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The Eider

Puffin, Lunga, Treshnish
Islands in June
©Steve Petty



Blackcaps in Kintyre

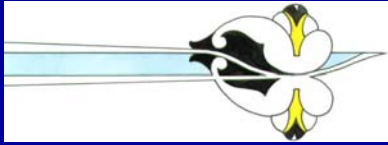
Remarkable insects
Recent reports for May-July
Papers for the ABC's AGM

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Editorial

Following my editorial in the last issue, there have been no offers to take over editing the *Eider*, so I have agreed to carry on until the end of the year. This means I will be producing the December newsletter, so please let me have any articles as soon as possible. Everyone must have enjoyed their holidays as this current issue is the smallest for a long while! Over the last year we have been averaging 24-26 sides per issue compared to just 20 sides in this one! So, now's your chance to put pen to paper! It doesn't have to be about birds. For example, see Clive Craik's fascinating article on armyworms (pages 5-6).

Nigel Scriven, our chairman, has put together a very appealing programme for the autumn meeting at the Cairnbaan Hotel (programme at the bottom of the next page). The club's AGM takes place just after lunch and provides you with a chance to influence the future direction of the club. Don't miss this opportunity if you have ideas about how the club could be improved!

ABC indoor meetings 2008-2009

Autumn Meeting 2008

Saturday 8th November

Cainbaan Hotel near Lochgilphead

<http://www.cairnbaan.com/>

The programme is at the bottom of page 3. Our Chairman has put together an interesting series of talks for the day. Please note that the AGM will be held straight after lunch.

Spring Meeting 2009

Friday 24-Sunday 26th April

Weekend meeting on Islay, based at the Islay Natural History Centre, Port Charlotte.

<http://www.islaywildlife.freereserve.co.uk/>

Some information about this weekend meeting has been given in previous issues of the *Eider*. The meeting will be based at the Islay Natural History Centre (INHC) in Port Charlotte. Participants should arrive on Islay on Friday evening. There will be bird watching sessions on Saturday and Sunday mornings, with an indoor meeting on Saturday afternoon in the INHC. The programme for the latter is given at the top of page 3.

Quite a few members have shown an interest in this venture, and some plan to make the trip into a longer holiday. A list of accommodation around Port Charlotte (Hotels, Bed and Breakfast, Youth Hostel etc.) is available on request. It



may also be possible to arrange a meal for the participants at the Port Charlotte Hotel on the Saturday night. Accommodation at the hotel itself is limited, so early booking is recommended.

If you would like to go on this trip, but have not yet registered an interest with Steve Petty (contact details at the top of page 2), please do so as soon as possible, so that you can be kept up to date with developments, including car sharing and field trips.

Autumn Meeting 2009

Saturday 7th November

Cainbaan Hotel near Lochgiphead

<http://www.cairnbaan.com/>

We hope to have the programme finalised in time for the March *Eider* in 2009.

| Spring Meeting on Islay Programme for the indoor session on Sat 25th April 2009 | |
|--|---|
| Time | Topic |
| 13.10-13.20 | Introduction <i>Chairman of the Argyll Bird Club</i> |
| 13.20-1330 | Introduction to the Islay Natural History Trust <i>Malcolm Ogilvie</i> |
| 1330-1345 | Recent bird sightings <i>Paul Daw, Argyll Bird Recorder</i> |
| 1345-1430 | Islay wildlife <i>George Jackson</i> |
| 14.30-15.15 | RSPB reserves on Islay <i>James Howe</i> |
| 15.15-1600 | Tea/coffee |
| 1600-1645 | <i>Choughs</i> <i>Eric Bignal or colleague</i> |
| 1645-1730 | Geese on Islay <i>Malcolm Ogilvie</i> |

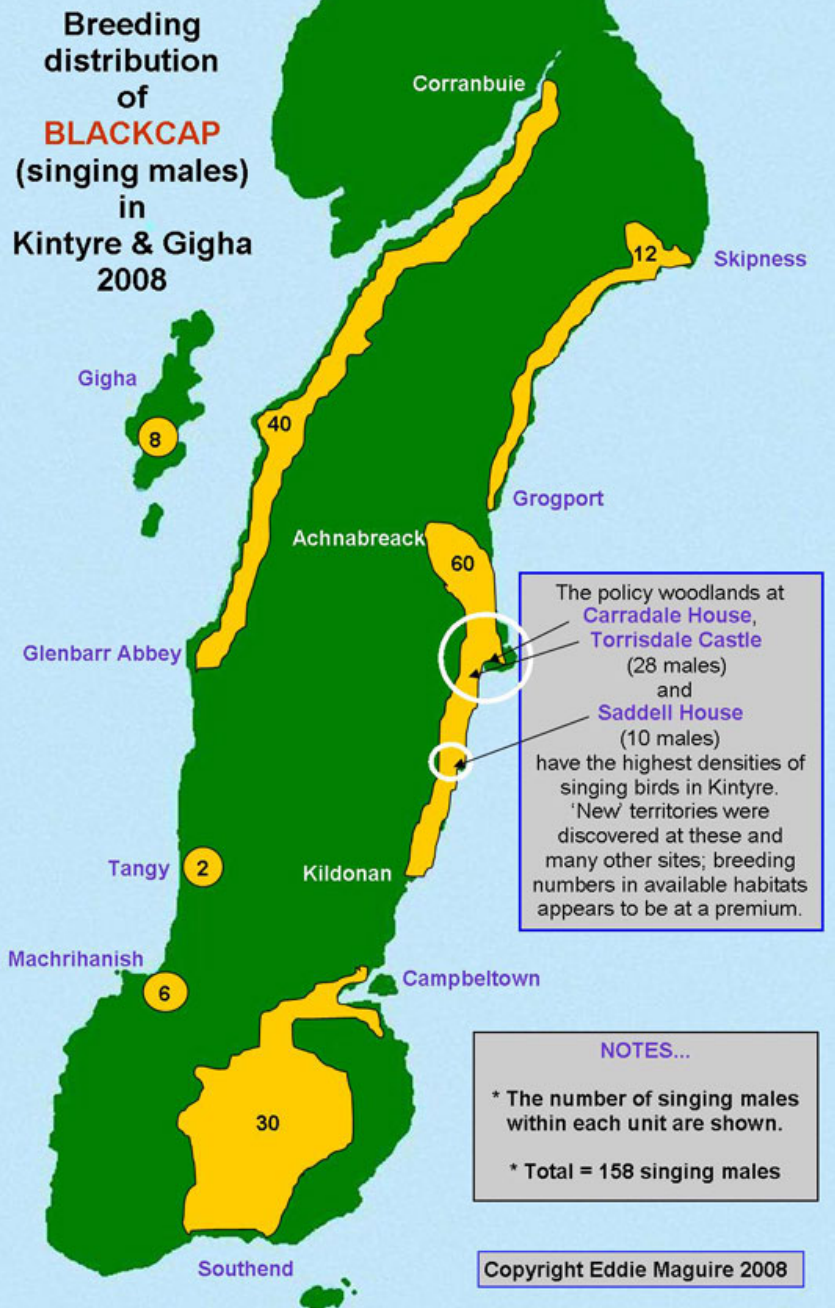
| Programme for the ABC's Autumn Meeting Saturday 8th November at the Cairnbaan Hotel, near Lochgilphead | |
|---|---|
| Time | Session |
| 0930 | Doors open, coffee and tea |
| 0950-1000 | Welcome and introduction— <i>Nigel Scriven</i> (Chairman of the Argyll Bird Club) |
| 1000-1015 | Recent bird sightings— <i>Paul Daw</i> (Argyll Bird Recorder) |
| 1015-1100 | BTO Atlas update— <i>Bob Swann</i> |
| 1100-1130 | Coffee/tea |
| 1130-1200 | Antarctica— <i>Michael Thomas</i> |
| 1200-1245 | A quarter century of Buzzards on Colonsay— <i>David Jardine</i> |
| 1245-1345 | Lunch (available in the hotel) |
| 1345-1430 | Annual General Meeting (club members only) |
| 1430-1500 | A flying visit to North Ronaldsay Bird Observatory— <i>Nigel Scriven</i> |
| 1500-1545 | Tea/coffee |
| 1545-1630 | Ravens in Cowal— <i>Arthur French</i> |
| 16.30 | End of meeting |

Status of the Blackcap in Kintyre

Throughout May and early June, constant early morning songbird surveys were carried out at all the main deciduous woodlands (especially the policies) and adjoining habitats in Kintyre, and this turned out to be a real eye-opener.

