). A record 37 territories were recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*.

2003 Recorded in 7 of 10 BBS squares (70%). A total of 31 territories were recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf average 22 territories 1990-

2003). Birds were found in all 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey in 2003 and had increased in numbers by up to 50% since the similar survey in 1985.

COMMON NIGHTINGALE *Luscinia megarhynchos* Spideag 1104
Vagrant. Only two Argyll records, both of singing birds, one on Islay in April 1973 and the other at West Loch Tarbert in May 1989.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

BLUETHROAT *Luscinia svecica* 1106
Vagrant. Only two Argyll records: a female in Kintyre in May 1975 and a male of the red-spotted race svecica on Coll in 1994.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochuros* Ceann-dubhan 1121
Less than annual passage migrant. All but 2 of 22 records in Argyll during 1980-2000 were in spring (late Mar to May) or late autumn (Oct to mid-Nov).

Two good years for this scarce Argyll species. In 2002, a female/1st winter bird was seen at Port Charlotte *Islay* from 19th-21st Jan. One was at Machrihanish on 19th Oct and a female/1st winter was Tayinloan on 24th Nov.

In 2003, singles were at Ganavan (Oban) on 16th Feb and at Lagavulin *Islay* from 29th to 30th Mar. More unusually, a singing male was a temporary resident in Campbeltown from 25th Apr to 15th May.

COMMON REDSTART (REDSTART) *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* Ceann-dearg 1122
Summer visitor, locally common in relatively open woodland. Recorded on Colonsay, Islay, Tiree and Coll only as a scarce passage migrant.

One at Taynish NNR on 9th Apr 2002 was the earliest spring arrival ever recorded there. Migrants were recorded: at Hynish *Tiree* (a female on 29th Sep 2002), *Colonsay* on 27th Apr and at RSPB L. Gruinart on 20th Aug 2002. A female seen at Totronald on 6 May 2003 was apparently the first ever record for *Coll*.

Breeding. 2002 Six territories were recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. Of the seven boxes occupied at Bonawe *N Argyll*, all but one was predated by Pine Marten *Martes martes* as eggs or small young. A brood of 8 young fledged from the unpredated box (JCAC).

2003 Six territories were recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf 1990-2003 av. of 6). No attempt was made to breed in any of the nest boxes at Bonawe *N Argyll* (JCAC). Redstarts were found in all but three of 16 broadleaved woods for the Woodland Bird Survey in 2003 (lower densities than during 1985 survey).

In both years breeding season records were received only for *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull* and *North Argyll*.

This species is currently very under-recorded in Argyll and readers of this report are encouraged to notify the Recorder of all sightings.

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra* Gocan 1137
Widespread and common summer visitor.

Apr-May. 2002 One was at Dunadd (Moine Mhor) *Mid-Argyll* on 1st May and the main arrival was 4th-7th May, when birds were also reported from *Islay*, *Mull* and *Tiree*.

2003 A very early bird was reported from RSPB L. Gruinart on 9th Apr followed by records from *Mid-Argyll* and *Mull* in the last week of Apr. Most did not arrive until the first week of May.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 2 of 13 BBS squares (15%). At RSPB L. Gruinart 6 territorial males were counted and 6 breeding pairs were located on *Colonsay*. Breeding was also confirmed on *Mull* and *Tiree*.

2003 Not recorded in any of the 10 BBS squares. A casual survey found 7 territorial males at RSPB L. Gruinart. Two pairs were located on *Colonsay*.

Aug-Oct. 2002 The last records were at RSPB L. Gruinart on 29th Sep and at Vaul *Tiree* on 10th Oct.

2003 None were reported after 2 migrants were seen at Corsapoll (Gruinart) *Islay* on 24th Aug.

During 2003-2003 there were records from all recording areas. They were widespread on *Islay*, *Mid-Argyll* and *Mull* but only single records from *Coll*, *Cowal* and two from *North Argyll* (incl. one on Lismore).

COMMON STONECHAT *Saxicola torquatus* Clacharan 1139
Widespread resident breeding species, but population can decline dramatically after severe winters. Some emigration may take place in winter.

Larger counts all in 2002 included: 23 at 9 locations on *Tiree* during Sep, 15 between Scalasaig and Machrins *Colonsay* on 3rd Sep and 16 on Sanda Island on 18th Sep.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 4 of 13 BBS squares (31%). Three breeding pairs were found on Oronsay and 40 on *Colonsay*. A whole reserve count at RSPB L. Gruinart located 26 pairs and 6 were found at Ardnave. Two pairs bred at Moine Mhor and a pair with recently fledged young were on Cara island (Gigha) *Kintyre* on 15th May.

2003 Recorded in 1 of 10 BBS squares (10%). A casual survey at RSPB L. Gruinart found 27 pairs, 24 were found on *Colonsay* and 4 bred on Sanda Island.

During 2002-2003 there were breeding season records from all recording areas except *Coll* (although they almost certainly occurred here too). They were also present in the breeding season on Gigha *Kintyre* and Lismore *North Argyll* but not on the Treshnish Isles. Pairs were widespread on: *Colonsay*, *Islay*, *Mull*, *Cowal*, *Kintyre* and *Mid-Argyll*. The *Argyll* population is apparently at a high level currently.

NORTHERN WHEATEAR (WHEATEAR) *Oenanthe oenanthe* Brù-gheal 1146
Common summer visitor and passage migrant.

Mar-Apr. 2002 First arrivals were at Breachacha *Coll* and Aird Dearg *Mid-Argyll* on 18th Mar. By 1st Apr birds had also been reported from: *Cowal*, *Islay*, *Kintyre* and *Mull* with at least 50 present on *Tiree*.

2003 Two early males were at Glen Garrisdale *Jura* on 14th Mar and by 21st Mar birds had been reported from: *Coll*, *Cowal*, *Islay*, *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll* and *Mull*.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 3 of 13 BBS squares (23%). On the Treshnish Isles a minimum of 5 family parties were noted on Lunga in late Jun with 2 further families on Sgeir a' Chaisteil. Two pairs bred at the gravel pits on The Laggan *Kintyre* and at least 7 family parties were noted along the southern shore of L. Buie *Mull* on 12th Jun.

2003 Recorded in 2 of 10 BBS squares (20%). A minimum of 5 family parties were found on Lunga Treshnish Isles in late Jun and birds were also noted on Fladda and Sgeir a' Chaisteil. The 15 pairs present on Sanda Island bred with apparent success. On 8th Jun 20 adult and 5 juv. birds were counted on Iona.

During 2002-2003 there were breeding season records from all Argyll recording areas. They were widespread on *Islay*, *Mull* and *Tiree* and were present in the breeding season on *Gunna Island Coll* (breeding confirmed), *Gigha Kintyre* and *Lismore North Argyll*.

Sep-Oct. 2002 Birds were still widespread on the islands in the first two weeks of Oct but then departed rapidly with last records at *Heylipol Tiree* on 15th Oct and *Ardnave* on 16th Oct.

2003 Most had left by the end of Sep and the last were at *Hynish Tiree* on 6th Oct and *Sorisdale Coll* on 16th Oct.

GREENLAND WHEATEAR *O. o. leucorhoa*

Apparently rare passage migrant, but probably under-recorded.

Spring. The only records in 2002 were singles at: *L. na Gile Tiree* on 13th Apr, *Oronsay* on 28th Apr and at *Caolas Tiree* on 1st May. Only *Sanda Island* reported birds in 2003 with maxima of 3 on 19th Apr and 3 on 9th May.

Autumn. In 2002, one was at *Crossapol Tiree* on 31st Aug after which small numbers were seen on the island throughout Sep with the last on 12th Oct. The maximum on *Sanda Island* was 8 on 28th Aug. In 2003, *Machrihanish SBO* had singles on: 13th Aug and 2nd Sep with 2 on 16th Sep. Two were on *Sanda Island* on 14th Aug, 4 on 28th Aug and one on 30th Aug. One was at *Vaul Tiree* on 14th Sep.

BLUE ROCK THRUSH* *Monticola solitarius*

1166

Vagrant. A first summer male present at Skerryvore in June 1985 and later found dead is the only Argyll record. It is now accepted as the first record of a genuinely wild bird in Britain.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus* Dubh-chreige

1186

Summer visitor breeding very locally in upland areas. More widespread, though still very scarce, on migration. All records required.

2002 The only records were of males at: *Uisken Mid-Argyll* on 3rd Apr, *Bearnus (Ulva) Mull* on 14th Apr (singing) and below the summit of *Beinn nan Gobhar (Loch Buie) Mull* on 24th Sep.

2003 A male at *Balevullin* on 7th Apr was only the second record for *Tiree* and a male was also at *Hyne Coll* on 24th Apr. There were reports of birds on *Mid-Argyll* during Jul including a male in *Glen Bellart* on 7th and 14th and a male in the north of *Ulva Mull* on 27th. In autumn: one was at *Tenga Mull* on 12th Sep, immature males near *Kilchoman Wood Islay* on 15th Oct and at *Balephuill Tiree* on 31st Oct.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula* Lon-dubh

1187

Widespread and common resident breeding species. Immigration in winter and noticeable autumn passage in some years.

Jan-Jun. A flock of 18, mostly male, birds were in a field at *Glenamachrie (Glen Lonan) Mid-Argyll* on 6th Feb 2002. On 12th Jan 2003, at least 60 were counted within a mile of *Otter Ferry*, the majority of them males. A male at the *Village on Lunga, Treshnish Isles* on 23rd Jun 2003 was the first Blackbird seen on the islands since the late 1970s.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 8 of 13 BBS squares (61%). A record 10 territories were found in the CBC plots at *Taynish NNR Mid-Argyll*.

2003 Recorded in 6 of 10 BBS squares (60%). Six territories were recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf average 5 territories 1990-2003). Blackbirds were found in all but three of 16 broadleaved woods visited for the Woodland Bird Survey in 2003; with numbers more than doubled since the same woods were surveyed in 1985

Sep-Dec. In 2002 a noticeable influx occurred in Nov with a steady stream of mainly male birds moving through Otter Ferry on 10th, 63 were counted among Fieldfares and Redwings at L. Don on 13th and at least 24 were counted during the WeBS count at L. Sween on 19th.

On 17th Oct 2003 ca100 were present in fields along the shore near Otter Ferry about 80% of which were males. Visible migrants were seen flying off high to the N or NE at Kilchoman Wood *Islay* on 31st Oct and 12 were together on a garden lawn at Tayvallich *Mid-Argyll* on 20th Dec.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris* Liath-thruisg 1198
Passage migrant and winter visitor. Abundant in autumn but relatively few in winter and spring.

Jan-May. 2002 Larger than usual winter numbers included: parties of 20-60 on *Tiree* in Jan, 50 at Kilmichael Beg *Mid-Argyll* on 6th Jan, ca300 at Bealachandrain Farm (Glendaruel) *Cowal* on 12th Jan, ca190 at Aoradh (L. Gruinart) on 16th Jan and 150 at Emeraconart (Ballygrant) *Islay* on 4th Feb. One at L. Allan *Islay* on 28th Apr was the last of spring.

2003 The only flocks of any size were: 50 at Slockavullin *Mid-Argyll* on 6th Jan, ca100 at Craignure golf course *Mull* on 10th Jan and 60 at Southend *Kintyre* on 15th Mar. The last single bird was at RSPB L. Gruinart on 19th Apr.

