

**The Twenty Sixth  
ARGYLL BIRD REPORT  
With Systematic List for the year  
2014**

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**Argyll Bird Club**  
Scottish Charity Number SC008782

Founded in 1985, the Argyll Bird Club aims to promote interest in and conservation of Argyll's wild birds and their natural environment. The rich diversity of habitats in the county supports an exceptional variety of bird life. Many sites in Argyll are of international importance. The Club brings together people with varied experience, from complete beginners to experts, and from all walks of life. New members are particularly welcome.

**Activities**

Every spring and autumn there is a one-day meeting with illustrated talks and other activities. These meetings are held in conveniently central locations. Throughout the year there are field trips to local and more distant sites of interest.

**Publications**

The annual journal of the Club is the *Argyll Bird Report*, containing the Systematic List of all species recorded in the county during the year, together with reports and articles. The less formal quarterly newsletter, *The Eider*, gives details of forthcoming events and activities, reports of recent meetings, bird sightings, field trips, articles, and shorter items by members and others.

**Website**

[www.argyllbirdclub.org](http://www.argyllbirdclub.org)

To apply for membership, please (photocopy and) complete the form below and send to our Membership Secretary: **Sue Furness**, The Cnoc, Tarbet, G83 7DG. Tel. 01301 702 603 E-mail: [r.furness@bio.gla.ac.uk](mailto:r.furness@bio.gla.ac.uk)

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Please make cheques payable to "Argyll Bird Club". If you wish to pay by standing order, which reduces our administration and costs, please ask the Membership Secretary to send you the appropriate form.

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## Editorial

2014 was an exciting year for the wide range of species recorded, setting a new record of 240 which is four more than the previous record in 2010. An exceptionally prolonged easterly airflow in May gave rise to our best ever spring for rare and scarce migrants, particularly on Tiree.

Two new species for Argyll were accepted, both in spring: Collared Flycatcher and White-throated Sparrow. Continental Great Cormorant was also added as a new sub-species. We had our 2<sup>nd</sup> Argyll records of American Herring Gull, Yellow-legged Gull, Red-rumped Swallow and Melodious Warbler, 3<sup>rd</sup> records of Pied-billed Grebe, Black Kite, Marsh Warbler and Rustic Bunting, of which three turned up. Other notable sightings included White-billed Diver, Glossy Ibis, Rough-legged Buzzard, Temminck's Stint, White-rumped Sandpiper, Bonaparte's Gull and Bee-eater, with a good supporting cast of many other scarce species. As exciting as it is to see such birds it is of course important not to forget the bigger picture....

In 2014 BirdLife International's most recent assessment showed that 1,373 species (13% of extant species or roughly one in eight) are globally threatened with extinction. Looking at the trend over the past 20 years confirms that the state of the world's birds has been getting worse, with species moving ever faster towards extinction. In 2015 the fourth Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC4) was published and since the last assessment in 2009 the findings have been alarming for the UK with a further 20 species being added to the Red List. Many of these species are very relevant in an Argyll context with seabirds continuing to give cause for concern and Shag, Kittiwake and Puffin now added to the Red List. White-fronted Goose moves from Green to Red and again highlights the international importance of Islay, Tiree and Coll, and parts of Kintyre for this species. Some waders are not doing well and Curlew, declining as a breeding species throughout the UK, is particularly affected. Woodcock is also now Red Listed and reports of 270 birds being shot by one shooting party in Cowal is just one worrying example. With species such as Whinchat, Grey Wagtail and Mistle Thrush now Red Listed alongside other notable Argyll species such as Wood and Grasshopper Warbler to name but a few, it is hoped that this will give rise to an increased observer awareness and the importance of bird recording. Hundreds of observers have kindly contributed thousands of records to this report which helps greatly to give an accurate picture of our changing bird life.

Jim Dickson (Jan 2016).

# Bird Recording in Argyll

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

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

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

## Rare birds

Details of all rare bird sightings should be sent in as soon as possible after the sighting to **Jim Dickson**, 11 Pipers Road, Cairnbaan, Lochgilphead, Argyll PA31 8UF. Tel: 01546 603967 E-mail: [meg@jdickson5.plus.com](mailto:meg@jdickson5.plus.com). Please use the standard form (available from Jim Dickson. These 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 passed to the *British Birds* Rarities Committee (BBRC), as appropriate.

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

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

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

Species considered by the ABRC (as at Jan 2015), SBRC (# - as at Jan 2015) and BBRC ( $\beta$  - as at Jan 2015). **NB** some of these species are not yet on the Argyll list.

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

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

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

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

# Interpretation of the Species Accounts

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

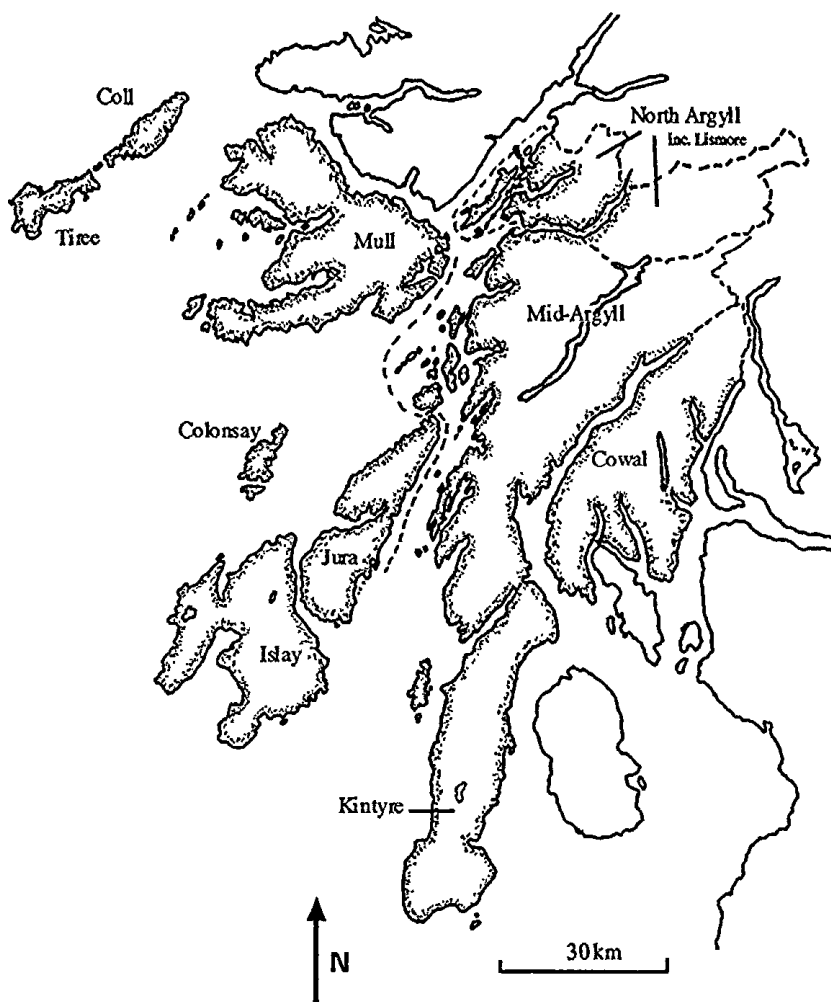
**Category E.** Species that have been recorded as introductions, human-assisted transportees, or escapes from captivity, and whose breeding populations (if any) are thought not to be self-sustaining. Species that have bred in the wild are designated as E\*. Category E species form no part of the British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

## **Tables and Figures**

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

Tables 1, 8 – 19 and 25 - 34 are based principally on data from the Wetland Birds Survey (WeBS) and from the RSPB *Islay* database for 2014, although higher counts have been included where available. Some tables include 'monthly maximum day-counts' on *Tiree*. These may be at one site but often represent the total number of birds seen at two or more sites on the island on a given day. Figures 1- 2 were supplied by David Jardine and are based on previous Bird Reports. Tables 20 - 23 and 35 - 39 are taken from the Argyll Raptor Study Group monitoring summaries produced by Roger Broad. Table 24 was from data supplied by Andy Robinson at the RSPB.

Figures in these tables for 'Loch Gruinart' represent the total for the whole of RSPB Loch Gruinart including the area known as Gruinart Floods (the area of flooded fields to the south of Loch Gruinart). Loch Crinan includes the outer Add estuary. In most cases the figures come from the respective WeBS counts for these areas although where higher counts are available these have been used. Also, 'outer Loch Etive' refers to WeBS counts covering the area from Connel Bridge to 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 unless 'monthly maximum day-counts' are specified. Regrettably, no regular WeBS counts have been carried out for the important site of Loch Indaal *Islay* during the period covered by this report and for this reason figures for this site are missing from the tables.



Map showing the recording areas of Argyll used in this report

## Studies and Surveys carried out in 2014

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

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

(3) **Systematic sea-watching at Machrihanish SBO (*Kintyre*)** [E. J. Maguire (Warden) contact: msbowarden@yahoo.com ]. Movements of seabirds, wildfowl and waders past this site are monitored regularly during most months of the year. With a few exceptions, all individual birds flying past when the hide was manned are identified and logged. In the systematic list below, Eddie Maguire has provided all records relating to Machrihanish SBO. A colour-ringing study of Twite is also ongoing at MSBO (Rab Morton/Eddie Maguire) and part of the larger **UK Twite Study Project**. The observatory celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2013.

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

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

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

### (5) **WeBS counts.**

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

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

**Please contact Paul Daw if you might be interested in taking part.**

#### **(6) Treshnish Isles Auk Ringing Group.**

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

#### **(7) Argyll Raptor Study Group.**

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

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

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

#### **(8) Aros Moss CES and Kintyre ringing studies.**

Constant Effort Site (CES) ringing, under the BTO scheme, has been carried out at Aros Moss, near the Laggan, Kintyre by Neil Brown over the past 17 years. The scheme uses ringing to monitor various aspects of bird populations in the UK. At this 50 ha site, comprising peat bog, willow scrub and reed mace, 12 visits are made each season. Neil also carries out retrapping adults for survival (RAS) studies at two Sand Martin colonies, one of which has been monitored for the last 15 years, and also raptor ringing studies in south Kintyre.

## Symbols and abbreviations

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

# Systematic List for 2014

The following systematic list includes entries for 240 Category A, B and C species recorded in Argyll during 2014 and is a new yearly record total (*cf.* average 221 species during the years 1993 – 2013. Note: Glossy Ibis is now added to the 2013 list bringing that years total to a then record equalling 236 species). Two new species were added to the Argyll list in 2014 (*viz.* Collared Flycatcher and White-throated Sparrow) which stood at 351 species seen up to the end of 2014. The Continental race (*sinensis*) of Great Cormorant was also accepted as an additional sub-species. A record of a probable ‘Siberian’ Lesser Whitethroat was recorded. Two category E species were recorded in 2014 (Black Swan and Rüppell’s Vulture). A further nine notable races (sub-species) were recorded in 2014 and a record of Thayer’s Gull is still under consideration by the BBRC.

All species that have occurred in Argyll are listed here other than Category B (i.e. species not recorded in Argyll since 1<sup>st</sup> January 1950): Red-crested Pochard, Wilson’s Storm-petrel, White-faced Storm-petrel, American Bittern, Sora, Little Crake, Great Snipe, Pallas’s Sandgrouse and Cirl Bunting. They are not referred to further in the following Systematic List.

## MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor* Eala

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

**Winter/spring** The highest count reported was 39 at the 4 main freshwater lochs on *Tiree* during the WeBS Count on 20 Jan. The only counts in double figures elsewhere were 12 during the WeBS Count at Loch Sween *Mid-Argyll* on 18 Jan and 11 at Loch Gruinart Floods, Islay on 18 Jan.

**Breeding/summer** Clive Craik reports that the only pair seen with young in the Argyll part of the SAMS study was at Loch Nell *Mid-Argyll*, where 5 large young were with their parents on 25 Sep. Elsewhere in his area three pairs unsuccessfully raised young. A clue to the fate of one brood is that of the 5 downy young seen with a pair at Connel *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Jun the last was eaten by a Herring Gull on 26 Jun (Mike Harrison). By the end of Apr a minimum of 9 nesting pairs had been located on *Tiree* (at Loch an Eilein, Loch Bhasapol (2 pairs), Loch a’ Phuill (2 pairs), Loch Garradh nan Capull, Loch Caol, Loch Bhirceapol and An Fhaodhail with additional pairs found at Loch a’ Chlair and Loch Riaghain in May. Broods found on the island included: b/5 at Loch a’ Phuill, b/5 at The Reef, b/6 at Loch Bhasapol, b/3 at Loch Bhirceapol and b/3 at An Fhaodhail. Elsewhere, pairs with young were noted as follows: Loch Gorm *Islay* b/6 on 7 Jun, Ardnave Loch *Islay* b/6 on 22 Jun, Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* b/4 on 28 Jul, Ardencale (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* b/1 on 5 Aug, Salen Bay *Mull* b/2 on 15 Aug, Loch Skerrols *Islay* b/5 on 19 Oct, Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* b/7 on 5 Nov and Seil Island *Mid-Argyll* b/2 and b/3 on 9 Nov. A pair with a nest at Bishop’s Glen *Cowal* (outcome unknown) was the first there for many years.

**Winter/spring** The highest count reported was 39 at the 4 main freshwater lochs on *Tiree* during the WeBS Count on 8 Dec and Loch Sween *Mid-Argyll* had 34 during the WeBS Count on 24 Oct. Higher counts away from these two sites included: 25 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 8 Nov, 24 at Loch Skerrols *Islay* on 19 Oct, 19 during the WeBS Count at Loch Etive *Mid-Argyll* on 8 Sep, 18 on Seil Island *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Nov, 16 at Ardnave Loch *Islay* on 13 Oct, 15 at Loch Skerrols *Islay* on 16 Oct and 11 at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 27 Aug.

**BEWICK'S SWAN** (TUNDRA SWAN) *Cygnus columbianus* Eala-bheag  
 AMBER LIST A *rare autumn and spring migrant: only two records since 1996. Formerly more frequent, mainly on Islay and in Kintyre.*  
 No records.

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

*Winter/spring* The highest count reported was 189 on 22 Mar, a *Tiree* island total following a large influx which included 118 at Loch a' Phuill. Up to 75 were recorded on *Tiree* in Jan-Feb with influxes in Mar reaching a peak of 189 on 22 Mar (Table 1). Fewer were recorded elsewhere but higher counts included: 72 at Ardtun *Mull* on 11 Mar, 60 at Loch Gorm *Islay* on 25 Mar, 42 at Loch Pottie (Poit na h-I) *Mull* on 13 Mar, 24 at Lochan na Bi (Glen Lochy) *North Argyll* on 26 Mar, 18 at Sleidmeall *Islay* on 19 Mar, 18 over Abhainn a' Chuirn *Colonsay* on 21 Mar, 17 at Ballimore (Otter Ferry) *Cowal* on 24 Mar, 16 at Loch Melldalloch *Cowal* on 25 Mar and 16 at the head of Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 18 Mar.

*Breeding/summer* Up to 4 were recorded at various sites on *Colonsay*, *Islay*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull* and *Tiree* during late May, Jun and Jul but with no indication of breeding.

*Autumn/winter* Early arrivals included 2 at Bunnahabhain *Islay* on 12 Sep, and 4 at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 21 Sep. The peak count for passage birds at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* was 284 on 23 Oct and high counts elsewhere included: 170 at Rockside *Islay* on 26 Oct, 120 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 24 Oct, 120 at Kinnabus (The Oa) *Islay* on 28 Oct, 84 at Ulva Lagoons (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 24 Oct, 72 at The Strand, *Colonsay* on 24 Oct, 59 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 6 Oct, 52 at Saligo *Islay* on 8 Oct, 50 at Portnahaven *Islay* on 23 Oct and 30 at Kilmichael (Campbeltown) *Kintyre* on 23 Oct.

Later in the year, 176 (inc. 30 juvs.) were found during an all island count on *Tiree* on 8 Dec and 15 at the Sound of Gigha on 13 Dec. Elsewhere, no counts in Dec reached double figures.

Table 1. Maximum monthly counts of Whooper Swans on *Tiree* and at Loch Gruinart in 2014.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	7	9	6	4	2	1	2	1	2	120	17	7
Tiree	75	75	189	33	4	1	2	2	11	284	134	176

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

**'TUNDRA' BEAN GOOSE** *Anser f. rossicus*

*Winter* Four were at Kilmichael farm, near Campbeltown *Kintyre* on 22 Feb to 23 Mar [Eddie Maguire, Al McNee et al]. A bird, either *rossicus* or *fabalis*, was at Lyrabus *Islay* on 19 Nov [Louise Muir, Mary Redman].

**PINK-FOOTED GOOSE** *Anser brachyrhynchus* Gèadh-gorm  
 AMBER LIST *There are variable numbers on passage, with occasional large flocks but relatively few over-winter.*

**Winter/spring** By far the largest number reported from Jan-May was 400 flying north over Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Apr, followed later the same day by a further 82. The only other flock of any size comprised 47 at Crossapol Dunes *Coll* on 27 April. Elsewhere birds were reported in single figures from various sites in *Coll*, *Colonsay*, *Islay*, *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll*, *North Argyll* and *Tiree*.

**Breeding/summer** Single birds were seen at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 7 Jun and at Oronsay Farm *Colonsay* on 21 Jun.

**Autumn/winter** The first birds of autumn were 2 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 13 Sep. Then on 18 Sep, 100 were reported from Lochbuie *Mull*, 83 at Killean *Kintyre* and a single bird at River Orchy mouth *North Argyll*, followed by 125 flying S over Scarinish *Tiree* on 20 Sep. Larger groups later in the year include 39 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 9 Oct and 50 at Ardnave Loch *Islay* on 13 Oct. Otherwise up to 6 were seen at various locations in *Islay*, *Mid-Argyll* and *Tiree* until late Nov: two singles at different sites on *Tiree* on 15 Dec being the last of the year.

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

**‘GREENLAND’ WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE** *A. a. flavirostris*

**Winter/spring** The co-ordinated count in Mar produced a total of 8,421 birds in Argyll [Table 2]. In *Kintyre* birds were at: The Laggan (1,231), Clachan (162), Tayinloan (577), Gigha (111) and Glenbarr (40). In *Mid-Argyll* birds were at: Danna (68), Ulva (131) and Moine Mhor (11) [SNH Goose Project]. After last year's increase to 9,298, numbers were back to a historically low level. Significant counts elsewhere included: 1,320 at East Chiscan (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 18 Feb, 800 at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 16 Jan, 471 at Sgor Cainteach (Sound of Gigha) *Kintyre* on 22 Jan, 281 at High Dunashry (nr. Tayinloan) *Kintyre* on 3 Apr, 271 at Loch Kinnabus *Islay* on 20 Jan, 175 at Kilcheran Loch (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 1 Mar, 168 at Rubha Dubh Allt na Muice (The Oa) *Islay* on 10 Feb, 100 at North Craigs *Kintyre* on 8 Mar, 88 at Kintaline Mill (nr. Benderloch) *North Argyll* on 16 Feb, 86 at East Loch Fada *Colonsay* on 23 Mar, 83 at Taynish (Loch Sween) on 14 Mar and 62 at Ardnaclach (Appin) *North Argyll* on 16 Feb. The last reported were 2 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 12 May.

**Breeding/summer** No records were received for the period mid-May to mid-Sep.

**Autumn/winter** The first reported returning bird was a single at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 14-16 Sep. No more were reported until 5 Oct when 14 were at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay*; numbers then built up steadily and 566 were counted there on 30 Oct. In the following days 38 were found at Inverfolla (Appin) *North Argyll* on 31 Oct, 23 at Danna (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 2 Nov, 26 at Loch an Eilein *Tiree* on 3 Nov, 67 at East Loch Fada *Colonsay* on 3 Nov and 357 at West Parkfergus (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 10 Nov.

The co-ordinated count in Dec produced a total of 7,133 birds in Argyll (cf 9,247 birds in Dec 2013) [Table 3]. In recent years, only the Dec 2011 count of 7,058 has been lower than this. The *Kintyre* birds were at: The Laggan (1,047), Tayinloan (293) and Gigha (89). In *Mid-Argyll* birds were at: Danna (74), Keills (105) and Moine Mhor (8). Numbers on *Tiree* peaked on 17/18 Nov, when an all island count found 651 (of 615 aged, just 23 (3.7%) were goslings), 74 at East Loch Fada on 19 Nov was the highest count on *Colonsay*, in *North Argyll*, 43 were at Inverfolla (Appin) on 16 Dec and 18 at Fidden on 29 Oct was the only record from *Mull*.

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

**March 2014.**

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Lorn	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
2,121	210	n/r	n/r	154	739	86	0	5,099	12

There were also 190 on Bute, which is outwith the Argyll recording area.

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

**December 2014.**

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Lorn	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
1,429	187	n/r	25	141	521	53	0	4,772	5

There were also 131 on Bute, which is outwith the Argyll recording area.

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

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

No records.

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

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

No records.

**GREYLAG GOOSE** *Anser anser* Gèadh-glas

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

**Winter/spring** An all-island count on *Tiree* on 13/14 Jan found 2,380 birds and on The Laggan *Kintyre*, 620 were counted between Kilmichael and East Chiscan, in three flocks, on 28 Feb. In Mar, the SNH co-ordinated goose count recorded a total of 4,563 birds in Argyll, of which 1,952 (42.8%) were on *Tiree* [Table 4]. Larger counts elsewhere included: 260 at Slockavullin *Mid-Argyll* on 2 Mar, 148 at Sgor Cainnteach (Sound of Gigha) *Kintyre*, 142 at Toberonochy (Luining) *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Mar, 140+ at Loch na Cille *Mid-Argyll* on 2 Feb, 130 at Ardyne Farm *Cowal* on 1 Mar, 120 at Torr an Arbhair (Gruline) *Mull* on 3 Mar, 114 at Loch Etive *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Feb, 104 at Fearnach (Kilfinan) *Cowal* on 23 Jan, 99 at Kiloran *Colonsay* on 4 Mar, 88 over New Danna (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Jan and 70 at Ardencaple (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Jan.

**Breeding/summer** The first brood of goslings on *Tiree* was noted on 8 May and by Jun, large numbers were present, including 38 broods at Loch a’ Phuill (10 Jun) with a mean brood size of 3.18. Four adults with 4 small goslings were found at New Danna (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 18 May and 65 broods totalling 220 young were found on *Colonsay*, in mid-Jun. Three pairs with broods of 4, 2 and one were at Garmony Burn *Mull* on 30 May and 16 broods totalling 77 young on *Oronsay Colonsay* on 21 Jun. The Treshnish Isles *Mull* moult flock had built up to at least 196 birds by 1 Jul, mostly around the islands of Sgeir an Eirionnaich, Fladda and Sgeir an Fheadair. Breeding was confirmed on Lunga where a mixed flock of adults and goslings were found on 4 Jul (TIARG). Broods of young were also reported from several other locations in *Islay, Mid-Argyll, Mull and North Argyll*.

**Autumn/winter** The peak count on *Tiree* was 2,808 on 25/26 Aug {of 2240 aged, 788 (35.2%) were juveniles - mean brood size 2.27 (N = 347 broods)}. Larger counts elsewhere included:

1,143 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 21 Aug, 800 on Loch Gorm *Islay* on 1 Sep, 630 at Kilchoman *Islay* on 7 Nov, 198 at Gruline *Mull* on 26 Sep, 162 at Loch Etive *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Nov, 160 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 28 Aug, 147 at West Machrihanish *Kintyre* on 10 Nov, 141 at Loch Craignish *Mid-Argyll* on 6 Sep, 135 on Luing *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Dec, 122 at East Loch Fada *Colonsay* on 17 Dec, 118 at Sgor Cainteach (Sound of Gigha) *Kintyre* on 8 Sep, 100 at Eorsa (Loch na Keal) *Mull* on 4 Nov and 100 at Mid Ardyne *Cowal* on 19 Dec.

The co-ordinated count in Dec produced a total of 4,907 birds in Argyll, of which 2,249 (45.8%) were on *Tiree* [Table 5].

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

**Mar 2014.**

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Lorn	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
1,298	212	n/r	n/r	445	1,952	160	16	342	138

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

**Dec 2014.**

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Lorn	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
1,428	46	n/r	0	422	2,249	134	47	525	56

## **SNOW GOOSE** *Anser caerulescens* Gèadh-bàn

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

**Winter/spring** The 2 (1 white, 1 intermediate morph) birds at Tayinloan *Kintyre* first reported in Oct 2013 were present in the area again until at least 10 Apr. Elsewhere, 2 ‘Greater Snow Geese’ were reported on Iona *Mull* on 15 and 25 Mar.