One of the biggest surprises was the breeding distribution of Blackcap. An astonishing total of 158 singing males was located at around 47 sites, with the highest densities occurring in the policy woodlands at Carradale House-Dippen (15 males), Torrisdale Castle (12 males), Saddell House (10 males) and Ronachan House (9 males). Very obvious increases were noted at twelve regular breeding sites.

Within favoured habitats, the number of Blackcaps on the peninsula has, without doubt, increased and is now at a very



high level (see distribution map).

Other remarkable surprises included more Garden Warblers (20 singing males) than Wood Warblers (three singing males) and only three singing Redstarts.

For much more information including breeding distribution maps for many species visit our website at www.machrihanishbirds.org.uk

Eddie Maguire

Remarkable insects of Argyll

Butterflies have been disappointing this year. Remember 2006, when Peacocks rose in clouds from buddleia and, literally, darkened the sky? Or 1996, when Painted Ladies were abundant and it seemed you could find their caterpillars on almost every thistle? In 2008, at least in North Argyll, three of the Magnificent Four (Peacock, Red Admiral and Small Tortoiseshell) have been few in number, while the fourth (Painted Lady) has been almost absent. But how many of us know that Argyll now has an annual insect extravaganza to rival the hibernating Monarch Butterflies of the Mexican forest, or the synchronously flashing fireflies of the Far East? The conifer forests of Kilmel-

ford and Barcaldine are the only places in the British Isles where armyworms have been recorded. In 2008 Kilmelford was the only known site in the British Isles and, in July, numbers there were much higher than ever before. Several lucky folk made pilgrimages to see them (photo below).

Each of these remarkable moving columns is composed of many thousands of closely appressed larvae of the fly *Sciara militaris*. Most larvae are 6-9mm long, the biggest about 11mm. The columns are up to four metres in length, but mostly 100cm or less. Columns were first re-



Above. Close-up view of part of a marching column of armyworms at Kilmelford in July 2008.

Left. Caterpillar of Barred Umber moth on blackcurrant at Barcaldine, August 2008.

Both photos ©Clive Craik

corded at Barcaldine in 2004. In 2005 they were present almost daily from 19 July to 6 August, the highest number on 23 July when 22 columns containing a total of about a quarter of a million larvae were counted. But only two columns were seen at Barcaldine in 2006 and none in 2007 or 2008. However, in 2006 and 2007 Astrid van der Kraan found columns 29km to the south-west at Kilmelford. Numbers there increased in 2008 when the highest count on a single day was an amazing 140 columns on 26 July, a total of well over a million larvae and several times the highest day-count at Barcaldine. The function of these extraordinary moving columns is not known. They may be predatory machines, more efficient at feeding on microscopic organisms than single larvae would be. Some experiments we made at Kilmelford in 2008 may confirm this theory.

The larvae pupate underground in early August and flies emerge in mid-August. Identification of European species can be made by only one person in the world, Dr Frank Menzel of Germany. It was he who confirmed that the armyworms at Barcaldine were *S. militaris*, the first British record of this species and of the armyworm phenomenon. Presumably the same species is now appearing at Kilmelford but this still has to be confirmed. The species can be identified only by microscopic examination of adult males and, in 2008, some of the Kilmelford larvae were reared in captivity to obtain male flies for this purpose. At the time of writing (22 August), we are also trying to find the adult flies in the wild at the Kilmelford site. Despite the million

or so larvae known to have been there, this is proving surprisingly difficult and not a single fly has yet been seen.

Armyworm larvae must surely be present at other sites in Argyll conifer forests. Look out in July and early August for long grey strips looking like waste plastic or discarded snakeskins. Look more closely to see they are composed of thousands of larvae, together moving forward at about two cm a minute. More information can be found in Craik *et al.* (2006) and Craik *et al.* (2007). Clive can supply reprints to anyone who is interested.

In July, Mary Craik found another remarkable insect on a blackcurrant bush in her garden at Barcaldine, a larva of the Barred Umber moth. It is one of the most convincing of the "stick-caterpillars". A close-up view reveals the finer details of its disguise. The head looks like a bud, the front pairs of legs like a blunt thorn, and lumps near its hind legs like twig bases or scars (photo on previous page).

Clive Craik (Barcaldine) & Astrid van der Kraan (Kilmelford)

References

J.C.A. Craik, P. Wormell & S. Austin (2006) Armyworms in west Scotland in 2005. *Entomologist's Record* **118**: 115-122.

J.C.A. Craik, A. van der Kraan, M. van der Kraan & S. Austin (2007) Armyworms – a second site in the British Isles. *Bulletin of the Amateur Entomologists' Society* **66**: 241-243.

Recent bird reports from Paul Daw: May-July 2008

This report is a selection from the sightings already published on the club website (see Latest Reports 72-75 for full details of sightings). There are very few records from Islay included in this report. This is because we hear very little from the island these days. All records from Islay (and Jura) are very welcome. Records included are not necessarily of 'rarities' but may also relate to birds in unusual places or behaving in untypical ways. I have also included records from areas that are not normally well covered. In particular I would welcome more reports from Islay, Kintyre and North Argyll. You can send them in by e-mail, post or telephone (see below).

Highlights. After generally fine weather in May things went downhill in late June and July. However, it has been a good breeding season for scarce wildfowl and a **Ring-necked Duck** was a good find on Islay in early May. Reports from several club members also indicated a good breeding year for 'garden' birds such as tits and finches as well as for **Barn Swallows**.

A **Great Reed Warbler** singing on Seil Island on 12th May and a singing **Blyth's Reed Warbler** at Carnan Mor, Tiree on 3rd June are both, if accepted by BBRC, potential new species for Argyll. A sprinkling of other rare or unusual species was reported. These included a first-summer **American Golden Plover** at the Add Estuary on 21st July, a

Recent Report Updates

The latest bird sightings in Argyll are available on the Argyll Bird Club website at:

<http://www.argyllbirdclub.org>

On the home page 'click here for latest bird reports' takes you to straight to the most recent update. This page is updated every 10-14 days

Hoopoe at Loch Buie, Mull on 26th May, a **Shore Lark** at Upper Killeyan, Oa, Islay on 8th May (only our second ever record), female/immature type **Golden Orioles** at Carnan Mor, Tiree on 6th May and just north of Uig, Coll on 19th May, a male **Golden Oriole** at Balephuill, Tiree on 5th July, and a **Eurasian Nuthatch** at a nut feeder in the garden at Strone House, Cairndow, Cowal on 20th May. As last summer, **Stock Doves**, which are normally very difficult to see in Argyll, made an appearance this time in record numbers (see below).

Rarity acceptance. The record of a lone **Little Bunting** watched and photographed at Milton, Tiree on 23rd October 2007 has now been accepted by the Scottish Birds

Stop Press

A **Lesser Grey Shrike** was seen at Balephuill Tiree on 6th August (John Bowler). Sadly it was only a brief visit and was not seen subsequently. There are only two previous Argyll records of this species. Another possible first for Argyll, and again from Tiree, was a **Short-toed Lark** found by John Bowler on 12th August and subsequently photographed by Jim Dickson (photo below).

Three **Little Egrets** were found by visitors (Julie Goodlet-Rowley and David Rowley) at the head of West Loch Tarbert on 24th August. When Jim Dickson went to check them out on the following day he found no less than four **Little Egrets**! The photo below shows two of them. Surprisingly, four Little Egrets have been seen together before in Argyll; on Mull in October 1969 (see *Birds of Argyll* p.125)



Short-toed Lark on Tiree and Little Egrets in West Loch Tarbet. Both photos ©Jim Dickson

Records Committee. It was associating at times with House Sparrows feeding on grain, but had gone the next day (John Bowler). This is only the second Little Bunting ever recorded in Argyll. The first was found dead at Skerryvore Lighthouse in late Sep 1985.

Observers. Full names are given in brackets except for BA = Bill Allan, JB = John Bowler, TC = Tom Callan, PD = Paul Daw, JD = Jim Dickson and EJM = Eddie Maguire.