Sep-Dec. 2002 Eight at Balnahard *Colonsay* on 14th Sep were the first returning migrants. Numbers built up in mid-Oct and 100s were reported over Craignure *Mull* on 18th. However, after this only relatively small numbers were found; the largest flocks being 50 at Cornabus *Islay* on 9th Nov and 75 at Slockavullin *Mid-Argyll* on 8th Dec.

2003 The first small flocks flew into Dervaig *Mull* from the mainland on 21st Sep and 50 were over Barre Beithe (L. Awe) on 8th Oct. From 12th Oct a sudden large influx was apparent in many parts of Argyll. Larger flocks included: 120 at Arileod *Coll*, 400 at Grasspoint *Mull* and 180 at Moine Mhor on 14th, 250 in Glendaruel *Cowal* on 16th, 650 at Kilchoman *Islay*, 285 at L. Gruinart and 220 on Oronsay on 17th Oct. Smaller flocks reported after this included: 67 at Totamore *Coll* on 2nd Nov, 80 at Tayvallich *Mid-Argyll* on 12th Nov and 50 at Sunderland *Islay* on 7th Dec.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos* Smeòrach 1200
Widespread and common resident breeding species. Some immigration in winter.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 6 of 13 BBS squares (46%). Eleven territories were recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. At least 20 pairs were seen on *Tiree* on 26th May.

2003 Recorded in 6 of 10 BBS squares (60%). Thirteen territories were recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf average 8 territories 1990-2003). Birds were found in all of the 16 broadleaved woods visited for the Woodland Bird Survey in 2003. Numbers had more than doubled since the same woods were surveyed in 1985 and they were still occurring at higher densities than Blackbirds.

Sep-Dec. 2002 Small groups of migrants included: 10+ on Rowans at Otter Ferry on 9th Sep, 12 (also on Rowans) nr. Kilninian *Mull* on 13th Sep, 15 at Uragaig *Colonsay* on 15th Sep and 11 on Sanda Island also on 15th Sep. Birds showing non-local racial characteristics included a *clarkei* type individual at Loch Gruinart wood on 3rd Oct and a continental *philomelos* type at Loch Gruinart on 25th Oct.

2003 Groups of 15 at West Hynish *Tiree* on 19th Oct and 15 on Oronsay on 20th Oct were part of an obvious influx associated with Redwings. Most of the birds on *Tiree* in Nov were bright individuals showing characteristics of the continental race *philomelos* but a few were more typical of *hebridensis*.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus* Sgiath-dhearg

1201

Passage migrant and winter visitor. Abundant in autumn but relatively few winter. Occasional individuals recorded in late spring. Bred on Mull in 1991.

Jan-May. 2002 The largest flocks during Jan were: 123 at Smaull *Islay* on 3rd, ca60 at Largiemore (Otter Ferry) *Cowal* on 4th, 55 at Balephuill *Tiree* on 12th, 50 at Totronald *Coll* on 13th, 60 at Aoradh (RSPB L. Gruinart) on 16th and 60+ at Otter Ferry on 17th. Only small numbers were seen in Feb and flocks of: 60 at Airport Camp *Tiree* on 1st Mar and 450 in Kilmichael Glen *Mid-Argyll* on 4th Mar were presumably returning migrants. Late birds were at L. Allan *Islay* on 28th Apr and L. Buie *Mull* on 9th May.

2003 The only flocks of any size reported at this time were: 40 at Otter Ferry on 9th Jan, 30 on Oronsay on 27th Mar and 60 L. Gruinart on 28th Mar. None were reported after 6th Apr when: one was at L. Bhasapol and 7 at Totronald *Coll*.

Sep-Dec. 2002 A very early returning bird was at Balephuill *Tiree* on 14th Sep. The main arrival took place from 6th Oct onward when larger flocks included: 130 over Aros Moss *Kintyre* on 7th, ca110 at Otter Ferry on 13th, total of 145 on *Tiree* on 14th, 'hundreds' at Craignure *Mull* on 18th, 300 at Portnahaven *Islay* on 22nd, 500 in the Port Wemyss area of *Islay* on 25th and 180 at two locations on *Tiree* on 2nd Nov. There were still 200 at Slockavullin *Mid-Argyll* on 8th Dec.

2003 None were reported until 29th Sep when 200 arrived overnight on Oronsay. By 8th Oct some 1,000 birds were on *Tiree* including 350 at Balephuill. Other flocks included: 210 at Port-na-Luing *Coll* on 8th Oct, 80 at Carsaig *Mid-Argyll* on 14th Oct, 100 at L. Ballygrant *Islay* on 18th Oct, 220 at Arileod *Coll* on 3rd Nov, 200 in the east of *Tiree* on 10th Nov, 110 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 13th Nov, 350 in Kilmichael Glen *Mid-Argyll* on 14th Nov and 70+ at Kilfinan Bay *Cowal* on 31st Dec.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus* Smeòrach-mhòr

1202

Widespread but thinly distributed resident breeding species; except on Coll and Tiree where only an occasional visitor. Flocks sometimes seen on passage.

Jan-Apr. A flock of ca8 were at Lagg Bay *Jura* on 14th Mar 2003. Rare migrant at Kilmoluaig, *Tiree* on 4th Mar 2002.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 2 of 13 BBS squares (15%). There were 2 territories in the CBC plots at Tainish NNR *Mid-Argyll*.

2003 Recorded in 3 of 10 BBS squares (30%). There were 3 territories in the CBC plots at Tainish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf 1990-2003 av. of 1.5). Mistle Thrush was found in all but 2 of the 16 broadleaved woods visited for the Woodland Bird Survey in 2003 (lower densities than in 1985).

Jul-Dec. Post breeding flocks in 2002 included: 14 at Rhugarbh (Appin) *North Argyll* on 29th Jul, 39 at Otter Ferry on 29th Aug, 16 near Craignure *Mull* on 3rd Sep, 13 at Tullochgorm (Minard) *Mid-Argyll* on 8th Sep and 35 flying N at Beinn na Cille *Islay* on 1st Oct.

Flocks reported in 2003 included: 27 at Moine Mhor on 20th Aug, 30 in the Add Estuary on 21st Aug, 60 at Melldalloch *Cowal* on 28th Aug, 28 at Otter Ferry on 3rd Sep and 13 at Uisken *Mull* on 9th Sep. 1-2 birds on *Coll* on 16th-21st Nov 2003.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia* Ceileiriche-leumnach 1236
Summer visitor breeding locally in all areas; good densities may occur in young conifer plantations. Numbers fluctuate from year to year.

Apr-May. 2002 First arrivals were at: RSPB L. Gruinart on 21st Apr, Sanda Island and Fearnoch (Kilmichael) *Mid-Argyll* on 23rd Apr. By 7th May reeling birds had also been reported from: *Coll, Cowal, Mull* and *North Argyll*.

2003 Early arrivals were heard at Auchnasaul (nr Clachan-Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 16th Apr and at Dunadd *Mid-Argyll* on 17th Apr. By 17th May reeling birds had also been reported from *Coll, Colonsay Cowal, Islay, Jura, Mull* and *Tiree*.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 1 of 13 BBS squares (8%). There were 2 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. Counts of singing males during the breeding season included: 10 at RSPB L. Gruinart, 10 on *Colonsay*, 3 at Aros Moss *Kintyre* and 3 at Easter Ellister *Islay*.

2003 Not recorded in any of the 10 BBS squares. There were 4 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf 1990-2003 average of 2); equalling the previous highest count in 1998. A casual survey at RSPB L. Gruinart found 10 reeling birds in Jun and 7 were found on *Colonsay*. Singing birds were recorded at 4 sites on *Tiree* and breeding was thought probable. Reeling birds were also heard on *Coll* during the breeding season.

Aug-Sep. One singing at midnight near Sunderland *Islay* on 21st Jul was the last record in 2002. There were single birds at the Add Estuary on 31st Aug and at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 15th Sep in 2003.

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* Uiseag-oidhche 1243
Summer visitor and locally common breeding species.

Apr-May. 2002 One at RSPB L. Gruinart on 27th Apr was the first. In the following two weeks there were records from *Coll, Kintyre, Mid-Argyll, Mull* and *Tiree*.

2003 Singing birds were heard at RSPB L. Gruinart on 20th Apr and East L. Fada *Colonsay* on 21st Apr. There had also been records from *Coll, Jura, Mid-Argyll, Mull* and *Tiree* by 7th May.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 3 of 13 BBS squares (23%). A total of 7 territories were found in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR. On 15th May at least 8 singing birds were heard on Gigha *Kintyre*, at least 30 were heard at various locations on *Islay* on 26th/27th May and 3 were singing at Lang Aoineadh *Jura* on 5th Jun. Other counts of singing males in Jun included: 100+ on *Tiree*, 12 on Oronsay, 44 on *Colonsay*, ca12 at Aros Moss *Kintyre* and 2 at L. Dochart *North Argyll*.

2003 Recorded in 2 of 10 BBS squares (20%). A total of 6 territories were found in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf 1990-2003 average of 9). A count of 43 pairs on *Colonsay* included 12 on Oronsay. Four or possibly 5 pairs bred on Sanda Island.

Aug-Sep. 2002 The last 3 on *Tiree* were at Kenovay on 21st Aug and one was at Corsapol *Islay* on 7th Sep.

2003 Local breeders staying late on *Tiree* in Sep included: 2 at Heylipol (on 6th), 2 at The Manse (on 15th) and one at Balemartine (on 18th).

REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* 1251
Rare passage migrant, with only 3 records in Argyll during 1980-99, the last being at Colonsay Hotel (Colonsay) on 3rd May 1997.
No records in 2002 or 2003.

BOOTED WARBLER* *Hippolais caligata* 1256
Vagrant. The only accepted Argyll record was one at Balemartine Tiree on 20th Sep 1998.
No records in 2002 or 2003.

ICTERINE WARBLER *Hippolais icterina* 1259
Vagrant. Only 4 records the last being on Islay in 1993.
No records in 2002 or 2003.

BARRED WARBLER *Sylvia nisoria* 1273
Vagrant. Only four records 1896-1992, all in August/September.
No records in 2002 or 2003.

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca* Gealan-coille-beag 1274
Rare passage migrant, with only 11 or 12 records in Argyll during 1980-2000. It has been recorded in every month (except July) from May - Nov, and all the 7 or 8 records since 1990 have been from the islands.

The only accepted record was of an immature present all day in a garden at Heylipol *Tiree* on 12th Sep 2002 [J. Bowler]. This record has been accepted by ABRC.
There were no records in 2003.

COMMON WHITETHROAT (WHITETHROAT) *Sylvia communis* Gealan-coille 1275
Summer visitor, breeding widely but patchily. Numbers appear to fluctuate from year to year.

Apr-May. 2002 None were reported until early May when one was at Grasspoint *Mull*. Seven were recorded on Sanda Island on 5th May and birds were at An Lodan (L. Awe) and Taynish NNR on 6th May. By the end of May there had also been records from: *Coll, Islay, Jura, Kintyre* (incl. Gigha), *Mull* (incl. Iona and Ulva) and *Tiree*.

2003 A very early bird was at Heylipol *Tiree* on 14th Apr and other Apr records came from Seil *Mid-Argyll*, Fishnish *Mull* and RSPB L. Gruinart. They were widespread by the end of the first week of May.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 3 of 13 BBS squares (23%). A total of 8 territories were found in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR. During the Peregrine 2002 survey at least 3 territorial males were found in scrub at the foot of cliffs in Knapdale and more than 30 singing males were found along the raised beaches in the west of *Jura*. On *Colonsay*, a total of 25 breeding pairs were located and 3 singing males were found at RSPB L. Gruinart. A male in full song on Fladda on 24th Jun was TIARG's first record for the Treshnish Isles. Five were seen/heard on Ulva *Mull* on 16th May.