**Breeding/summer** An intermediate-phase bird paired to a Greylag Goose was seen at various sites on *Tiree* in late Apr but was not seen subsequently. There were no breeding season reports regarding the *Coll* feral flock.

**Autumn/winter** The *Coll* feral flock was reported, at Druim Buidhe, as numbering 26 birds on 14 Sep.

## **GREATER CANADA GOOSE** *Branta canadensis* Gèadh-dubh

*The resident population on Colonsay was introduced in 1934. Regular breeding has taken place since 1992 in Mid-Argyll in increasing numbers, with increasingly frequent breeding attempts elsewhere. A transatlantic origin seems probable for at least some of the medium-sized and small individuals seen in winter goose flocks on Islay and Tiree. See also Lesser Canada Goose below.*

**Winter/spring** The largest flock reported was 220 at Barsloisnoch (Moine Mhor) *Mid-Argyll* on 15 Feb. Other larger flocks reported included: 144 at Inverfolla (Appin) *North Argyll* on 12 Feb, 129 at East Darlochan (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 12 Feb, 120 at Loch Craignish *Mid-Argyll* on 15 Feb, 115 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Jan, 80 at Westport Marsh (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 22 Jan, 71 at Loch Etive *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Feb, 66 at Dunamuck (Moine Mhor) on 18 Jan, 57 at Toberonochy (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Mar and 49 at Druim na Claidh (Appin) *North Argyll* on 19 Jan.

**Breeding/summer** The first young reported were a pair with 3 small goslings at Inn Island (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 2 May. In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area, Clive Craik found evidence of breeding for at least 60 nesting pairs at 19 sites (he considers this a conservative

estimate). Large numbers of broods of young were found on the shore at Saulmore (nr. Dunstaffnage) *Mid-Argyll* at the end of May – so many that Clive described them as ‘uncountable’. Broods of young or other evidence of breeding were also reported from other locations in *Colonsay* (2), *Islay* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (8) and *Mull* (7), including 4 broods of young in the Sound of Kerrera *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Jun.

**Autumn/winter** The highest number reported at this time was 378 (including good numbers of young) at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Aug. Other larger flocks reported included: 264 at Druim na Claidh (Appin) *North Argyll* on 9 Nov, 220 at Port Appin *North Argyll* on 30 Aug, 205 at Barsloisnoch (Moine Mhor) *Mid-Argyll* on 3 Aug, ca 200 at Glencraigs (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 18 Nov, 184 at Loch na Cille (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 21 Nov, 143 at Loch Etive *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Nov, 142 at Coshandrochaid (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 3 Aug, 128 at Loch Laich *North Argyll* on 29 Nov, 80 at Lochdon *Mull* on 5 Nov and 76 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 25 Sep.

### **LESSER CANADA GOOSE** *Branta canadensis interior/parvipes*

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

No accepted reports. (See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.126).

### **LESSER CANADA GOOSE** *Branta hutchinsii/minima*

*Although there have been many claims over the years of birds of this type, especially on Islay, there are currently no records as yet formally accepted by the BOURC. A transatlantic origin seems probable for most of these birds.*

No accepted reports. (See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.126).

*Note: Numerous past records of Cackling or Richardson's Canada Goose have been considered acceptable in terms of identification by the BBRC however await formal acceptance as a British species by the BOURC, there has been a recent development with a record of a single bird at Loch Gruinart, Islay on 26 Mar 1984 now having been accepted by the BOURC.*

### **BARNACLE GOOSE** *Branta leucopsis* Cathan

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

**Winter/spring** In Mar, the SNH co-ordinated goose count recorded a total of 47,479 birds in Argyll. This is well down on last year's count of 53,585 but numbers in Argyll seem to fluctuate quite widely from year to year. The great majority (39,909) of these were on *Islay*. The peak winter count on *Tiree* was 4,581 on 13/14 Jan and other large flocks include 3,530 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 30 Jan, 2,200 at Balephetrish *Tiree* on 10 Apr, 1,400 at Shuna Sound (E of Toberonochy-Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Mar, 1,220 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 14 Feb, 1,110 at Kinnabus (The Oa) *Islay* on 16 Feb, 600 at Isle of Danna (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 6 Apr, 581 at Mid Loch Fada *Colonsay* on 17 Mar, 250 at Ceann an t-Sailein (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 28 Feb, 200 at Inch Kenneth *Mull* on 28 Jan, 175 at Conarst *Mull* on 24 Feb, 130 at Loch Beg *Mull* on 28 Jan and 84 at Loch na Cille (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Mar. The last flocks of spring were 26 at Loch Bhasapol *Tiree* on 30 Apr and 33 at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 2 May.

Late singles were at Danna (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 13 May and at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 19 May.

**Summer** There were no records between mid-May and late Sep.

**Autumn/winter** The first returning birds on *Islay* were 2 at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 25 Sep but the main arrival was during the first week of Oct and a count there in the late afternoon on 5 Oct found 6,250 birds. Oronsay *Colonsay* had a total of 179 birds (in six groups) flying over heading for *Islay* on 9 Oct and 360 flew SE over *Tiree* on 7 Oct in groups of up to 230. RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* had on 10 Oct found 11,905 birds and by 13 Oct numbers had risen to 16,201. On Oronsay *Colonsay*, 2,419 were counted on 17 Nov, 3,587 were found on *Tiree* during an all-island count on 17/18 Nov with 23,970 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 5 Nov the highest on record for this time of year. The co-ordinated Islay count in Dec had 39,185 birds; 84% of the Argyll total of 46,671. Elsewhere, 675 were between Bowmore to Gartbreck (Loch Indaal) *Islay* on 12 Oct, 100 at Port na Ba *Mull* on 19 Oct and 501 were counted at Toberonochy (Luining) *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Dec. 70 birds were cannon netted and ringed at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 27 Oct.

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

**Mar 2014.**

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
22	646	n/r	700	4,369	580	893	39,909	360

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

**Dec 2014.**

Kintyre	Mid-Argyll	Mull	Coll	Tiree	Colonsay	Oronsay	Islay	Jura
13	480	n/r	970	4,124	419	1,480	39,185	0

## **BRENT GOOSE** *Branta bernicla* Gèadh-got

**AMBER LIST A** *passage migrant, in varying numbers: very few in winter. Most birds seen in Argyll are of the light-bellied race B. b. hrota. Birds of the dark-bellied race B. b. bernicla occur occasionally, and there has been one record of the Black Brant B. b. nigricans. All records refer to the pale-bellied race B. b. hrota unless otherwise noted.*

**Winter/spring** Most records from Jan to Mar were on *Islay* and included counts of 56 at Bruichladdich on 9 Jan, 82 at Blackrock (Loch Indaal) on 11 Jan, 30 at Gortan on 1 Feb, 36 at Uiskentuie (Loch Indaal) on 12 Feb, 21 at Bruichladdich on 28 Feb and 10 at the head of Loch Indaal on 20 Mar. The only other records at this time were from *Jura* with 13 on the shoreline at Feolin Farm *Jura* on 23 Feb, 5 flying S between Brosdale Island and the mainland on 22 Mar and 12 at Craighouse on 28 Mar. Records during Apr and May included: 9 at Blackrock (Loch Indaal) on 5 Apr, 1 at Caoles *Tiree* on 1 Apr followed by 9 at Salum on 9 Apr, 311 on *Tiree* on 17 Apr (comprising 133 at Balephetrish Bay (inc. 5 colour-ringed), 66 at Miodar, 65 at Gott Bay and 47 flying NW over Cornaigmore), 200 on *Tiree* on 18 Apr (150 NW over Crossapol and 50 at Balephetrish Bay), 3 at Rubha Chraiginis *Tiree* on 25 Apr and single birds at various sites on *Islay*, the last being at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 22 May.

**Summer** No records during the summer months.

**Autumn/winter** The first of autumn were: 7 at Portnahaven *Islay* on 16 Sep, one at Sorobaidh Bay *Tiree* on 17 Sep, 150 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 24 Sep and 2 at Dun Cholla *Colonsay* on 30 Sep. Larger numbers later in the year included: 106 (inc. ringed birds from high arctic Canada Reserve Goose Count) at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 7 Oct, 96 at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 9 Oct, 53 at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 12 Oct, 31 at Loch Gruinart on 17 Oct, 17 flying south past Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 21 Oct, 25 at Gartmain (Loch Indaal) *Islay* on

23 Oct, 25 at Loch Indaal *Islay* on 10 Nov, 18 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 15 Nov and 27 at Gartmain (Loch Indaal) on 27 Dec. Elsewhere, 1 was at Treshnish *Mull* on 8 Oct, 3 on Gigha *Kintyre* on 11 Oct, 2 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 14 Oct and 10 flew NE over *Tiree* on 14 Oct. Single figure numbers were at various sites on *Islay* and *Tiree* until the end of the year.

### RED-BREASTED GOOSE *Branta ruficollis*

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

No records.

### COMMON SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna* Crà-ghèadh

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

**Winter/spring** A survey of Loch Gruinart Estuary on 23 Apr found 291 birds. Other counts of 10 or more birds, apart from those shown in Table 8, included: 55 at Bridgend Bay (Loch Indaal) *Islay* on 16 Apr, 49 at The Strand *Colonsay* on 10 Mar, 32 at *Colonsay* on 26 Feb, 30 at Fiddien *Mull* on 13 Mar, 30 at Bowmore *Islay* on 20 Apr, 20 at Salum *Tiree* on 6 Mar, 19 at Port na h-Atha (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 28 Apr, 17 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 1 Apr, 14 at Loch Don *Mull* on 14 Jan, 14 in the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on 22 Jan, 10 at Drumore *Kintyre* on 10 Mar and 10 at Arinagour *Coll* on 10 Apr.

**Breeding/summer** A total of 21 pairs were found on *Colonsay* and 9 broods totalling 50 young were found on *Colonsay* (inc. Oronsay). The first brood seen at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* was b/9 on 19 May and a pair with 7 recently fledged young were in the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 20 May. Pairs with broods of young were also reported from: Ardtalla, Bruichladdich, Sleidmeall and Traigh Nostaig on *Islay*, Eorsa *Mull* and Caolas, Clachan Mor, Salum, Sandaig and West Hynish on *Tiree*.

**Autumn/winter** Apart from those in Table 8 the largest counts at this time were: 14 at Corsapol *Islay* on 28 Oct, 7 at Ulva Lagoons (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 30 Nov and 12 at Salum *Tiree* on 29 Dec.

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

Lochs	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	222	156	98	291	130	21	1	2	18	n/r	54	128
Indaal*	42	11	40	40	10	30	8	0	0	0	0	1
Craignish	11	18	13	5	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sween	6	14	28	14	5	2	0	0	0	0	7	3

\* WeBS Counts for Bowmore to Gartbreck.

### MANDARIN DUCK *Aix galericulata*

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

Reported regularly from the area around Ford *Mid-Argyll*, with a max. of 18 on Loch a' Choire (inc. 3 juvs.) on 14 Dec. The only records elsewhere concerned 1 at Braevallich (Loch Awe) *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Apr and 1 at Duilletter (Glen Strae) *Cowal* on 20 Jun. No counts were reported of the established population at Lock Eck *Cowal*.

## EURASIAN WIGEON *Anas penelope* Glas-lach

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

**Winter/spring** Sites with counts of 50 or more, other than those listed in Table 9, included: 370 on floodwater at Kilmichael (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 11 Feb, 293 at the head of Loch Indaal *Islay* on 11 Jan, 178 on floodwater at East Chiscan (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 12 Feb, 160 at The Reef *Tiree* on 20 Jan, 70 at Druim Mor (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 1 Feb, 68 at the head of Loch Striven *Cowal* on 5 Mar, 67 on Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 16 Feb, 60 at Aird Luing (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 25 Jan, 57 at Loch Craignish *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Jan and 54 at Aros Castle *Mull* on 23 Feb.

**Breeding/summer** Eight birds all flying together at Loch Tulla *North Argyll* on 27 Jun were presumed to include a fledged brood. At least 3 pairs were present on *Tiree* during May but although breeding attempts were thought likely no broods of young were reported.

**Autumn/winter** Sites with counts of 50 or more, other than those listed in Table 9, included: 303 counted between Port Charlotte and Bowmore (Loch Indaal) *Islay* on 5 Nov, 213 on Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 8 Nov (also 114 there on 11 Oct and 181 on 6 Dec), 80 on floodwater at East Chiscan (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 17 Nov, 75 on Loch Gilp (S of Ardrishaig) *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Sep, 56 at Loch Craignish *Mid-Argyll* on 4 Dec, 140 at Clachan Mor *Tiree* on 22 Nov and 50 at Eorsa (Loch na Keal) *Mull* on 4 Nov.

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

Lochs	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart*	152	161	318	21	3	0	0	0	0	93	293	221
Indaal**	80	287	10	20	4	0	0	0	n/r	60	272	570
Crinan	198	138	62	8	0	0	1	2	54	151	78	80
Etive	127	101	50	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	14	47	87	111
Sween	64	33	141	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	13	84	110	82
Holy Loch	131	103	41	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	0	36	58	70
Tiree	397	210	262	150	184	0	3	1	173	290	355	316

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

## AMERICAN WIGEON *Anas americana*

A *rare visitor: nine or more records.*

**Spring/summer** An adult male was at Loch an Eilein *Tiree* and subsequently at Loch Bhirceapol and Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* from 21 Apr to 10 Jun [John Bowler, Janet Hunter, Graham Todd]. Record was accepted by the ABRC.

## GADWALL *Anas strepera* Lach-ghlas

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

**Winter/spring** Birds were reported regularly at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay*, with a max. of 6 on 15 Jan and 16 Mar. The only other records were on *Tiree*, with 2 at Kilmoluaig on 19 Feb and a pair at Loch a' Phuill on 12 Mar.

**Breeding/summer** Females with broods of 5 and 8 young were found on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 11 and 14 Jun respectively: only the second breeding record for the island. Six fledged juveniles were seen there on 2 Aug. At least 3 pairs were present on *Tiree* in May and a female with b/6

was found there on 26 May. Pairs were present at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* during May and Jun and a female with b/6 was seen on 13 Jun.

**Autumn/winter** A male in eclipse plumage was in the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 18 Aug and a male and female were seen at Gruline *Mull* on 7 Oct. Birds were reported at various sites on *Tiree* from mid-Sep to the end of Oct, with a maximum of 6 on 29 Oct. Small numbers were reported from *Islay* between mid and late Oct, with a maximum of 4 at Loch Gruinart on 31 Oct.

### **EURASIAN TEAL** *Anas crecca* Crann-lach

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

**Winter/spring** The total count on *Tiree* on 20 Jan was 658, which included 310 at An Fhaodhail. Other than this and those listed in table 10, the only counts of 50 or more birds were: max. 150 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 3 Jan, 127 at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 1 Jan, 100 at The Reef *Tiree* on 10 Mar, 92 at Loch Sween on 18 Jan, max. 90 at Loch Kinnabus *Islay* on 20 Jan, 90 off Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 4 Apr (a most unusual record), 89 at Holy Loch Cowal on 20 Jan, 70 on Luing *Mid-Argyll* 25 Jan, 56 on floodwater at East Chiscan (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 12 Feb and 50 at Loch Cam *Islay* on 11 Feb.

**Breeding/summer** At least 15 pairs were at likely breeding locations on *Tiree* in May and at least 7 broods of young were seen in Jun and Jul. Pairs with broods of young were also noted at Turraman Loch *Colonsay* and RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay*.



*Eurasian Teal*

*Jim Dickson*

**Autumn/winter** Counts of 50 or more birds, other than those listed in table 10, included: 1,720 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 2 Nov, 800 at Loch Tallant *Islay* on 12 Dec, 360 on floodwater at East Chiscan (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 17 Nov, 270 between Port Charlotte and Bowmore (Loch Indaal) *Islay* on 5 Nov, 220 at Machir Bay *Islay* on 7 Nov, 160 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on

14 Nov, 100 at Loch Sween *Mid-Argyll* on 20 Dec, 80 at Ardnave Loch *Islay* on 8 Dec, 79 on Luing *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Dec, 65 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Dec and 51 at Loch Kinnabus *Islay* on 10 Nov.

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

Lochs	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart*	77	194	441	27	18	0	5	3	228	1274	215	275
Indaal**	187	287	10	20	4	0	0	0	7	40	152	380
Crinan	28	n/r	11	2	14	18	14	48	134	55	52	83
Tiree	348	253	163	28	1	1	34	65	190	170	354	380

\* Including Loch Gruinart Floods \*\* WeBS Counts for Bowmore to Gartbreck. # Many more feeding around the coast and on floods.

### **GREEN-WINGED TEAL** *Anas carolinensis*

**A rare visitor: 21 or more records since 1980, mostly on Islay or Tiree: some records may well involve returning individuals.**

**Winter/spring** A male (from 2013) was again at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 14 and 20 Jan [John Bowler]. A male was at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 25 Mar to 3 Apr [James How, Peter Roberts et al.] and possibly the same individual again there on 25 May [Jim Dickson, Martin Scott et al.].

**Autumn/winter** A male was at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 28 Oct [David Wood] and subsequent unconfirmed reports there until later in the year. All records were accepted by the ABRC.

### **MALLARD** *Anas platyrhynchos* Lach-riabhach

**A common breeding, passage and wintering species**

**Winter/spring** Counts of 40 or more birds, other than those listed in table 11, included: 202 at the head of Loch Indaal *Islay* on 11 Jan, 48 at Ardencaple (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Jan, 47 at Loch Ederline *Mid-Argyll* on 18 Jan, 46 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 3 Jan and 43 on Loch Melldalloch *Cowal* on 13 Jan.

**Breeding/summer** At least 10 broods of young were seen at various sites on *Tiree*. Pairs with young were also reported from: Loch Cholla, Oronsay and West Loch Fada *Colonsay*; Killail (Otter Ferry) and Loch Melldalloch, *Cowal*; Bruichladdich, RSPB Loch Gruinart, Port Charlotte, River Sorn (Bridgend Woods) and Sleidmeall *Islay*; Feorlin, Kerrera and McCormaig Islands *Mid-Argyll*; Aird of Kinloch *Mull*, and Lismore and Loch Tulla *North Argyll*

**Autumn/winter** Counts of 40 or more birds, other than those listed in table 11, included: 154 at the Add Estuary on 5 Sep, 120 at Loch Gorm *Islay* on 5 Oct, 110 at N Moine Mhor *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Aug, 80 at Gruline *Mull* on 7 Oct, 73 at Loch Ederline *Mid-Argyll* on 8 Nov, 65 at Loch Sween *Mid-Argyll* on 8 Nov, 61 on Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Oct, 53 on Loch Melldalloch *Cowal* on 12 Oct and 48 in the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on 8 Sep.

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

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

Lochs	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart*	159	143	63	93	80	1	72	2	4	172	150	119
Indaal**	52	6	42	20	10	0	5	43	48	132	6	265
Crinan	28	n/r	11	2	14	18	14	48	134	55	52	43
Etive	117	59	29	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	89	122	162	123
Holy Loch	110	83	27	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	107	43	92	118
Tiree	76	58	12	10	7	13	135	145	16#	172	44#	81#

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

# Many more around the coast and on smaller pools.

### AMERICAN BLACK DUCK *Anas rubripes*

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

No records.

### NORTHERN PINTAIL *Anas acuta* Lach-stiùireach

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

**Winter/spring** The highest count was 73 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 14 Feb. The only records elsewhere concerned: one at Holy Loch *Cowal* from Jan to Mar, 2 on floodwater Kilmichael (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 22 Feb, up to 2 on floodwater at The Reef *Tiree* on 8-10 Jan with 5 there on 18 Feb, 6 at different sites on *Tiree* on 17 Mar and 2 at Loch Indaal *Islay* on 13 Apr.

**Breeding/summer** Seven pairs were present at two sites on *Tiree* during the breeding season and some 34 fledglings in 6 broods were seen in Jul. An excellent result for a species becoming an increasingly scarce breeder in Britain. Pairs were present at RSPB Loch Gruinart during Apr and May but with no evidence of breeding.

**Autumn/winter** The highest count was 73 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 23 Dec. Numbers on *Tiree* peaked at 29 at Loch a' Phuill on 22 Jul and one or two remained there until early Dec with 4 more at Loch Riaghain on 29 Dec. Elsewhere, a fem/imm. was at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Sep (presumably the same bird was at the head of Loch Gilp on 20 Sep), 8 were on Ulva Lagoons (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on 15 Sep, a female type flew S at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 18 Oct, a female flew past Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 3 Nov and 6 were on Loch Indaal *Islay* on 13 Dec.

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

Loch	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	5	73	50	8	2	0	0	0	0	62	71	73

### GARGANEY *Anas querquedula*

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

**Spring** A pair were seen in Shuna Sound (SE of Toberonochy, Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 10 May, two were on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 11 May and a drake was on floods SE of Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 18 May. On *Islay*, a pair was reported at RSPB Loch Gruinart on several dates from mid to late May and one on 6 Jul.

**Autumn** Following the unexpected autumn record of one in Oct 2013 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay*, a pair was reported there on 30 Oct this year.

## **BLUE-WINGED TEAL** *Anas discors*

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

No records.

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

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

**Winter/spring** Away from Islay and Tiree [Table 13] there were records at East Chiscan (The Laggan) Kintyre (a drake on 21 Feb and 3 (drake and 2 ducks) on 22 Feb and 2 Mar), Oronsay Colonsay (a pair on several dates in Apr) and a drake at Gallanach (Loch Crinan) Mid-Argyll on 13 May.

**Breeding/summer** At least 13 pairs were found nesting at 6 sites on Tiree and at least 3 broods of young were seen. Pairs were located at RSPB Loch Gruinart Islay and at least 3 broods of young were reported. At least 2 broods of young were located on Oronsay Colonsay.

**Autumn/winter** There were no records on Oronsay Colonsay after Jul and the only other records away from Islay and Tiree concerned 2 females at Westport Marsh (The Laggan) Kintyre on 25 Nov.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
L. Gruinart	34	21	35	13	11	2	15	0	0	11	31	14
Tiree	24	17	24	8	8	2	4	3	3	8	6	16

## **COMMON POCHARD** *Aythya ferina* Lach-mhàsach

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

**Winter/spring** The only records concerned single birds at Loch a' Phuill Tiree on 1 Mar and 21-22 Apr and a drake at Loch an Eilein Tiree on 19 May.

**Autumn/winter** On Islay, a drake was at Ardnave Loch on 7 Oct, 2 on Loch Skerrols on 11 Oct and 1 on Loch Gorm on 20 Oct. The remaining records were all on Tiree and involved single drakes on Loch a' Phuill during Oct and Dec.

## **RING-NECKED DUCK** *Aythya collaris*

*A rare visitor: 20 records.*

**Spring** An adult male was at Loch Ballygrant Islay on 19-23 Mar [Chris & Tony Johnson et al].

**Autumn/winter** Three singles were at Loch a' Phuill Tiree: a first-winter female on 26-28 Oct, another first-winter female on 28 Oct and a first-winter male on 3 Nov to 31 Dec and into 2015. [John Bowler]. All records were accepted by the ABRC.

## **FERRUGINOUS DUCK** *Aythya nyroca*

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

No records.

## **TUFTED DUCK** *Aythya fuligula* Lach-thopach

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

**Winter/spring** Other than those listed in Table 14, the only sites with counts of 10 or more were: max. 32 at Loch Pottie (Poit na h-I) *Mull* on 17 Feb, max. 32 at Loch Ballygrant *Islay* on 19 Mar, max. 20 at Loch Kinnabus *Islay* on 27 Feb, 19 at Loch Glenastle (The Oa) *Islay* on 26 Mar, 13 at Kilchurn Castle (Loch Awe) *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Jan, 13 at Loch Leathan *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Mar and 10 at Loch Assapol *Mull* on 6 Feb.

**Breeding/summer** Approx. 19 pairs were present on *Tiree* with at least 5 broods of young located. Elsewhere, pairs were present in the breeding season at East Loch Fada and Oronsay *Colonsay*, Loch Melldalloch *Cowal*, Ardnave Loch and RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay*. A female with b/1 was at Ardencaple (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 30 Jul.