Wildfowl (and Gamebirds)

A very late **Whooper Swan** was seen on Loch Orodale, Kintyre (NR 6516) on 27th May. It was swimming about and whooping intermittently and appeared in good condition (Steve & Sue Walker). Two late **Pink-footed Geese** were at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree on 28th May (JD). A **Ring-necked Duck** found on Loch Kinnabus, Islay on 8th May was only the tenth record for Argyll (Angus Keys per JD). A drake **Garganey** was on Loch Bhasapol, Tiree on 30th May (JB) and two males were on Loch an Eilean, Tiree on 29th May (JD). At least 26 **Common Scoters** were counted at 'West Coast Salmon', Kintyre on 10th May and a flock of 20 **Red-breasted Mergansers** was seen off Tayinloan (Tom Callan).

Early broods of Common Eiders were seen at Otter Ferry on 15th May (Tom Callan) and at Colintrave, Cowal on 18th May (Graham Clark). Other wildfowl with young included a female **Mandarin Duck** with six small ducklings at the head of Loch Eck on 29th May, a female **Goosander** with 12 small young (including five being carried on her back) on the River Cur, Loch Eck, Cowal on 6th June (Peter Woods), a female **Goosander** with nine small young on the River Eachaig at Benmore, Cowal on 10th June (per Andrew Webster), fledged broods of **Gadwall** and **Shoveler** at Kilmoluaig Tiree on 2nd July (JB) and a pair of **Mute Swans** with six small cygnets on the River Add at Islanddadd Bridge (Moine Mhor) on 17th June (Malcolm Chattwood). A pair of **Eurasian Wigeon** with a brood of five young were found at a site on Tiree on 15th June (JB). This is the first confirmed breeding record for the island. They are a rare breeding species anywhere in Argyll.

A **Common Quail** reported calling at Barrapol, Tiree on 16th July was the only record received so far this year (SW per JB).

An early count of moulting **Common Eiders** numbered 420 at Otter Ferry Spit on 23rd July (TC).

Seabirds—divers, grebes, shearwaters, herons etc (and other seawatch species)

A casual count of divers off the west coast of Kintyre on 10th May found at least 40 **Black-throated Divers** and at least 40 **Great Northern Divers** between 'West Coast Salmon' and Machrihanish (TC). On 13th May a **Red-throated Diver**, two **Black-throated Divers** and two **Great Northern Divers** were present at Kilfinan Bay, Cowal and two **Red-throated Divers** in breeding plumage were off Otter Ferry (David Warden/TC). Three **Black-throated Divers** were reported displaying on Loch Scridain, Mull on 25th May (Alan Spellman). During a BTO atlas survey on 31st May a **Red-throated Diver** and five **Little Grebes** were found on the Black Lochs near Oban (Mike Harrison)

Records of **European Storm-petrels** included 84 flying south in poor visibility off Machrihanish SBO in 3hrs on 17th June (EJM), six milling about off Hynish, Tiree in SW force 5 and rain on 29th June and 20 off Hynish on 1st



A superb photo of an adult female Sparrowhawk at Machrihanish SBO on 27th July. It's grasping a Starling that it has just caught.
©Eddie Maguire

July.

Also on 1st July, 150 **Manx Shearwaters** were off Hynish and other counts of **Manx Shearwaters** included a minimum of around 250 passing through the narrows at Otter Ferry in an hour, in a steady stream of groups of 4–14, on 22nd July (TC) and a peak count of 5,080 was logged in 3hrs at Machrihanish SBO on 27th July. The first **Balearic Shearwater** did not appear until 1st August (EJM).

A single **Leach's Storm-petrel** performed obligingly for almost an hour at Machrihanish SBO, possibly attracted by large numbers of terns, auks and other seabirds (including two **European Storm-petrels** and three **Arctic Skuas**) feeding there on 16th July (EJM).

A **Little Egret** at Loch Tulla, North Argyll on 7th May was an unexpected find at an unusual location for this species (Roger Broad).

The Heronry at Glen Caladh on Eilean Dubh, Cowal (NS0075) had 25-30 **Grey Herons** and at least 10 occupied nests on 23rd May (Daphne Campbell).

Raptors, rails etc.

The final count of **Corn Crakes** on Tiree was a new island record of 408 calling males, with birds calling throughout May-June until early August. Several broods were reported included a very large chick at Balephuil on 12th June, which must have come from a clutch laid at the start of May (JB). There were also reports of calling **Corn Crakes** on the mainland in May, near Keills, Loch Sween (Mark Smith per Mary-Lou Atchison) and north of Kilberry, Knapdale (Hugh Macdonald). Thirteen were reported calling on

Iona on 22nd July (Stuart Milligan).

A female **Marsh Harrier** was seen at Loch Bhasapol, Tiree on 7th May. Two were possibly in the area at this time (JB).

Reports of **White-tailed Eagles** included an immature flying from Eredine Point to the west side of Loch Awe on 2nd May being mobbed by two **Ospreys** (Karl Pipes), one (possibly the same bird) flying low over Loch Awe on 10th May. It had a red wing tag indicating it had been hatched on Mull in 2005 (John McNally) and two (male and female?) were seen flying over the Sound of Shuna, North Argyll on 30th June (Mike Gear).

By mid-May, four new pairs of **Ospreys** had been located in Argyll thus far this season (Roger Broad). Perhaps unsurprisingly, **Ospreys** were widely reported this summer, including birds at Lochdon, Mull on 25th May, Loch Eck twice in late May (Peter Woods), over the Black Lochs near Oban on 31st May (Mike Harrison), at Loch Glashan, Mid-Argyll on 30th June (PD) and at West Loch Tarbert, Kintyre on 15th July (per Barbara McMillan); as well as frequently around Loch Awe. There were also reports of two or three birds apparently nest building at a site on Moine Mhor in late July (BA/JD)!

Four **Common Kestrels** (two males, a female and a juvenile) were seen at Keillmore (Loch Sween) on 21st July. One male, in the teeth of a very strong headwind, flew towards Jura at wave-crest height, eventually disappearing from view. A ring-tailed **Hen Harrier** was also seen



Top left: Sanderling in summer plumage at Machrihanish SBO on 24th May. ©Eddie Maguire

Top right: A rare June record of a Black-tailed Godwit in summer plumage at Machrihanish SBO. ©Eddie Maguire

Bottom left: An American Golden Plover with a Golden Plover on the Add Estuary on 21st July. © Jim Dickson

nearby (Karl Pipes). Two **Golden Eagles** were seen flying over Ballygrogan (south of Machrihanish) on 27th July (EJM).

Waders

A **Woodcock** was roding at Eredine (Loch Awe) on the evening of 6th May (Mike Deakin). Two late **Purple Sandpipers** were still in the West Bay at Dunoon on 5th May (George Newall). A flock of six **Purple Sandpipers** was near the entrance to Fingal's Cave on Staffa on 12th May with a single on rocks off Fladda (Nick & Stella Laughton).

Relatively small numbers of **Whimbrels** were reported this spring. The highest count was of 32 at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree on 8th May (JB) while nine were seen in a tight flock at Ballochroy, Kintyre on 10th May (TC).

Records of scarcer species of wader included a pair of **Dotterel** near the lochan on Beinn an Lochan above the Rest and Be Thankful, Cowal on 11th May (per Russ Liddell), a **Little Stint** (with two **Red Knots**, 350 **Ringed Plovers** and 850 **Dunlin**) at Loch a' Phuill on 17th May (JB), two **Dotterel** in one of the fields on the RSPB reserve, Coll on 19th May (Simon Wellock). An adult **Little Stint** at Sorobaidh Bay on 22nd May was part of a large influx of waders on Tiree including 480 **Sanderlings** and 220 **Dunlin**, a **Red Knot** at Traigh Bhagh and 320 **Ringed Plovers** and 200

Dunlin and 18 **Red Knot** at Loch a' Phuill (JB). **Curlew Sandpipers** in breeding plumage were found at Loch a' Phuill on 28-29th May (per JB, JD), Miodar, Tiree on 4th June and at the Add Estuary (with a **Greenshank** also in breeding plumage and a **Curlew Sandpiper**) on the evening of 2nd July (JD). A **Little Stint** was at Loch a' Phuill on 29th May (JD).