2003 Recorded in 3 of 10 BBS squares (30%). A total of 8 territories were found in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf 1990-2003 av. of 7). A casual survey at RSPB L. Gruinart found 6 singing males, 22 singing males were found on *Colonsay* and 4 or possibly 5 pairs bred on Sanda Island.

Aug-Sep. 2002 Monthly maxima on Sanda Island were 8 on 19th Aug and 5 on 3rd Sep. A late single was found in fog at Kiloran Meadow *Colonsay* on 15th Sep.

2003 Eight were seen on Sanda Island on 6th Aug and the last was a female/imm. at Moss *Tiree* on 26th Aug.

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin* Ceileiriche-gàraidh 1276
Summer visitor and scarce breeding species.

Apr-May. 2002 One singing at Cairnbaan *Mid-Argyll* on 27th Apr was the first and another was at Moine Mhor on 1st May. Single birds were found at 3 locations on *Tiree* during May.

2003 An early bird was singing at Lochawe *North Argyll* on 19th Apr and one was singing at Moine Mhor on 2nd May.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 1 of 13 BBS squares (8%). There were 2 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. Singing males were also recorded during the breeding season at: Tullochgorm (Minard) *Mid-Argyll*, Carsaig *Mid-Argyll*, L. Dochard *North Argyll*, L. Creran *North Argyll* and *Colonsay Hotel Colonsay*.

2003 Recorded in 1 of 10 BBS squares (10%). There were 2 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf 1990-2003 av. of 2.5). They were recorded in nine of 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey during 2003. This includes 3 singing males at Coille Nathais (nr Taynuilt) *Mid-Argyll*. Singing males were also recorded during the breeding season: at Ardanaiseig (L. Awe) *Mid-Argyll*, nr. Minard *Mid-Argyll*, at Toward *Cowal* and on *Colonsay*.

Jul-Oct. 2002 Two were at Carraig Fhada *Islay* on 23rd Jul, one at Balemartine *Tiree* on 12th Sep, one at Balinoe *Tiree* on 13th Sep and one on Sanda Island on 21st Sep.

2003 Late migrants were at Hynish *Tiree* on 24th Sep and at Arinagour *Coll* on 16th Oct.

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla* Ceann-dubh 1277
Scarce summer visitor and regular passage migrant; especially in autumn. Increasingly numerous in winter.

Jan-May. 2002 No winter records. Birds which were at: Oban on 16th Apr, Kilnaughton *Islay* on 24th Apr and Sanda Island on 25th Apr would have been spring migrants. There were also records from *Colonsay* and *Mull* in early May and from *Tiree* later in the month.

2003 A male and a female were seen at bird feeders in a garden in Dunoon (*Cowal*) 6th Jan to 3rd Feb. Early spring migrants were found at Salen *Mull* on 14th Apr and Taynish NNR on 15th Apr with records from *Coll*, *Colonsay* and *Islay* in the following week.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 1 of 13 BBS squares (8%). There were a record 5 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. A female trapped at Aros Moss *Kintyre* on 18th Jul with engorged brood patch indicated breeding (the first at this site). Four males were singing in the *Colonsay Hotel* area on *Colonsay* on 8th Jun and there were also records of singing males during the breeding season from: *Islay*, *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll*.

2003 Recorded in 2 of 10 BBS squares (20%). There were 4 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf 1990-2003 average of 1). They were found in 8 of 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey during 2003. Singing males were also reported during the breeding season at: Bridgend Woods *Islay*, Ballochgair (N. of Peninver) *Kintyre*, Crarae Gardens *Mid-Argyll* and The Lodge plantation *Coll*.

Sep-Dec. 2002 An influx on *Tiree* in Oct involved at least 13 birds at 7 locations with males and females in equal proportions. Other Oct records came from *Coll*, *Cowal* and *Islay*. There were six winter records 6th Nov to 30th Dec, from *Islay*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull* and *North Argyll*.

2003 There were records during Oct from *Coll*, *Colonsay*, *Islay*, *Mid-Argyll* and *Mull*. Records were received from: 7 locations on *Mull* during Nov, singles at Kilmoluag, *Tiree* on 10th-11th, at Crossapol, *Tiree* on 20th, at The Lodge *Coll* on 21st and at Bridgend *Mid-Argyll* on 23rd. There were no Dec records.

GREENISH WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochiloides* 1293
Vagrant. Only two Argyll records: one found dead in Kintyre in May 1983 and one trapped at Sanda in July 1987.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER *Phylloscopus inornatus* Ceileiriche-buidhe 1300
Very rare & irregular passage migrant. Only five accepted previous records for Argyll: on Skerryvore in 1906, on Islay in Oct 1988, on Tiree in Oct 1998, on Islay in Oct 1999 and on Tiree in Sep/Oct 2001.

There were no records in 2002.

One found in a garden at Creag Mhor, L. Gruinart on 24th Sep 2003 remained until 26th Sep [C. McKay/T. ap Rheinallt et al]. This record has been accepted by ABRC.

WESTERN/EASTERN BONELLI'S WARBLER* *Phylloscopus bonelli/orientalis* 1307
Vagrant. A singing male on Islay in May 1976 is the only Argyll record. It could not be specifically assigned to either species but Western is more likely.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* Ceileiriche-coille 1308
Summer visitor, common in suitable woodlands.

Apr-May. 2002 The first of spring was at Rubha Riabhach (Appin) *North Argyll* on 20th Apr followed by birds at: Kilkenneth *Tiree* on 24th Apr, Blairmore (L. Long) *Cowal* on 26th Apr, Ardenavan (S. of Oyster Bar) *Mid-Argyll* on 29th Apr and L. Ba *Mull* on 30th Apr. One at Dunlossit Woods on 11th May was the only *Islay* record during 2002 and one was at Kilkenneth *Tiree* on 24th May.

2003 The first singing bird was at Taynish NNR on 23rd Apr, followed by birds at Tobermory *Mull* on 24th Apr and L. Melfort *Mid-Argyll* on 28th Apr.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 1 of 13 BBS squares (8%). There were 3 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. Widely reported on *Mull* during the breeding season.

2003 Not recorded in any of the 10 BBS squares. There were 5 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf 1990-2003 average of 7). They

were found in 14 of 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey during 2003 (lower densities than in the 1985 survey). Singing birds were reported in the Port Askaig area of *Islay* on 24th May and 10th Jun.

The only record in either year after the end of Jun was one at Loch na Keal *Mull* on 5th Jul.

COMMON CHIFFCHAFF (CHIFFCHAFF) *Phylloscopus collybita* Caifean 1311
Summer visitor and uncommon breeding species, scarce on the islands. More frequent on passage on some islands. Occasional records in winter.

Jan-May. 2002 A bird showing characteristics of the eastern *tristis* race (Siberian Chiffchaff) was in the hotel garden at Arinagour *Coll* on 16th Jan. The first spring migrant was at Toward *Cowal* on 26th Mar followed by: birds at Kilmory Castle *Mid-Argyll* on 27th Mar, Grasspoint *Mull* and Kiloran Bay *Colonsay* on 30th Mar. There were also records from Sanda Island and *Tiree* during Apr and May.

2003 An early migrant was at Lochan Tainish *Mid-Argyll* on 20th Mar. Other Mar records included singing birds at: Craighouse and Leargybreck *Jura* on 23rd, Connel *Mid-Argyll* on 28th and Kildalton Woods *Islay* on 29th. During Apr there were also records from: *Colonsay*, *Cowal*, *Kintyre*, *Mull*, *North Argyll* and *Tiree*.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 2 of 13 BBS squares (15%). Singing birds were reported during the breeding season from: Oban, Beinn Sgoltaire woods *Colonsay*, Arinagour *Coll*, Tayvallich *Mid-Argyll* and Ulva *Mid-Argyll*.

2003 Recorded in 1 of 10 BBS squares (10%). They were found in only 3 of 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey. Singing birds were also reported during the breeding season from: Glen Forsa *Mull*, *Colonsay*, The Lodge *Coll*, Bullwood (Dunoon) *Cowal* and Crarae Gardens (NW Of Minard) *Mid-Argyll*.

Sep-Oct. 2002 One in Ballygrant Woods on 23rd Sep was the only record for *Islay* during the year the last was at The Manse *Tiree* on 30th Sep.

2003 One was singing at Achnamara *Mid-Argyll* on 21st Sep. A late bird at The Lodge *Coll* 16th – 21st Nov had the plumage characteristics and call of the race *tristis* ('Siberian' Chiffchaff).

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus* Ceileiriche-giuthais 1312
Widespread and abundant summer visitor.

Apr-May. 2002 Arrival was early this year, with birds at: Totronald *Coll* and Tainish NNR on 4th Apr, Toward Point *Cowal* on 5th Apr, RSPB L. Gruinart and *Colonsay* (incl Oronsay) on 6th Apr. Widespread by the middle of Apr.

2003 Arrival was once again early, with birds at: Gruline *Mull* on 3rd Apr, Kilchattan *Colonsay* on 5th Apr, RSPB L. Gruinart and Tainish NNR on 6th, Oronsay on 8th Apr and Totronald *Coll* on 10th Apr. By 17th Apr birds were widespread.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 9 of 13 BBS squares (69%). A total of 83 territories was found in the CBC plots at Tainish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. On 16th May, 18 singing males/pairs were counted during a visit to Ulva *Mull*. One was singing at Moss on 6th Jun but was not heard thereafter and few if any stayed to breed on *Tiree*.

2003 Recorded in 8 of 10 BBS squares (80%). A total of 81 territories was found in the CBC plots at Tainish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf 1990-2003 average of 75). They were found in all the 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey during 2003; at slightly higher levels than during the similar survey

in 1985. Breeding was confirmed on Oronsay and only 2 singing males were located on Sanda Island (a dramatic decline from previous years). At least three males stayed from April in gorse at Heylipol church/Moss *Tiree* and one pair was noted carrying food on 12th, 18th and 25th (at least one pair bred).

Aug-Oct. 2002 Of 56 ringed at the CES on Aros Moss (Laggan) *Kintyre* in Aug; 39 (70%) were juvs. The maximum count on Sanda Island was 50 on 7th Aug. Late migrants on *Tiree* were at Balinoe and Hynish on 12th Oct and The Manse on 14th Oct.

2003 Late juveniles were seen at Kiloran *Colonsay* on 14th Sep and at Balemartine *Tiree* on 27th Sep. Birds were seen at The Lodge *Coll* on 20th Oct. Individuals on *Tiree* in Oct included: a very grey adult possibly of the Scandinavian race *acredula* at Heylipol on 20th and an immature at Balinoe; also on 20th.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus* Crìonag-bhuidhe 1314
Common breeding species and passage migrant. Scarce on Coll and Tiree.

Jan-Apr Three were at Baugh *Tiree* on 1st Mar, one at Balemartine *Tiree* on 3rd Mar one at Kenovay on 30th Mar 2002 and ones and twos on the coastal crags and river gorges of west *Jura* on 14th/15th Mar were presumably all migrants. In late Mar/early Apr 2003 a marked influx was evident on *Tiree* with up to 4 birds at more than four locations from 27th Mar-15th Apr.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 6 of 13 BBS squares (46%). A single territory was recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. A late migrant was at Crossapol, *Tiree* on 21st Jun.