**Autumn/winter** Other than those listed in Table 14, the only sites with counts of 10 or more were: Loch Gorm *Islay* with max. 300 on 5 Oct, Loch Glenastle (The Oa) *Islay* (max. 26 on 10 Nov), Loch Kinnabus *Islay* (15 on 8 Dec) and Loch Leathan *Mid-Argyll* (14 on 7 Dec). Smaller numbers were recorded elsewhere; on *Colonsay*, *Cowal*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull* and *North Argyll*.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Ardnave	n/r	6	10	15	10	1	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	7	8
Tiree	84	92	96	66	36	8	7	24	25	90	133	128

## **GREATER SCAUP** *Aythya marila* Lach-mhara

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

**Winter/spring** No regular counts were reported for Loch Indaal *Islay* but 130 were found there on 17 Jan, 50 on 1 Feb and 8 on 23 Feb. Elsewhere on *Islay*, 13 were at Bruichladdich on 3 Mar and up to 7 at Loch Gorm in Apr. A single male was seen at various sites on *Mull* during Feb and Mar, a drake was at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 8 Jan, a pair was in Gunna Sound *Tiree* on 22 Mar and 3 drakes were seen off Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 4 May.

**Autumn/winter** On *Islay*, the only count on Loch Indaal was 54 at Blackrock on 28 Oct, 2 were at Loch Ardnave on 23 Oct and 4 at Loch a' Gheoidh (Sunderland) on 28 Oct. Away from *Islay*, a drake was at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 4 Sep and up to 2 on Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* during Oct and Nov.

## **LESSER SCAUP** *Aythya affinis*

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

No accepted records. (See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.126).

## **COMMON EIDER** *Somateria mollissima* Lach-Lochlannach

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



*Common Eider*

*Eddie Maguire*

**Winter/spring** The only counts of 50 or more birds, other than those at sites listed in table 15, were: 129 in the inner harbour Campbeltown *Kintyre* on 12 Feb, 120 at Inch Kenneth *Mull* on 7 Apr, 119 at Loch Indaal (from Bowmore to Gartbreck) *Islay* on 13 Apr, 100 in Machrihanish Bay *Kintyre* on 8 Mar, 93 at Kilfinan Bay *Cowal* on 20 Apr, 76 off SE *Colonsay* on 10 Mar, 70 off Aird *Tiree* on 7 Mar, 64 between Vaul and Salum *Tiree* on 14 Apr, 65 between Kilkenneth and Hough *Tiree* on 18 Apr, 70 off Ardcastle (Loch Fyne) *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Apr, 60 in Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* on 27 Feb and 56 at Port na h-Atha (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 4 Apr.

**Breeding/summer** In the Argyll part of the SAMS study area, *ca* 91 nests/clutches were found at 13 sites but this did not include the large colony at Burnt Islands (Kyles of Bute) *Cowal*, which, as in 2013, was not monitored. In all, 25 ducklings (mean brood size 3.1) were noted in the Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* area in May – Jun (*cf* 62 in 2013). On *Colonsay*, 16 females with 13 broods totalling 38 young were found in Jun and 18 females with 7 broods totalling 18 young were found on Oronsay. On Treshnish Isles *Mull*, single broods of two ducklings were at Sgeir a' Chaisteil and south of Harp Rock (Area 10), and a nest on Sgeir an Eirionnaich. Adults with young were also noted as follows: *Cowal* (1 site), *Islay* (2 sites), *Mid-Argyll* (6 sites), *Mull* (1 site), *North Argyll* (1 site) and *Tiree* (12 sites).

**Autumn/winter** The 2014 co-ordinated count of Eider in the Firth of Clyde in Sep gave a total of 2,391 for the Argyll part of the area, including 1,096 in Loch Fyne. This continues the slight increasing trend over the past 3 years and there appears to be some stabilisation in overall numbers in the Firth of Clyde. However, recent declines in the numbers of Eiders across Europe are beginning to cause conservation concerns. As a result their conservation status is changing and the next UK Species of Conservation Concern assessment is likely to up-list Eider from amber to red (per Chris Waltho). Away from the sites listed in Table 15, counts of over 50 included: 300 at Loch Scridain *Mull* on 23 Sep, 287 at Ormsary *Mid-Argyll* on 26 Dec, 238 (inc. 160 drakes, 14 imm. drakes, 64 female-types) in the inner harbour Campbeltown *Kintyre* on 20

Nov, 200 at Port nan Each (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 27 Oct, 179 in the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on 8 Sep, 154 at Port Charlotte *Islay* on 5 Nov, 95 at West Hynish *Tiree* on 23 Aug, 95 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 23 Dec, 85 off Traigh Bhagh *Tiree* on 18 Sep, 60 off Traigh Bhi *Tiree* on 14 Oct, 75 in Kilfinan Bay *Cowal* on 9 Nov, 68 in Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* on 27 Sep, 62 near Rhunahaorine Point *Kintyre* on 23 Sep and 50 in small groups at ‘West Coast Salmon’ *Kintyre* on 29 Sep.

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

Lochs	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Holy L.	37	40	46	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	30	42	42	32
Craignish	39	6	31	26	4	7	14	11	34	39	26	20
Creran	63	n/r	75	26	61	50	n/r	n/r	n/r	98	39	n/r
Long*	135	133	106	42	120	447	232	298	55	115	61	125
Sound of Gigha	29	n/r	37	n/r	1	n/r	n/r	82	179	19	31	31

\* Ardentinny to Strone Point

### ‘NORTHERN’ COMMON EIDER *Somateria mollissima borealis*

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

2012. A record from *Tiree* in Apr is still under consideration by the BBRC.

2013. A record from *Tiree* in May is still under consideration by the BBRC.

2014. No records.

### KING EIDER *Somateria spectabilis*

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

No records.

### HARLEQUIN DUCK *Histrionicus histrionicus*

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

No records.

### LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis* Eun-buchainn

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

**Winter/spring** The largest numbers recorded were on *Tiree*, where up to 20 (on 25 Jan) were counted in Hough Bay in Jan-Mar, with 3 at Balephetrish Bay and 2 off Traigh Bhi on 20 Jan, 1 at Gott Bay on 28 Feb, 3 at Balephetrish Bay on 11 Mar and 2 flying E at Baugh on 3 May. Elsewhere, a female was at Port na h-Atha (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 9 Jan, 5 were in the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on 22 Jan, a female was off Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 3 dates in Feb, at Bowmore *Islay* 2 were present on 12 Feb and a drake on 24 Feb, 2 at Kiloran Bay *Colonsay* on 26 Feb, an imm. drake at Machrihanish SBO on several dates from 1 Mar to 11 Apr and a female at Uiskentuie (Loch Indaal) *Islay* on 25 Apr.

**Winter/spring** The largest numbers recorded were again on *Tiree*, where numbers at Hough Bay peaked at 15 on 28 Dec. Elsewhere on *Tiree*, one was off Traigh Bhi on 14 Oct and up to 5

were at Balephetrish Bay from Oct to Dec. On *Islay*, 3 were off Bruichladdich on 13 Oct, a female at Bowmore on 4 Nov, 13 at Port Charlotte on 5 Nov, 5 at Bowmore on 5 Nov and 4 at Bowmore on 23 Dec. In the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre*, 2 were present on 19 Nov, 9 on 6 Dec and 14 (off Rhunahaorine Point) on 26 Dec. Elsewhere, one was on Loch Scridain *Mull* on 28 Oct, 2 flew S at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 3 Nov, one was on Loch Craignish *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Nov and 2 in Machrihanish Bay *Kintyre* on 16 Nov.

### **COMMON SCOTER** *Melanitta nigra* Lach-bheag-dhubh

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

**Winter/spring** The highest count was 150 off Port Charlotte (Loch Indaal) *Islay* on 10 May. Other than those in Table 16, the only significant counts elsewhere were: 17 at Ballimore (Otter Ferry) *Cowal* on 10 Mar, 6 at Dubh Sgeir (Kerrera) *Mid-Argyll* on 25 Apr and 5 at Creag Island (Lynn of Lorn) *North Argyll* on 3 May. Up to 3 were reported at various sites on *Mull* from Jan to May and up to 2 at various sites on *Tiree* from Jan to Mar.

**Breeding/summer** On *Colonsay*, 40 flew N past Eilean Treadhrach (Oronsay) on 21 Jun and birds were recorded at various locations in May and Jun but no evidence of breeding was reported anywhere in Argyll.

**Autumn/winter** The highest count was 113 between Port Charlotte and Bowmore (Loch Indaal) *Islay* on 5 Nov. Other than those in Table 16, the only significant counts elsewhere were: 62 in small groups off ‘West Coast Salmon’ (Sound of Gigha) *Kintyre* on 29 Sep, 15 at Loch a’ Chumhainn (Loch Cuin) *Mull* on 6 Jul, 8 females off Gigha *Kintyre* on 11 Oct and 6 at Ormsary *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Dec.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Loch Indaal	n/r	30	9	30	150	n/r	n/r	62	7	40	113	n/r
Machrihanish SBO	0	0	1	24	42	34	8	0	9	5	5	0
Sound of Gigha	16	n/r	7	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	61	70	64	18	28

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

### **SURF SCOTER** *Melanitta perspicillata*

*A rare visitor: at least 16 records.*

No records. (See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.126).

### **VELVET SCOTER** *Melanitta fusca* Lach-dhubh

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

**Spring** Four were reported off Milton *Tiree* on 1 Jan and single birds were seen at Port Askaig and near Port Charlotte (Loch Indaal) *Islay* and Loch na Keal *Mull* during Apr and May.

**Summer/autumn/winter.** One was near Port Charlotte (Loch Indaal) *Islay* on 16 Jun, up to 3 were found in the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* from Sep to Dec and 4 were in Claonaig Bay *Kintyre* on 13 Dec. Elsewhere, single birds were at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 12 Oct, West Loch Tarbert *Kintyre* on 18 Oct and Ormsary *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Dec.

### **COMMON GOLDENEYE** *Bucephala clangula* Lach-bhreac

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

**Winter/spring** Other than those in Table 17, the highest count was 42 at Creag Mhor (Loch na Keal) *Mull* on 10 Mar. Sites with counts of 10 or more elsewhere (other than those in Table 18) included: 22 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 12 Feb, 19 at Loch Caolisport *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Mar, 18 at Loch Pottie (Poit na h-I) *Mull* on 17 Feb, 18 at Ormsary *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Mar, 14 at Ardnave Loch *Islay* on 15 Jan and 10 in Loch Long *Cowal* on 22 Jan.

**Breeding/summer** The only record between late Apr and mid Oct concerned 3 fresh-plumaged females-types (probably juvs.) flying S together at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 2 Jul.

**Autumn/winter** The first returning birds recorded were 3 on Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Oct. The highest count was at the mouth of Loch Caolisport *Mid-Argyll* where 72 were found at Ormsary on 26 Dec. Other than those in Table 17, the only other site with a count of 10 or more was Glenastle Loch *Islay* with 10 on 2 Dec. Smaller numbers were widely reported, from all recording areas except *Coll* and *Jura*.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Oct	Nov	Dec
L. Indaal	n/r	7	8	1		4	5	n/r
L. Etive	12	33	26	n/r		0	0	10
L. Sween	33	24	16	4		0	20	13
Holy L.	5	14	2	n/r		0	0	5
Tiree	35	42	42	29		3	31	36

### **SMEW** *Mergus albellus* Siolta-bhreac

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

No records.

### **RED-BREASTED MERGANSER** *Mergus serrator* Siolta-dhearg

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

**Winter/spring** Counts of 10 or more, other than at sites listed in Table 18, included: 35 at Loch na Keal *Mull* on 10 Mar, 21 on *Tiree* on 17 Jan, 20 at Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 19 Feb, 14 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 4 Apr, 13 at Ardgaddan Bay (nr Otter Ferry) *Cowal* on 6 Mar, 13 at West Loch Tarbert *Kintyre* on 20 Apr, 12 in Balephetrish Bay *Tiree* on 10 Mar and 10 at the mouth of Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* on 15 Apr.

**Breeding/summer** The only broods of young reported were b/8 and b/3 in the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Jul and b/4 at Loch Bhasapol *Tiree* on 31 Jul.

**Autumn/winter** Counts of 10 or more, other than at sites listed in Table 18, included: 94 at ‘West Coast Salmon’ (Sound of Gigha) *Kintyre* on 17 Sep, 70 at Eorsa (Loch na Keal) *Mull* on 22 Sep, 39 at Torosay *Mull* on 10 Sep, 22 at Loch Caithlim (Seil Island) *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Oct, 18 on Lismore *North Argyll* on 29 Nov, 15 from the *Islay* ferry on 15 Nov, 13 at The Strand *Colonsay* on 15 Sep, 12 at The Holy Loch *Cowal* on 1 Aug and 15 at Hough Bay *Tiree* on 28 Oct.

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

Lochs	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart*	13	8	23	9	12	n/r	n/r	n/r	5	36	17	9
Indaal	7	15	12	18	4	n/r	n/r	n/r	20	45	99	10
Craignish	9	10	22	30	24	21	18	3	27	44	32	23
Creran	9	n/r	8	18	6	2	n/r	n/r	n/r	15	10	n/r
Crinan	12	1	32	14	25	6	37	38	32	26	18	7
Gilp	13	14	n/r	19	n/r	n/r	n/r	18	22	23	7	2
Long**	11	12	11	5	6	4	10	2	3	9	0	5
Sween	13	10	18	37	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	7	12	50	19
S. of Gigha	21	n/r	4	n/r	55	n/r	n/r	143	116	15	25	16

\* Including Loch Gruinart Floods. \*\* Ardentinny to Strone Point

## **GOOSANDER** *Mergus merganser* Sìolta

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

**Winter/spring** The largest counts reported were 12 at Loch Ba *Mull* on 21 Jan, 4 at Ardgartan *Cowal* on 10 Mar and 4 at Arichastlich (Glen Orchy) *North Argyll* on 29 Mar. Birds were widely recorded elsewhere and up to 3 were seen at various sites in: *Cowal, Islay, Jura, Mid-Argyll, Mull* and *North Argyll*.

**Breeding** Females with broods of young were seen at Fernoch (Loch Awe) *Mid-Argyll* and the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll*.

**Summer/autumn/winter** The largest counts reported were: 15 at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Oct, 11 flying towards the Add Estuary at Poltalloch *Mid-Argyll* on 31 Aug, 8 in Kilfinan Bay *Cowal* on 9 Nov, 6 at Loch na Cuilce *Mull* on 7 Jun, 6 at Loch Craignish *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Aug, 5 at Appin *North Argyll* on 1 Jun. Elsewhere, up to four were reported from various sites in *Cowal, Islay, Kintyre, Mid-Argyll, Mull* and *North Argyll*.

## **RUDDY DUCK** *Oxyura jamaicensis*

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

No records.

## **COMMON QUAIL** *Coturnix coturnix* Gearradh-gort

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

**Summer** Calling birds were reported at: Salum *Tiree* on 27 May, The Roundhouse *Coll* on 31 May, Ardnave *Islay* on 1 Jun, Neriby *Islay* on 6 Jun and Benmore Lodge (Loch Ba) *Mull* on 30 Jun.

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

Birds were seen regularly in the southern half of Colonsay during the spring and summer (500 were released there in autumn 2013). They were also widely reported on Islay, including 15 at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 16 Oct. Elsewhere there were records from Eriska North Argyll on 12 Jun and Loch Striven Cowal on 12 Sep.

**RED GROUSE (WILLOW GROUSE)** *Lagopus lagopus scotica* Coileach-fraoic  
AMBER LIST A *sparsely distributed, resident, breeding bird.*

**Winter/spring** All the records received were from Islay, where birds were reported from: Bunnahabhainn, Glac Easgamail, Lower Glenastle Loch, RSPB Loch Gruinart, and Rubh' an t-Salinn or Mull, with records from: Creag a' Chromain, Cruachan Treshnish, Ensay, Reudle and Ulva.

**Breeding** Pairs were seen during the breeding season at Capul Choiche (Glendaruel) Cowal and RSPB Loch Gruinart Islay.

**Autumn/winter** The largest numbers reported were 14 at Creag na Feannaige (The Oa) Islay on 2 Dec and 8 at Port Charlotte Islay on 18 Aug. Smaller numbers were seen elsewhere, at various locations on Islay and near Loch Garasdale Kintyre.

**PTARMIGAN (ROCK PTARMIGAN)** *Lagopus muta* Tàrmachan

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

**Winter/spring** One was at Arrivain (Glen Lochy) North-Argyll on 9 Mar, 2 near Stob Ghabhar North Argyll on 29 Mar, 2 at Ben Vane Cowal on 27 Apr and 1 at Ben More Mull on 8 May. Ptarmigan feathers were found at the edge of a snow patch above Corrie Daimh (Beinn Udlaidh) North Argyll on 21 Apr.

**Breeding/summer** Three were at Coire Buidhe (nr Druiamavic) North Argyll on 23 Jun. On 27 Jun, 11 adults were seen at Stob a' Choire Odhair North Argyll and adults with recently fledged young were seen there on 29 Jun. Adults with recently fledged young were seen on Beinn Toaig North Argyll on 29 Jun.

**Autumn/winter** Five were seen at Beinn Starav North Argyll on 3 Sep, 5 at Beinn a' Bhuiridh North Argyll on 7 Sep, 3 at Stob a' Choire Odhair North Argyll on 7 Sep and one at Abhainn Doire Dhubhaig (Ben More) Mull on 9 Oct.

**BLACK GROUSE** *Tetrao tetrix* Caoileach-dubh

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

**Winter/spring** On 2 Jan, 8 were seen near Kilfinan Farm Cowal and 4 were at Tom an t-Saoir (Loch Avich) Mid-Argyll on 22 Jan. Elsewhere, ones and two were reported in Cowal, Kintyre, Mid-Argyll, Mull and North Argyll.

**Breeding/summer** Four were displaying at Kames Bay (Loch Melfort) Mid-Argyll on 11 Apr and 7 were displaying nr. Killervan Kintyre on 11 Apr. Calling birds were also heard during May at Capul Choiche (Glendaruel) Cowal, in Mid-Argyll at: Loch Arail, Lochan Anma (Knapdale), Clais Dhearg (nr. Connel) and Allt Cabrachan (nr. Loch Nell), and at Beinn Sgluich North Argyll.

**Autumn/winter** Two were at Loch Garasdale *Kintyre* on 26 Sep and 2 were at Scotsmill (nr. Clachan) *Kintyre* on 28 Oct.

**WESTERN CAPERCAILLIE** *Tetrao urogallus* Capall-coille

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

No records.

**GREY PARTRIDGE** *Perdix perdix* Cearc-thomain

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

The only record concerned 2 (thought to possibly be released birds) seen at Lyrabus *Islay* on 26 Sep.

**COMMON PHEASANT** *Phasianus colchicus* Easag

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

Large numbers were widely reported on *Islay* throughout the year, including 20 at Kilchoman on 2 Dec and 9 at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 17 Oct. Smaller numbers were recorded from: *Colonsay*, *Cowal*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull* and *Tiree* and breeding was confirmed on *Islay* and *Tiree* and in *Mid-Argyll*.

**GOLDEN PHEASANT** *Chrysolophus pictus*

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

No records.

**RED-THROATED DIVER** *Gavia stellata* Learga-ruadh

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

**Winter/spring** Reported widely on the sea in small numbers: around islands, in sea lochs, and along the mainland coast especially in more sheltered areas. Particular concentrations occur in certain favoured locations, such as: 12 at North Ledaig *North Argyll* on 4 Jan, 14 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 1 Mar, 10 at Iona *Mull* on 10 Mar, 27 at Loch Indaal *Islay* on 16 Apr.

**Breeding/summer** Birds were reported at breeding sites from about mid-Mar until late Aug. Forestry Enterprise Scotland recorded birds present on 5 of the 6 lochs they monitor. BTO Atlas data suggest there may be around 100 pairs in Argyll (Wilson et al. 2015 SWBSG Report 1504).

**Autumn/winter** Small numbers were reported from all coastal areas apart from innermost sea lochs throughout autumn and winter. Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* reported fewer than in 2013, with 3 on 5 Sep, 12 on 15 Sep, 9 on 17 Sep, 6 on 19 Sep, 9 on 29 Sep, 8 on 3 Oct, 8 on 4 Oct and 6 on 25 Oct. There were 7 birds (in heavy primary moult) at Poll Gorm (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 15 Sep, 7 at Gott Bay *Tiree* on 10 Oct, 14 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 13 Oct, 26 in the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on 29 Oct, 51 at Port Charlotte *Islay* on 5 Nov, and 10 at Hough Bay *Tiree* on 15 Nov.

**BLACK-THROATED DIVER** *Gavia arctica* Learga-dhubh

**AMBER LIST A** *very scarce breeder in Mid and North Argyll: scarce in winter but more numerous on passage. The Sound of Gigha, Kintyre and Kilfinan Bay, Cowal are sites of*

**national importance for wintering birds. Knapdale Lochs Special Protection Area is designated for breeding black-throated divers.**

**Winter/spring** Birds were widely distributed in very small numbers around islands, in sea lochs, and along the mainland coast especially in more marine areas. The only groups of more than three individuals were 4 at Ballochroy *Kintyre* on 14 May and 6 at the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on 20 May.

**Breeding/summer** Breeding has been confirmed at 13 sites between 1985-2014 and an average of 2.7 chicks fledged annually in the last 10 years. As in 2013, a number of former black-throated diver breeding sites were not visited in 2014. On *Mull*, a single adult was recorded on one occasion in late July. There were 5 birds at Ballochroy *Kintyre* on 15 July. The number of pairs found at monitored sites in mainland Argyll and which fulfilled the criteria for a “summering pair” remained at a low level with only six pairs in 2014. Five pairs were confirmed to lay eggs including one pair that nested at a site monitored every year and where the last confirmed nesting attempt was in 2004. Four pairs (three nesting on rafts) hatched 5 young and 4 of these chicks survived to fledging.

**Autumn/winter** Single birds were seen at many sites, especially around *Islay* and *Kintyre*. Larger groups included: 5 at Sgor Cainteach (Sound of Gigha) *Kintyre* on 19 Aug and 7 there on 8 Sep, 13 at Achanadriane *Kintyre* on 23 Sep, 10 at Kilfinan Bay *Cowal* on 9 Nov, 9 in the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on 19 Nov, 38 at West Loch Tarbert *Mid-Argyll* on 24 Nov, and 23 at Loch Caolisport *Mid-Argyll* on 28 Dec.

## **GREAT NORTHERN DIVER** *Gavia immer* Muir-bhuachail

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

**Winter/spring** Birds were reported from all coastal areas, especially sea lochs and coasts of: *Colonsay*, *Gigha*, *Islay*, *Kintyre*, *Mull*, and *Tiree*. Highest numbers seem to be reported in spring, although this may in part relate to better conditions for counting and more birdwatching activity. Larger numbers included: 41 at Ardnave *Islay* on 10 Feb, 70 at Loch na Keal *Mull* on 10 Mar and 56 at Loch Scridain *Mull* on 11 Mar with a total of 374 counted at roosts around *Mull* on 10-12 Mar and 371 counted at roosts around *Mull* on 25-28 Mar, 46 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 12 Mar, 423 at Machrihanish *Kintyre* on 1 Apr, 67 at Eilean Ceann na Creige *Kintyre* on 14 Apr, 45 at Port Ellen *Islay* on 18 Apr, 62 at Loch Indaal *Islay* on 20 Apr, 66 at *Colonsay* on 29 Apr, 319 at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 10 May, 70 at Ballochroy *Kintyre* on 14 May, 83 off NE *Colonsay* on 18 May, 137 at *Tiree* on 20 May, and 68 at *Tiree* on 28 May. During Jun, numbers fell to just the occasional one or two birds though widely distributed off *Kintyre* and the Argyll islands.

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

**Autumn/winter** Many individuals were reported in Sep but no large groups. Numbers began to build up in Oct, and counts of 10 to 20 birds were not uncommon from: *Coll*, *Colonsay*, *Islay*, *Kintyre*, *Mull*, and *Tiree* in Oct to Dec, with smaller numbers at many other locations with fully marine coastlines. As usual, numbers in autumn and early winter were generally lower than in late winter and spring. Larger groups included: 238 at the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on 29 Oct, 64

at Port Charlotte *Islay* on 5 Nov, 20 at Balemartine *Tiree* on 16 Nov, and 42 between *Islay* and the mainland on 22 Nov.



*Great Northern Diver*

*Jim Dickson*

**WHITE-BILLED DIVER** *Gavia adamsii* Learga-bhlàr

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

*Spring* An adult was seen and photographed in flight off Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 17 May [Eddie Maguire, Steve Holloway]. Record was accepted by the SBRC.

**BLACK-BROWED ALBATROSS** *Thalassarche melanophrys*

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

No records.