The star wader of this period though, was an **American Golden Plover** (together with a single European **Golden Plover**) seen and photographed (see above) at the Add Estuary at 16.00hrs on 21st July (JD). A flock of 23 **Turnstones** in breeding plumage on 22nd July were the first returning birds at Otter Ferry (TC). A **Green Sandpiper** was flushed from the Tayinloan Burn on 30th July (Katie Pendreigh).

At the very end of the period under review, the 31st July turned out to be an outstanding day for wader passage—almost everywhere in Argyll apparently! Waders at Gott Bay, Tiree included 745 **Sanderlings**, 315 **Dunlin** and ten and **Turnstones** (JB). An influx of 15 **Common Redshanks** appeared in Loch Crinan together with nine **Red Knots**, three **Greenshanks**, a **Bar-tailed Godwit** and up to nine **Dunlin** (JD). Increasing numbers of **Common Redshanks** were at Otter Ferry during the day, with 34 at mid-day rising to 52 by 20.00hrs (TC). Meanwhile impressive totals at Machrihanish SBO included 290 **Oystercatchers**, 72 **Red Knots**, 210 **Dunlin**, 240 **Sanderlings**, a single **Ruff**, eight

Black-tailed Godwits, two **Whimbrels**, 190 **Common Redshanks** and 75 **Turnstones** (EJM).

Following on from JB's article in the June 2008 *Eider* "Icelandic Connections to Argyll", more leg flagged/colour-ringed **Sanderlings** appeared in Argyll during May. A red leg-flagged bird amongst a flock of 480 **Sanderlings** at Gott Bay, Tiree on 19th May had been ringed at Esiamia, Ghana in August 2007 (JB) and another colour-flagged Sanderling at Gott Bay on 22nd May had been ringed at Zackenberg in northeast Greenland in July 2007. Finally, a colour-ringed Sanderling photographed at Machrihanish SBO on 28th May turned out to have been marked in Ghana on 18 March 2007. It was present in Ghana again throughout January 2008 and was seen there last on 29th Jan (EJM—with thanks to Edward Koomson for the information from Ghana and JB for tracking this down).

Skuas (see also 'seabirds'), gulls, terns and auks

Up to eight **Arctic Skuas** were foraging off Machrihanish SBO on 12th June. **Arctic Skuas** were present daily for much of June, an indication of the recently increased frequency of this species in summer (EJM). Two adult **Arctic Skuas** flew south past Machrihanish SBO on 19th July followed, later in the day, by an adult **Pomarine Skua**, the first of the year (EJM).

Three **Great Skuas** seen around Caliach Point, Mull on 15th and 16th May appeared to be displaying and were landing on the flat top of the highest area of the point. A single pale-phase **Arctic Skua** also flew over (Nick & Stella Laughton). A pair of **Great Skuas** that had certainly nested at a site on Tiree was still around on 23rd June, but with no sign of chicks. A second pair was on territory at another site on the island but did not nest (JB). Together with reports of displaying birds at a site on the north coast of Mull and the recent nesting on Rum (per Roddy Mavor), Bonxies seem to be on the march southwards. Whether this will be good news for other seabirds remains to be seen!

A first-winter **Little Gull** was seen with **Kittiwakes** between Colonsay and Jura on 15th May (David Jardine, Ian Fisher). An unseasonal first-year **Glaucous Gull** was feeding with other gulls off the north of Jura on 20th May (Roger Broad). An **Iceland Gull** was newly arrived at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree on 17th July, the second year running that one has appeared here in July (JB).

A total of 60 **Kittiwakes** flew south in an hour off Machrihanish SBO on 13th July (EJM) and c.700 **Kittiwakes** flew south past Machrihanish SBO in 4hrs on 24th July. (EJM). At least three adult and three first-summer **Kittiwakes** were seen on Liath Eilean from a boat on Loch Fyne on 21st July (PD, TC). An adult Yellow-legged Gull was in the Add Estuary on 28th July (JD).



Above: Little Tern at Machrihanish SBO in May.
©Eddie Maguire

Below: Recently fledged Sandwich Tern at Machrihanish SBO on 14th July, but most probably not from Argyll. ©Eddie Maguire

At least 30 **Sandwich Terns** were at Machrihanish SBO on 26th June. At least 20 pairs of **Arctic Terns** and six pairs of **Common Terns** were breeding at Machrihanish this year and c.15 pairs of **Common Terns** were breeding on the concrete dolphins at the NATO jetty in Campbeltown Loch (EJM). A total of 87 **Common Terns** (all adults) was counted loitering or fishing at Otter Ferry Spit, Cowal on 23rd July. Some had rings on their left legs (TC).

Approximately 32 **Little Terns** were counted at the breeding site in mid Kintyre on 4th July—with several birds bringing in fish (Andy Robinson). Also on 4th July, a flock of 70+ **Arctic Terns** that arrived at Machrihanish SBO included a total of 11 second-summer-type birds (EJM). A group of five **Little Terns** were resting on freshly uncovered rocks on Westport Beach, near Campbeltown on the morning of 6th July (David Lord) and 27 **Little Terns** (including fledged young) were feeding off Aird, Tiree on

15th July (JB).

Two **Sandwich Terns** were seen at Kirn, Dunoon on 12th May (George Newall) and two more were roosting at Bullwood, Cowal on 25th May (James Towill and Marco McGinty). The first juvenile **Sandwich Terns** appeared at the tern colony at Machrihanish on 12th July (see photo on previous page). Sadly not locally bred birds (EJM).

On 13th May, at least 12 **Black Guillemots** were counted in the Oban Bay area, including three occupying storm drains near the Corran Halls (PD) and at least 24 **Black Guillemots** were counted around Eilean Aoghainn from a boat on Loch Fyne on 21st July (PD/TC).

Two **Puffins** were seen in the Firth of Lorn off Ledaig Point on 15th May. This is well up the firth and an unusual place to see them (Mike Harrison). Four **Puffins** were seen from the ferry northwest of Mull on 29th May (BA/Anne-Lise Dickie). A lone **Puffin** was seen in the Firth of Clyde half a mile north of Inellan, Cowal on 26th July (per Daphne Campbell).

Auks on Loch Fyne on 16th June included 39 **Common Guillemots** above the Otter Ferry spit (failed breeders?), 13 **Black Guillemots** around Glas Eilean and six **Black Guillemots** (including birds on nests) at Pier House, Otter Ferry (TC).

Doves, owls, woodpeckers etc.

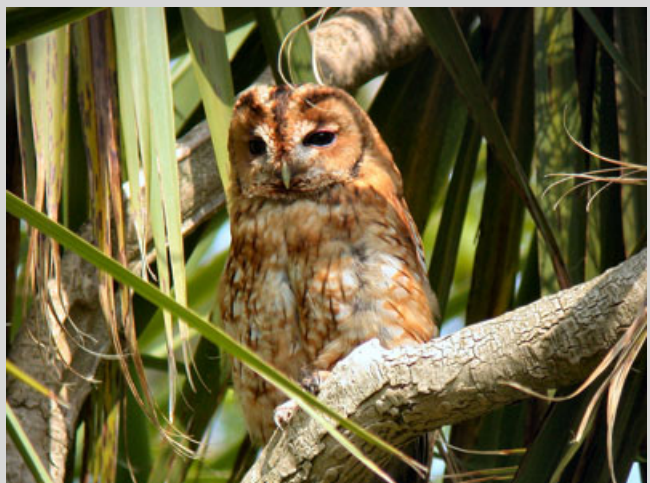
On 5th June, no less than five **Stock Doves** were seen, together with **Wood Pigeons**, on a newly seeded field near Moine Mhor. Amazingly this is the most **Stock Doves** seen in one place in Argyll since records began in 1980 (BA/JD)!

Two **Wood Pigeons** at Carnan Mor, Tiree on 11th May were in potential breeding habitat. The species has not, so far, been recorded breeding on the island (JB). Two **Wood Pigeons** seen at Uig, Coll on 12th May were unusual visitors and could have been the same birds (Ben Jones).