2003 Recorded in 8 of 10 BBS squares (80%). A single territory was recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf 1990-2003 average of 1). They were found in 12 of 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey during 2003

Sep-Dec. 2002 The largest movement ever recorded on Sanda Island took place in mid-Sep, with a maximum count of at least 120 birds on 14th Sep. Other counts in double figures included: 10 at The Lodge *Coll* on 16th Sep, 15-20 at Aros Moss (Laggan) *Kintyre* on 8th Oct and 16 on Gigha on 17th Oct.

2003 At least 20 were seen regularly in the plantation at The Lodge *Coll* in Oct and Nov while they were common in all the woodland blocks visited at the N end of *Jura* on 4th-6th Dec.

FIRECREST *Regulus ignicapilla* Crìonag 1315
Rare visitor. The only Argyll records are for south Kintyre in 1980, 1981 and 1982 and Dalmally (N Argyll) in Dec 1999.

2002 An adult male was seen well in a small group of stunted conifers near Keills Chapel, L na Cille (L. Sween) on 12th Mar. It had apparently been in the vicinity for several days [J. Aitchison, P. Daw, C. Pollock]. This record has been accepted by ABRC.

There were no records in 2003.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata* Breacan-glas-sgiobalta 1335
Summer visitor breeding widely but sparsely.

May-Jun. 2002 First arrivals were at: Port Askaig *Islay* on 11th May, Ardfern *Mid-Argyll* on the 12th and Torloisk House *Mull* on the 13th. By the end of May there had

also been records from *Colonsay, Jura* and *Tiree*. Three single birds were present on *Tiree* during the first week of Jun but not thereafter.

2003 Arrival was earlier this year with singles at: Vaul *Tiree* on 30th Apr, Garmony *Mull* on 3rd May and Kilmichael *Mid-Argyll* on 9th May. By the end of May there had also been records from *Islay, Tiree* and *Kintyre* (Sanda Island).

Breeding. 2002 Not recorded in any of the 13 BBS squares. There were 3 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. Confirmed breeding was reported from Ardkinglas House *Cowal*, and from; Dalmally *North Argyll*, Fearnoch (Kilmichael) *Mid-Argyll* and Minard *Mid-Argyll*. Breeding season records also came from: *Coll, Islay, Gigha Kintyre, Mull* (several) and elsewhere in *Cowal* and *Mid-Argyll*.

2003 Not recorded in any of the 10 BBS squares. There were 2 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf 1990-2003 average of 4). Probable breeding was reported from Dervaig *Mull* and RSPB L. Gruinart with birds also present during the breeding season on: *Kintyre, Coll, Colonsay* and elsewhere on *Islay, Mull, and Mid-Argyll*. They were found in only 8 of 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey during 2003 (considerably lower densities than during the 1985 survey).

Aug-Sep The last records in 2002 were at Sanda Island on 6th Sep and Kilninian *Mull* on 8th Sep. In 2003 two late birds were recorded on *Tiree* on 27th - 29th Sep.:

RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula parva*

1343

Vagrant. Only two records for Argyll. First-winter birds were at Easter Ellister (Islay) in November 1974 and October 1975.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca* Breacan-glas

1349

Summer visitor and passage migrant breeding very locally in oak woods. Increase in breeding population in recent years is attributable to the Argyll Bird Club nest-box scheme but numbers may now be declining.

May. 2002 A male bird was recorded on passage at Balephetrish Bay *Tiree* on 21st May and a female was reported in the Ardura Woodlands *Mull* on 26th May.

2003 There were no spring records.

An individual ringed as a chick at Bonawe in June 2001 was controlled (recorded alive on passage) at Dungeness Bird Observatory (Kent) on 3rd May 2002.

Breeding. 2002 Eggs were laid in 5 boxes at Bonawe *N Argyll*. No young fledged from three of these after predation of eggs or young by Pine Marten; some may have fledged from one box with 7 young that were large enough to leave when it was attacked. Five young were fledged from one unpredated box. Overall productivity was thus 1.0 – 2.4 young/pair and 80% of boxes were attacked by Pine Marten. A pair was reported nesting in a box at Barnaline Lodge (nr. Loch Awe) *Mid-Argyll* on 5th June.

2003 One pair laid in the boxes at Bonawe *N Argyll* but the nest was predated at the egg stage by a Pine Marten making 2003 the worst year on record for this species. The future prospects for Pied Flycatcher as a breeding species in Argyll seem bleak at present.

Sep. 2002 A passage bird was recorded on Sanda Island *Kintyre* on 16th Sep

2003 A confiding immature bird fly-catching all day in a garden at Heylipol *Tiree* on 18th Sep had gone by the following morning.

Widespread and common resident breeding bird on mainland; local on some islands and rare on Colonsay, Tiree and Coll.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 2 of 13 BBS squares (15%). There were 2 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. Breeding pairs were also reported from Aros Park *Mull* and Colonsay House *Colonsay* (2 pairs).

2003 Recorded in one of 13 BBS squares (10%). There was a single territory in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf 1990-2003 average of 1.6). A family group of 4+ was at Colonsay House on 19th Jun but numbers generally on *Colonsay* were down on 2002. They were found in 12 of 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey during 2003 (lower densities than during the 1985 survey).

Flocks. Larger flocks reported in 2002 included: *ca25* at Bridgend Woods *Islay* on 21st Jan, 32 at Ballygrant Woods *Islay* on 18th Jun, 32 at Otter Ferry on 25th Jun with 22 on 16th Sept, 16 at Gorten *Mull* on 27th Sep, 30+ at Dalmally *Mid-Argyll* on 29th Sep, 20 in Dunoon on 5th Nov, 17 at Blarghour (L. Awe) on 17th Nov and 12 feeding on peanuts in a garden in Connel *Mid-Argyll* on 8th Dec. On 15th Sep 6 tribes totalling *ca70* were found on *Colonsay*, a remarkable number considering the species was absent from the island as recently as 1998.

Smaller numbers were reported in 2003: the only flocks of 10 or more being 12-14 at Tenga *Mull* on 9th Sep, 10 at Dervaig *Mull* on 1st Oct, 10 in Bridgend Woods on 23rd Nov and 30 at Craignure *Mull* on 1st Dec.

Widespread and very common resident breeder, but rare on Tiree and Coll.

Unusual numbers on *Coll* and *Tiree* in late 2002 included: a flock of 4 at Ruaig *Tiree* on 13th Oct 2002 and 9 or more on *Coll* on 15th Oct. There were still 5 at 2 locations on *Coll* on 5th Nov and one remained at Friesland on 24th Dec. In 2003: *Coll* had singles at Achamore on 11th Mar and The Lodge on 27th Oct as well as 5 or more at The Lodge on 17th Nov; whilst a bird wintered at Sandaig, *Tiree* from Nov. The only site reporting large numbers was a garden at Kintallan (Tayvallich) *Mid-Argyll*, which had a maximum of 30 on the lawn on 26th Dec 2003.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 6 of 13 BBS squares (46%). A total of 34 territories was recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. Eggs were laid in 38 boxes at Bonawe *N Argyll*. None fledged from 27 of these after predation by Pine Marten, two young fledged from one box after predation and about 67 young fledged from ten unpredated boxes. Thus overall productivity was 1.9 young/pair and 78% of occupied boxes were predated by Pine Marten.

2003 Recorded in 7 of 10 BBS squares (70%). A record total of 37 territories was recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf average 22 territories 1990-2003).

At least 12 pairs laid in the boxes at Bonawe *N Argyll*. Nine were predated by Pine Marten and/or Great Spotted Woodpecker. One clutch was deserted and two pairs fledged young successfully. They were found in all of the 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey during 2003 (at higher densities than during the 1985 survey).

GREAT TIT *Parus major* Currac-bhaintighearna

1464

Widespread and very common resident breeder, but absent from Tiree and Coll.

A single bird at Arinagour *Coll* on 5th Nov 2002 was the only record from *Coll* or *Tiree* during 2002-2003. A count of 16 at a bird feeder at Kintallan (Tayvallich) *Mid-Argyll* was unusually high.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 4 of 13 BBS squares (31%). A total of 14 territories was recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*.

Eggs were laid in 17 boxes at Bonawe *North Argyll*. None fledged from six and 4 fledged from two boxes all after predation by Pine Marten, and about 67 young fledged from 9 unpredated boxes. Thus overall productivity was 4.2 young/pair, and 47% of boxes were attacked by Pine Marten.

2003 Recorded in 5 of 10 BBS squares (50%). A record total of 20 territories was recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (*cf* average 9 territories 1990-2003).

At least 3 pairs bred in the boxes at Bonawe *N Argyll* and all fledged young successfully. They were found in all of the 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey during 2003 (at higher densities than during the 1985 survey).

CRESTED TIT *Lophophanes cristatus* Gulpag-stuic

1454

Vagrant. Only two Argyll records: one near Water of Tulla, North Argyll in November 1991 and one at Tobermory Mull in October/November 2002.

On 19th Oct 2002 one was seen and photographed feeding on peanuts in a garden at Tobermory *Mid-Argyll*. It was seen there again: 20th – 21st Oct, 28th Oct and 9th Nov [C Macintyre, A. Spellman]. It was not possible to ascertain the race to which it belonged so it is difficult to speculate on the origin of this very unexpected individual.

This record has been accepted by ABRC.

No records in 2003.

COAL TIT *Periparus ater* Smutag

1461

Widespread and very common resident breeding bird, except on Tiree and Coll. Some dispersal noted in autumn.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 5 of 13 BBS squares (38%). A total of 19 territories was recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*.

2003 Recorded in 5 of 10 BBS squares (50%). A total of 15 territories was recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (*cf* average 9 territories 1990-2003). They were found in all of the 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey during 2003 (at lower densities than during the 1985 survey).

During 2002-2003 there were records of up to 3 birds at the Lodge *Coll* throughout the year, including a singing bird on 12th Apr 2002, but with no definite evidence of breeding. There were no records from *Tiree* in either year.

WILLOW TIT *Poecile montanus* Currac-ghiuthais

1442

Vagrant. The only Argyll record is of one near Water of Tulla, North Argyll in June 1991.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

EURASIAN NUTHATCH (NUTHATCH) *Sitta europaea* 1479
Vagrant to Argyll with only three accepted records: at Dalmally (N Argyll) in Jun 1975, at Lochgilphead (Mid-Argyll) in winter 1975-76 and at Glenbranter (Cowal) in Apr 1999.
No accepted records in 2002 or 2003.

EURASIAN TREECREEPER (TREECREEPER) *Certhia familiaris* Snaigear 1486
Widespread and common resident breeder, except on Tiree and Coll.
Up to 2 at The Lodge *Coll* from 27th Oct-3rd Dec were the only records from *Coll* or *Tiree* during 2002-2003.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 1 of 13 BBS squares (8%). There were a record 8 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*.

2003 Not recorded in any of the 10 BBS squares. There were 3 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf 1990-2003 average of 4.5). They were found in all the 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey during 2003 (at lower densities than during the 1985 survey).

GOLDEN ORIOLE *Oriolus oriolus* 1508
Rare and irregular passage migrant. All 14 Argyll records 1980-2001 were in spring (15th Apr to 11th Jun).

No records in 2002.

A male was heard singing at Taynish NNR for ca20 minutes on 31st May 2003. Remarkably, this was the fourth record of Golden Oriole at this site, the first being in May 1992.