**FULMAR** *Fulmarus glacialis* Eun-crom

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

*Winter/spring* Most records came from the western fringes of Argyll, especially *Tiree*, *Islay*, and *Colonsay*. Large numbers attended nest sites somewhat erratically from Jan onwards. For example, there were 250 on sites at Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree* on 4 Jan, 300 there on 14 Jan, 1,000 there on 19 Feb, numbers tending to be higher during days of calm weather at that time of year. A 'blue' phase bird was seen flying past Luing *Mid-Argyll* on 25 Jan.

*Breeding* On 20 May there were 748 occupied sites (AONs) at Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree*, with some birds then incubating eggs. Numbers of occupied sites declined to 654 on 18 Jun (when most had eggs and no chicks were hatched yet), and declined further to 515 on 15 Jul (when most had small chicks), and 337 on 22 Jul (when most had large chicks). Fledging from Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree* began from early Aug with only 213 AONs on 7 Aug. Also on *Tiree*, there were 52 AONs in the quarry on Balephetrish Hill on 19 Apr. On *Colonsay*, on 11-16 Jun there were 8 AONs N of Eilean Easdale (Kiloran Bay), 18 at Port Lobh, 267 at Urugaig, and 35 at Lamalum. There were 22 AONs at Eileach an Naoimh (Garvellachs) *Mid-Argyll* on 18 May. Treshnish

Isles Auk Ringing Group (TIARG) reported that there were 354 AONs on Lunga plus Sgeir a' Chaisteil *Mull*, essentially the same as in 2013.

**Autumn/winter** Numbers seen at sea in Aug and Sep were highest off *Tiree*, but with only tens per hour. As usual, numbers seen in Oct were extremely small, with just the occasional individual flying past *Tiree*. About 400 birds were back on the cliffs at Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree* on 2 Nov, with 500 on 16 Nov, 22 Nov and 16 Dec, during spells of calmer weather.

### **CORY'S SHEARWATER** *Calonectris borealis*

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

No records.

### **GREAT SHEARWATER** *Puffinus gravis* Fachadh-mòr

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

No records.

### **SOOTY SHEARWATER** *Puffinus griseus* Fachadh-dubh

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

**Spring** One was seen flying west past Hynish *Tiree* on 6 May and is only our fifth spring record.

**Autumn** Fewer records than usual with single birds noted off West Hynish *Tiree* on 3 Aug, Aird *Tiree* on 13 and 14 Aug with 6 there on 15 Aug. 2 were off Easdale *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Aug and 1 was in the Sound of Mull (towards Ardnamurchan) *Mull* on 4 Oct.

*This poor showing reflects the lack of westerlies with the only one notable NW gale on 17 Aug.*

### **MANX SHEARWATER** *Puffinus puffinus* Fachadh-bàn

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

**Spring** The first record in spring was of one bird passing Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 14 Mar, with singles there also on 19 and 21 Mar and 4 on 22 Mar. An exceptional number of 6,000 birds were feeding at dusk off the east coasts of *Coll* and *Tiree* on 10 Apr. This was the only record of more than 60 birds seen at once in that month. However, there were 3,000 off Treshnish Point *Mull* on 20 May and 1,570 off Lady's Rock *Mull* on 24 May.

**Breeding/summer** Only small numbers were seen in Jun and most of Jul. However, there were 6,000 passing off *Tiree* in just a couple of hours on 30 Jul, a date when breeding birds should have chicks in the nest. It seems probable that birds from the huge colony on Rum must commute into or through Argyll waters while breeding. Numbers passing *Tiree* were consistently high in Aug, with between 500 and 1,000 per hour on many days, and several counts of 1,000 to 5,000 per hour passing the island. On 13 Aug there were 16,250 birds passing Aird *Tiree* in just 75 minutes from first light. Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* reported a peak of about 300 birds per hour passing through much of the second half of Aug. On 30 Aug a flock of 1,200 birds was off *Jura*. These are likely to be breeding birds from Rum, by far the largest colony of the species in west Scotland. There were no data on breeding at Sanda Islands *Kintyre*. Treshnish Isles Auk Ringing Group reported adults present on Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* but with no assessment of the breeding numbers at that colony, although up to 1,000 birds were rafting off the Treshnish Isles *Mull* in the evening so were likely to be waiting there for dark before coming into that colony.

**Autumn** Numbers seen in Sep were very much lower than the numbers seen in Aug, suggesting that migration from the massive colony on Rum may occur less through Argyll waters than foraging activity of chick-rearing adults. The largest counts after 8 Sep were of only 16 birds off Rubha na Faing *Islay* on 12 Sep and 16 birds off *Tiree* on 2 Oct. The last record of the year was of 3 birds passing Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 31 Oct.



*Manx Shearwaters*

*Jim Dickson*

**BALEARIC SHEARWATER** *Puffinus mauretanicus*

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

No records.

**MACARONESIAN SHEARWATER** *Puffinus baroli*

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

No records.

**EUROPEAN STORM-PETREL** *Hydrobates pelagicus* Pàraig

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

**Spring** The first spring records were of 12 birds off *Oban Mid-Argyll* on 2 Jun, and similar numbers north of *Mull* on the same date and for the following few days.

**Breeding** TIARG reported that many birds were heard churring in burrows on *Lunga* and *Sgeir a' Chaisteil* (*Treshnish Isles*) *Mull*. However, no counts were made at those colonies. No information was available from *Sanda Islands Kintyre*, the other main breeding site. Six birds were caught and ringed at *Colonsay* on 12 Jun, but were not necessarily breeding birds.

**Autumn** Small numbers were reported from seawatching from *Coll*, *Mull*, *Tiree*, and from ferries. The last record was 2 off *Coll* on 19 Oct.

**LEACH'S STORM-PETREL** *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* Gobhlan-mara  
**AMBER LIST A** *scarce, but regular, autumn passage migrant off western headlands; particularly after strong westerlies. There are occasional reports in spring and summer.*  
**Autumn** There were nine records, mostly of individual birds but with groups of up to 10, the first bird on 16 Jun off Arinagour Coll, and the last on 22 Oct off Aird Tiree. All records were from Coll or Tiree apart from 4 seen from Machrihanish SBO Kintyre.



*Northern Gannet*

*Eddie Maguire*

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

**Winter/spring** Small numbers were reported most days in Jan from Tiree. The largest Jan count was 36 birds passing Balevullin Tiree in 1 hr on 25 Jan. Similar small numbers were seen in Feb off Islay and Tiree. Numbers increased in Mar with records from Colonsay, Islay, Kintyre, and Tiree, though mostly of small numbers. However, 88 passed off Tiree in 1 hr. on 24 Mar. There were more reports during Apr, from a wider range of areas, including Mull and a few in Cowal. On 29 Apr, 368 were seen from Frenchman's Rocks Islay during 1 hr of seawatching, and 395 were counted from Portnahaven Islay on 3 May.

**Summer** Birds were reported from all marine areas of Argyll in early Jun but mostly in small numbers, with few flocks exceeding 30 birds, although there were 200 off Machir Bay Islay on 28 Jun. There appear to be no sites in Argyll being prospected by gannets as future colony sites, despite the moderate numbers regularly present in Argyll waters in summer. However, in Jul-Aug the numbers reported increased, with up to 300 per hour passing Tiree and slightly smaller numbers passing Islay and Kintyre, suggesting that birds from large colonies such as Ailsa Craig

were making longer feeding trips and so passing through Argyll. 1,700 birds passed Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* in 1 hr on 21 Aug, and 3,600 were seen there in 6 hrs on 29 Aug.

**Autumn/winter** Tens per hour, occasionally hundreds per hour, flew past seabird hotspots such as Frenchman's Rocks *Islay*, Aird *Tiree* and Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on various dates in Sep and Oct, with the highest count of 740 birds passing Aird *Tiree* in 90 mins on 21 Oct. Numbers of gannets reported then declined rapidly at most sites in Nov. None were reported from anywhere other than *Tiree* in Dec, and numbers even off *Tiree* were then down to a few birds per day.

## **GREAT CORMORANT** *Phalacrocorax carbo* Sgarbh

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

**Winter/spring** There were small numbers (mostly 1-5 birds) at many estuarine (predominantly sea loch) sites across Argyll. Larger numbers were: 16 at Rubha Chraiginis *Tiree* on 17 Jan, 11 on the Kilmaronag Islands (Loch Etive) Mid-Argyll on 19 Feb, 13 at Eilean Traighe (Loch Etive) Mid-Argyll on 19 Feb, 12 at Glas Eilean (Loch Fyne) Mid-Argyll on 5 Mar, 11 at Eilean Traighe (Loch Etive) Mid-Argyll on 15 Mar and 10 at Bowmore *Islay* on 16 Mar.

**Breeding** There were 21 Apparently Occupied Nests (AONs) at Glas Eilean (Loch Fyne) Mid-Argyll on 8 Apr, and 16 AONs at Corr Eilean (McCormaig Islands) Mid-Argyll on 12 Jul. There were 18 nests on inaccessible cliffs on Eilean Dubh (Lynn of Lorn) North Argyll on 1 Jun. Many had two or more visible young. Cliff-nesters (Shag & Cormorant) are the only seabirds now breeding on this mink-occupied island which used to hold a thriving seabird colony.

**Autumn/winter** Birds were fairly well dispersed throughout the sea lochs and sheltered coasts of Argyll throughout autumn and winter. The largest recorded groups were: 12 at Eilean Traighe (Loch Etive) Mid-Argyll on 8 Sep, 12 at Loch Beg Mull on 28 Sep, 14 at Black Crofts North Argyll on 3 Oct, 10 at Gigha *Kintyre* on 11 Oct, 15 at Eilean Traighe Mid-Argyll on 12 Oct, 14 at Aoradh *Islay* on 10 Nov, and 30 feeding with European Shags off Arinagour Coll on 25 Nov.

## **GREAT (Continental) CORMORANT** *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*

**A rare but increasingly frequent visitor to Scotland. Increasing as a breeder at inland sites in England where some hybridisation occurs with nominate Atlantic Great Cormorant.**

**Autumn** An immature (ICY) was seen and photographed at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 13 Oct [John Bowler]. This record was referred to the SBRC and was accepted. *This becomes the first record of this 'race' in Argyll.*

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

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

**Winter/spring** As usual, birds were widely distributed on sea coasts in the early part of the year, with no major aggregations reported. The largest numbers reported were 84 passing Hynish *Tiree* in 1 hr on 6 Jan, 62 passing Balevullin *Tiree* in 1 hr on 25 Jan, and 43 at Eilean Traighe (Loch Etive) Mid-Argyll on 19 Feb.

**Breeding/summer** John Bowler reported that at Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree* there were 100 AONs on 7 Apr, decreasing to 66 on 20 May, by which time most nests held eggs but some birds were still nest-building. There were 350 shags feeding in Gunna Sound *Tiree* on 26 May. By 18 Jun there were 73 AONs at the Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree* colony, with most nests holding small chicks. On 11 Jul this colony held 78 AONs with large chicks in most occupied nests. At Happy Valley *Tiree* there were 6 AONs on 30 Jun. TIARG reported that shag breeding numbers seem to have

declined considerably on the Treshnish Isles *Mull*. There were 104 AONs on Lunga, and 6 on Sgeir a' Chaisteil, well below numbers present in 2013 which themselves were a considerable decrease from numbers before 2005. Up to 630 shags were feeding around the Treshnish Isles *Mull*, suggesting that many birds were choosing not to breed but were still present in the local population. TIARG have been carrying out a colour ringing study of this population to assess survival rates as part of the BTO 'RAS' programme, but survival rates have not yet been estimated. In the SAMS study area, observations were available from only three sites: Eilean Dubh (Lynn of Lorn) *North Argyll* held 10 nests on 1 Jun, Bernera Island (Lismore) *North Argyll* held 3 pairs on 3 May, and Eileanan Glasa (Sound of Mull) *Mull* had birds at nests in May, but was deserted in Jun apparently due to presence of mink. There were 4 pairs at a sample cliff at Uragaig *Colonsay* on 9 Jun and 4 pairs at the Pigs Paradise sample colony *Colonsay* on 16 Jun.

**Autumn/winter** Although west coast shags tend not to migrate extensively, there can be large aggregations in autumn and some large local movements. Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* reported 110 shags passing northwards in 30 mins on 7 Aug and speculated that these would most likely have been juveniles from colonies in Northern Ireland. There were 500 around the Treshnish Isles *Mull* on 5 Aug, 580 in Gunna Sound *Tiree* on 20 Aug, 700 off Soa Point *Tiree* on 18 Sep, 110 at Gigha *Kintyre* on 11 Oct, and 150 (feeding communally) at West Hynish *Tiree* on 16 Dec.

#### **ASCENSION FRIGATEBIRD** *Fregata aquila*

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

No records.

#### **EURASIAN BITTERN** *Botaurus stellaris* Chorra-ghràin

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

No records.

#### **BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** *Nycticorax nycticorax*

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

No records.

#### **CATTLE EGRET** *Bubulcus ibis*

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

No records.

#### **SNOWY EGRET** *Egretta thula*

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

No records.

### **LITTLE EGRET** *Egretta garzetta* Corra-gheal-bheag

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

**Spring** One in breeding plumage was at Dunbeg *Mid-Argyll* on 24 Apr [Steven Benjamins], one in breeding plumage was at the head of Loch Melfort *Mid-Argyll* on 16 May [David Jardine, Jim Dickson], one in non-breeding plumage was at Loch Crinan then at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 18-22 May [Jim Dickson et al], one mobile bird in breeding plumage was at Loch Bhasapol, Loch a' Phuill and Loch Bhirceapol *Tiree* on 19 May [Jim McNally, John Bowler].

**Autumn/winter** One was at Kennacraig and at West Loch Tarbert *Kintyre* on 10 Aug to 8 Dec [S. & A. Duckworth, Jim Dickson, John Nadin et al], one was at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Nov [Jim Dickson], one was on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 8 Nov into 2015 [Isobel Baker, Mike Peacock], one was at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Nov and 22 Dec (possibly same as the West Loch Tarbert bird) [Jim Dickson et al], one was at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 5 Dec [John Harrison] and one was at Loch Riddon *Cowal* on 26-27 Dec [Graham Clark].

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

**A vagrant: seven records; one at Gruinart Flats, Islay in Jun 1986, one Ballachuan Loch (Seil) Mid-Argyll in Apr 1988, one at Loch Gruinart, Islay in May 1998, one on Tiree in May & Jun 2000, one on Tiree in May and Jun 2002, one at Feolin, Jura in Oct 2009 and one at Inveraray, Mid-Argyll in May 2011.**

No records.

### **GREY HERON** *Ardea cinerea* Corra-ghrithreach

**A widespread resident: breeding in all areas except Tiree.**

**Winter/spring** Birds were widely distributed in small numbers, although there were 25 at Eilean Traighe (Loch Etive) *Mid-Argyll* on 17 Jan and 31 there on 19 Feb, 13 at Mid Ardyne *Cowal* on 5 Feb, 15 at Oronsay airstrip *Colonsay* on 15 Feb, and 14 at Loch Allan *Islay* on 19 Mar.

**Breeding** In many areas of Argyll herons nest as individual pairs or groups of two or three nests rather than in large heronries, and these scattered pairs are easily overlooked so breeding numbers are probably much higher across the county than totals recorded. Several former sites on *Colonsay* have been abandoned but there were 14 nests at Garvard *Colonsay* on 25 Apr. There were none at the traditional colony at Eriska *North Argyll* on 4 Apr, 16 nests at Ardtur (Appin) *North Argyll* on 4 Apr, 31 nests at Ardachy (Loch Etive) *North Argyll* on 4 Apr, 16 nests at Ballachuan hazel wood *Mid-Argyll* on 15 Apr, and 5 nests at Bellanoch *Mid-Argyll* on 20 Apr.

**Autumn/winter** WeBS counts in Aug-Dec mostly gave totals between 10 and 30 individuals on each of Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll*, Loch Etive *North Argyll*, Loch Craignish *Mid-Argyll*, Loch Gruinart *Islay*, and Loch Sween *Mid-Argyll*. The highest single count was of 41 at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Sep. Elsewhere, there were: 20 at Loch Allan *Islay* on 24 Jun, 20 at Loch Indaal *Islay* on 2 Aug, 26 at Druim na Claidh (Appin) *North Argyll* on 9 Nov, 19 at Lochdon *Mull* on 4 Dec, and 23 at Oronsay Airstrip *Colonsay* on 6, 10 and 11 Dec.

### **BLACK STORK** *Ciconia nigra*

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

No records.

## **WHITE STORK** *Ciconia ciconia*

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

No records.

## **GLOSSY IBIS** *Plegadis falcinellus*

*A vagrant: seven records since 1901; the most recent being one at Loch Sween, Mid-Argyll on 25 and 26 Sep 2009.*

**2013:** One was at Scalasaig Farm Colonsay on 27 Dec [Hazel Smith, Scott Weatherstone] and was accepted by the SBRC.

**Winter** The bird at Scalasaig Farm Colonsay (from 2013) was seen again on 25 Jan and 5 Feb [Jan Binnie]. A first-winter (2CY) was at Kirkapol Tiree on 13 Jan [John Bowler, Susan Kyle, Janet Hunter]. Both records were accepted by the SBRC. These are the first records for Colonsay and Tiree.

## **EURASIAN SPOONBILL** *Platalea leucorodia*

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

No records.

## **PIED-BILLED GREBE** *Podilymbus podiceps*

*A vagrant: two records; one found at Loch Peallach, Mull in Jun 1998 and one at Salen Bay, Mull on 22 Mar to 6 Apr 2011.*

**Spring** An adult was on a lochan at Feorlin (Tullochgorm) Mid-Argyll on 30 May to at least 6 Jun [A. W. Lauder, N. T. Keogh, S. Holloway]. Record was accepted by the BBRC.

*This is only the 13<sup>th</sup> record in Scotland and was assumed by the BBRC to be the same as the bird at Loch Thom, Clyde on 20-29 Apr.*

## **LITTLE GREBE** *Tachybaptus ruficollis* Spàg-ri-tòn

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

**Winter/spring** There were records from all areas of Argyll apart from Coll or Jura. Most were of one or two birds, with largest numbers: 10 at Taynish (Loch Sween) Mid-Argyll on 18 Jan and 14 at Eilean Traighe (Loch Etive) Mid-Argyll on 19 Feb.

**Breeding** Breeding was reported from many sites throughout Argyll though with no records from Coll, Tiree or Jura.

**Autumn/winter** There were records from all areas of Argyll except for Coll and Jura. Most were of one or two birds, with largest numbers: 28 at Eilean Traighe (Loch Etive) Mid-Argyll on 9 Nov and 26 there on 8 Dec, 22 on Loch Sween Mid-Argyll on 10 Nov.

## **GREAT CRESTED GREBE** *Podiceps cristatus* Gobhlachan-laparan

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

**Winter/spring** There were 3 spring records: 1 at West Loch Tarbert Kintyre on 20 Feb, 1 at Port Ellen Islay on 4 Mar, and 1 at Machrihanish SBO Kintyre on 3 May.

**Autumn/winter** Four records involving at least 2 and possibly up to 5 birds: 1 at Bowmore Islay on 26 Oct, 1 at Loch Gorm Islay on 3 Nov, 1 at Port Charlotte Islay on 5 Nov, and 2 at Loch Indaal Islay on 10 Nov.

**RED-NECKED GREBE** *Podiceps grisegena* Gobhlachan-ruadh

**RED LIST A** *scarce winter and passage visitor: most records are in Sep-Mar; at least 40 records.*

**Spring** One was seen and photographed at Ardrishaig (Loch Gilp) *Mid-Argyll* on 3 Apr [Chris Griffin].

**Winter** One was seen and photographed at Rhunahaorine Point *Kintyre* on 26 Dec [Jonathon Platt]. Records were accepted by the ABRC.

**SLAVONIAN GREBE** *Podiceps auritus* Gobhlachan-mara

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

**Winter/spring** Records from Jan to early May, were mostly from *Cowal*, *Loch na Keal Mull*, *Bowmore* (Loch Indaal) *Islay* and *Sound of Gigha Kintyre*. These involved 2 or 3 birds at sites in *Cowal* (mostly *Otter Ferry*) where this species is unusual, but larger numbers at the other (traditional) sites with a peak count of 34 at *Loch na Keal Mull* in Mar. Apart from counts at the best known sites (Table 19), other records are usually predominantly of just 1 or 2 birds and mostly at sites near these strongholds. However, there were 2 birds at *North Ledaig North Argyll* on 4 Jan. The last record in spring was from *Tayinloan Kintyre* on 10 May.

**Autumn/winter** The first autumn record was of 2 birds at the *Sound of Gigha Kintyre* on 27 Aug. Numbers peaked at the *Sound of Gigha Kintyre* in Oct with 58 birds, and at *Loch Indaal Islay* in Nov with 49 birds. At *Loch na Keal Mull*, numbers in autumn were never as high as the peak there in spring (Table 19). Elsewhere, 1 bird was on *Tiree* for several days in early Oct, and there was another, which may well have been the same bird, on 3 Nov and several dates through to 22 Dec.

Table 19. *Maximum numbers of Slavonian Grebes counted in 2014 at the three main sites for this species in Argyll (n/r = no data).*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
L. Indaal	2	4	12	5	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	9	49	n/r
L. na Keal	n/r	12	34	8	n/r	n/r	n/r	n/r	7	10	4	n/r
S. of Gigha	9	n/r	3	3	n/r	n/r	n/r	2	3	58	12	3

**BLACK-NECKED GREBE** *Podiceps nigricollis* Gobhlachan-dubh

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

No records.

**EUROPEAN HONEY-BUZZARD** *Pernis apivorus*

**AMBER LIST A** *rare passage migrant: 10 records since 1980.*

**Spring/summer** One, possibly a female, was seen flying N over *Miller's Port* (*Lismore*) *North Argyll* on 3 May [David Jardine]. A 2CY male was at a location in *Kintyre* on 8 Jun [A. W. Lauder, N. T. Keogh, S. McAvoy]. Both records were accepted by the ABRC. (See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.126).

**BLACK KITE** *Milvus migrans*

*A vagrant: two records; one at Vaul, Tiree on 16th May 1997 and one near Dalmally, North Argyll on 31 May 2010.*

**Spring** One was seen briefly and photographed at Fearnach (Kilmichael Glen) *Mid-Argyll* on 3 May [Jonathan Platt et al]. Record was accepted by the SBRC.

**RED KITE** *Milvus milvus* Clamhan-gobhlach

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

**Spring/summer** Unusually, there was just a single record in 2014; concerning one over Aros House Islay on 23 Jul.

**WHITE-TAILED EAGLE** *Haliaeetus albicilla* Iolair-mhara

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

Unsurprisingly, for such a striking and sought after bird, over 220 records were received in 2014. The great majority were from *Islay* and *Mull*, although in the former case this probably reflects the numbers of birders rather than birds present. Birds were reported from all Argyll recording areas throughout the year. The total sightings reported for each recording area were: *Coll* (4), *Colonsay* (including Oronsay) (4), *Cowal* (2), *Islay* (over 80, some of two or more birds together), *Jura* (10), *Kintyre* (1, at Machrihanish SBO), *Mid-Argyll* (28, including records from Scarba and Lunga), *Mull* (over 80, some of two or more birds together), *North Argyll* (5) and *Tiree* (4). On 1 Jul an adult bird was seen flying from the direction of north Mull to Lunga (Treshnish Isles). This is the first record of the species on the Treshnish Isles by TIARG.

One was seen eating a Barnacle Goose at the head of Loch Indaal *Islay* on 21 Feb and 5 juvs. were seen together at Loch Sween *Mid-Argyll* on 20 Dec.

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

**Breeding** In Argyll, 29-30 pairs attempted to breed and 28 of these were confirmed to have laid eggs. Eighteen pairs were successful and fledged 21 chicks. There are additional new “pairs” but none of these are yet known to have built nests. Accessible chicks in 2013 continued to be fitted with oxidised aluminium colour rings on the left leg (David Sexton, RSPB Scotland, Roger Broad). The provisional 2014 figures for Scotland as a whole are 96 pairs (Sea Eagle Project Team).

**WESTERN MARSH HARRIER** *Circus aeruginosus* Clamhan-lòin

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

**Winter/spring** A female was interacting with a Common Buzzard at Upper Craigabus (The Oa) *Islay* on 30 Jan. A female was seen at Hough *Tiree* on 25 Apr.

**Autumn** A juv. flew south along the west coast of *Tiree*, from Beinn Hough to Loch a' Phuill, on 15 Sep and a juv. headed SW off the coast of Mannal/Hynish *Tiree* on 4 Oct, being mobbed by Kittiwakes!