There were more records of **European Turtle Doves** than usual this spring. Single birds were reported at Scarinish, Tiree on 7th May (JB), at Barrapol, Tiree on 16th May (JB), along the Loch Sgoltaire track on Colonsay on 17th May (David Jardine & ABC) and at Kenovay, Tiree on 24th May. One seen in a garden at Southend, Kintyre on 29th May, allowed some beautiful photos to be taken (photo opposite)(Fiona Rowland).

Later records of **Common Cuckoos** included one seen sitting on fence posts on either side of the drive at a cottage in Appin, North Argyll and flying down to feed in grass on 30th June (Mike Gear) and a single at Barsloisnoch (Moine Mhor) on 10th July (JD).

Birds found during atlas Timed Tetrad Visits on



Top: Turtle Dove in a Southend garden, Kintyre on 29th May. ©Roger Roland

Middle: Long-eared Owl photographed on the Isle of Bute. ©Jim Duncan

Bottom: Tawny Owl roosting in a palm tree at Kilchrist Castle, south Kintyre on 22 May. ©Eddie Maguire

Gigha 7th–14th June included **Barn Owls** hunting near Achamore Gardens (Stephen Welch). **Short-eared Owls** were seen at Heylipol Church on 24th May (per JB) and flying along Glen More, Mull on 22nd July (Stuart Milligan). A **Long-eared Owl** was seen at the Taynuilt end of Glen Lonan Mid-Argyll on 3rd May (Bob Grove). There have been no other recent records of the species from this area.

Two, very early, **Common Swifts** were seen between Lochgilphead and Cairnbaan, Mid-Argyll on the afternoon of 1st May. There were three April records in the 1990s but this is the earliest **Swift** arrival since then (Sue Chattwood). Later, up to three birds were seen away from the usual breeding localities at: Inveraray on 24th May (PD), near Connel airport on 5th June (Mary Gregory), over Balephuill, Tiree in the rain on 22nd June (JB), over Traigh Bhi, Tiree on 8th July (JB) and over Loch Glashan, Mid-Argyll on 12th July (PD). Six **Common Swifts** flew north past Machrihanish SBO on 25th July (EJM) and a flock of 20 or more were circling screaming over Lochgilphead on 29th July (Sue Chattwood).

A **Hoopoe** reported at Loch Buie, Mull on 26th May and one seen on Ulva, Mull the following day (27th) were probably the same individual (per Alan Spellman). Surprisingly at least one Hoopoe appears in Argyll almost every year.

Passerines

A female/immature **Golden Oriole** was at Carnan Mor, Tiree on the evening of 6th May. It was very wary, but showing on and off from 20.15 to 20.45hrs (JB). Of the twenty odd records of Golden Oriole in Argyll most have been in May or June. A **Wood Pigeon** at West Hynish and a **Jackdaw** on a peanut-feeder at Moss were both unusual visitors on Tiree (JB).

Timed Tetrad Visits (TTVs) for the Breeding Atlas have already given interesting insights into the populations of commoner species in various parts of the county. Birds found during a TTV (NR98G) near Otter Ferry, Cowal on 6th May included 48 **Common Pheasants**, two **Common Sandpipers**, 22 **Wood Pigeons**, two **Common Cuckoos**, 13 **Robins**, 21 **Blackbirds**, 25 **Willow Warblers**, 26 **Great Tits**, 33 **Common Chaffinches**, ten **Greenfinches**, nine **Common Crossbills** and two **Reed Buntings** (TC).

At a nearby Tetrad (NR98L) the following day (7th May) species found included ten **Common Pheasants**, four **Common Cuckoos**, 22 **Meadow Pipits**, five **Whinchats**, eight **Common Stonechats**, 16 **Blackbirds**, a **Grasshopper Warbler**, 37 **Willow Warblers**, 17 **Common Chaffinches**, four **Common Crossbills** and two **Reed Buntings** (TC). A total of eleven singing **Tree Pipits** were recorded during a TTV near Minard on 26th May (PD) and birds found during TTVs at Achamore Gardens on Gigha during 7th–14th June included six male **Blackcaps**, single **Common Chiffchaff** and **Spotted Flycatcher**, and breeding **Treecreeper** and **Long-tailed Tit** (Stephen Welch).

A **Shore Lark** was found at Upper Killeyan, Oa, Islay on 8th May (Angus Keys per JD). The only previous Shore Lark record for Argyll was in October 1976 when three

birds were seen, at Bowmore, Islay.

A nice fall of warblers on Tiree over 9th–10th May included a male **Blackcap** at Balephuill and two **Blackcaps** (one of either sex) at Kilkenneth on 9th as well as, on 10th, three **Common Whitethroats** (two males, one female), three **Blackcaps** (two males, one female), a **Grasshopper Warbler** and a **Spotted Flycatcher** at Balephuill, and two **Common Whitethroats** (one male, one female), 12 **Willow Warblers** and a **Spotted Flycatcher** at Carnan Mor (JB).

Three **Common Whitethroats** were seen at 'West Coast Salmon', Kintyre on 10th May (TC). Anecdotal evidence indicates that numbers of **Common Whitethroats** in Argyll this summer have been higher than usual, although this may be partly due to birds encountered during TTVs.

Three **Whinchat** territories were identified in the Add Estuary area on 11th May (JD) and six **Common Stonechats** were seen at Kilbride Bay, Cowal (TC). Again there have been more records than usual of Whinchats, including many with young, especially in Cowal. This too may be partly due to birds encountered during TTVs (TC/Peter Woods).

A **Great Reed Warbler** was first heard singing mid-morning in a garden at Cuan, Seil Island on 12th May. It remained all day and was also seen on 13th May (Tim Goodwin *et al.*). A description has been supplied for BBRC and, if accepted, it will be a new species for the Argyll list.

A surprising number of **Spotted Flycatchers** were found on Tiree this spring including one at Heylipol on 12th May and singles at Vaul and Carnan Mor on 13th. Good numbers of **Spotted Flycatchers** have also been recorded throughout Argyll this summer with reports from localities where they are not usually seen including birds on Colonsay on 16th May (David Jardine/ Ian Fisher) and an adult feeding a chick at Keills (Loch Sween) on 8th July (John Aitchison).

Two **Mealy Redpolls** were photographed at Balephuill, Tiree on 18th May (JB) and a female type **Golden Oriole** was reported just north of Uig, Coll at 16.00hrs on 19th May (SW).

A **Eurasian Nuthatch** was seen at a nut feeder in the garden at Strone House, Cairndow (NN180102) at 10.45hrs on 20th May (Duncan Oxland). One was reported (but not confirmed) nearby a couple of year ago and, with the fairly recent records at Glenbranter, it seems possible that a small breeding population may already be established somewhere in this area.

Two **Garden Warblers** were singing at Barnluasgan, Loch Sween on 23rd May and a **Common Redstart** was at Taynish NNR (JD).

Frustratingly briefly, John Halliday thought he heard the nasal call of **Golden Oriole**, at Taynish NNR on 27th May. A probable **Golden Oriole** was also reported as heard there on 24th May (Dick Edie).

A very late female **Brambling** was seen in a garden at



Top: Sand Martins about ready to fledge, Langa Quarry, Kintyre.
©Eddie Maguire

Bottom left: Whinchat along the Add Estuary. This year, there have been more records of this species than usual. ©Jim Dickson

Bottom right: Blyth's Reed Warbler on 3rd June at Caman Moor, Tiree. If accepted this will be another new species for the Argyll list. ©John Bowler



Bridgend near Lochgilphead on 30th May (Malcolm Chattwood). Interestingly the other two late Argyll Brambling records in recent years have been in the same general area.

During a BTO atlas survey on 31st May, a **Magpie** was found at Cuil-uaine croft (NM925330) near the Black Lochs, Oban (Mike Harrison).

A singing **Lesser Whitethroat** at Carnan Mor, Tiree on 1st June was the first ever spring record on the island and a female **Common Redstart**, a female **Common White-throat**, a male **Blackcap**, a **Common Chiffchaff**, a **Spotted Flycatcher** and a female **Chaffinch** were also found there.

At least two pairs of **Sand Martins** were found nesting in the wall of a small quarry dug (within past the 3-4 weeks) for track improvements at Drimfern, Glen Aray, Mid-Argyll on 2nd June. The species had not been seen in the area before (Judith Witts). This provides an example of

how opportunistic Sand Martins can be when new nesting opportunities occur.