RED-BACKED SHRIKE *Lanius collurio* 1515
Very rare passage migrant. Only 6 Argyll records during 1980-2003: at Lagg (Jura) in Sep 1986, Kilnaughton Bay (Islay) in Oct 1987, on Mull in May/June 1992, at Dalrannoch (N Argyll) in Jul 1994, Aros Moss (Kintyre) in May 1998 and near Pennyghael (Mull) in Jun 1998.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

LESSER GREY SHRIKE *Lanius minor* 1519
Vagrant. Only two Argyll records: one at Salen, Mull in September 1974 and one on Coll in November 1988.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor* Feòladair-glas 1520
Increasingly rare and irregular winter visitor; only 4 records during 1985-2001.

No records in 2002

One near L. Mor (nr. Muasdale) *Kintyre* on 10th Jan 2003 was the first Argyll record since 1996 and one of only 16 in the past 30 years.

WOODCHAT SHRIKE *Lanius senator* 1523
Vagrant. The only Argyll record was a juv. at Kilnaughton Bay (Islay) on 16th Sep 1996.
No records in 2002 or 2003.

EURASIAN JAY (JAY) *Garrulus glandarius* Sgraicheap

1539

Locally distributed breeder, on the mainland only. Some immigration in autumn. All records required.

There were reports of single birds at: Aros Park *Mull* on 26th Jun and 25th Jul 2002 and one was reported from the N end of *Jura* at the end of Oct 2002. In Oct 2003 two were seen at Lochbuie *Mull* on 12th and 2 at Fishnish on 28th.

The largest gatherings reported were 8 flying over Dunoon on 24th Aug 2002, 8 during a one mile walk S from Blarghour (L. Awe) on 13th Nov 2002, max. 5 at Blairmore (L Long) *Cowal* on 12th Dec and at least 15 in a loose flock near Melldalloch *Cowal* on 31st Aug 2003.

Breeding. During 2002-2003 there were breeding season records from more than 20 different locations in *Mid-Argyll* as well as 4 in *Cowal* and one in *North Argyll*. They were found in 8 of 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey during 2003 (numbers having increased since the 1985 survey).

MAGPIE *Pica pica* Pioghaid

1549

Local resident breeder in Cowal, rare elsewhere. All records required.

A first year bird seen at Ardtalla on 22nd May 2002 was the first record for *Islay* since 1992. It was seen at various locations on the island until early in 2003. As usual birds were seen in *Cowal* throughout the year at Dunoon, Blairmore (L. Long), Carrick Castle and the Toward area. Elsewhere birds were seen (singles unless otherwise stated) at: Castlesween *Mid-Argyll* (late Jan to early Feb 2002), Craignish Castle *Mid-Argyll* (2 during Apr 2002), Kiel Crofts *North Argyll* (4th Apr 2002), Barcaldine *North Argyll* (5th Apr 2002), Pottie *Mull* (7th Apr 2002), Lochawe *Mid-Argyll* (15th Dec 2002), Island of Danna *Mid-Argyll* (19th Apr 2003) and near Inveraray *Mid-Argyll* (10th Nov 2003).

RED-BILLED CHOUGH (CHOUGH) *Pyrhcorax pyrrhcorax* Cathag-dhearg-chasach

1559

The Argyll islands hold almost all of the Scottish population. Islay is the stronghold, with smaller numbers on Jura and Colonsay and a so far unsuccessful pair on Mull. All records away from Islay required.

Breeding. A complete census of Choughs in Scotland during 2002 found a total of 82 pairs in Argyll. Of these breeding was confirmed for 65, 5 probably bred and 12 were present with no evidence of breeding. This represents a 26% increase since the last full census in 1998. The majority were on *Islay* (a total of 64 pairs in all categories). The only others in Scotland were a single pair in Galloway. For full details see: Finney, S. K., & Jardine, D. C. 2003. The distribution and Status of the Red-billed Chough in Scotland 2002. *Scottish Birds* 24: 11-17. There was no full census in 2003 but there were 18 occupied sites on *Colonsay*. Six pairs failed early or did not lay, 7 failed to fledge young and 8 successful pairs reared 19 young [D. C. Jardine].

Larger gatherings during 2002-2003 included: 68 coming in to roost at Kilchoman *Islay* on 20th Jul 2002, 57 feeding on kelp fly lava on Oronsay on 10th Dec 2002, 42 at roost at Kilnave *Islay* on 13th Dec 2002, 50 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 21st Feb 2003, 54 feeding on mining bee larvae on Oronsay on 26th Oct 2003, 56 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 13th Nov 2003 and 20 mobbing a Peregrine Falcon on Oronsay on 29th Nov 2003.

WESTERN JACKDAW (JACKDAW) *Corvus monedula* Cathag 1560
Resident breeding bird, common throughout much of Argyll, but scarce on Mull and does not breed on Tiree or Coll.

Records for *Coll* included: 11 at The Roundhouse on 15th Oct 2002, 2 at Fasachd on 8th Dec 2002 and 3 at Cliad on 19th Nov 2003. On *Tiree*, there were 4 at Crossapol in Oct/Nov 2002 and an unprecedented influx occurred in autumn 2003. The first to arrive were 26 at Ruaig on 23rd Oct and numbers peaked at 100 there on 24th Oct. Although these had all gone by 25th Oct, 80 appeared at Miodar on 1st Nov and the last were 16 at Clachan on 9th Nov. There were few *Mull* records away from Iona.

Larger flocks reported included: 162 at Octovullin *Islay* on 14th Feb 2002, 230 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 4th Sep 2002, ca100 at Kilfinan Bay *Cowal* on 3rd Nov 2002 and 200+ at Poltalloch *Mid-Argyll* on 22nd Nov 2003.

Breeding. Birds were present during the 2002 breeding season on *Jura*, several pairs nested on Machrihanish Airfield *Kintyre* in 2002 and a pair bred in the church tower at Dervaig *Mull* in 2003.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus* Ròcas 1563
Resident breeding bird, common throughout much of Argyll, but scarce on Mull and does not breed on Colonsay, Tiree or Coll. Post-breeding influx of juveniles to some islands, e.g. Mull and Tiree.

Recorded outwith the normal breeding areas during 2002-2003 as follows:

- *Coll*: 9 at Cliad in Nov 2002, 5 flocks totalling 83 birds at 3 locations in Dec 2002, 32 at Gallanach in Jan 2003 and 9 at Cliad in Nov and Dec 2003.

- *Tiree*: 11 at Crossapol in Nov 2002, 2 at Whitehouse in Nov 2002 and 2 at Barrapol Dunes in Jan 2003.

- Oronsay: 4 in Apr 2002 and singles in Apr and Nov 2003.

Reports of flocks of 100 birds or more included: 130 at L. Gruinart on 24th Feb 2002, 200 at Rockfield *Islay* on 9th Jul 2002, 400+ at Bleachfield (Laggan) *Kintyre* on 13th Jul 2002 and 270 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 12th Sep 2003.

Breeding. In 2002 the annual survey of rookeries on *Islay* produced a total of 399 nests at 8 active rookeries (cf 442 at 9 rookeries in 2001) [MAO]. No figures were available for 2003 at the time of writing. A rookery next to the school on Iona had ca12 nests in Apr 2002.

CARRION CROW/HOODED CROW From September 2002 these forms have been regarded as separate species: Carrion Crow *Corvus corone* and Hooded Crow *Corvus cornix*.

Hybrid Crows. Many crows seen in Argyll show mixed characteristics of both species. These are common in: *Mid-Argyll* and *Cowal* around L. Fyne, *Kintyre* and have also been reported on *Mull*

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone* Feannag-dhubh 1567
Most crows in Cowal are this species and it is also spreading into Kintyre and Mid-Argyll with a broad area of hybridisation. There are occasional records from outwith this area of birds showing all the characteristics of corone.

Away from the main breeding area in *Cowal*, birds showing *C. corone* characteristics were found during 2002-2003 at: 2 sites on *Coll*, *Colonsay*, Sanda Island

Kintyre, 2 sites on *Mull* and several sites on *Islay*. In *Mid-Argyll* they were found in Knapdale, L. Awe, Tayvallich and quite frequently around L. Fyne.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in one of 13 BBS squares (8%). No significant records in 2003.

HOODED CROW *Corvus cornix* Feannag-ghlas

1567.2

Widespread and very common resident breeding species.

Flocks of 50 or more were reported at: Tayinloan (50 on 1st Jan 2002), Cruib *Jura* (52 on 1st Jun 2002), L. Feochan *Mid-Argyll* (76 on 12th Jun 2002), Cliad *Coll* (50 on 25th Sep 2002) and Paltalloch *Mid-Argyll* (50 on 22nd Nov 2003).

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 7 of 13 BBS squares (54%). There was a single territory in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*.

2003 Recorded in 6 of 10 BBS squares (60%). There were 3 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf 1990-2003 average of 1.6). They were found in all the 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey during 2003.

COMMON RAVEN (RAVEN) *Corvus corax* Fitheach

1572

Common resident breeding species. Large flocks may occur, especially in winter.

Counts of 30 or more during 2002-2003 included: 88 at Gott tip *Tiree* on 1st May 2002, 70 moulting immatures between Machrihanish and Cnoc Moy *Kintyre* in May/June 2002, 70 flying to roost at Bridgend *Islay* on 28th Jul 2002, 32 mobbing several Golden Eagles over the Paps of *Jura* on 23rd Sep 2002, 40 at Ben Feall *Coll* on 12th Nov 2002, 73 flying E over RSPB L. Gruinart on 16th Dec 2002, 50 flying N over Moine Mhor to roost at Dunadd on 6th Jan 2003 and 70+ at L. Frisa *Mull* on 12th Sep 2003. Two birds were seen to fly from *Mull* to Arinagour, *Coll* on 11th Dec 2003.

At Aros Moss (Laggan) *Kintyre* birds were seen carrying golf balls lifted from the nearby golf course on several occasions during the summer of 2002!

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 4 of 13 BBS squares (31%). Many occupied sites were recorded throughout Argyll during the Peregrine Survey but only sites where the breeding outcome was accurately known are included in table 43.1. Seen daily with juvs on Lunga, Treshnish Isles in Jun and may well have bred.

Table 43.1 *Outcome of monitored Common Raven territories in Argyll in 2002.*

Area	Sites checked	Territories occupied	Ts. known to have fledged young	Min. no. of young fledged	No. of young per successful territory
SW Mull ¹	18	17	11	30	2.72
Colonsay ²		10	7	20	2.85
Jura		1	1	1	1.00
Islay		6	5	8	3.00
North Argyll		2	2	7	3.50
Mid-Argyll		6	6	20	3.33
Kintyre		2	2	7	3.50
Cowal ³		52	16	42	2.62
Total		96	51	148	2.90

¹ Outcome not known for 5 pairs.

² Complete survey of Colonsay and Oronsay located 10 pairs: two pairs reared no young, 7 reared 20+ young, outcome not known for one.

³ Fifty-two sites were occupied. Out of 30 sites that were fully monitored 14 pairs either did not breed or failed on eggs/small young and 16 successfully reared 42 young. On *Tiree* an incomplete survey found 4 active sites in Feb/Mar but breeding outcome not known.

2003 Recorded in 4 of 10 BBS squares (40%). Family party of 2 ads. and 4 juvs. seen on Lunga Treshnish Isles in Jun but no nest found.

Table 43.2 *Outcome of monitored Common Raven territories in Argyll in 2003.*

Area	Territories checked	Territories occupied	Ts. known to have fledged young	Min. no. of young fledged	No. of young per successful territory
<i>Tiree</i> ¹		2	1	4	4.00
SW Mull ²		14	12	37	3.08
Colonsay ³		13	9	33	3.66
Islay ⁴		7	7	26	3.71
Cowal		13 ⁵	8	18	2.25
Total		49	37	118	3.19

¹ No complete census carried out but 7-8 pairs recorded. Breeding outcome only known for two sites (one site failed and one successfully fledged b/4) - these two are included in the table above (JB).