## **HEN HARRIER** *Circus cyaneus* Brèid-air-tòin

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

During the year over 700 records were received, from all Argyll recording areas including Oronsay Colonsay, Lunga Mid-Argyll and Lismore North Argyll. On 16 Jun, 10 were seen over the RSPB reserves of Ardnave and Loch Gruinart Islay.

### **Breeding**

Table 20. *Outcome of monitored Hen Harrier territories in Argyll in 2014.*

Area	Sites checked	Sites occupied	Sites where eggs laid	Sites successful	Sites failed	Outcome unknown	Min no. large young	Young per successful site
Mull	34	14	13	12	1	0	38	3.16
Colonsay	9	5**	4	4	0	0	13	3.25
Islay	9	5**	4	4	0	0	13	3.25
Mainland*	13	11	5	4	1	0	10	2.50
Cowal	12	4**	3	3	0	0	15	5
Bute	1	1**						
Total	78	40	29	27	2	0	89	3.31***

\* Mainland includes sites in Mid Argyll (6) and Kintyre & Knapdale (7).

\*\* Include 1pr failed/not breeding

\*\*\* Calculated for 19 broods from all areas where fledged brood size accurately known.

NB Bute is outwith the Argyll recording area.

**Mull** In total, 29 known nesting areas were not checked at all. Of the 34 Hen Harrier sites surveyed in 2014 there were 20 apparently unoccupied, 13 proven breeding, and 1 probable breeding attempts. Of the 13 proven breeding attempts, one failed on 5 small young. 12 successful nests fledged 38 young. There were 5 clutches of 4, 6 clutches of 5 and 1 clutch of 6 eggs. One nest was not located. Although voles did not appear to be at all plentiful on Mull this year the fine warm weather probably helped with breeding success (Paul Howarth).

A hen harrier chick ringed on Colonsay in 2013 was recovered at Geltsdale, Cumbria in spring 2014. (ARSG per Roger Broad).

**Roosts** Numbers recorded at the monitored roost at RSPB Loch Gruinart Islay during the year were as follows: Jan: 3, Feb: 1 (f), Oct: 2 (f), Nov: 2.

## **PALLID HARRIER** *Circus macrourus*

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

No records.

## **NORTHERN GOSHAWK** *Accipiter gentilis* Glas-sheabhag

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

No records.

## **EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK** *Accipiter nisus* Speireag

**A widespread, resident, breeding species.**

During 2014 birds were reported from all Argyll recording areas except *Jura* and *North Argyll*. Prey species noted included: Blue Tit, Common Starling, Dunnock, House Sparrow, Common Chaffinch and Twite.

**Breeding** Nine sites were checked in 2014 (*Colonsay* 5, *Mid-Argyll* 1, *Kintyre* 1, *Cowal* 1 & *Bute* 1). Seven sites were occupied with eggs laid at all of them. Two sites were successful and fledged a total of 7 young; one site failed with chicks and the final outcome is not known for the other 4 sites (ARSG per Roger Broad).

## COMMON BUZZARD *Buteo buteo* Clamhan

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

During 2014 numerous records were received from all Argyll recording areas. The following counts give some idea of the numbers present: 17 noted during the goose count on *Tiree* 13/14 Jan, 11 at Treshnish Point *Mull* on 10 Sep, 10 around Port Ellen *Islay* on 25 Sep and 7 between Feolin and Craighouse *Jura* on 16 Feb.

### **Breeding**

Table 21. *Outcome of monitored Common Buzzard territories in Argyll in 2014* (ARSG – coordinator I. Hopkins). **NB: includes data for Bute, which is outwith the Argyll Recording area.**

			Sites where breeding proven				
Area	Sites checked	Sites Occupied	Sites failed	Sites successful	Outcome unknown	Number fledged*	Large young per successful site
Tiree	12	12	0	2	0	4	2.00
Colonsay	58	18**	0	5	4	12	2.40
Islay	10	10	1	5	0	7	1.25
Mid-Argyll	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Kintyre	1	1	0	1	0	1	1.00
Cowal	27	21	0	6	0	12	2.00
Bute	45	20***	0	13	0	24	1.84
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>1.87</b>

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

\*\* Includes 4 sites with single birds

\*\*\* includes 7 sites with single birds.

Bute: low number of pairs are possibly due to the continuing scarcity of rabbits (Ian Hopkins)

## ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD *Buteo lagopus* Bleidir-molach

***A rare visitor: (several old reports); 12 records since 1963, last on Tiree on 17 Sep 1997.***

**Winter** One (not aged or sexed) was at Gleann Mor (nr. Port Charlotte) *Islay* on 11 and 19 Nov [Bob Davison, Stuart Crutchfield]. Record was accepted by the ABRC.

## GOLDEN EAGLE *Aquila chrysaetos* Iolair

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

Away from breeding sites, birds were reported from all Argyll recording areas except *Tiree*. There were four records of 4 birds together: at Loch na Keal *Mull* on 11 May, Benmore Lodge

(Loch Ba) *Mull* on 18 Jun, at Loch Beg *Mull* on 28 Sep and at Glac Easgamail, (The Oa) *Islay* on 17 Nov.

### Breeding

Table 22.1 *Summary Information 2014*

	Ts checked	Ts occupied	Ts where eggs laid	Ts known to have fledged young	% of occupied Ts that fledged young	Min no. of large young	Young per successful pair
N Argyll	1	1	1	1	100	1	1.00
S Argyll	27	27	22	10	37.03	10	1.00
Mull	32	31	13	6	19.39	6	1.00
Other Islands	11	11	5	3	27.27	3	1.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>28.57</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1.00</b>

South Argyll: the summary provided by Mike Gregory provides additional details for some of this area: this has been a very successful year in *Kintyre* and Knapdale *Mid-Argyll* with 4 pairs and 2 pairs respectively known to have laid eggs all rearing single chicks. In contrast *Mid-Argyll* and Lorn had only 2 single chicks reared out of 10 that were confirmed to lay eggs. In *Cowal* there were only 2 chicks fledged from the 6 pairs that laid.

Table 22.2 *Golden Eagle Summary Information 2003-2014. (Data from National Surveys is included in bold).*

Year	Ts checked	Ts occupied	Ts where eggs laid	Ts known to have fledged young	% of occupied Ts that fledged young	Min number of large young	Number of young per successful pair
2014	71	70	41	20	28.57	20	1.00
2013	64	61	37	20	32.78	23	1.15
2012	65	61	36	18 (21)	31.14% (36.06%)	19 (22)	1.05 (1.04)
2011	60	54	25	17	31.48	17	1.0
2010	65	61	37	20 (25)	32.78% (40.98%)	28	1.10 (1.12)
2009	66	59	40	16	27.11%	18	1.12
2008	73	64	42	33 (35)	51.5% (54.68%)	36 (38)	1.09
2007	69	63	41	25 (26)	39.6% (41.2%)	25 (26)	1.00
2006	73	66	43	17	26.15%	17	1.00
2005	65	59	40	17 (18)	28.8%	19 (20)	1.11
2004	61	56	38	28 (29)	50%	32 (33)	1.14 (1.13)
<b>2003</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>29 (30)</b>	<b>36.25% (37.50%)</b>	<b>30 (31)</b>	<b>1.03 (1.03)</b>

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

Confirmation was obtained in 2014 that a home range in *Kintyre* has been re-occupied by a pair (reported in 2013) and another apparently vacant home range has been re-occupied by a pair in Knapdale. In *Mid-Argyll* a former home range apparently vacant following extensive afforestation has been reoccupied (the new nest site being found during survey work for the 2014 National Peregrine Survey). Another pair was found in a new area of *Mid-Argyll* but more extensive fieldwork will be needed during the National Golden Eagle Survey in 2015 to determine whether this is a distant new nesting location in an existing recently re-occupied home range or a completely new home range. The co-operation of fieldworkers working for Environmental Consultants for proposed developments in Argyll has been helpful in confirming much of the above new information. (ARSG per Roger Broad).



*Osprey*

*Jim Dickson*

**OSPREY** *Pandion haliaetus* Iolair-iasgaich

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

**Spring** The first arrival reported was one flying across from Bute to at Colintrave Cowal on 12 Mar. This was followed by birds at: Loch Ederline *Mid-Argyll* (2) on 1 Apr, the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 1 Apr, Tayvallich *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Apr, Lochdon Mull on 16 Apr and Loch Gorm Islay on 23 Apr.

**Breeding**

Table 23. *Summary Information 2005-2014.*

Year	Sites occupied	Sites successful	No. large young	Young per successful site
<b>2014</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>34**</b>	<b>2.12</b>
2013	17	13	29	2.23
2012	19	14	39	2.78
2011	16	6	13	2.16
2010	20	13	30	2.30

2009	15	12	28	2.33
2008	15	11	22*	2.00
2007	12	11	22	2.00
2006	12	9	17	1.88
2005	10	5	9	1.80

\*\* brood size: b/1 x 5, b/2 x 4, b/3 x 7.

\* excludes breeding information for one pair where outcome unknown.

2014: 18 pairs with nests. This total includes two pairs that are not thought to have laid eggs (one, a new site at a platform was present all season, the other pair was found at a new small nest in late Jul.)

One pair that bred for the first time in 2011 found they had breeding sea eagles as close neighbours in 2014 - both species each successfully reared a single chick despite nesting ca 400m from each other. (ARSG per Roger Broad).

**Autumn** Migrant birds were widely reported from mid-Aug onwards, including birds at Holy Loch Cowal on 20 Aug, Loch Gruinart Islay on 21 Aug, Grasspoint Mull on 23 Aug, the Add Estuary Mid-Argyll on 28 Aug, West Loch Tarbert Kintyre on 30 Aug and Machrihanish SBO Kintyre on 2 Sep. The last records were of single birds at Loch Gruinart Islay on 19 Sep and Loch a' Phuill Tiree on 26 Sep.

#### **Reports of colour-ringed Ospreys:**

A chick ringed in *Mid-Argyll* in 2013 was photographed at Lamin Lodge, Gambia on 10/11/14. Three chicks ringed at separate sites in *Mid-Argyll* in 2014 were seen on their first migration out of Argyll. One, reported from Broome Pits, Norfolk on 03/09/14, had been present for the previous 18 days. Another was reported near the Tavy/Tamar confluence, Devon on 17/09/14. The third was seen in the Bay of Santander, North Spain on 23/09/14. A chick from 2013 reported last year when it was photographed at the Yealm Estuary, Devon was photographed again near Tavistock, Devon on 20/09/14.

During the 2014 breeding season: a chick ringed in *Mid-Argyll* (2007) was seen as a breeding female nr. Aboyne, Aberdeenshire; a chick ringed in *Mid-Argyll* (2009) was seen as a breeding adult on Bute; a chick ringed in *Mid-Argyll* (2009) was seen as a breeding male near Bridge of Orchy and the breeding female here had been ringed as a chick near Aberfoyle, Central Scotland (2010). A chick ringed near SE Loch Lomond (Central) (2010) was identified as a breeding adult on W Loch Awe.

### **WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus* Snagan-allt**

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

**Winter/spring** The only record from the mainland was at Lochan Luing Kintyre in Jan but there were regular reports from the islands with sightings or calling birds on: *Islay* (3 sites), *Gigha*, *Kerrera Mid-Argyll*, *Luing Mid-Argyll*, *Mull*, *Colonsay* (7 sites), and *Tiree* (3 sites). Single birds were found run over by cars at Balevullin and Balemartine Tiree in Feb.

**Summer/breeding** Birds were heard calling at 9 sites on *Tiree* during the summer and breeding was proven at Kilkenneth where a female was photographed with 4 small chicks on 30 May, at The Reef where an adult was seen with a fledged juv. on 26 Jun and at Balephuill where a fledged youngster was seen on 22 Aug. In Apr-Jun, birds were also recorded calling at 5 sites on *Colonsay*, at 3 sites on *Islay*, at 2 sites on Lismore *North-Argyll* and at single sites on *Oronsay Colonsay*, *Mull*, and on *Seil Mid-Argyll*. One calling from cliff-top bracken on Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* on 29 Jun and 3 Jul was the first to be recorded there by TIARG.

**Autumn/winter** Birds were a little more widespread with records from 2 sites in *Kintyre* in Oct-Nov including up to 7 responding to a tape lure at Lochan Luing, 1 at Loch Seil *Mid-Argyll* in Nov, at single sites on *Colonsay* and *Oronsay Colonsay* in Aug-Dec, at 3 sites on *Islay* in Jul-Dec, at 3 sites on *Mull* in Sep-Nov and up to 4 birds at a site on *Lismore North Argyll* in Aug-Nov. Records from *Tiree* included a group of at least 3 birds squealing at Balephuill from Aug through Dec with odd birds seen there and 1 was seen at Sorobaidh Bay in Sep and 1 was watched crossing the road at Balemartine in Oct.

**SPOTTED CRAKE** *Porzana porzana* Traon-breac

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

**Spring** A good year with at least 4 different calling birds. There was a very early bird at *Bolsay Islay* on 2 Apr and this was perhaps the same as one calling at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 30 Jun. Another called at Gleann Cul Bhurg (*Iona*) *Mull* on 7 May and what was presumably the same bird then called at Baile Mor (*Iona*) *Mull* from 9 May to 13 Jun. Others called at Carse House (*Knapdale*) *Mid-Argyll* on 24 May and at Ardentiny *North Argyll* on 16 and 19 Jun.

**CORN CRAKE** *Crex crex* Traon

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

**Spring/summer** Arrivals were more typical this year in a warmer spring than 2013, with the first bird at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 15 Apr and first arrivals on *Oronsay Colonsay, Tiree, Coll* and *Iona Mull* on 17-26 Apr. Up to 2 calling males were noted in the vicinity of the old village, Lunga (*Treshnish Isles*) *Mull* on 29 Jun-5 Jul plus a female with a brood of 2-3 well grown young there (*TIARG*), whilst single birds called on *Eileach na Naoimh* and *A' Chuli* in the *Garvellachs Mid-Argyll* on 11 Jun. The only mainland record was of two calling at *Southend Kintyre* on 3 May but not subsequently. A nest containing 9 eggs was inadvertently uncovered during grass strimming in a garden at *Balemartine Tiree* on 23 May but the nest was covered over and all but 1 egg hatched successfully in mid-Jun. Young birds and broods were noted on *Islay, Colonsay and Tiree* in Jul-Aug plus a recently hatched brood on *Tiree* on 1 Sep. The overall *Argyll* total was 22% up on 2013.

**Autumn** Most had left by mid-Sep but odd birds were seen at various sites on *Tiree* until the first week of Oct.

**Breeding** The table below summarises the results of surveys of calling Corn Crakes in *Argyll* in 2013 and shows earlier years for comparison. The reduction in the *Argyll* totals in 2007-13 is due in part to a re-assessment of the numbers on *Coll*.

Table 24. *Number of calling Corn Crakes in Argyll areas, 2003-2014.*

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Coll	159	171	180	118	122	116	121	103	64	91
Tiree	310	316	391	413	392	391	385	371	348	396
Iona	29	39	30	50	46	34	24	31	25	28
Mull	5	7	4	8	2	7	6	2	3	3
Colonsay/ Oronsay	53	62	73	67	61	72	58	71	53	86
Islay	52	59	70	82	84	81	85	86	87	98

Smaller islands*	6	10	7	n/r	2	2	12+**	2	1	4
Mainland		1			5	3+	<i>see above</i>		<i>see above</i>	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>738</b>	<b>714</b>	<b>706</b>	<b>691</b>	<b>666</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>708</b>

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

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



*Corn Crake*

*Mike Peacock*

## **COMMON MOORHEN** *Gallinula chloropus* Cearc-uisge

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

**Winter/spring** Birds were well scattered early in year. On *Tiree* there were singles at Cornaigmore and Sandaig in Jan and at Balephuill and Cornaigmore in Mar with 2 at Sandaig in Apr. Singles were at Kilcheran Loch and Balnagown Loch on Lismore *North Argyll* in Mar and at Ardtur (Appin) *North Argyll* in Apr. From *Mid-Argyll*, there was 1 at Loch Ederline (Ford) in Feb with 2 birds there in Mar, whilst 2 were in Oban in Feb. On *Islay* at least 1 bird was present at RSPB Loch Gruinart in Feb- Mar with a bumper count of 8 there on 27 Apr.

**Summer/breeding** Possible/probable breeding pairs were at Sandaig *Tiree* in May-Aug, at Dunoon Golf course *Cowal* in May, at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* in May-Jun, at Kilcheran Loch (Lismore) *North Argyll* in Jun, at Ardencaple House (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* in Jul, at Cill an t-Suidhe (Lismore) *North Argyll* in Aug and at Port Charlotte *Islay* in Aug. Pairs were seen with young at Ardtur (Appin) *North Argyll* in Jul and at Bishop's Glen (Dunoon) *Cowal* in Aug, whilst a pair with a brood of 3 was seen in Aug-Sep from a clutch of 7 eggs in Jul at Bruichladdich *Islay*.

**Autumn/winter** Birds were more widespread later in the year. On *Islay* there was 1 at Loch Skerrols in Oct, 1 at RSPB Loch Gruinart in Oct and Dec and up to 4 at Port Charlotte in Oct with 2 there in Dec, whilst the family remained at Bruichladdich in Sep. On *Tiree* there were singles at Sandaig and Loch na Mointeach (Scarinish) in Sep and up to 2 at Loch Bhasapol in Dec. Elsewhere there were singles at East Loch Fada *Colonsay* in Sep, at Loch Ederline (Ford) and Oban *Mid-Argyll* in Oct with 1 again in Oban in Dec and 2 at Bishop's Glen (Dunoon) *Cowal* in Dec.

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

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

**Winter/spring** The declining fortunes of this species in Argyll continue. There were just 4 records, all from *Tiree*, involving single birds at Loch Bhasapol on 20 Jan and 28 Apr, 1 at Loch a' Phuill on 1 Mar and 1 at Loch Garradh nan Capull on 13 May.

**Summer** 1 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 10 Jun was presumably a late migrant.

**Autumn/winter** A little more widespread. A first-winter bird was at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 19 Oct with 3 there on 22-30 Nov and 2 remaining to 22 Dec. On *Islay* there was 1 at Ardnave Loch on 22 Oct-14 Nov with another at Loch Gorm on 3 Nov.

### **COMMON CRANE** *Grus grus*

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

**Winter/spring** A single crane, most likely this species, was seen over Loch Skerrols *Islay* on 14 Jan [Ed Burrell]. Two adults were seen flying and calling over Tullochgorm *Mid-Argyll* on 18 Apr [Paul Daw]. The later record was accepted as 'Common' and former as 'crane sp.' by the ABRC.

### **EURASIAN STONE-CURLEW** *Burhinus oediconemus*

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

No records.

### **PIED AVOCET** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

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

No records.

### **EURASIAN OYSTERCATCHER** *Haematopus ostralegus* Gille-Brìghde

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

**Winter/spring** Counts were received on a regular basis throughout the year from eleven sites (see table 25). Other notable winter records were 10 at Craighouse *Jura* on 24 Jan, 120 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 26 Jan and 48 at Loch Caolisport *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Feb. 74 on *Tiree* on 18 Feb was the first suggestion of the return of breeding birds, later 34 were at Ardschivaig *Mull* on 24 Feb, 45 at Corran View (Loch na Keal) *Mull* on 3 Mar, 110 at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 3 Mar, 120 at Sorobaidh Bay *Tiree* on 6 Mar and 172 at Traigh Bhaigh *Tiree* on 13 Mar. The first 2 reported inland were at Afon Orchy *North Argyll* on 29 Mar. Other flocks noted in spring were 66 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 5 Apr, 53 at Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* on 15 Apr, 31 at Loch

Buie *Mull* on 27 Apr, 180 at Otter Ferry Spit *Cowal* on 5 May and 22 non-breeders at Black Mill Bay (Luining) *Mid-Argyll* on 10 May.

**Breeding/summer** Breeding pairs were noted back at nest sites on The Oa *Islay* on 19 Feb, with mating pairs recorded at Killail *Cowal* on 22 Apr and Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 29 Apr, with the first nest found at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 8 May. Young were noted at The Reef *Tiree* by the end of May. 36 pairs were found breeding in the wetland compartments (only) at this site and 10 breeding pairs were found at Gruinart *Islay*. On the Treshnish Isles *Mull*, 6 pairs (2 confirmed breeding) were found on Lunga, 5 pairs (one with one chick) on Sgeir an Eirionnach, 3 pairs on Sgeir an Caisteal and 2 pairs (one with 3 chicks) on Sgier an Giusaich. Elsewhere breeding was proved on *Colonsay*, at Dunoon *Cowal*, Bruichladdich, Carnain, Loch Carn and the River Sorn (Bridgend) (all *Islay*), and Ban Eileanan (Sound of Mull,) Corranachenchy and Loch a' Chumhainn (all *Mull*). Probable breeding was noted at Gairletter Point *Cowal*, the Add Estuary, Kilbride (Seil) and on the McCormaig Isles (Eilean Mor 3 pairs, Corr Eilean 1 pair) (all *Mid-Argyll*). A non-breeding flock of 91 birds was noted at Druim Mor (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 21 June.

**Autumn/winter** Away from the regular counted site (see table 25), 120 were at Cornaigmore *Tiree* on 21 Jul and 200 at Seal Cottage (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 11 Aug. Southward passage noted at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* included 40 on 29 Jul, 90 on 31 Jul and 140 on 12 Aug. 30 were at Calgary *Mull* on 4 Oct, 71 at Kilfinan Bay *Cowal* on 12 Oct, 24 at Fennachrochan (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 29 Nov, 20 at Loch Laich *North Argyll* on 29 Nov, 66 in the E & W Bays Dunoon *Cowal* on 18 Dec and 11 at Slatrach Bay (Kerrera) *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Dec.

Table 25. *Maximum WEBS monthly counts of Oystercatchers at Loch Gruinart, Loch Indaal (Islay) Loch Sween, Loch Crinan, Loch Gilp, Loch Craignish (Mid-Argyll), Holy Loch, Blairmore (Loch Long) (Cowal), Loch Etive, Loch Creran (North Argyll) and the Strand (Colonsay) in 2014.*

<i>Lochs</i>	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	96	139	125	148		170		110	125	155	150	238
Indaal	182	136	60	68	50	40	48	48	50	86	40	173
Sween	15	22	26	23				10	15	15	11	3
Crinan	45	26	51	9	33	57	118	32	73	29	26	45
Gilp	252	177		58				75	248	274	273	186
Craignish	35	27	46	18		19	23	8	8	11	20	12
Holy L.	367	363	215						207	297	333	222
Blairmore	96	125	72	61	26	21	57	99	108	89	91	135
Creran	87		48	31	17	17				82	93	
Etive	3	67	58							1	5	3
The Strand		51	19		71		73		31	26	41	

## AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis dominica*

**A rare autumn visitor: 21 records; all 2001-2013.**

**Autumn** A first-summer (2CY) was at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 3 Sep and subsequently seen at Balevullin and Kilmoluaig until 19 Oct [Keith Gillon, John Bowler, Jim Dickson, Graham Todd, Toby Green]. Record was accepted by the ABRC.

## PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis fulva*

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

No records.

**EUROPEAN GOLDEN PLOVER** *Pluvialis apricaria* Feadag

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

**Winter/spring** The largest numbers throughout the year were reported from *Tiree* and *Gruinart Islay* (see Table 26), where a peak count of 4,400 was noted at *The Reef Tiree* on 17 Apr. Elsewhere during winter 200 were on *Oronsay Colonsay* on 26 Jan and 50 at *Loch Beg (Loch Scridain) Mull* on 28 Jan. As spring approached there were more sightings including 38 at *Kilchattan (Luing) Mid-Argyll* on 29 Mar, 260 on *Oronsay Colonsay* on 4 Apr, 150 at *Loch Scridain Mull* on 18 Apr, 12 at *Loch Ba Mull* on 22 Apr, 150 at *Fidden Mull* on 24 Apr, 6 at *Cruachan (Treshnish) Mull* on 24 Apr, 300 at *Totornald Coll* on 26 Apr and 14 *Lochbuie Mull* on 28 Apr.

**Breeding/summer** A few reports were received from birds in breeding habitat: one was on *Beinn Breac-liath North Argyll* on 10 Mar, 4 at *Glenmanuilt Hill Kintyre* on 8 Apr, 14 at *Allt Dearg Kintyre* on 11 Apr, and ‘present’ on *Beinn Dothaidh North Argyll* on 8 May.