A singing **Blyth's Reed Warbler** was photographed at Caman Mor, Tiree on the evening of 3rd June (found at 17.45hrs). This is a notoriously difficult species to identify, but with the song and photographs we have our fingers crossed that Tiree has provided yet another new species for the Argyll list.

A male **Pied Flycatcher** was reported at Balnamoil, Mull of Kintyre on 14th June (Phil Broadhead per EJM) and a male **Common Redstart** was seen with recently fledged young in Minard Woods, Mid-Argyll on 15th June (PD). At least one pair of **Pied Flycatchers** was present at Bonawe, North Argyll (BA). This is now a very scarce species in Argyll.

Two **Rose-coloured Starlings** seen and photographed in a garden at Clachan, Seil, Mid-Argyll on 23rd June (J. & E. Mellor per JD) were the first of three summer records of this rare species. One was reported near Gartcharran,

Loch Craignish on 2nd July (Jan Brown) and another was seen on 30th July, this time at Dervaig, Mull (P. & A. Brown per Alan Spellman). There has been quite an influx of Rose-coloured Starlings since early June, with records all over Britain (per Birdguides).

Another **Eurasian Nuthatch** was reported on 29th June. One was seen at a feeder in a garden just outside Craignure, Mull at 09.00 hrs (P. Hall).

A flock of 14 **Rooks** (mainly adults, but some juveniles.) on 3rd July were very unusual visitors to Otter Ferry. Numbers had increased to 40 by 15th July (TC). A flock of 31 **Red-billed Choughs** were feeding together at Ardnave Point, Islay on 11th July (Malcolm Chattwood).

A family party of five **Common Crossbills** were at Otter Ferry on 13th July feeding on European Larch cones (TC).

At least 40 **Mistle Thrushes** moved through Otter Ferry in a loose flock on 18th July. They appeared to be mainly juveniles (TC).

On 22nd July, a flock of c.20 **Twite** were seen on Iona (Stuart Milligan) and a calling **Yellow Wagtail** (a rare passage migrant in Argyll) flew low over Uisaed Point, Kintyre (EJM). The peak July count of **Twite** at Machrihanish SBO was 12 on 27th (EJM).

An unseasonable fall of migrants occurred in West Tiree on 27th July in a southerly breeze accompanied by intermittent thick sea fog. Species included a **Lesser White-throat**, six **Goldcrests** (all juveniles), a **Lesser Redpoll** and a colour-ringed **Twite**, which had been ringed at Heysham, Lancashire during the 2005/06 winter (JB).

Other sightings

It was a good day for butterflies on 14th May at Glenan, Cowal (see photos below), with **Speckled Woods** found in at least six different patches of wet woodland, one **Small Copper** seen along the beach and one male **Orange-tip**

found amongst many **Green-veined Whites** (Steve Petty).

Orange-tip Butterflies were seen at Otter Ferry, Cowal on 8th May (TC) and at Auchindrain, Mid-Argyll on 25th May (PD). A female **Orange-tip** seen in the garden at Kames on 31st May was a reward for looking closely at many Green-veined Whites (Steve Petty)! For those, like me, who were not aware until recently that the female Orange-tip has no orange tip to the wings and at first glance can look very like one of the common white species. Otherwise the poor weather later in the summer has led to a dearth of butterfly records.

A **Bearded Seal** present in Loch na Keal, Mull on 14th May has been causing much excitement. This circumpolar species is seldom recorded in Britain (per Alan Spellman). It was still present there on 7th June.

There have been several reports of **Minke Whales** including individuals off Coll on 29th May (BA/Anne-Lise Dickie), off Hynish, Tiree on 1st June (JB), in the Otter Ferry narrows on 22nd June (per TC) and off Balemarine, Tiree on 26th July (BA).

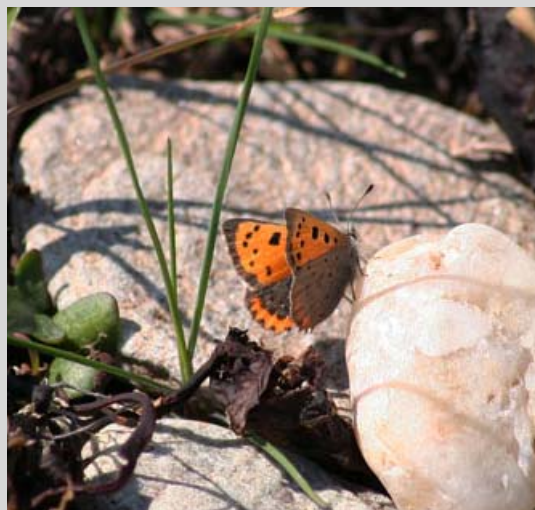
A **Basking Shark** was watched feeding in front of the house in the Kyles of Bute just north of Tighnabruaich for about 15 minutes on the evening of 23rd June (Daphne Campbell). Among several other reports of this species were four seen to the east of Coll from the Oban ferry on 30th May (JD), 35 off Hynish, Tiree on 1st June (JB) and an amazing total of 73 counted between Baugh and West Hynish, Tiree on 24th July (BA).

Excellent views were had of two **Pine Martens** crossing a forestry track at Balcardine Forest, North Argyll on 20th July (Stuart Milligan).

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Two species of butterflies photographed at Glenan, Cowal on 14th May. Speckled Wood left and Small Copper right. ©Steve Petty

Recent publications

This section provides readers with information about publications (papers in journals, reports, books etc) that have appeared since the last list was published in the March 2007 *Eider* (number 80). The criteria for selection are that a publication must have a link to birds in Scotland. The selection is biased towards what I read, so I would welcome information about other publications for inclusion in future lists.

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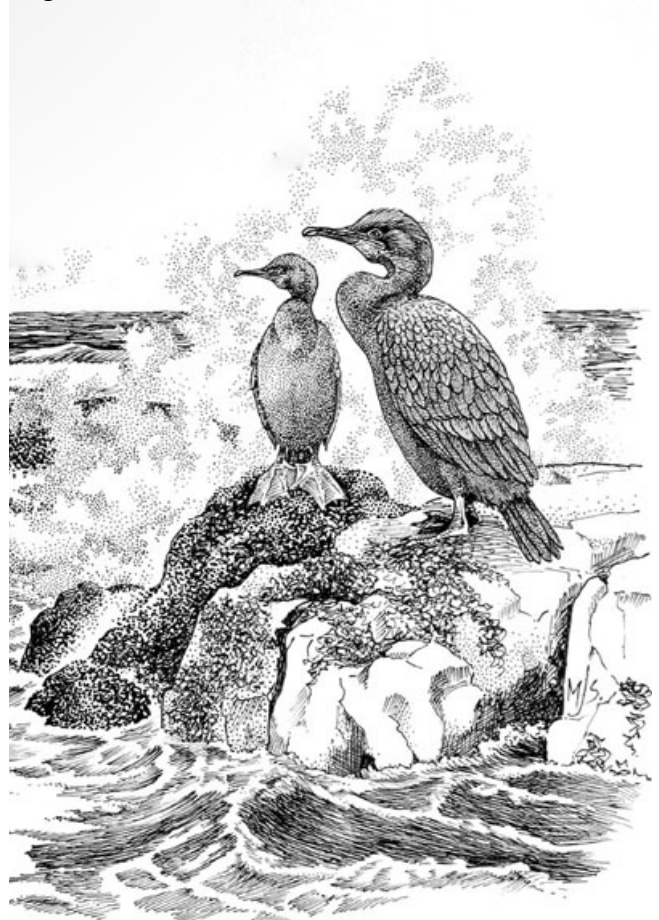
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Shags by Margaret Staley

BTO Atlas meeting for Volunteers

A meeting will take place at the Living Stones Hall in Kilmartin on Saturday 11th October at 10.30hrs. The purpose of the meeting is to review the first year's results and to have an open discussion of any problems or concerns volunteers may have.

The methodology will be run through carefully during a two hour morning session. After a break for lunch there will be a field trip to a tetrad adjacent to the hall. On site everyone will have the opportunity to see how well they have reported on their own patch or perhaps learn how to do better in the three years ahead.

Club Members who have not taken part already in the atlas, but who may be considering contributing in the years ahead, are encouraged to come along and find out exactly what atlas work entails.