² At least 16 sites were occupied. Outcome of breeding attempts not known at 2 sites and are not included in the table above.

³ The most successful season recorded in over 10 years of monitoring on Colonsay, no doubt because of benign March and fantastic April with chicks well grown by the time the weather turned poor in May (DCJ).

⁴ One tree site fledged b/5 (J How).

⁵ The figures in the table include a tree nest that failed. Not included in the table above are: (1) an additional 6 pairs that nested and were successful although the brood size was not accurately known and (2) another 4 pairs that nested but the outcome was not known.

COMMON STARLING (STARLING) *Sturnus vulgaris* Druid 1582
Locally common resident breeding species. A localised post-breeding influx of juveniles occurs on Mull. Numbers boosted by winter visitors.

2002 Larger flocks reported during the year included: 500 at Totronald *Coll* on 16th Jan, 1,200 at Heylipol *Tiree* on 3rd Feb (included 2 leucistic birds with white tails), 305 on Oronsay on 26th Feb, 450 at Ardnave on 5th Aug, 1,400 at Ruaig *Tiree* on 7th Aug, 1,200 on the machair at Hough *Tiree* on 9th Sep, 1,200 at Torastan *Coll* on 16th Sep, and 2,000 at Lyrabus *Islay* on 29th Oct. On 7th Oct a flock of 120 were seen squeezing close together on wires at Danna *Mid-Argyll* as a Sparrowhawk made repeated passes at them.

2003 Larger flocks included: 793 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 7th Jan, 400 at Ruaig *Tiree* on 7th Feb, 1,000 nr Bowmore harbour *Islay* at dusk on 21st Jun, 650 at L. a' Phuill on 7th Jul, 1,100 at Ruaig *Tiree* on 8th Oct, 800 at L. an Eilein *Tiree* on 3rd Nov, 600 at Arileod *Coll* on 4th Nov and 800 at Heylipol *Tiree* on 3rd Dec.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 5 of 13 BBS squares (38%). There were 7 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. Breeding was confirmed on Lunga, Treshnish Isles.

2003 Recorded in 2 of 10 BBS squares (20%). There were 3 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (*cf* 1990-2003 average of 2). Breeding was confirmed on Lunga, Treshnish Isles and on Oronsay.

ROSE-COLOURED STARLING *Sturnus roseus* Druid-dhearg 1584
Rare visitor, mostly in Jul and Aug. There have been 9 Argyll records (one possibly involving a returning bird from the previous year) during 1980-2001; all but one were adults.

Widespread invasions occurred in Europe in 2002 and 2003, resulting in record numbers in the UK. Argyll had its best year ever, with 11 sightings accepted by the SBRC (Table 44). There were more Argyll records of this exotic visitor in 2002 and 2003 than over the previous 20 years combined.

Table 44. *Accepted records of Rose-coloured Starlings in Argyll in 2002 and 2003.*

Date	Location	No.	Comments	Observer(s)
8 th – 12 th Jun 2002	Sandaig <i>Tiree</i>	1	First summer. Fed on beetles emerging from machair in loose association with Common Starlings	J. Bowler
16 th – 19 th Jun 2002	Connel <i>Mid-Argyll</i>	1	Adult in garden	M. & G. McBay
21 st Jun 2002	Bowmore <i>Islay</i>	1	Possibly female – apparently present for a week prior to this date	J How, T. ap Rheinallt et al
29 th -30 th Jun 2002	Castlesween <i>Mid-Argyll</i>	1	Adult - apparently present for a week prior to this date	T. Daniels, P. Daw, J. Dickson
29 th Oct – 12 th Oct 2002	Bowmore <i>Islay</i>	1	Adult –or poss 2 nd cal. yr. Poss. same bird as seen in Jun	J Cameron, T. ap Rheinallt et al
21 st - 26 th Oct and 17 th Nov 2002	Kintra <i>Islay</i>	1	Juv. with flock of Common Starlings	J. & F. Dickson, A. W. Reid et al
21 st – 23 rd May 2003	Kilmelford <i>Mid-Argyll</i>	1	Adult	J. Dickson
27 th May – 8 th Jun 2003	Seil Island <i>Mid-Argyll</i>	1	Adult	W. Jackson
16 th Jun 2003	Portnahaven <i>Islay</i>	1	Adult – probably first seen on 15 th Jun	T. ap Rheinallt <i>et al</i>
19 th – 20 th Sep 2003	Crossapol <i>Tiree</i>	1	Adult male in garden – had apparently been present for 2 weeks	M. Hutchinson, I. Brown, J. Bowler, J. Hunter
1 st Oct 2003	Ballymeana ch <i>Islay</i>	1	Immature	R. Youngman, J Hastings

A striking species such as this is often reported by casual bird watchers who do not provide formal descriptions and these records are therefore not accepted. There were several such additional sightings during 2002, including reports from Gigha, Iona and Lismore. Most if not all of these were probably genuine.

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus* Gealbhonn 1591
Resident breeding bird commonly associated with human habitation, so distribution rather localised in sparsely inhabited areas.

Larger flocks reported during 2002 included: 80 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 15th Feb, 75 feeding in long grass on Oronsay on 17th Aug, 142 at Whitehouse *Tiree* on 26th Aug, 70 at Balephetrish *Tiree* on 5th Sep, 100 at Roundhouse *Coll* on 17th Sep and 60 on stubbles at Crossapol *Tiree* on 29th Oct.

In 2003 the only flocks of any size reported were: 40 on Oronsay on 18th Jan, 60 at Kenovay *Tiree* on 21st Jul, 70 at Ruaig *Tiree* on 11th Aug and 70 at Whitehouse, *Tiree* on 15th-29th Sep.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 2 of 13 BBS squares (15%). At least 20 pairs bred on Oronsay. Thirty in a garden at Dervaig *Mull* in summer included many juvs.

2003 Recorded in 1 of 10 BBS squares (10%). Thirty in a garden at Dervaig *Mull* in spring included many juvs.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus* Gealbhonn-nan-craobh 1598
Currently a very scarce visitor, last recorded on Iona in Jun 1996. All records required.
No records in 2002 or 2003.

RED-EYED VIREO* *Passer montanus* 1633
Vagrant. The only record is of one at Arinagour (Coll) in Oct 1992
No records in 2002 or 2003.

COMMON CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs* Breacan-beithe 1636
Abundant resident breeder, except on Tiree. Small numbers breed on Coll. Foraging flocks gather outwith the breeding season, their numbers augmented by winter visitors.

During 2002-2003 up to 10 were seen on *Tiree* from late Sep to the end of Mar. Larger numbers were also found on *Coll*, during winter, including: 33 at The Lodge on 19th Jan 2002 and 40 at The Roundhouse on 17th Nov 2003.

Larger flocks reported included: 200 at Tayinloan on 1st Jan 2002, 200+ at Benmore Lodge (L. Ba) *Mull* on 24th Jul 2002, 350 at Carnduncan *Islay* on 10th Mar 2003 and 350 at the Add Estuary on 12th Sep 2003.

In early spring in 2002 and 2003 an almost totally pink morph male was seen at Otter Ferry. All the normally white, grey and black pigment was replaced by pink. This followed sightings at Evanachan Otter Ferry in 2001.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 9 of 13 BBS squares (69%). A record 40 territories were recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. Two were in song at The Lodge *Coll* on 13th Apr.

2003 Recorded in 7 of 10 BBS squares (70%). A record 40 territories were again recorded in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf average 29 territories 1990-2003). They were found in all of the 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey during 2003 (slightly higher levels than during the 1985 survey).

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla* Breacan-caorainn 1638
Uncommon winter visitor in varying numbers (only small numbers in recent years). Occasional summer records.

Jan-May. 2002 Records were of single birds: in Jan at: Furnace *Mid-Argyll*, Tobermory *Mull* and Carsaig *Mid-Argyll* with 7 in a mixed finch flock at Cluanach *Islay* on 20th Jan.

2003 Single birds in Feb, at Cairnbaan *Mid-Argyll* and RSPB L. Gruinart with a late female at Arileod *Coll* on 9th May.

Summering birds. No summering birds were found in 2002 or 2003.

Oct-Dec. 2002 Most records were during Oct. A first winter male was feeding on peanuts at Tullochgorm (Minard) *Mid-Argyll* on 12th, 3 were at Hynish *Tiree* and one at The Roundhouse *Coll* on 15th. After this singles were seen: on *Tiree* on 17th and 19th Oct and at L. Don on 22nd Oct and 2nd Nov.

2003 More records than usual, starting with 5 at Arinagour *Coll* on 13th Oct. After this up to 3 were reported from various locations on: *Coll*, *Colonsay*, *Islay*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull* and *Tiree*. Higher numbers were 20 flying N over RSPB L. Gruinart on 27th Oct and 7 at The Roundhouse *Coll* on 6th Nov.

GREENFINCH *Carduelis chloris* Glaisean-daraich 1649
Locally common resident breeding species. Scarce on some islands.

Larger flocks reported during 2002 included: 80 at Braigo *Islay* on 20th Jan, 43 in a garden at Tayvallich on 18th Aug, 46 at Upper Killeyan *Islay* on 9th Sep, ca100 at Tayinloan on 19th Sep and 40 at Nerabus *Islay* on 22nd Oct. In 2003 there were: 50 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 12th Sep, 21 on Oronsay on 16th Oct, 25 at The Roundhouse *Coll* on 17th Nov and 45 at Connel *Mid-Argyll* on 7th Dec.

Small numbers were recorded in winter 2002 and 2003 on Oronsay and *Tiree*

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in one of 13 BBS squares (8%). A pair were present in a garden at Vaul *Tiree* on 31st May 2002 but were not seen subsequently.

2003 Recorded in 2 of 10 BBS squares (20%).

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis* Lasair-choille 1653
Localised resident breeder. Absent as a breeding species from Colonsay, Tiree and Coll. Some emigration in autumn.

Larger flocks reported during 2002 included: 40+ at Otter Ferry on 1st Sep, 40 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 19th Sep and 35 in the Add Estuary on 13th Oct. In 2003 there were: 60+ New Danna (L. Sween) on 21st Sep, 60 at Otter Ferry on 21st Sep, ca40 at Wester Ellister *Islay* on 1st Oct and 100 in small flocks along the shore at Otter Ferry on 17th Oct.

Flocks of: 19 at Arileod *Coll* on 14th Oct 2002, 13 at Balemartine *Tiree* on 20th Oct 2003 and 9 on Oronsay on 17th Dec 2003 were unusually high counts for these islands.

Breeding. 2002 Not recorded in any of the 13 BBS squares. There a single territory in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*.

2003 Recorded in 4 of 10 BBS squares (40%). There were 2 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf 1990-2003 average. of 1).

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus* Gealag-bhuidhe

1654

Resident and locally common breeding species but absent from Tiree and Coll except as an occasional winter visitor. Numbers fluctuate from year to year.

The only flocks of 30 or more reported were: 100+ at Dalnaha (L. Spelve) *Mull* on 11th Sep 2002, 30+ at L. Glashan *Mid-Argyll* on 14th Sep 2002, 35 at Otter Ferry on 5th Oct 2002, ca60 at Blarghour (L. Awe) on 9th Nov 2002, 30+ at Ardfern *Mid-Argyll* on 14th Oct 2003 and 60 at Blarghour on 11th Nov 2003. The only records for *Coll* and *Tiree* were at Arinagour *Coll* (max 6 on 16th Oct 2003) and The Lodge *Coll* (one on 16th Nov 2003).