**Autumn/winter** 160 at *Barrapol Tiree* on 19 Jul and 30 flying north at *Machrihanish SBO Kintyre* on 28 Jul were the first obvious migrants noted in autumn. Others noted were 2 at *Loch Crinan Mid-Argyll* on 5 Sep, 48 at *Traigh nam Barc Colonsay* on 15 Sep, 35 flying south at sea off *Coll* on 27 Sep, 100 at *Lag shore Mull* on 26 Sep, 32 at *Loch Beg (Loch Scridain) Mull* on 28 Sep and 23 at *Cruachan (Treshnish) Mull* on 29 Sep. Numbers increased on *Tiree* and at *Gruinart Islay* during October, when 230 were on *Oronsay Colonsay* on 5 Oct. Later 3 were at *Craignure Mull* on 1 Nov, 400 at *West Parkfergus Kintyre* on 18 Nov and 8 at *Rhunahaorine Kintyre* on 6 Dec.

Table 26. *Maximum monthly day-counts of Golden Plovers on Tiree and Gruinart Islay in 2014.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tiree	3010	2000	3150	4400	20	9	175	260	950	2789	3470	4090
Gruinart	940	1240	700	700				3	22	1410	1770	1265

**GREY PLOVER** *Pluvialis squatarola* Feadag-ghlas

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

**Winter/spring** Three were found at *Gartbreck (Bowmore) Islay* on 16 Feb, one of which remained there through until 16 Apr. Spring passage was light with 4 single birds noted at *Machrihanish Bay Kintyre* on 25 Apr, the *Add Estuary Mid-Argyll* on 8 May, at *Ardnave Islay* on 12 May in summer plumage and at the *Strand Colonsay* on 20 May.

**Autumn/winter** Singles at *Traigh Bhi Tiree* and *An Fhaodhail Tiree* on 26 Aug were the first returning birds and were followed by one flying south at *Machrihanish SBO Kintyre* on 29 Aug, one at *Clachan Mor Tiree* on 30 Aug, 3 there on 13 Sep and a juv. at *Loch a' Phuill Tiree* on 22 Sep. Numbers increased in mid-Oct, when there were 3 at *Loch Gruinart Islay* on 17 Oct, two at *Bridgend Islay* on 19 Oct, 2 at the *Strand Colonsay* on 20 Oct, and 1 at *Ardnave Islay* on 27 Oct. In Nov, singles were at *The Strand Colonsay* on 9 Nov and *Balephetrish Bay Tiree* on 22 Nov, and 3 were at *Loch Indaal Islay* on 10 Nov. Elsewhere on *Islay*, 2 were at *Ardnave* on 14 Nov. During Dec, there were only sightings from *Tiree*, when 2 were at *Salum* on 20 Dec, with 1 lingering until 29 Dec.

**NORTHERN LAPWING** *Vanellus vanellus* Curragag

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

**Winter/spring** Large numbers were reported throughout the year at Gruinart *Islay* and *Tiree* (see table 27). Elsewhere during winter 100 were found at Kilchoman *Islay* on 2 Jan, 60 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 3 Jan, and birds were present at Benderloch *North Argyll* on 13 Jan. 13 were at Holy Loch *Cowal* on 20 Jan, 24 at Connel *Mid-Argyll* on 21 Jan and 8 at Mid Ardyne *Cowal* on 5 Feb. From early Feb, birds were reported in larger numbers and at more sites e.g. 100 at Westport Marsh *Kintyre* on 8 Feb, 20 at Fidden *Mull* 10 on Feb, 88 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 17 Feb, 20 at Gorsten *Mull* 22 Feb, 46 at Cnoc an t-Suidhe *Mull* on 24 Feb and 26 at Ardchiavaig *Mull* on 24 Feb. Later in spring notable sightings included 70 at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 2 Mar, 20 at North Craigs *Kintyre* on 8 Mar, 1 at Loch Etive *North Argyll* on 15 Mar, 15 on Ulva *Mull* on 18 Mar, 50 at Loch Ba *Mull* on 22 Mar, 20 at Ardyne Burn *Cowal* on 4 Apr, 1 at Killail *Cowal* on 3 May, 6 at Linne a'Dhuais *Mull* and 6 at Slochd na Feola *Mull* on 10 May and 20 at Benmore Lodge *Mull* on 22 May.

**Breeding** Birds were on eggs and territory on *Tiree* from 17 Mar. The first brood on *Tiree* was at Caolas on 19 Apr. 55 pairs were noted in the wetland compartments (only) at The Reef *Tiree*. At Gruinart *Islay*, where the first brood was noted on 29 Apr, there were 207 pairs (*cf* 180 in 2013). 60 pairs were noted on Oronsay *Colonsay* and 31 pairs were found on *Colonsay*. Elsewhere breeding was confirmed at Kilchoman and Saligo Bay (both *Islay*) and Fidden *Mull*, probable breeding was noted at Drimvore *Mid-Argyll* and Allt na Crannaich *North Argyll* and possible breeding at Druim Buidhe and Loch an Dun (both *Coll*) and Barcaldine Castle *North Argyll*.

**Autumn/winter** Post-breeding flocks reported were 61 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 11 Jun, 46 at Loch an Eilein *Tiree* on 16 Jun, 13 at Gleann Cul Bhurg (Iona) *Mull* on 2 Jul, 19 at Fionnphort *Mull* on 3 Jul, 12 at Loch Airigh Meall Bhreide *Coll* on 11 Jul and 8 at Loch an Duin *Coll* on the same date. Through the autumn and winter large numbers were found at Gruinart *Islay* and *Tiree* (see table 27). Through autumn and towards the year end notable sightings included 80 at Ardskenish *Colonsay* on 13 Sep, 200 at Loch Gorm *Islay* on 8 Oct, 40 at Glen Cannel *Mull* on 16 Oct, 1 at New Danna *Mid-Argyll* on 2 Nov, 4 at Kilfinnan Bay *Cowal* on 9 Nov, 600 at West Parkfergus *Kintyre* on 14 Nov, 120 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 22 Nov, 4 at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 30 Nov and 18 at Aird Luig *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Dec.

Table 27. *Monthly Maximum counts of Lapwings at Loch Gruinart RSPB Reserve and on Tiree in 2014.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	460	520	239	104						701	479	430
Tiree	3490	2220	1500				304	1120	750	2325	4540	4045

N.B. These counts exclude breeding pairs.

**LITTLE RINGED PLOVER** *Charadrius dubius*

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

No records. (See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.126).

**COMMON RINGED PLOVER** *Charadrius hiaticula* Trilleachan-tràghad

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

**Winter/spring** Reports throughout the year were received from *Tiree*, where large counts are regular, and from Bowmore-Gartbreck *Islay* (see table 28). Elsewhere during winter 12 were at New Danna *Mid-Argyll* on 1 Jan, 43 at Point Sands Holiday Park *Kintyre* on 2 Jan, 25 at Otter Ferry Spit *Cowal* on 5 Jan, 21 at Kilfinan Bay *Cowal* on 19 Jan, 100 at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 7 Feb, 20 at Cluniter *Cowal* on 12 Feb, while there was only one at Eilean Traighe (Loch Etive) *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Feb. During spring, sightings became more widespread and numbers on passage increased with 18 found at Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* on 15 Apr, 254 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 23 Apr and 62 on Oronsay *Colonsay* and 200 on The Strand *Colonsay* on 26 Apr. 365 were at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 30 Apr, 42 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 6 May, increasing to 235 on 18 May when 56 were nearby at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll*. The following day 300 were at Ballinaby *Islay* and 546 at Loch Gruinart *Islay*. Elsewhere 9 were reported at Loch na Keal *Mull* on 22 May, 310 on The Strand *Colonsay* on 23 May and 11 at An Sailean (Benderloch) *North Argyll* on 24 May.

**Breeding** The first hatched young was reported from Caolas *Tiree* on 15 May, young were also found on the verges of the airport runway at Machrins *Colonsay*. Definite breeding was reported from Dunoon *Cowal*, the Big Strand, Bruichladdich, Claggain Bay and Loch Indaal (all *Islay*), Linne a'Dhuais and Port na Ba (both *Mull*) and The Reef *Tiree*. Probable breeding was recorded at Kilfinan Bay and Otter Ferry (both *Cowal*), Bagh Gleann nam Muc *Jura*, Corran Lunga (1 pair) (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* and Eilean Musdile (Lismore) *North Argyll*. Possible breeding was noted at the Corran River mouth *Jura* and Eilean Mor (McCormaigh Isles) *Mid-Argyll*.

**Autumn/winter** 30 flying south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 15 Jul were the first signs of autumn passage. During Aug, 7 were at Cill an t-Suidhe (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 4 Aug, 71 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Aug, 20 at Craignure Golf Course *Mull* on 15 Aug and 40 on Eorsa (Loch na Keal) *Mull* on 24 Aug. Later in autumn 24 were at New Danna *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Sep, 187 at Traigh nam Barc *Colonsay* on 15 Sep, 35 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 20 Sep, 55 at Machir Bay *Islay* on 21 Sep and 11 at Loch a'Chumhainn *Mull* on 24 Sep. During Oct 18 were present at Druim na Claidh (Appin) *North Argyll* on 12 Oct, 181 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 13 Oct, 42 at Craignure Bay *Mull* on 15 Oct, 95 at Sorobaidh Bay *Tiree* on 27 Oct, 64 at Ardnave Point *Islay* on 27 Oct and 38 at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 29 Oct. Towards the end of the year 47 were noted at the Coalyard (Gortan) *Islay* on 7 Nov, 69 on The Strand *Colonsay* on 9 Nov, 30 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 23 Nov, 35 at Innellan *Cowal* on 18 Dec and 24 at Black Mill Bay (Luìng) *Mid-Argyll* on 18 Dec.

Table 28. *Maximum monthly day-counts of Ringed Plovers on Tiree, and Bowmore–Gartbreck Islay in 2014.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tiree	140	115	85	535	905	35	55	115	222	95	253	180
Bowmore	88	10	36	81	45	35	6	40	10	9		23

# **KILLDEER** *Charadrius vociferus*

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

No records.

# **EURASIAN DOTTEREL** *Charadrius morinellus* Amadan-mòintich

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

**Spring** A migrant was found at the south end of Oronsay *Colonsay* on 5 May.

**Summer** Five were found (in breeding habitat) on Meall an Eun *North Argyll* on 4 Aug.

## **WHIMBREL** *Numenius phaeopus* Eun-Bealltainn

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

**Spring** There were no winter records. The first migrant was noted at Salen Bay *Mull* on 3 Mar, followed by one, possibly the same bird, at Aros Estuary *Mull* on 9 Mar. 12 were at Bowmore *Islay* on 16 Mar and 12 were noted flying south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 4 Apr, the first seen there in spring. Other first records included 1 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 18 Apr and 1 at Caolas *Tiree* on 19 Apr. Shortly after this numbers increased with 23 on *Islay* on 23 Apr, when 30 were seen flying north at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre*. 6 were at Fiddon *Mull* on 24 Apr, when there were also 7 at Tayinloan *Kintyre*. 40 were recorded at Nerabus *Islay* on 25 Apr, when the first in *Mid-Argyll*, a single, was also at Loch Gilp. 3 at Arinagour *Coll* on 26 Apr were the first there. The same day 1 was at Killail *Cowal*, followed by 2 the following day, the only records throughout the year from *Cowal*. Spring migration peaked in late Apr and early May, with the following notable records: 8 at Ardskenish Point *Colonsay* on 27 Apr, 30 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 27 Apr, 4 at Loch Beg (Loch Sridain) *Mull* on 29 Apr, 1 at Connel *Mid-Argyll* on the same date, when 55 were also noted flying north at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* and 60 were at Nerabus *Islay* the following day. On 2 May, 21 were at Hough Bay *Tiree*, 6 at Arinagour *Coll*, 126 at Loch Indaal *Islay* and 107 flew north at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre*. Thereafter, 45 were at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 5 May, 30 at Fiddon *Mull* on 5 May, 21 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* and 10 at Craignure *Mull* on 7 May, 58 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 8 May, 42 at Blackmill Bay (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 10 May, 60 at Ardnave *Islay* 12 May, 14 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 13 May and 50 at Gartnara *Islay* on 17 May.

**Summer** In Jun there were scattered sightings e.g. 2 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 1 Jun, 1 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Jun, 3 at Gartbreck *Islay* on 15 Jun and 6 on *Tiree* on 16 Jun.

**Autumn** The first returning birds were in a flock of 26 flying south at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 2 Jul; during the remainder of Jul 1-2 were on Oronsay *Colonsay*, at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* and Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll*. 8 at Milton *Tiree* on 5-8 Aug was evidence of a further movement around this time when one was on Iona *Mull* on 7 Aug and 7 were at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Aug. The largest group reported in the autumn was 36 birds, was at Clachan Mor *Tiree* on 3 Sep; thereafter single birds were reported at Lochdon *Mull* on 8 Sep, Sorobaidh Bay *Tiree* on 10 Sep, Salen Bay *Mull* on 14 Sep and the last at Aros Estuary *Mull* on 23 Nov.

## **EURASIAN CURLEW** *Numenius arquata* Guilbneach

**RED LIST A** *widespread breeding species in suitable habitat: more numerous on passage and in winter.*

**Winter/spring** Regular counts were received throughout the year from the Holy Loch *Cowal*, Loch Gruinart and Loch Indaal (both *Islay*) and Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* (see table 29). Other interesting reports during winter were 75 at Crossapol *Tiree* on 10 Jan, 28 at Inveresrigan *North Argyll* on 17 Jan, 21 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 18 Jan, 100 at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 21 Jan, 10 at Blairmore Farm *Cowal* 22 Jan, 15 at Blackmill Bay (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 25 Jan and 85 at Machir Bay *Islay* on 30 Jan. 38 were on The Strand *Colonsay* on 6 Feb, 13 at Kilfinan Bay *Cowal* on 18 Feb, 120 at Sandaig *Tiree* on 21 Feb, 18 at Lagganulva *Mull* on 27 Feb and 70 at Crossapol *Tiree* on 28 Feb. Thereafter counts declined as wintering birds migrated to their breeding areas; 14 were at Killail *Cowal* on 4 Mar, 12 at An Sailean (Benderloch) *North Argyll* on 10 Mar, 40 at Loch Gorm *Islay* on 23 Mar, 21 at Druim Mor (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 2 Apr, 1 at Arinagour *Coll* on 27 Apr, 2 at Loch Eatharna *Coll* on 29 Apr, 35 at Caolas *Tiree* on 9 May, 6 at Slochd na Feola *Mull* on 10 May and 24 at Laphraoig *Islay* on 14 May.

**Breeding/summer** 20 pairs bred at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* (the same number as 2013). An agitated bird at Kames Golf Course *Cowal* on 22 Apr and 1 displaying at Lub Fhinn *Mull* on 18 Jun were the only other evidence of breeding reported. One was at Jura House *Jura* on 12 Jun.

**Autumn/winter** Signs of returning migrants were first noted on 1 Jul when 30 were at Fionnphort *Mull* and 62 on The Strand *Colonsay* with 22 at Heylipol *Tiree* on 2 Jul. Thereafter 9 were at Gairletter Point *Cowal* on 17 Jul, 50 at Crossapol *Tiree* on 1 Aug, 20 at Aird Luing (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 2 Aug, 51 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 3 Aug, 65 at Clachan Mor *Tiree* on 30 Aug, 40 at Taynish *Mid-Argyll* on 8 Sep, 86 at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 19 Sep, 30 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 4 Oct, 26 at the head of Loch na Keal *Mull* on 7 Oct, 34 at Loch Creran *North Argyll* on 12 Oct, 50 at Balemartine *Tiree* on 15 Oct and 72 at Coull Farm *Islay* on 29 Oct. As winter approached more notable records were 60 at Aird *Tiree* on 18 Nov, 14 at Fennachrochan (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 29 Nov, 59 at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 13 Dec and 50 at Mid Ardyne *Cowal* on 19 Dec.

Table 29. *Maximum monthly counts of Curlews at Loch Gruinart and Loch Indaal Islay, and WEBS counts from Loch Crinan and the Holy Loch in 2014.*

<i>Loch</i>	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	229	52	142	17	16	45	1	107	93	115	325	189
Indaal	300	267	22	30	11	26	15	120	75	85	68	200
Crinan	77	79	34	13	2		64	47	78	64	29	47
Holy Loch	147	84	94					50	136	42	115	49

## **BLACK-TAILED GODWIT** *Limosa limosa islandica* Cearra-gheb

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

**Winter** The only birds recorded in winter were on *Islay* where 7 were at Loch Gruinart on 15 Jan, one at Loch Indaal on 10 Feb and 5 at Bridgend on 14 Mar.

**Spring** One at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 28 Mar was the first migrant noted; with no further birds reported until 1 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 7 Apr, 3 flying north past Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 8 Apr and 40 which arrived at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 16 Apr. Two, the only birds recorded during the year on *Cowal*, were at Otter Ferry Spit on the same date. Passage peaked between mid-Apr and early May 164 were at Loch Bhasapol *Tiree* on 17 Apr, 104 were at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 18 Apr, 7 were at Machrihanish Bay *Kintyre* on 19 Apr, one was at Westport Marsh *Kintyre* on 24 Apr, 48 were at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 24 Apr, 13 were at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 27 Apr and 4 were on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 28 Apr. In May, 23 were at The Green *Tiree* on 1 May, 39 were at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 4 May, one was at Fidden *Mull* on 5 May and one at the Add Estuary on 6 May was the earliest reported in *Mid-Argyll*.

**Summer** A few remained over summer including 2 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 8 June. An adult male colour-ringed in Iceland in Jul 2010 which has been seen annually on *Islay* was at Ballinaby on 21 Jun. 8 were on Eilean nan Ron (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 8 Jul.

**Autumn** Passage resumed from late Jul when 15 were at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 22 Jul, 10 were at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 25 Jul, one was at Croig *Mull* on 5 Aug, 10 were at Cornaigmore *Tiree* from 20-22 Aug and one was at Fidden *Mull* on 22 Aug. During Sep, 28 were at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 5 Sep followed by 28 at Bowmore *Islay* on 8 Sep. Thereafter smaller numbers were found on *Islay* and *Tiree* and there was 1 at Seal Cottage (Oronsay)

*Colonsay* on 22 Sep and 1 at Loch Beg (Loch Scridain) *Mull* on 28 Sep. 27 were noted at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 29 Sep, followed by 27 at Bowmore *Islay* on 12 Oct. This pair of records, along with a similar pair in Sep, suggest that some birds may have more than one established stop-over site in Argyll. Thereafter 3 were at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 11 Nov and 3 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 17 Nov. A juv. at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 23 Nov was the last record. There were no records from *Coll*, *Jura*, or *North Argyll*.

## **BAR-TAILED GODWIT** *Limosa lapponica* Roid-ghuilbneach

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

**Winter/spring** Away from *Islay*, where large numbers were seen and counted regularly (see table 30), smaller numbers were noted elsewhere: 5 at Seal Cottage (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 6 Jan, 18 at Balephetrish Bay *Tiree* on 17 Jan, 25 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 18 Jan, 5 at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 7 Feb, 1 at the Aros Estuary *Mull* on 13 Feb, 5 at Fiddien *Mull* on 13 Mar, 14 at Sorobaidh Bay *Tiree* on 20 Mar, 7 at The Strand *Colonsay* on 5 Apr and 4 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 18 May. 2 at Loch Creran on 19 Jan were the only reports during the year from *North Argyll*. There were no records from *Coll*, *Cowal* and *Jura*.

**Summer** Away from *Islay* where 121 were at Blackrock (Loch Indaal) on 8 Jun, small numbers of summering birds were noted; 6 were at Loch na Cuilce *Mull* on 7 Jun, 2 at Salum *Tiree* on 17 Jun, one flew north at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 28 Jun and 4 were on The Strand *Colonsay* on 1 Jul.

**Autumn/winter** The peak counts were again on *Islay* (table 30). The first suggestion of autumn migration was one flying south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 8 Jul, then 3 were at Loch Gilp *Mid Argyll* on 12 Jul, and possibly the same 3 nearby at Loch Crinan on 14 Jul. Later 4 were on *Tiree* on 31 Jul, 14 at Gott Bay *Tiree* on 22 Aug, 10 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Sep and 5 on The Strand *Colonsay* on 13 Sep. Unusually for this coastal species one was inland at West Parkfergus *Kintyre* on 7 Nov. Towards the year-end 25 were at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Dec and 18 on *Tiree* on 20 Dec.

Table 30. *Maximum monthly counts of Bar-tailed Godwits at Loch Gruinart and Loch Indaal Islay in 2014.*

<i>Lochs</i>	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	222	176	300	76	40	5	9		nc	1	144	228
Indaal	86	40	147	46	105	121	12	7	1	103	nc	nc

## **RUDDY TURNSTONE** *Arenaria interpres* Trilleachan-beag

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

**Winter/spring** Regular counts were received throughout the year from Otter Ferry *Cowal*, Loch Gruinart and Loch Indaal (both *Islay*) and *Tiree* (see table 31). During winter 11 were reported at Minard *Mid-Argyll* on 1 Jan, 45 at Point Sands Holiday Park *Kintyre* on 2 Jan, 40 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 3 Jan, 25 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 18 Jan, 160 at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 20 Jan, 45 at Cluniter *Cowal* on 12 Feb and one at Ardichiavig *Mull* on 24 Feb. Numbers increased during spring when 170 were at The Reef *Tiree* on 11 Mar, 25 at the Holy Loch *Cowal* on 17 Mar, 25 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 20 Mar, 24 at Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* on 31 Mar, 32 at Dunoon *Cowal* on 1 Apr, 93 at Sandaig *Tiree* on 5 Apr, 14 at Pennyghael *Mull* on 18 Apr, 56 at Cluniter *Cowal* on 30 Apr and 16 at Seal Cottage (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 17 May.

**Summer** There were three records of single birds in Jun at: Traigh Bhaigh *Tiree* on 4 Jun, on Iona *Mull* on 6 Jun and at Balephetrish Bay *Tiree* on 15 Jun.

**Autumn/winter** The next sighting was not until 22 Jul, when the first returning adult was found at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre*. 12 in summer plumage were found at Ledaig Point *North Argyll* on 2 Aug and 25 flew south past Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 17 Aug. Other autumn sightings included 10 at Balnahard Bay *Colonsay* on 14 Sep, 172 at Balephetrish Bay *Tiree* on 22 Sep, 28 at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 15 Oct and 15 on *Jura* on 29 Oct. Later in the winter notable sightings included 3 at Druim na Claidh (Appin) *North Argyll* on 9 Nov, 83 (a record count) at Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* on 16 Nov, 86 at Dunoon *Cowal* on 25 Nov, 40 at Ardrishaig *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Dec, 21 at Knock *Mull* on 15 Dec and 13 at Black Mill Bay (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Dec.

Table 31. *Maximum monthly counts of Turnstones at Loch Gruinart and Loch Indaal (Islay), Otter Ferry (Cowal) and Tiree in 2014.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	69	62	43	12					10			35
Indaal	4	9	5	18	4				3	10	30	28
Otter F.	95	109	53	81	2							
Tiree	160	140	170	93	29	1	9	20	172	90	60	Nc

## **RED KNOT** *Calidris canutus* Luatharan-gainmhigh

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

**Winter/spring** During Jan and Feb there were only six reports of single birds from *Colonsay*, *Islay* and *Mid-Argyll*. 3 were found at Gartbreck *Islay* on 16 Mar, but spring migrants were not noted until 10 Apr when 2 were found at Sorobaidh Bay *Tiree*. 20 were at Gartbreck *Islay* on 13 Apr and on 16 Apr, 6 were at Otter Ferry Spit *Cowal*. 2 were found at Loch Beg (Loch Scridain) *Mull* on 24 Apr, 15 were still at Bowmore *Islay* on 1 May and 6 were at Balephetrish Bay and 3 at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 4 May. The last spring migrants were 4 at Black Rock (Loch Indaal) *Islay* on 19 May.

**Autumn/winter** The first returning bird was an adult found at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 20 Jul and 5 were at Gott Bay *Tiree* on 31 Jul. In mid-Aug 2 were found at Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Aug and 1 flew south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 17 Aug. Numbers increased thereafter with 10 at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Aug and 9 juvs. were at Gott Bay *Tiree* the following day. On 21 Aug, 25 were at Loch Gruinart *Islay* and 1 was found at Loch Beg (Loch Scridain) *Mull*. Juvs. were also found on *Coll* at Breachacha, 1 on 28 Aug, and 2 at Arinagour on 29 Aug. Numbers peaked in Sep when 69 were at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 2 Sep, 21 were at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Sep, 4 at Loch Caolisport *Mid-Argyll* on 15 Sep and 20 were at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 20 Sep, when 13 were at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll*. In Oct, 20 were found at Bridgend *Islay* on 19 Oct and 13 at Gruinart *Islay* on 3 Nov was the last flock seen. Thereafter singles were noted at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 13 Nov, on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 15 Nov, on Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 3 Dec and at New-Danna *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Dec.