If you wish to attend this meeting or would like more information please let me know, as I need to know the number of participants for catering purposes.

Richard Allan, BTO Regional Representative

Tel: 01852 300359

E-mail: richardallan@compuserve.com

Butterfly survival zones in Scotland

A new strategy has identified the top ten butterfly survival zones in Scotland. Managing these areas is the key to saving many species from extinction.

Scotland is an important refuge for many species which are declining rapidly in England. But unless conservation work is done on a large scale, endangered species that survive in Scotland could disappear from our landscapes completely.

Director of Butterfly Conservation Scotland, Paul Kirkland, said: "The butterflies of Scotland are threatened by recent changes in farming and forestry practice that have caused the breakdown of continuity in our countryside. Butterfly Conservation Scotland has identified these ten Butterfly Survival Zones where we will be focusing our new conservation strategy to re-connect isolated colonies to secure their future."

Director of Butterfly Conservation Scotland, Paul Kirkland, said: "Scotland's butterflies have been preserved by landowners, crofters and foresters who have chosen to continue to manage their land in traditional ways, especially in the north and west. We do not want to follow England's example of abandoning these practices which has led to these species disappearing."

With funding from Scottish Natural Heritage, Butterfly Conservation Scotland is working with many partners, including Forestry Commission Scotland, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, Scottish Agricultural College and Local Biodiversity Action Plan officers. Projects include introducing conservation grazing by livestock into woodlands for the Pearl-bordered Fritillary and Chequered Skipper, and restoring grazing on abandoned farmland for the Marsh Fritillary. This work will benefit many other species, including moths, orchids, and even lichens, as well as the rare butterflies.

This year's Save Our Butterflies Week also marks Butterfly Conservation's 40th birthday. The charity was conceived after amateur naturalists realised that butterfly numbers were dropping as the result of intensive agricul-

The 10 most important landscape areas for butterflies in Scotland

- North Argyll (especially around Loch Creran: Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Chequered Skipper, Marsh Fritillary)
- Lorne & Knapdale: Marsh Fritillary, Pearl-bordered Fritillary
- Lochaber (especially Loch Arkaig to Roy Bridge): Chequered Skipper, Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Marsh Fritillary
- Upper Deeside: Pearl-bordered Fritillary
- Badenoch & Strathspey: Pearl-bordered Fritillary
- Highland Perthshire (Rannoch & Breadalbane): Pearl-bordered Fritillary,
- Solway coast & hinterland (especially Mabie Forest): Pearl-bordered Fritillary
- Mull: Marsh Fritillary
- Islay: Marsh Fritillary
- Moray Firth (especially Culbin): Pearl-bordered Fritillary

ture in the 1950s. It is now the world's biggest Lepidoptera body.

He concluded: "Forty years on and butterfly numbers are still declining at an alarming rate. We know much more nowadays and can reverse these declines when we intervene on a large enough scale. Today marks the start of our biggest intervention yet with the establishment of Butterfly Survival Zones in these 10 key landscapes."

Catrin Hollingum, Publicity Officer

E-mail: chollingum@butterfly-conservation.org

Paul Kirkland, Director, Scotland

E-mail: pkirkland@butterfly-conservation.org

[press release, Butterfly Conservation www.butterfly-conservation.org]

Argyll Bird Club

Treasurer's report for the financial year 2007-2008

The Argyll Bird Club's income and expenditure were considerably higher than in any previous year. The club had a deficit of £4997.29 in financial year 2007-08. This is the first deficit we have had, and is considerably less than we had anticipated, thanks to a combination of very good sales of the new book, and printing costs coming in considerably below the printer's initial estimate. The deficit was mainly due to the production, marketing and distribution costs of the *Birds of Argyll* book, but our expenditures on Bird Recording, on Public Meetings, and on Data Handling Developments were all higher than in the previous year. Licensing costs were for use of OS mapping in the book, use of a poem, and allocation of ISBN numbers for the book and future bird reports. Packaging materials were mainly for cardboard book wrappers, and rolls of bubble wrap, for posting copies of the book. Field trip costs in this and the previous financial year were income and expenditure for boat hire for the two field trips to Ailsa Craig.

Our assets at the end of the year stood at £20,307.70 despite all of the major expenditure on the book being completed during this financial year. Income from subscriptions was £2574.73, the highest on record, reflecting our buoyant level of membership, as subscription levels have remained constant for many years. Income from bank interest increased due to the high balance in the account. Raffle income continues to be a useful offset to the cost of providing free coffees and teas at indoor meetings, though was rather less this year than last. Income from sales almost entirely represents sales of *Birds of Argyll*. A slowly increasing number of members taking the electronic *Eider* kept postage and photocopying costs down; most of the postage costs reported were for postage of *Birds of Argyll* which costs about £8 per copy to post within the UK, and more overseas. Expenditure on public meetings can mainly be attributed to room hire and refreshment costs. For the fourth year the club paid insurance to cover risks of field outings.

A major area of expenditure this year has again been in "data handling developments". This aspect of the club's activities is central to the club, involving electronic storage of bird observations in Argyll. The expenditure, which has been supported by our grants from SNH, was mainly for

Accounts for the 23rd year of the Argyll Bird Club 16 April 2007-15 April 2008

| Income | 2007/2008 | 2006/2007 |
|------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Subscription | 2574.73 | 2553.23 |
| Sales | 14,865.00 | 27.50 |
| Bank Interest | 466.55 | 387.84 |
| Other (raffles, donations, etc) | 150.00 | 252.00 |
| Grants | 0.00 | 3242.00 |
| Field Trips | 280.00 | 160.00 |
| Total | 18,336.28 | 6622.57 |
| | | |
| Expenditure | | |
| Bird Report | 0.00 | 1695.00 |
| Newsletter photocopying | 0.00 | 300.00 |
| Postage | 1568.00 | 297.00 |
| Bird Recorder expenses | 109.36 | 54.92 |
| Public meetings | 813.15 | 640.65 |
| Publicity | 574.55 | 0.00 |
| Data handling developments | 1297.26 | 1273.47 |
| Insurance | 110.00 | 110.00 |
| Field Trips | 320.00 | 120.00 |
| Returned payments | 155.00 | 120.00 |
| Licences | 212.01 | 0.00 |
| Packaging materials | 445.32 | 0.00 |
| Printing of "Birds of Argyll" book | 17,728.92 | 0.00 |
| Total | 23,333.57 | 4611.04 |
| | | |
| Surplus/Deficit for year | -4997.29 | 2011.53 |
| Brought forward | 25,304.99 | 23,293.46 |
| Assets at end of year | 20,307.70 | 25,304.99 |

hardware (a new club laptop of high specification suitable both for indoor meetings requiring large PowerPoint files, and for database processing, for software supporting desktop publishing work on bird reports and the newsletters, and for broadband facilities. All of this development is a very important aspect of the modernisation of bird recording, and

puts Argyll Bird Club into a very good position for future data handling. The returned payments included a cheque that "bounced" after being paid into the club's account and refunds to members who bought several copies of *Birds of Argyll* at the agreed price before the

committee decided on a new price structure with members being able to buy as many copies as they wish at the £25 member rate.

Bob Furness, 15 May 2008.

Statement of an independent examiner

I am not a member of Argyll Bird Club, but I have held office for many years in the Scottish Ornithologists' Club, and have considerable experience of the running of the local branch of the SOC in Glasgow. I have inspected the Leger of Income and Expenditure and the Balance Sheet of Argyll Bird Club, and I have checked details of the invoices, receipts and payments against these and against the Bank Statements, cheque books and bank giro credit slips, and certify that the statements of Income and Expenditure, and the Balance Sheet, presented by the Trustees, are accurate.

Dr Bernard Zonfrillo, Faculty of Biomedical and Life Sciences, Graham Kerr Building, University of Glasgow, Glasgow G12 8QQ

Membership Secretary's report 2007-2008

At the end of financial year 2007-08 (April 2008) we had a total of 212 fully paid up memberships (about half of these being family members). So we have approximately 350-400 members in the club if we count individuals rather than memberships. Our number of memberships is yet again up on the previous year. A small number of people joined the club to be able to buy the *Birds of Argyll* at the reduced members' rate, but this accounts for rather few of the new members. An increasing proportion of members (now about 85%) pay their subscription by Banker's Standing Order. This greatly assists in the management of the membership database, and reduces the numbers of reminder letters that we need to send out.