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 5 of 13 BBS squares (38%).

2003 Recorded in 3 of 10 BBS squares (30%). They were found in all of the 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey during 2003 (at lower densities than during the 1985 survey).

LINNET *Carduelis cannabina* Gealan-lìn

1660

Localised resident breeder. Flocking in autumn and winter. Absent from some islands in winter including Tiree and Coll.

During 2002-2003 there were frequent reports of flocks of 100 or more on *Islay* especially during Aug and Sep. The highest counts were: 270 at RSPB L. Gruinart on 10th Sep 2003 and 350 at Rockside on 13th Aug 2002. Other counts of 100 or more at this time included: ca100 on Sanda Island on 7th Aug 2002, 100 on *Coll* on 24th Jul 2003, 170 feeding on arable stubbles on Oronsay on 14th Sep 2003 and 195 in two flocks at Ruaig *Tiree* on 30th Sep 2002.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 2 of 13 BBS squares (15%). There were a record 6 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. At least 30 pairs bred on *Tiree*, 5 on Oronsay and 25 were found on Sanda Island.

2003 Recorded in 2 of 10 BBS squares (20%). There were 4 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (cf average 3 territories 1990-2003). Numbers breeding on Sanda Island were lower, with a maximum of 15 pairs but an estimated 40-50 bred on *Tiree* with up to 20 on *Coll*. A casual survey at RSPB L. Gruinart found 22 singing birds in Jun.

During 2002-2003 there were also records during the breeding season from *Jura*, *Mull* and *Gigha Kintyre*.

There were no records at any time of the year from *Cowal* or *North Argyll*, in either year.

TWITE *Carduelis flavirostris* Gealan-beinne

1662

Localised resident breeding species, found especially on the islands. Flocking in low-lying arable and coastal areas, Aug onwards. Some evidence to suggest emigration from Argyll in autumn, although there may also be an influx of wintering birds to some areas.

During 2002-2003 there were frequent reports during autumn and winter of flocks of 50 or more on all the main islands. The highest counts for each island were: 210 at Cliad *Coll* on 15th Dec 2003, 153 at a small area of saltmarsh on Oronsay on 23rd Sep 2003, 250 at Portnahaven *Islay* on 22nd Oct 2002, 80 on Sanda Island on 19th Sep 2002 and 310 at The Reef *Tiree* on 4th Nov 2002. Smaller numbers were found on *Mull* where the highest counts were 55 at L. Caol (nr Bunessan) on 18th Sep 2002 and 65 at the N end of Iona on 26th Sep 2002.

A flock of 25 were found on the islet of Garbh Reisa in the Sound of *Jura* on 28th Sep 2002.

The largest flocks reported on the mainland were: 70 at Tayinloan on 24th Nov 2002, 155 at Machrihanish SBO on 18th Sep 2003 and 250 in the Add Estuary on 12th Sep 2003.

There were no records at any time of the year from *Cowal* in either year and the only report from *North Argyll* concerned a few (<10) on Lismore in Aug 2003.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 2 of 13 BBS squares (15%). On *Colonsay*, 30 pairs were located with *ca5* on Oronsay. Approximately 12 pairs were found on Sanda Island and 6 bred at RSPB Smaul *Islay*. Pairs were present during the breeding season at RSPB L. Gruinart and at Upper Killeyan *Islay*. A female netted on Lunga with a well developed brood patch indicated probable breeding on the Treshnish Isles. Scattered pairs were found: on *Jura*, along the west coast of *Mid-Argyll* (incl. Knapdale) and on *Mull* (incl. Iona) during the Peregrine 2002 survey.

2003 Recorded in 2 of 10 BBS squares (20%). On *Colonsay*, 42 pairs were located with 2 on Oronsay. Five pairs were found at RSPB L. Gruinart during a casual survey, 10 were found on Sanda Island, adults with juvs were present on Lunga Treshnish Isles and pairs bred widely on *Coll* and *Tiree*. Two pairs were found on Scarba in Jun and birds were also seen on Staffa during the breeding season.

LESSER REDPOLL *Carduelis cabaret* Dearcan-seilich 1663
Localised resident breeder. Numbers fluctuate from year to year. Flocking occurs in autumn and winter.

The only counts of 20 or more reported were: 20 at Claggain Bay *Islay* on 26th May 2002, 47 at Aros Moss *Kintyre* on 3rd Aug 2002, 20+ at Lochgair *Mid-Argyll* on 12th Sep 2002, 30 in Kilmichael Glen *Mid-Argyll* on 13th Oct 2002 and 20 at New Danna (L. Sween) on 21st Sep 2003.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 3 of 13 BBS squares (23%). There were 5 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*. Well distributed along the NW coast of *Jura* with males recorded at 19 separate sites in May. Six pairs were found on *Colonsay*, 2 nested on Sanda Island and breeding pairs were found at 5 or more sites on *Islay*. Singing males or pairs were found at 3 or more sites on *Coll* during the breeding season and birds were present during the breeding season on Lismore *North Argyll*.

2003 Recorded in 3 of 10 BBS squares (30%). There were 5 territories in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (*cf* average. 4 territories 1990-2003). A casual survey at RSPB L. Gruinart found 2 breeding pairs and 3 bred on Sanda Island. At least 5 pairs were present on *Coll* in May 2003 of which 3 bred. They were found in 11 of the 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey during 2003 (at higher densities than during the 1985 survey).

During 2002-2003 there were records during the breeding season from all recording areas. Birds were present on *Tiree* during May in both years but with no proof of breeding.

COMMON REDPOLL *Carduelis flammea* (includes Mealy Redpoll *C. f. flammea* & Greenland Redpoll *C. f. rostrata*) 1663.1
Scarce passage migrant and irregular winter visitor.

The only two accepted records concern a juv/first winter bird (*flammea*) with Lesser Redpoll at L. Gorm *Islay* 28th Sep 2002 [T. ap Rheinallt] and one at Balephuill *Tiree*

(not assigned to race) on 1st Nov 2003 [J. Bowler]. Both records have been accepted by ABRC.

ARCTIC REDPOLL *Carduelis hornemanni* 1664
Vagrant. The only accepted Argyll record was one of the race exilipes on Islay on 22nd Sep 2001.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

COMMON CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra* Cam-ghob 1666
Numbers, distribution and breeding season vary depending on abundance of conifer cone crops. Highly irruptive species with large flocks sometimes moving to locate a new seed area, usually in summer.

2002. In Jan, a pair were calling at Laggan Forest Islay on 19th, 10 were seen at Fearnoch (Kilmichael) *Mid-Argyll* on 20th and 12+ (incl 2 adult males) were feeding on Japanese/Hybrid Larch cones at Otter Ferry on 24th. A pair including a singing male was at Killiechronan (Gruline) *Mull* on 5th Apr and a flock of 13 at Pennygown (Nr Gruline) *Mull* on 15th Apr included 3 adult males. Five were seen at Victoria Bridge (L. Tulloch) *North Argyll* on 12th May. Records in Jun included: 8 at Fearnoch (Kilmichael) *Mid-Argyll* on 1st, a pair at Kilmaha (L. Awe) on 4th, 20 at L. Frisa *Mull* on 10th and 2 at L. Arail (Knapdale) *Mid-Argyll* on 15th. In Jul birds were present in the Glen Gorm/Tobermory area of *Mull* until 23rd, 4 were at Cairnbaan *Mid-Argyll* on 21st and 17 (incl 2+ adult males) were feeding on European Larch at Otter Ferry on 26th.

There were no further records until Sep, when freshly eaten cones were found at Colonsay House *Colonsay* on 15th, 9 were in a garden at Vault *Tiree* on 16th and one was seen and several heard at Fishnish *Mull* on 23rd.

2003. Singles were recorded: flying over Colonsay House on 20th Apr, over Cairnbaan on 26th Apr and at Knock *Mull* on 24th Jun. Two were at Lettermore (L. Frisa) *Mull* on 10th May and 4+ were feeding on Japanese/Hybrid Larch at Largiemore (L. Fyne) *Cowal* on 1st Jul. A flock of 15 calling birds were in forestry N of Furnace *Mid-Argyll* on 2nd Jul, 3 (a pair with poss. juv.) fed on Pitch Pine cones at Baravullin (Benderloch) *North Argyll* on 8th Jul and single birds were at Kilchoman Woods and Sunderland Plantation *Islay* on 16th Oct.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 2 of 13 BBS squares (15%). Pairs with immatures were seen at Arichamish (L. Awe) in Jun and at Otter Ferry in Jul.

2003 Not recorded in any of the 10 BBS squares (20%). They were found in 5 of the 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey during 2003.

COMMON ROSEFINCH *Carpodacus erythrinus* 1679
Very rare visitor, chiefly in summer. Eight previous records; on Iona in Jun 1989 & Jun/Jul 1990, Colonsay in Jun 1994, Tiree in Sep 1996, Oronsay in Nov 1996, Tiree in Jun 1998, Mid-Argyll in Jun 1999 and Islay in Jun 1999. .

No acceptable records in 2002 or 2003.

BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* Corcan-coille 1710
Locally common resident breeder. Absent from Tiree, Coll and Colonsay and irregular on Gigha.

A single bird was on Sanda Island on 14th Sep 2002, small numbers were reported from *Islay* and there were widespread records from *Mull* but there were no reports from any of the other islands.

The only counts of 10 or more reported during 2002-2003 were: *ca*25 in a recently felled area in Eredine Forest Mid-Argyll on 5th Jan 2002, 12 at Danes Leap (nr Otter Ferry) on 17th Jan 2002, 11 on a Hypericum hedge at Blairmore (l. Long) *Cowal* on 25th Jan 2002 and *ca*11 in Glen Forsa *Mull* on 18th Sep 2002. The highest count in 2003 was 6 near Otter Ferry on 23rd Jan.

Breeding. 2002 Recorded in 2 of 13 BBS squares (15%). One territory was found in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll*.

2003 Recorded in 2 of 10 BBS squares (20%). No territories were found in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (*cf* average 1.6 territories 1990-2003). They were found in 9 of the 16 broadleaved woods in *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* surveyed for the Woodland Bird Survey during 2003 but only in very small numbers.

During 2002-2003 birds were recorded during the breeding season in *Cowal*, *Islay*, *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull* and *North Argyll*.

HAWFINCH *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* Gobhach 1717
Very rare visitor. Only 4 Argyll records during 1980-2000: one at Ardanaiseig (Mid Argyll) in Apr 1985, 4 at Loch Gruinart in Feb 1986, one at Arinagour (Coll) in Mar 1988 and a male at Achnacreebeag (N Argyll) in Apr 2000.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

AMERICAN REDSTART* *Setophaga ruticilla* 1755
Vagrant. The only Argyll record concerns a female or first-winter at Portnahaven (Islay) on 1st November 1982

No records in 2002 or 2003.

LAPLAND BUNTING *Calcarius lapponicus* 1847
Less than annual passage migrant. Most frequent in autumn, less so in spring and very rarely recorded in winter.

One was at Ardskenish Point *Colonsay* on 14th Sep 2002 and 2 were at Ardnave Loch *Islay* on 28th Sep 2002.

There were 4 records of single birds in 2003, all in autumn. These were: at Craigens (L. Gruinart) *Islay* on 27th Sep, at Ardnave on 28th Sep, flying over The Reef *Tiree* on 30th Sep and at L. Bhasapol on 20th Oct.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis* Gealag-an-t-sneachda 1850
Varying numbers on passage and in winter. Has bred North Argyll in the past.