## **RUFF** *Philomachus pugnax* Gibeagan

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

**Winter** One at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 10 Jan and 20 Jan was the first mid-winter record of a Ruff in Argyll. There are previous records in Nov and Feb.

**Spring** Three spring migrants were found: the first was at Gruinart *Islay* on 15- 30 Apr, another was at Port Ellen *Islay* on 30 Apr and the last, a female was at Druim Mor (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 22 May.

**Autumn/winter** The first autumn migrant was with Greenshanks at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 27 Jul. The following month 1 was at Druim Mor (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 9 Aug, and another at Gruinart *Islay* on 21 Aug. A steady passage was noted on *Tiree* towards the end of Aug with three juvs. on The Reef on 21 Aug, and 5 on the island the following day. 1 was at Oronsay airfield *Colonsay* on 27 Aug, and 6 juvs. were at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 31 Aug. On 2 Sep, 12 were on *Tiree* including 10 at Middleton, thereafter numbers on the island declined with 5 at Loch a' Phuill on 10 and 17-20 Sep. Elsewhere in Sep, 1 was noted at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 2 Sep and in *Mid-Argyll* 2 were at Loch Crinan on 14-19 Sep and 1 at the head of Loch Gilp on 19 Sep. Up to 3 were seen at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* between 28 Sep and 13 Oct. A male was found at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 26-31 Oct and the last birds noted in autumn were 2 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 3 Nov.

**BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER** *Limicola falcinellus*

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

No records.

**CURLEW SANDPIPER** *Calidris ferruginea* Luatharan-crom

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

**Spring** Five birds were observed in spring; slightly fewer than in 2013. The first was an adult at Gott Bay *Tiree* on 6 May. Later a fem/1S male was found at Crinan Ferry *Mid-Argyll* on 20 May and another was at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 22 May. 2 were at Heylipol Church pool *Tiree* on 9 Jun which flew to Loch a' Phuill; 1 was back at Heylipol on 12 Jun.

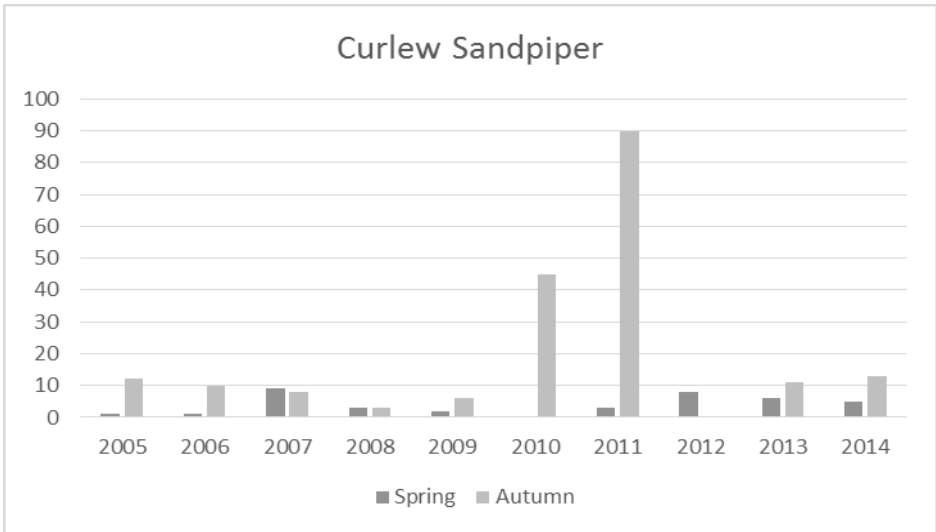


Figure 1: Trend of spring and autumn Curlew Sandpiper (individuals) in Argyll 2005-2014

**Autumn** Autumn passage was light. A very early returning bird was noted flying south with Dunlins at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 22 Jul. The next report was not until 1 Sep when 2 juvs. were found on *Tiree*, 1 at Gott Bay, the other at Clachan Mor. The bird at Clachan Mor was there the following day when 1 was also at Loch Gruinart *Islay*. 3 were at Clachan Mor *Tiree* on 5 Sep, followed by 1 at Bridgend *Islay* on 12 Sep. First year birds were also identified at Traigh nam Barc *Colonsay* on 15 Sep and at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Sep. 2 were at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 23 Sep, just before the last, 1 at The Strand *Colonsay* on 25 Sep.

**TEMMINCK'S STINT** *Calidris temminckii*

**RED LIST** A rare passage migrant: four records; one at Machrihanish, *Kintyre* in Jul 1974, one at Fiddon, Mull in Sep 1985, one at An Fhaodhail, *Tiree* in Aug 1992 and one at Loch Gruinart, *Islay* in May 2000.

**Spring** An adult was at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 22-23 May [James How, Jim Dickson]. Record was accepted by the ABRC

**SANDERLING** *Calidris alba* Luatharan-glas

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

**Winter** *Tiree* remained the stronghold of this species (see table 32). During winter colour-ringed/flagged birds including a juv. marked on Greenland and an adult marked on Iceland were found on *Tiree*. Other wintering birds included 11 at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 1 Jan, 22 at Seal Cottage (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 5 Jan, 346 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 15 Jan, 12 at Machrihanish *Kintyre* on 24 Jan increasing to 18 on 7 Mar and 45 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 14 Mar.

**Spring** Spring migration peaked at 1,540 on *Tiree* on 6 May when 1,160 were at Gott Bay and 350 at Traigh Bhi. During spring passage, marked birds from Greenland (3 juvs.), Iceland (10 - 5 of which wintered in N France, one in N Ireland and one in Northumberland), Portugal (9), Spain (4) and Hayling Island, Hampshire (4) were noted on *Tiree*. Other spring counts were 14 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 26 Apr, 2 at Port na Ba Mull on 5 May, 60 flying south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 14 May, 52 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 17 May, increasing to 74 on 18 May, 53 at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 20 May, 100 off passage at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 22 May, 50 at Machir Bay *Islay* on 23 May, 53 at the Big Strand *Islay* on 25 May, 18 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 29 May, 14 at Bunessan Mull on 31 May and 11 on Iona Mull on 6 Jun.

**Autumn** On 15 Jul, 2 were seen flying south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* and later that month 1 was at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Jul and 7 were at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 30 Jul. 68 flew south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 12 Aug. During Sep passage of juvs. peaked on *Tiree* on 15 Sep, when there were 19.9% juv. in a sample of 317. 11 were at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Sep, 255 at Gruinart *Islay* on 8 Sep, 50 at Bowmore *Islay* on 13 Sep, 19 on *Colonsay* on 15 Sep and 25 at Machir Bay *Islay* on 21 Sep. Movement was also recorded into Oct, when 60 flew south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 12 Oct and 63 passed there during a storm on 21 Oct.

**Winter** 7.4% of a sample of 282 birds on *Tiree* on 3 Nov were juvs. Wintering colour-ringed/flagged individuals on *Tiree* from Greenland and Iceland had both been seen there the previous winter. Elsewhere 27 were at Ardnave Point *Islay* on 2 Nov, 92 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 5 Nov and 72 on The Strand *Colonsay* on 9 Nov.

Table 32. *Maximum monthly counts of Sanderlings on Tiree in 2014. Counts from Tiree are not always of the whole island.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tiree	280	340	310	535	1540	30	401	413	409	398	282	390

### **DUNLIN** *Calidris alpina* Graillig

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

**Winter/spring** Regular counts were undertaken at two sites on *Islay* and on *Tiree*, where the largest concentrations occur (table 33). Elsewhere 24 were at Glendarroch *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Jan, 25 were at Otter Ferry Spit *Cowal* on 5 Jan, 32 were at Cluniter *Cowal* on 12 Feb, 37 were at Otter Ferry Little Spit *Cowal* on 10 Mar and 2 were at Arinagour *Coll* on 26 Apr. Spring passage on *Tiree* peaked on 6 May, when a record total of 4,320 were at Gott Bay. 370 migrants were at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 18 May, and there were also 430 nearby at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on the same day. The following day 133 were at Fionnphort *Mull* and 33 at Loch Beg (Loch Scridain) *Mull*, while 300 were at Traigh nam Barc *Colonsay* on 20 May.

**Breeding/summer** It was a good breeding season at the Reef *Tiree* where 50 singing males were found in the wetland compartments. Many fledglings were seen there at the end of Jun, but a small chick was even seen on the late date of 15 Jul. 2 chicks were seen at Loch Ba *Mull* on 30 Jun, this is the first recorded breeding on *Mull* for many years. On *Islay*, 2 pairs bred at RSPB Loch Gruinart and display was noted at Loch Gorm on 20 Jun.

**Autumn/winter** Autumn passage was first noted when 31 were at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 21 Jul, 145 were at Gott Bay *Tiree* on 31 Jul and 30 flew south past Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 17 Aug. Later, moderate numbers occurred in various locations, including: 5 at Fiddien *Mull* on 27 Aug, 45 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Sep, 1 at Corran Sands *Jura* on 6 Sep, 34 at Traigh nam Barc *Colonsay* on 15 Sep, 51 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 16 Sep, 9 at Bellochantuy *Kintyre* on 25 Sep and 9 at Loch a' Chuimhainn *Mull* on 26 Sep. Later 25 were at Machir Bay *Islay* on 20 Oct, 10 at West Parkfergus *Kintyre* on 14 Nov and 40 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Dec.

Table 33. *Maximum monthly counts of Dunlin at Loch Gruinart Islay and on Tiree in 2014.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	515	176	29	758	1450		18		191	73	35	124
Indaal	32	10		80	114	6	60		80	23	30	130
Tiree	137	110	80	340	4810	50	145	123	65	44	35	136

### **PURPLE SANDPIPER** *Calidris maritima* Luatharan-rioghail

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

**Winter/spring** Four on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 3 Jan were the first reported. Larger numbers were found on *Tiree* with 75 at Rubha Chraiginis on 4 Jan and 60 at Balephetrish Bay on 20 Jan. Elsewhere 4 were at Cuan Point (Luig) *Mid-Argyll* on 25 Jan, 14 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 26 Jan and 5 Mar, 5 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 16 Feb, 8 on Laine Sgier (Calgary) *Mull* on 26 Feb and 3 at Dunollie *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Mar. A flock of 29 was found at Dunoon *Cowal* on 1 Mar, which increased to 31 birds on 30 Mar; 23 were still present on 24 Apr, with the last 2 reported there on 20 May.

**Autumn/winter** The first returning bird was 1 at Dunoon *Cowal* on 15 Sep. Another was at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 2 Oct and 10 were there from 27 Oct. However, sightings were

scarce with the first single noted on *Tiree* on the late date of 30 Oct, with 20 found at Milton *Tiree* on 8 Nov. More were reported towards the end of the year, perhaps reflecting a later migration from sites to the north with 2 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 23 Nov and 23 at Dunoon *Cowal* on the same day. 3 were at Calgary *Mull* on 3 Dec, 7 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 23 Dec, 61 at Hough Bay *Tiree* on 28 Dec, and 3 at Eilean Traigh (Loch Caolisport) *Mid-Argyll* on 31 Dec.



*Purple Sandpipers*

Margaret Staley

### **BAIRD'S SANDPIPER** *Calidris bairdii*

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

No records.

### **LITTLE STINT** *Calidris minuta* Luatharan-beag

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

**Spring** Three singles were noted in the spring; all were on the islands, at Traigh nam Barc *Colonsay* on 20 May, Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 28 May, and Carnain *Islay* on 10 Jun.

**Autumn** Only 9 were found in autumn; 2014 turned out to be an 'average year' (see figure 2). The first autumn migrant was seen at Killiechronan *Mull* on 28 Aug, followed by other singles at the Big Strand *Islay* on 30 Aug, Bridgend *Islay* on 12 Sep, and Traigh nam Barc *Colonsay* on 13 Sep. A juv. was at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 14-16 Sep, and another juv. was also reported at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Sep, with 1, possibly the same bird, at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* the following day and 2 juvs. at Loch Crinan on 19-20 Sep. The last bird reported was a juv. at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* from 21-27 Sep.

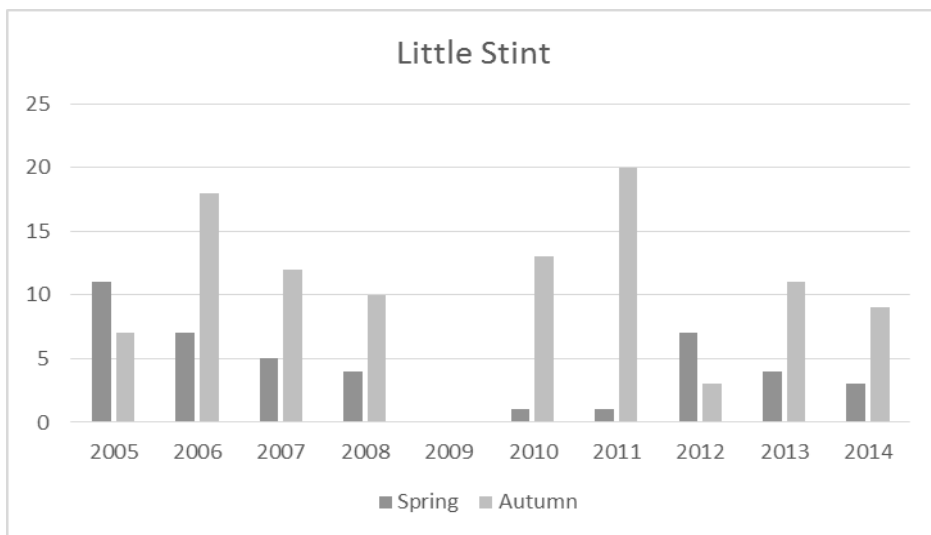


Figure 2: Trend of spring and autumn Little Stint (individuals) in Argyll 2005-2014

#### **WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER** *Calidris fuscicollis*

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

**Autumn** An adult was seen and photographed at Gott Bay Tiree on 31 Aug and 1 Sep [Keith Gillon, John Bowler]. Record was accepted by the SBRC.

#### **BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER** *Tryngites subruficollis*

*A rare spring and scarce autumn visitor: 32 records of upto 41 birds since the first in 1971.*

**Autumn** An un-aged bird was at Loch a' Phuill Tiree on 4 Sep [Keith Gillon] and a juvenile, possibly the same bird, was at Loch a' Phuill Tiree on 8 Sep [John Bowler]. Both records were accepted by the ABRC.

#### **PECTORAL SANDPIPER** *Calidris melanotos*

*A scarce mainly autumn visitor: at least 48 records.*

**Autumn** A juvenile was at Loch a' Phuill Tiree on 4-14 Sep [Keith Gillon, John Bowler] and another juvenile was there on 20-27 Sep [John Bowler, Jim Dickson, Rob Still]. Two juveniles were at RSPB Loch Gruinart Islay on 20-24 Oct [James How, Steve Percival]. All records were accepted by the ABRC.

#### **SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER** *Calidris pusilla*

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

No accepted records. (See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.126).

## **RED-NECKED PHALAROPE** *Phalaropus lobatus* Deargan-allt

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

**Spring/summer** The first bird in spring was a female seen at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 22 May. This bird, or another female, was also seen there on 9 and 18 Jun.

**Breeding** At one of the same (confidential) sites as in 2010-13, the first returning bird noted was a female on 3 Jun at Site A. On 9 Jun, 2 females and a male were noted at the site where they bred in 2013 (Site B) and on 10 Jun a female was seen feeding at a further site (Site C). During Jul, a male was accompanied off a nest by a female on 7 Jul at Site B and was later seen with a brood of 3 chicks on 23 Jul. A male was seen washing and feeding between incubation bouts at site C on 15 Jul.

## **GREY PHALAROPE** *Phalaropus fulicarius* Liathag-allt

### **Irregular passage migrant particularly associated with autumn gales: rare in winter and none in Apr-May.**

**Autumn** There were three sightings in autumn. The first was at Machir Bay *Islay* on 20 Aug. The other birds were seen at sea off *Tiree*; 1 in Gunna Sound on 6 Sep, followed by 2 off Gott Bay on 18 Oct.

## **COMMON SANDPIPER** *Actitis hypoleucos* Luatharan

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

**Winter** The over-wintering bird which was present from 9 Dec 2013 remained at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* from 1 -31 Jan.

**Spring** One found at Machrihanish *Kintyre* on 24 Mar was the first reported. First records from other regions were 4 at Kiloran *Colonsay* on 1 Apr, 1 at Corrynachenchy *Mull* on 9 Apr, 1 Cladach *Islay* on 13 Apr, 1 at Loch Nell *Mid-Argyll* on 15 Apr, 2 at Rubha Mor Corrach *Cowal* on 17 Apr, 1 at Benderloch *North Argyll* on 20 Apr, 2 at Loch Eatherna *Coll* on 26 Apr and 1 at Loch Bhasapol *Tiree* on 29 Apr. Most records in spring were of 1-2 birds, but 6 were at Loch Ba *Mull* on 24 Apr, 6 at Linne a' Dhuais *Mull* on 10 May and 7 at Slochd na Feola *Mull* on 10 May.

**Breeding/summer** Breeding was confirmed at the Kilmaronag islands (Loch Etive) *Mid-Argyll*, Ban Eileanan (Sound of Mull) *Mull*, Corrachenchy *Mull* and on *Colonsay* where 27 territories were found (recovering from a low of 22 territories in 2013). Probable breeding was reported from *Cowal* at Balliemore shore, Evanachan, Otter Ferry and Otter Ferry Spit. On *Islay* it was noted at Bruichladdich, Claggain Bay and Machir Bay, while in *Mid-Argyll* it was recorded at Auchgoyle Bay, Barndormin, Brainport Bay and Cuan Point (Luing). Probable breeding was also noted at four sites on *Mull* - Benmore Lodge (Loch Ba), Derryguaig, Kellan Mill and on the Treshnish Isles, two pairs were found on Corran Lunga and one pair on Sgeirean na Guisaich. Possible breeding was noted at Kilbride (Seil), Loch Leacann and Minard Bay (all *Mid-Argyll*), Lochbuie *Mull* and Allt na Crannaich (Loch Awe station) *North Argyll* and Hynish and Milton *Tiree*.

**Autumn** During late Jun and Jul, larger post-breeding /migrating groups were noted as follows: 8 at Calgary Bay *Mull* on 20 Jun, 9 at Loch a'Chumhainn *Mull* on 28 Jun, 8 at the Holy Loch *Cowal* on 6 Jul, 8 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Jul, 9 flew south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 8 Jul, with 16 flying south there on 10 Jul and 30 south on 12 Jul. Two at Baigh Gleann nam Muc *Jura* on 10 Jul were the only records from this region all year. Amongst the later birds reported were 2 at The Strand *Colonsay* on 24 Jul, 2 at Toberonochy (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 2 Aug, 2 at Port Charlotte *Islay* on 7 Aug, 7 at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Aug, also with 3 there on 20 Aug. 2 were at Loch na Keal *Mull* 24 Aug, 1 at Ardnave *Islay* on 29

Aug, and other singles at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 11 Sep and Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 26 Sep.

**Winter** A single bird was found at Ronachan Point *Kintyre* on 28 Dec.

### **SPOTTED SANDPIPER** *Actitis macularius*

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

### **GREEN SANDPIPER** *Tringa ochropus* Luatharan-uaine

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

**Spring** There was a single record of one at Eilean Traigh (Ormsary) *Mid-Argyll* on 14 May.

**Autumn** Three singles were recorded at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 20 Jul, at Orsay *Islay* on 7 Aug and at Vaul *Tiree* on 25 Aug.

### **SPOTTED REDSHANK** *Tringa erythropus* Gearradh-breac

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

No records.

### **GREATER YELLOWLEGS** *Tringa melanoleuca*

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

No records.

### **COMMON GREENSHANK** *Tringa nebularia* Deoch-bhuidhe

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

**Winter** A total of at least 17 different wintering birds were found during Jan-Feb. One was at Linne Mhuirich *Mid-Argyll* on 1 Jan, 4 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 9 Jan, 1 at Loch Beg (Loch Scridain) *Mull* on 3 Jan, 1 Loch Feochan *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Jan, 4 at Benderloch *North Argyll* on 13 Jan, 2 at Loch Caithlim (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Jan, 1 at Loch Creran *North Argyll* on 19 Jan, 2 at Lochdon *Mull* on 5 Feb, and 2 at Loch Sween *Mid-Argyll* on 16 Feb,

**Spring** Three at Pennyghael *Mull* on 1 Mar were the first suggestions of migration. Later 2 were at Kennacraig *Kintyre* on 14 Mar, 1 was at Aros Estuary *Mull* on 20 Mar, and 1 on The Strand *Colonsay* on 28 Mar. The first reported at an inland site in *North Argyll* was found on 1 Apr. Singles were found at The Reef *Tiree* on 22 Apr, and Westport Marsh *Kintyre* on 22 Apr. 1 was heard calling as it flew over Campbeltown *Kintyre* on 28 Apr and 2 late migrants were found at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 18 May.

**Breeding/summer** A pair were seen mating at a site in *North Argyll* on 28 Apr and were subsequently seen at this site on 15 May and were agitated on 27 Jun, suggesting successful breeding. At another site in *North Argyll*, a calling bird was found on 15 May, and then an agitated pair were found on 1 Jun and on 27 Jun also indicative of successful breeding.

**Autumn/winter** Migration commenced early with 1 at Loch an Eilen *Tiree* on 16 Jun, 2 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 20 Jun, 9 at The Strand *Colonsay* on 30 Jun, and 1 over Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* on 1 Jul. Greater numbers were reported later in the month with 7 on *Tiree* on 15 Jul, 5 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Jul, 10 on *Tiree* on 21 Jul, 4 at Loch Kinnabus (The Oa) *Islay* on 24-28 Jul, 13 at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* from 29 Jul – 2 Aug, 4 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Jul, 5 at Ardencaple (Seil) on 30 Jul and 4 at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 31 Jul. Fewer

were seen in Aug, with 2 at Breachacha *Coll* on 28 Aug. Numbers increased again in Sep, when 6 were at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 10 Sep, 3 at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Sep, 5 at Breac Achadh *Mull* on 13 Sep, 6 at The Strand *Colonsay* on 13 Sep and 5 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 17 Sep. During Oct, notable records included 1 on Gigha *Kintyre* on 11 Oct, 3 at Lochdon *Mull* on 14 Oct, 4 at Craignure Bay *Mull* on 21 Oct and 6 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 21 Oct. During Nov-Dec, around 20 wintering birds were reported from *Colonsay* (1), *Cowal* (1) *Islay* (5), *Mid-Argyll* (7), and *Mull* (6).

*CORRECTION TO 2013 REPORT* The agitated pair reported on *Lunga* (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* on 24 Jun 2013, is in error. This record was of birds in breeding habitat in North *Argyll*.

### **LESSER YELLOWLEGS** *Tringa flavipes*

*A vagrant: seven records; at North Argyll in 1951, Mid-Argyll in Oct 2000, Islay in May 2003, Islay and Colonsay in Sep 2005, Islay in May 2007, Islay in Apr 2009 and Tiree in Oct 2011.*  
No records.

### **WOOD SANDPIPER** *Tringa glareola* Luatharan-coille

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

*Spring* The first noted were singles at Loch a Phuill *Tiree* on 12 May and RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on the same day. Another was found on pools by the Ringing Stone *Tiree* on 29 May and 2 were on Loch Ba (by Benmore Lodge) *Mull* on 6 Jun.

*Autumn* No records.

### **COMMON REDSHANK** *Tringa totanus* Cam-ghlas

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

*Winter/spring* 14 were at Rubha Chraiginis *Tiree* on 4 Jan and 36 at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 31 Jan, while there were 14 at Seal Cottage (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 11 Jan, 19 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 16 Feb and 15 at West Loch Tarbet *Kintyre* on the same date. As spring progressed 25 were found at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Mar, increasing to 63 there on 21 Mar and 12 at Loch a'Chumhainn *Mull* on 17 Mar and 1 was at Loch Creran *North Argyll* on 22 Mar.