Sue Furness, 15 May 2008

Minutes of the 22nd Annual General meeting of the Argyll Bird Club

The last AGM of the Argyll Bird Club was held at the Cairnbaan Hotel on Saturday 10th November 2007

1. Apologies: Dr. Hazel Campbell, Danielle Clark, Mike and Penny Gear and Ann Brown.

2. Minutes of the AGM of 4th November, 2006: Approved.

3. Matters arising and not covered in the following items: None.

4. Chairman's Report: Nigel Scriven thanked the committee for all their work throughout the year. This included four meetings, as well as arranging field trips to Gigha, Taynish, Bute (which had to be re-arranged a week later owing to atrocious weather), Ailsa Craig (which proved to be so popular that a second trip was arranged the following week), Machrihanish Bird Observatory and the Owl Centre in Campbeltown (cancelled owing to bad weather on the day) and the Add Estuary with the main focus being on digiscoping. He also thanked club members who had arranged the trips and encouraged others to help in this way in the future. Nigel commented on the high quality of the 2002/03 *Argyll Bird Report* and thanked Paul and Tom, together with their team of helpers, for their work on the

arduous task of preparing, illustrating and editing this and the future reports soon to follow. Paul was also thanked for his extensive work on handling data for the NBN gateway. Nigel highlighted that the club's quarterly publication, the *Eider*, has gone from strength to strength owing to contributions from members and the excellent editing carried out by Steve Petty, he offered his thanks to all who are involved and especially to Steve who also manages the club's website. David Wood had his spare time taken over almost entirely by the work involved in leading the production of the *Birds of Argyll* book, and he, along with the editors and writers of the species accounts, illustrators and photographers etc. were thanked by all present.

5. Secretary's Report: Katie Pendreigh began by thanking the committee members for all their help and support and reported that the committee had four enjoyable and productive meetings throughout the year at the George Hotel, Inveraray. She outlined the principal topics discussed which included the *Birds of Argyll* book, the handling, processing and publishing of bird records for the *Argyll Bird Report* and regular updates by Paul on the continuing work

and preparation of data to be uploaded to the National Biodiversity Network Website. Also discussed were BTO surveys and ways of encouraging club members to carry them out, and how future club meetings and outings were organised. The Club's Public Liability Insurance policy had been renewed with Golden Valley Insurance Services for another year and the necessary information had been submitted to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator allowing our charitable status to be maintained for another year.

6. Treasurer's Report: Bob Furness alerted members to copies of the Statement of Accounts for the year 16th April 2006–15th April 2007, distributed on seats throughout the room, and reminded those present that it had also been published in the September 2007 edition of the *Eider*. He invited members' questions regarding the details, and reported the budget as being healthy, even following the costs involved in publishing the book—out of a publishing run of 1,000 copies, 400 had already been committed which would allow the accounts to at least break even. The annual subscription charged was thought to remain appropriate and the number of people paying by bankers order had increased.

7. Membership Secretary's Report: The club membership had grown steadily during the year, from 198 to 216 members, although it was surprising that there had not been a higher number of people joining in time to take up the special offer of buying the book at the reduced cost for members.

8. Future Field Trips: Several proposals for future trips had been published in the September *Eider* and members were asked for any further suggestions and/or offers to lead trips. Steve reported that he is unable to carry forward arrangements for the trip to Spain until the flight schedules are published, but hoped that they would be in place before Christmas, which would allow him to finalise numbers and book accommodation.

9. Election of Office Bearers and Committee Members: Nigel Scriven stood down from the chairmanship in order to allow proposals for chairman for the coming year to be put forward. Having previously agreed to stand as chair-

man again, his name was proposed for the position by Bob Furness and seconded by Roger Broad. Other office bearers and committee members were elected as follows:

Treasurer: Bob Furness, proposed by Paul Daw, seconded by Norman.

Secretary: Katie Pendreigh, proposed by Steve Petty, seconded by John Anderson.

Committee Members who were re-elected: Richard Allan (BTO Representative), Roger Broad, Tom Callan (editor of the Argyll Bird Report), Danielle Clark, Paul Daw (Argyll Bird Recorder), Ian Hopkins, Steve Petty (Editor of the *Eider*) and David Wood were proposed by Nigel Scriven and seconded by Eva Shrewsbury. Richard Wesley, was proposed by Nigel Scriven, and seconded by Tom Callan filling the committee to its maximum of 12.

Membership Secretary: Sue Furness, proposed by Ian Hopkins, seconded by Helen Anderson

10. AOCB

Trial re-introduction of the European Beaver to Knapdale, Argyll. John Anderson reminded club members of the letter of support he had been asked to send on behalf of the club, when holding the position as their honorary secretary, and suggested the club should again undertake a collective response. Nigel put forward the motion that the Argyll Bird Club continues to support the re-introduction of European Beavers to Knapdale. Paul Daw proposed a vote on this motion and Ian Hopkins seconding it. At a show of hands, 28 members voted for the motion while five were against, therefore the motion was carried. It was recognised that this is a controversial issue and pointed out that people have been given the opportunity to make their individual submissions as well. Leaflets to that effect, published jointly by SNH and the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, were available and on display at the meeting.

Birds of Argyll book. David Wood thanked all the editors, photographers and illustrators for tremendous amount of time and dedicated effort they had given towards making the book the comprehensive and attractive publication it is.

Katie Pendreigh, November 2007

Agenda for the 23rd AGM of the Argyll Bird Club

The AGM will be held at 13.45-14.30hrs on Saturday 8 November 2008 at the Cairnbaan Hotel, near Lochgilphead.

Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the 2007 AGM
3. Matters arising, not covered in the following items
4. Chairman's report

5. Secretary's report

6. Treasurer's report

7. Membership Secretary's report

8. Future field trips

9. Election of office bearers and committee members. A maximum of 12 can be elected and nominations are invited. Current officials are listed on the back page of this issue.

Katie Pendreigh, 4th June 2008

**Articles for the December issue of the
Eider should with the Editor before the
25th November 2008**

**Officials and Committee of the Argyll
Bird Club (2007/2008)**

Chairman: Nigel Scriven, 2 Allt na Blathaich, Loch Eck, Dunoon, Argyll PA23 8SG (*phone* 01369 840606 & 01505 843679)

Vice Chairman: Position vacant

Secretary: Katie Pendreigh, The Whins, Ferry Road, Tayinloan, Argyll PA29 6XQ (*phone* 01583 441359)

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

Membership Secretary: Sue Furness, The Cnoc, Tarbet, Dumbartonshire G83 7DG (*phone* 01301 702603)

Committee: Richard Allan (Oban), Roger Broad (Killearn), Danielle Clark-De Bisschop (Colintraive), Paul Daw (Minard), Ian Hopkins (Bute), Steve Petty (Tighnabruaich) Tom Callan (Otter Ferry) Richard Wesley (Balvicar) and David Wood (Bellanoch)

Editor of the *Argyll Bird Report*: Tom Callan, Corra, Otter Ferry, Tighnabruaich, Argyll PA21 2DH (*phone* 01700 821212)

Editor of the *Eider*: Steve Petty, Craigielea, Kames, Tighnabruaich, Argyll PA21 2AE (*phone* 01700 811235)

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

Argyll Bird Recorder

Paul Daw, Tigh-na-Tulloch, Tullochgorm, Minard, Argyll PA32 8YQ
phone 01546 886260
e-mail monedula@globalnet.co.uk)

BTO Regional Representatives in Argyll

Argyll South, Bute & Gigha: Richard Allan
phone 01852 300 359
e-mail richardallan@compuserve.com)

Argyll North – Mull, Coll, Tiree & Morvern: Sue Dewar
phone 01680 812594
e-mail sue.dewar@btconnect.com

Islay, Jura & Colonsay: John Armitage
phone 01496 860396
e-mail jsa@ornquest.plus.com



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

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

The *Eider* is published during the first weeks in March, June, September and December. Articles for each issue must be with the editor before the 25th day of the month prior to publication. However, it greatly helps if material can be submitted well before these deadline dates. Contributions are accepted in the order they are received, which may result in some late submissions being held over until the next issue.

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

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

More about the Argyll Bird Club

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

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

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

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