Jan-May. 2002 *Mull* had: 5 at Fionnphort on 1st Jan, 2 in Glen More on 8th Jan, 5 at Gribun on 15th Mar and one in Glen More on 18th Mar. There were 15 at Traigh Bhi *Tiree* on 12th Jan and 15 at West Hynish *Tiree* on 28th Jan. A flock of 16 were on the dunes at Ardnave on 13th Feb and a late male in breeding plumage was at Lossit *Islay* on 21st May.

2003 A flock of 12 were at Ais-an t-Sidhean (Auch Gleann) *North Argyll* on 16th Feb. Otherwise up to 3 were reported in early Apr from Westport

(Machrihanish Bay) *Kintyre*, Stob a' Choire Odhair (Black Mount) *North Argyll*, Crossapol Bay *Coll*, Sorobaidh Bay *Tiree*, RSPB L. Gruinart, Ben Cruachan *North Argyll* and Ben Feall *Coll*. A male was on the shore at Erraid *Mull* on 8th May and the last was at Port Wemyss *Islay* on 17th May.

Breeding season. No records in either year.

Sep-Dec. 2002 The first single was at Knockangle Point *Islay* on 19th Oct. Thereafter up to 6 were seen at: Friesland *Coll*, on *Islay* at Kilchoman, Kilnave, Saligo and Loch Gruinart; Ben Lui *North Argyll*, and Coshandrochaid (L. Sween) *Mid-Argyll*, Oronsay, Glen Bellart *Mull* and on *Tiree* at; Greenhill, Hough Bay, Middleton and Sorobaidh Bay. The only flocks were 15 at the Add Estuary on 16th Nov and 19 on Beinn an Dothaidh (Bridge of Orchy) *North Argyll* on 17th Nov.

2003 The first of autumn was at Balephetrish Bay on 18th Sep and one was on Oronsay on 19th Sep. A flock of 30 were heading S over the sea at Machrihanish SBO on 6th Oct and one was at Arileod *Coll* on 1st Nov. All the remaining records (of up to 6 birds until late Nov) were at various sites on *Islay*.

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella* Buidheag-bhealaidh 1857
Localised resident breeding species. Birds forage in cut hay and silage fields outwith breeding season. Population seems to be in decline and all records are welcome.

Jan-Apr. 2002 The only flocks reported were: 15 at Port Ellen *Islay* on 29th Jan, 10 at Carsaig *Mid-Argyll* on 2nd Feb, 15 at Sunderland *Islay* on 16th Feb and 15 at Bunnahabhain *Islay* on 29th May.

2003 Surprising numbers were visiting gardens on *Mull* during Jan including up to 20 at Penmore (Dervaig) and up to 15 at Dervaig.

Breeding. 2002 Not recorded in any of the 13 BBS squares. Four singing males were found in the Craigs area (Laggan) *Kintyre* and 2 pairs at RSPB Aoradh Wood *Islay*. During the Peregrine 2002 survey birds were found to be well distributed in some remote coastal areas. Males were recorded at 19 different sites in habitats including wooded gullies/bracken patches on slopes, raised beaches and below crags on the NW coast of *Jura* from 31st May – 3rd Jun. At least 10 singing males were found on the south and west coasts of *Mull* with a few pairs on the west coast of *Mid-Argyll* in similar habitats.

2003 Not recorded in any of the 10 BBS squares. Singing males were heard at several sites in *Islay*, *Jura*, *Mid-Argyll* and *Mull* during the breeding season.

Aug-Dec. The only count in double figures in either year was 14 at Cuin (Dervaig) *Mull* on 29th Sep 2003.

CIRL BUNTING *Emberiza cirulus* 1858
Vagrant. The only Argyll record concerns a pair at St. Catherine's, Loch Fyne on 6th June 1920. The male was seen again on 10th June.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

RUSTIC BUNTING *Emberiza rustica* 1873
Vagrant. Only two Argyll records: one on Islay in May 1980 and one on Tiree in June 1987.

No records in 2002 or 2003.

- LITTLE BUNTING** *Emberiza pusilla* 1874
Vagrant. The only Argyll record was a first-winter bird found dead at Skerryvore Lighthouse (about 15 km south-west of Tiree), on or around 27th Sep 1985.
 No records in 2002 or 2003.
- YELLOW-BREASTED BUNTING*** *Emberiza aureola* 1876
Vagrant. The only Argyll record was one on Tiree in September 1981.
 No records in 2002 or 2003.
- REED BUNTING** *Emberiza schoeniclus* Gealag-lòin 1877
Locally common resident breeding species. Small flocks sometimes gather outwith the breeding season.
- Jan-May.** 2002 The largest flock reported at RSPB L. Gruinart was 25 on 10th Feb and the highest count elsewhere was 8 on Sanda Island on 5th May.
 2003 The only flock reported, was of 30 at Laggan Bridge Islay on 2nd Jan.
- Breeding.** 2002 Not recorded in any of the 13 BBS squares. No territories were found in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* although occasional birds were recorded there. At RSPB L. Gruinart a whole reserve count found 30 territorial males/pairs. Elsewhere: 4 pairs were found at Ardnave, 11 on *Colonsay*, one on Oronsay and 7 at Aros Moss *Kintyre*.
 2003 Recorded in one of 10 BBS squares (10%). There was one territory in the CBC plots at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* (*cf* average 1.5 territories 1990-2003). A casual survey at RSPB L. Gruinart found 59 pairs, 13 were on *Colonsay*, an estimated 15-20 on *Tiree* and 2 on Sanda Island.
 During 2002-2003 there were records during the breeding season from all recording areas apart from *Cowal*.
- Jul-Dec.** 2002 A flock of 30 near L. Gorm Islay on 28th Sep was the only count in double figures.
 2003 Ten on Sanda Island on 26th Jul was the only count in double figures.
- BLACK-HEADED BUNTING*** *Emberiza melanocephala* 1881
Vagrant. Seven previous records all of singles in May – Jul and all but one being males.
 No records in 2002 or 2003.
- CORN BUNTING** *Emberiza calandra* Gealag-bhuachair 1882
Resident population on Tiree now extinct. Recent records probably of migrants.
 In 2002, for the first time in recent history, a full year passed with no Corn Buntings reported in Argyll.
 2003. A single bird was present at Smaull Islay from 1st Jan to 15th Feb and another single was seen feeding on spilt grain in the cattle feeding area at the farm on Oronsay 5th – 9th Jan.
- BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD*** *Molothrus ater* 1899
Vagrant. The only Argyll record concerns one at Ardnave Point, Islay on 24th April 1988.
 No records in 2002 or 2003.

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.12). 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, Red Kite, White-tailed Eagle, Red-legged Partridge, Grey Partridge and Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon). These are dealt with in the main systematic list.

No records were received of escaped or introduced species during 2002-2003. It is well known that these species can eventually become established as feral breeders (e.g. Mandarin Duck) and we are keen to hear of any exotic birds seen in the wild in Argyll.

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 since the publication of *ABR 18*.

White-billed Diver	<i>Tiree</i>	25/05/03	BBRC
Honey-buzzard	<i>Islay</i>	20/10/02	ABRC
Hobby	<i>Coll</i>	16/06/03	ABRC
Eleanora's Falcon	<i>Tiree</i>	01/05/03	BBRC
Ring-billed Gull	<i>Islay ferry</i>	03/10/02	SBRC
Roseate Tern	<i>Kintyre</i>	02/06/97	SBRC
Wood Lark	<i>Mull</i>	09/05/03	SBRC
Black-eared Wheatear	<i>Kintyre</i>	05/10/02	BBRC
Common Redpoll	<i>Islay</i>	11/06/03	ABRC
Common Rosefinch	<i>Mull</i>	10/06/02	ABRC
Northern Oriole	<i>Mull</i>	22/09/02	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.

There are no 2002 or 2003 records currently being considered by the various rarity committees.

Details of the following claimed 2002 and 2003 records of species on the BBRC, SBRC and ABRC lists have not been received.

Little Egret	Kennacraig	<i>Kintyre</i>	01/06/03.
Sabine's Gull	Machrihanish	<i>Kintyre</i>	05/09/02.

Ring-billed Gull	Loch Indaal	<i>Islay</i>	01/05/02.
Eurasian Nuthatch	Ardkinglas	<i>Cowal</i>	28/06/03

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 ABRC, BBRC or SBRC.

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Paul Daw
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Contributors to this report:

M. Abele, J. Aitchison, H. Addelee, A. Anderson, P. Alfrey, J. T. H. Allen, R. A. G. Angus, T. ap Rheinallt, J. Armitage, M. Atkin, D. R. Atkins, J. Austin, P. Bolton, I. Boston, J. Bowler, R. & M. Braithwaite, R. A. Broad, M. Brooke, A. & P. Brown, N. Brown, F. & M. Cairns, T. Callan, H. & I. Cameron, J. Cameron, G. Carr, T. Charman, H. Chisholm, H. L. & R. Clayton, D. Clilverd, D. Clugston, A. & E. Colling, R. Cook, N. Cowie, J. & M. Craig, C. Craik, L. Cregeen, A. Davis, P. Daw, M. Devine, J. & F. Dickson, I. Dillon, B. Doe, W. M. Edgar, D. Ellisdon, R. J. Evans, V. Fairbrother, C. & V. Falshaw, M. A. Featherstone, J. Flood, T. Forster, R. W. Furness, D. Gilbert, M. Giles, A. Gooding, R. Goudy, A. Greenwood, M. Gregory, R. & M. Gulliver, J. Halliday, D. Halloween, J. H. Hamilton, F. Harmer, J. M. Harrison, R. Harrington, J. Hastings, A. Heavisides, M. Hind, P. Hodgson, A. Hogg, P. Hollinrake, J. How, M. Hutcheson, G. Jackson, W. Jackson, L. James, D. C. & J. Jardine, C. M. & T. Johnson, M. & S. Johnson, R. Johnson, A. Keys, C. Linfoot, M. & G. McBay, J. McCallum, S. McCulloch, A. MacDonnell, C. MacFarlane, F. MacGillivray, M. & P. McGovern, C. MacIntyre, L. Macintyre, C. R. McKay, J. B. MacKay, M. McKay, S. Maclean, G. MacNeil, D. J. McPhee, E. J. Maguire, R. & D. Marks, R. D. Medland, T. D. H. Merrie, S. Money, R. Morton, R. Musgrove, G. Newall, M. Newell, M. A. Ogilvie, P. Oliver, R. Parks, J. Paterson, M. Peacock, V. Peacock, K. Pendreigh, M. Perrons, M. Phillips, A. & J. Plackett, A. E. Potter, E. R. Pugh, M. & N. Rae, A. W. Reid, B. Richards, M. Richardson, P. Riley, A. Robbs, P. Roberts, C. Robson, F. Rout, Sanda Island Observatory, S. & C. Scott, D. Sexton, K. Shaw, A. Smith, J. Stewart-Smith, A. Spellman, C. Spray, P. T. & M. J. Staley, M. Stephens, T. Stewart, M. Stuart, R. Sutton, S. Swift, R. M. Tapply, G. Toplis, J. Towill, Treshnish Isles Auk Ringing Group, J. Walden, C. Waltho, D. Watkinson, A. Webster, A. Wheeldon, L. White, A. J. Whitehouse, J. Wolstencroft, D. Woodhouse, S. Wrightson, G. Yates, F. Younger, R. Youngman.

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