*Breeding/summer* 42 pairs were noted in a survey of the wetland compartments (only) at The Reef *Tiree* and 9 pairs were found on *Colonsay* (where fledged young were noted at Ardskenish) and 19 pairs were recorded on Oronsay *Colonsay* where 5 fledged broods were found on 11 Jun. 117 pairs were noted at Gruinart *Islay*, a slight increase on 2013 (103 pairs). Fledged young were also noted at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll*. Probable breeding was reported at Otter Ferry *Cowal* and Loch Ba *Mull*, while possible breeding was recorded at Arinagour *Coll*.

*Autumn/winter* 17 flew south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 26 Jun and post-breeding flocks of 26 were found on Eilean nan Ron (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 8 Jul and of 19 at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 7 Jul. Further evidence of autumn migration were 25 moving south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 27 Jul, 7 at Ardencaple (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Aug, 70 flying south at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 12 Aug, 53 at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 20 Aug and 18 at Loch na Cille *Mid-Argyll* on 24 Aug. Later in the autumn 3 were at Lowlandman's Bay *Jura* on 6 Sep, 39 at Clachan Mor *Tiree* on 13 Sep, 59 at the Head of Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 6 Sep, 18 at The Strand *Colonsay* on 13 Sep, 9 at Lochdon *Mull* on 1 Oct, and 45 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Oct. Details of regular counts of wintering birds are given in table 34, elsewhere 26 were at West Loch Tarbet *Kintyre* on 30 Nov and 28 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Dec.

Table 34. *Maximum monthly counts of Redshanks at Loch Gruinart (Islay), Holy Loch (Cowal), and monthly maximum day-counts on Tiree in 2014.*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun		Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gruinart	71	27	91	51	34				79			178	
Holy L.	10	9	17								11	24	11
Tiree	36	21	24	96	123	103		19	30	39	44	51	20

### **JACK SNIPE** *Limnocryptes minimus* Gobhrag-bheag

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

**Winter/spring** There were six winter records of this cryptic wader, slightly fewer than 2013 (9 records). All were of single birds; at Druim Mor (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 23 Feb, Balephuill *Tiree* on 4 Mar, Traigh nan Gillean *Tiree* on 10 Mar, Fiddan *Mull* on 27 Mar, Gartbreck *Islay* on 28 Mar and Seal Cottage (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 4 April.

**Winter** There were six more records of single birds in the autumn and winter (five in 2013), which were also restricted to the islands; at Gartbreck *Islay* on 14 Oct, Kiloran Farm *Colonsay* on 22 Oct, Whitehouse *Tiree* on 22 Nov, Creag na Feannaige (The Oa) *Islay* on 2 Dec, Braibruich *Islay* on 16 Dec and Loch Indaal *Islay* on 25 Dec.

### **LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER** *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

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

No records.

### **EURASIAN WOODCOCK** *Scolopax rusticola* Coileach-coille

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

*Roding birds are under recorded and all records are welcome for this species, which is believed to have declined as a breeding species in Argyll (Bird Atlas 2001-11).*

**Winter/spring** The first record of the year was of one on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 2 Jan. Most Jan-Feb records were of 1-2 birds noted in *Cowal, Islay, Mid-Argyll, and Tiree*. That this species is an under-recorded common, but thinly spread, wader in winter in Argyll was demonstrated with details of 270 shot mainly on Portavadie Estate *Cowal* by one Italian shooting party in Jan. During March, one was found at Kilcheran Loch (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 1 Mar and 6 were at An-Innes *Islay* on 2 Mar. Two were at Ardura *Mull* on 30 Apr.

**Breeding/summer** Roding birds were reported from 26 Apr at Scalasaig *Colonsay* and also from Loch Tallant *Islay*, Torranlochchain *Mull*, Lochbuie *Mull* and *Colonsay House Colonsay*, where there were 27 registrations in 75 minutes during the national Woodcock Survey on 20 May and 17 and 16 registrations on 11 and 18 Jun respectively. The only other record during the summer was one on the Rhinns *Islay* on 28 Jul. There were no reports in Aug (as in 2013) or Sep.

**Autumn/winter** The first report in autumn was of 1 at Balephuill *Tiree* on 8 Oct, but there were no other records until late in the month when singles were found at Kilchoman *Islay* on 26 Oct, Scotmill *Kintyre* on 28 Oct. From early Nov, there were also sightings of 1-2 wintering birds in *Colonsay, Cowal, Mid-Argyll and Tiree*. The larger counts usually were of birds observed on the verges of roads at dusk and dawn e.g. 9 on the road on the East side of Loch Awe *Mid-Argyll* on

19 Nov, 6 on the Pennyghael-Bunnissan road *Mull* on 22 Nov and 3 at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 26 Nov. 3 at Gruinart *Islay* on 22 Dec were the last reported.

### **COMMON SNIPE** *Gallinago gallinago* Naosg

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

**Winter/spring** During winter most sightings were of 1-2 birds on the islands. 15 at Sorobaiddh Bay *Tiree* on 27 Jan were notable, as were 3 at Kirnan *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Jan, 4 at Gruinart *Islay* on 14-15 Feb, 19 at Bruichladdich *Islay* 19 Feb and 2 at Kiloran Bay *Colonsay* on 25 Feb. Reports increased during Mar, as they became more visible or returned to breeding areas e.g. 17 at Gruinart *Floods Islay* on 16 Mar and 7 at Fidden *Mull* on 27 Mar.

**Breeding/summer** Widespread drumming was noted on *Tiree* from 10 Mar, and 5 were displaying at Monydrain (Lochgilphead) *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Mar. Drumming was also noted at Glenegedale *Islay* on 3 Apr, at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 8 Apr, and 5 birds were drumming at Loch na Keal *Mull* on 10 Apr. Other displaying birds were noted at Octofad *Islay* on 9 May, Scalasaig *Colonsay* on 9 May, Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 19 May, and near Fingal's Cave (Staffa) *Mull* on 12 Jun. Breeding was confirmed at The Reef *Tiree*, where there were 91 displaying birds in the wetland compartments (only) on 13 May and 9 Jun. 64 displaying birds were recorded at Gruinart *Islay*. Two broods of b/l+ were found on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 1 and 8 Jul. At least 3 breeding pairs were noted on the Treshnish Isles *Mull*. Other breeding season reports (possible breeding) were received from Druim Buidhe *Coll* on 26 Apr, Loch Ba *Mull* on 20 May, Iona *Mull* on 13 Jun and Achallader *North Argyll* on 13 Jun.

**Autumn/winter** Larger groups and sightings from other regions were reported following the breeding season, including 9 at Black Mill Bay (Luining) *Mid-Argyll* on 2 Aug, 6 at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 5 Aug, 1 at Loch a'Bhalaich *Jura* on 5 Aug, 8 at Bruichladdich *Islay* on 6 Aug, and 14 at Gott Bay *Tiree* on 7 Aug. Sightings peaked in Sep-Oct, when 30 were at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 4 Sep, 4 at Loch Kinnabus *Islay* on 9 Sep and 7 at East Loch Fada *Colonsay* on 13 Sep. 72 were on *Tiree* on 16 Sep including 60 at Loch a'Phuill, 25 were at Loch Garasdale *Kintyre* on 16 Sep, 5 at Beinn Uraaidh *Islay* on 21 Sep, 7 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 25 Sep and 3 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 25 Sep, while there were 95 at Loch a'Phuill *Tiree* on 5 Oct, 7 at Loch a'Chumhainn *Mull* on 7 Oct, 70 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 21 Oct, 70 at Balephuill *Tiree* on 23 Oct and 120 at Barrapol *Tiree* on 30 Oct. Numbers declined significantly thereafter with 2 at the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on 19 Nov and 15 at Barrapol *Tiree* on 16 Dec being the more notable records. Throughout the year there were no records from *Cowal*.

### **POMARINE SKUA** *Stercorarius pomarinus* Fasgadair-donn

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

**Winter** An immature (2CY) was close in-shore off Ardrishaig (Loch Fyne) *Mid-Argyll* on 3 Jan during stormy weather.

**Spring** Single birds were seen at sea in the area off Treshnish Point *Mull* on 19 Apr and 12 and 13 May.

**Autumn** A high total of 51 were recorded between 5 Oct and 15 Nov; many were associated with large late groups of feeding Kittiwakes. On *Tiree* 6 (inc. 3 adults) flew SW past Hynish on 5 Oct. A juv. was attacking Kittiwakes off West Hynish on 6 Oct. 3 adults passed Aird on 19 Oct and 13 (inc. 2 adults) passed there on 21 Oct. An adult was seen between *Coll* and *Mull* on 19 Oct and 1 was off Caliach Point *Mull* on 21 Oct. 10 (inc. 2 adults) passed Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 24 Oct and 3 juvs. passed there on 25 Oct. 3 passed Hough Bay and Cornaig Bay *Tiree* on 28 Oct. 2 passed Frenchman's Rocks *Islay* on 31 Oct and 1 was chasing Kittiwakes off

Ardnave Point *Islay* on 3 Nov. 2 juveniles were in Gunna Sound *Tiree* and a juv. was between *Mull* and *Coll* on 11 Nov. The last report was of a juv. at Hough Bay *Tiree* on 15 Nov.

**ARCTIC SKUA** *Stercorarius parasiticus* Fasgadair

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

**Spring** First of the spring was a dark phase bird at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 17 Apr, then 2 birds at Treshnish Point *Mull* on 19 Apr. 1-3 birds were seen on various dates during May-Jul off *Colonsay, Islay, Jura, Kintyre, Mull, and Tiree*. Unusually, there were no records of more than 3 individuals on any one date in this period, and more than half the birds where the colour phase was reported were dark phase individuals, suggesting very little spring passage of birds from northern breeding areas through Argyll.

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

**Autumn** Small numbers were seen off *Mull, Islay, Kintyre, Mid-Argyll* but especially *Tiree* in Aug-Oct. Peak counts were 13 at Croig *Mull* on 17 Sep and 10 at Aird *Tiree* on 21 Oct. The last record of the autumn was of 1 at Rubha na Faing *Islay* on 31 Oct.

**LONG-TAILED SKUA** *Stercorarius longicaudus* Fasgadair-stiùireach

*A scarce and irregular passage migrant: spring and autumn records off western coasts and islands.*

**Autumn** A juvenile flew past Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 25 Oct [Eddie Maguire, Iohmar McMillan]. Record was accepted by the ABRC. (See list of rejected, records etc on p.126).

**GREAT SKUA** *Stercorarius skua* Fasgadair-mòr

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

**Winter/spring** The earliest record was a bird passing Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 18 Mar. There were 2 at Gunna Sound *Tiree* on 22 Mar. There were no more sightings until 13 Apr, when 2 were back on territory at Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree*. There were reports for most dates from then through to autumn. Apart from 1 or 2 seen passing Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre*, all reports during spring were from *Tiree, Mull, Coll, Colonsay* or *Islay*, or from ferries travelling to/from those islands, and were of groups of no more than 4 birds.

**Breeding** On Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull*, TIARG reported that at least 3 territories were occupied, with successful breeding in 2 of these. Two pairs were holding territory and displaying on *Oronsay* and at least 1 pair on *Colonsay*. At least 1 pair held territory at *Coll*, and at least 2 pairs at *Tiree*. No data were received on the current breeding status at Staffa *Mull*. A pair held territory at Sleidmeall *Islay* and were present there on various dates from 2 May to 25 Aug, although breeding was not proved. A bird was watched attacking and killing a shelduck at Ardnave *Islay* on 15 Jul, and one was seen hunting adult greylag geese at Miodar *Tiree* on 31 Jul.

**Autumn/winter** Small numbers (mostly single birds) were seen on passage in Aug to Oct from a variety of coastal sites but especially *Tiree*. The peak counts were 26 at Croig *Mull* on 17 Sep, 10 passing Aird *Tiree* on 21 Oct, and 15 passing Hough Bay *Tiree* on 28 Oct. The last records of

the year were of single birds at Hynish *Tiree* on 31 Oct and at Rubha na Faing *Islay* also on 31 Oct.

**ATLANTIC PUFFIN** *Fratercula arctica* Buthaid

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

**Winter/spring** The first 10 birds reported were all found dead! These were at Aird Luing *Mid-Argyll* on 25 Jan, Machir Bay *Islay* on 30 Jan and on 16 Feb (2 birds), *Tiree* (4 birds on 23 Feb, 1 on 6 Mar and 1 on 3 Apr). The first live puffin was seen on 10 Apr, when there were 15 birds in Gunna Sound *Tiree*. There were 24 off Black Point (Sanda Islands) *Kintyre* on 11 Apr which were assumed to be the local breeders returning. Small numbers were seen during Apr-May off known breeding sites, but 1 at Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 28 Apr was unusual.

**Breeding** On the Treshnish Isles *Mull*, the estimated breeding population was 2,618 Apparently Occupied Burrows (AOBs) on Lunga plus Sgeir a' Chaisteil. No data were available from Sanda Islands *Kintyre* where mink have reached the seabird colonies recently. 2 were on the sea off Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree* on several dates in July but breeding was not suspected.



*Atlantic Puffins*

*John Bowler*

**Autumn/winter** As usual, only seen in extremely small numbers in late summer/autumn. The last records were 1 off Aird *Tiree* on 12 Aug, 1 off Portavadie *Cowal* on 12 Sep, 3 in the Sound of Mull *Mull* on 4 Oct, and 1 off Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 24 Oct.

**BLACK GUILLEMOT** *Cepphus grylle* Gearra-breac

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

**Winter/spring** Birds were widely distributed along Argyll coasts in small numbers. Large counts included: 19 at Caol Isla (Port Askaig) *Islay* on 5 Mar, 14 at Port nan Each and 15 at Port

na h-Atha (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 10 Mar, 19 at Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* on 11 Mar, 12 at Bunnahabhainn *Islay* on 22 Mar and 40 there on 30 Apr, 21 at The Oa *Islay* on 26 Mar, 22 at Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree* on 7 Apr, 232 around the Sanda Islands *Kintyre* on 11 Apr, 35 at Creag na Feannaige (The Oa) *Islay* on 25 Apr, 38 at Lower Glenastle Loch *Islay* on 25 Apr. Because black guillemots remain in much the same area throughout the year these counts are likely to indicate the size of the local populations in these sites (though including immature as well as adult birds), possibly better than counts during the breeding season (when adults may be in burrows/cavities at nests so not detected).

**Breeding** Widely distributed along Argyll coasts where nesting habitat is available. The count of only 232 birds around Sanda Islands *Kintyre* (the population within the Clyde Sea Sill MPA) on 11 Apr is worrying as there were 349 there on 5 May 2013. There is anecdotal evidence that mink have colonised Sanda and may have killed many black guillemots there. Nevertheless, that is possibly still the largest population of this species in Argyll. At the tern rafts in Loch Creran *North Argyll* there were 8 adults on the sea on 25 May, 3 pairs nested in boxes on the rafts, and raised 5 young.

**Autumn/winter** Birds were widely distributed along Argyll coasts in small numbers. Large counts included: 30 (two-thirds being juveniles) at Dalrannoch *North Argyll* on 19 Aug, and 11 feeding in Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* on 29 Sep.

## **RAZORBILL** *Alca torda* Falc

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

**Winter/spring** As usual, few were seen in Jan. However, large numbers arrived from the very end of Jan, with 75 at Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 30 Jan, and 407 passing Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 5 Feb. Birds were widely distributed off the coasts of Argyll but mostly in small numbers in Feb and Mar. A few dead birds were found on beaches in Jan-Mar, but there were 70 dead razorbills on shores in SW *Kintyre* in the last week of Feb and first week of Mar, and at the same time small but unusual numbers of dead razorbills were noted at *Tiree*. A bird found dead at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 2 Mar had been ringed as an adult on Skomer, Wales, in 2005, while by coincidence a bird that had been ringed on Sanda Islands *Kintyre* in 1997 was found dead in Cornwall on 2 Mar. Several dead razorbills were also found on the shoreline of *Cowal* in early Mar, all freshly dead and uneaten. By 7 Apr there were about 100 birds back on breeding sites at Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree*, with widespread feeding activity around the *Tiree* coast, considerably outnumbering common guillemots in that area. On 17 Apr, 108 flew west off Aird *Tiree* in 1 hr.

**Breeding** At Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree* there were 206 birds on the cliff on 20 May with some on eggs. On 18 Jun, 279 were counted at Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree* and most were still on eggs. The same number was counted on 11 Jul, many accompanied by chicks. Many chicks had fledged by 22 Jul, when there were still 108 adults on the cliff. There were 34 AONs in the monitoring plot at Urugaig *Colonsay* in Jun.

**Autumn/winter** After post-breeding dispersal in Jul-Aug, reports were mostly of small numbers and there were very few records in Sep-Oct, most of those being from *Kintyre*, *Islay*, *Colonsay* or *Tiree*. Small numbers were present around *Tiree* in Nov-Dec. There was only one other report for Nov, of a single bird seen from the Kennacraig-*Islay* ferry on 15 Nov.

## **LITTLE AUK** *Alle alle* Colcach-bheag

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

**Winter** Four were seen near Minard (Loch Fyne) *Mid-Argyll* on 6 Feb, and 1 off Glenbarr *Kintyre* on 10 Feb. There was 1 off Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 10 Nov, 1 off *Jura* on 28 Nov, 2 off *Aird Tìree* on 5 Dec, and 4 off *Aird Tìree* on 8 Dec.

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

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

**Winter/spring** There were few reports from Jan-Feb although small numbers were regular at Otter Ferry *Cowal* from 1 Jan. Larger numbers were reported from Mar onwards. A few were found dead in late Feb/early Mar, but in much smaller numbers than razorbills. There were about 200 back on nesting ledges at Ceann a' Mhara *Tìree* on 7 Apr and birds were then also widespread around the *Tìree* coast.

**Breeding/summer** At Ceann a' Mhara *Tìree*, many eggs were washed off ledges by heavy rain on 17-18 May, but 1,127 birds were attending nest sites on 20 May. On 18 Jun there were 1,898 birds attending nest sites, with about 60% incubating, though it is unclear how many of these were on replacement eggs. The first fledged chicks were seen on 17 Jul, but on 22 Jul there were still 983 adults, with 312 large chicks. At *Colonsay*, a sample count of 547 adults found 9.87% bridled (compared to 8.2% 30 years ago). The monitoring plot at Urugaig *Colonsay* held 88 birds (mean of 5 counts through Jun). At the Treshnish Isles *Mull*, 6,434 birds were counted at Lunga and Sgeir a' Chaisteil. From a sample of 2,366 birds checked, 181 (8.7%) were bridled.

**Autumn/winter** There were no reports of high mortality of juveniles in the autumn. Only small numbers of birds were reported in Sep and in Oct in most areas, although large numbers of 'auks' (common guillemots and/or razorbills) were seen passing both Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* and *Tìree*, especially during Oct. As usual, there were very few reports in Nov and Dec, indicating that birds had generally moved offshore *Argyll* by early winter.

## **BRÜNNICH'S GUILLEMOT** *Uria lomvia*

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

No records.

## **BRIDLED TERN** *Onychoprion anaethetus*

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

No records.

## **LITTLE TERN** *Sternula albifrons* Steàrnag-bheag

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

**Spring** Records came mainly from *Islay* or *Tìree*, the first being 2 on 15 Apr at Gott Bay *Tìree*. Peak counts were 14 at Traigh Bhaigh *Tìree* on 8 May and 12 at Ardnave *Islay* on 12 May.

**Breeding** On *Tìree*, there were about 50 pairs in total, spread across several sites. Breeding success was moderate, with mean productivity slightly below one chick per pair. No birds were recorded at the traditional breeding sites on *Coll*. Up to 9 adults were seen in the Sound of Gigha

*Kintyre*, up to 12 birds on *Islay*, and up to 6 birds on *Oronsay Colonsay*, but there are no data on breeding activity, other than that 4 pairs bred at one site on *Islay*.

**Autumn** Many birds had already left breeding areas during Jul. The last autumn record was of 3 juveniles in *Gott Bay Tiree* on 11 Aug.

**GULL-BILLED TERN** *Gelochelidon nilotica*

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

No records.

**CASPIAN TERN** *Hydroprogne caspia*

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

No records.

**WHISKERED TERN** *Chlidonias hybrida*

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

No records.

**BLACK TERN** *Chlidonias niger* *Steàrnag-dhubh*

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

No records.

**WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN** *Chlidonias leucopterus*

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

No records.

**SANDWICH TERN** *Sterna sandvicensis* *Sàrnag-mhòr*

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

**Winter/spring** The first record of spring was on 3 Apr, when 5 were seen at Port Ellen *Islay* and on the same date 2 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre*. Records were frequent but involving small numbers (mostly 1, 2 or 3 birds) throughout the rest of Apr, from most coastal areas of Argyll but especially *Islay* and *Kintyre*. The largest count in Apr was of 22 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre*, while in May the highest count was of 13 at Tayinloan *Kintyre*.

**Breeding/summer** In Jun and Jul, there were plenty of records from most parts of coastal Argyll with numbers in groups generally small, but ranging up to 44 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 8 Jun and 40 there on 6 Jul. Despite no evidence of breeding occurring in Argyll, courtship feeding was seen at *Tiree* on 7 Jul where higher numbers than usual were present in Jul. A few juveniles were seen from 20 Jul onwards, presumably from the nearest colony (probably in Northern Ireland). A small number of first summer birds were also reported.

**Autumn/winter** Most autumn records were during Aug and from *Islay* or *Kintyre*. Most were of single birds, the largest group being 6. The species was noted as ‘rather scarce’ at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre*. The latest was a single seen from the Kennacraig to *Islay* ferry on 1 Nov.

**FORSTER’S TERN** *Sterna forsteri*

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

No records.

## **COMMON TERN** *Sterna hirundo* Steàrnag-chumanta

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

**Spring** The first of the season was seen at Port Kilcheran (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 1 May. The species was seen regularly from then onwards, in many coastal areas of Argyll. Most spring records were of small numbers, with flocks of more than 6 birds being unusual. However, there were 20 at Tobermory *Mull* on 12 May, and 30 at Appin *North Argyll* on 16 May.

**Breeding/summer** In the study area monitored by Clive Craik a total of 14 sites held at least 681 pairs. Many sites were affected by mink whereas productivity was high in some sites where mink were controlled. Purpose-made mink-proof tern rafts in Loch Creran *North Argyll* managed by Clive Craik held 245 pairs that fledged about 130 young. Glas Eileanan (Sound of Mull) *Mull* held 98 pairs and hatched at least 50 chicks, but heavy predation (apparently by otters) resulted in none fledging. At least 2 pairs nested on Big Scone Island (Machrihanish) *Kintyre*.

**Autumn** Birds were reported in small numbers from many coastal areas in Aug (apparently fewer than in most recent years). Highest counts were: 34 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Aug and 70 at Lady's Rock *Mull* on 19 Aug. Most birds had gone from Argyll waters by the end of Aug. Last records were: 9 in Gott Bay *Tiree* on 1-3 Sep and 1 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 4 Sep.

## **ROSEATE TERN** *Sterna dougallii* Steàrnag-stiùireach

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

No records.

## **ARCTIC TERN** *Sterna paradisaea* Steàrnag

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

**Spring** The first birds reported were at Gartbreck *Islay* and Bowmore *Islay* on 13 Apr but reports came from several locations from 17 Apr onwards. Spring records came mostly from *Islay* and *Tiree*. There were 85 at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 1 May, 40 at Treshnish Point *Mull* on 6 May, 38 at Gartbreck *Islay* on 19 May and 38 at Bowmore *Islay* on 20 May.

**Breeding** There were 225 pairs nesting at 15 sites across *Tiree* by mid-Jun (with most still on eggs at the end of Jun) and these fledged around 0.4 young per nest. TIARG reported that about 230 pairs bred on the Treshnish Isles *Mull*, with almost all of these on Sgeir an Eirionnaich. Five pairs nested at Big Scone Island (Machrihanish) *Kintyre* in Jun. Clive Craik monitored 8 colonies which held a total of about 70 pairs.

**Autumn** Birds were widely distributed in more marine areas of Argyll in Aug but mostly in very small numbers (the highest count was only 23 birds at Milton *Tiree* on 1 Aug). There were only a few records during Sep, and the last record was of 4 birds off Hynish *Tiree* on 5 Oct.

## **IVORY GULL** *Pagophila eburnea*

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

No records.

### **SABINE'S GULL** *Xema sabini*

**A scarce and irregular passage migrant mainly in autumn.**

**Winter** An adult was at Inner Loch Scridain/Loch Beg *Mull* on 6 Feb [Bryan Rains].

**Autumn** A juvenile was at Gunna Sound, off *Tiree* on 11 Nov [John Bowler]. Records were accepted by the ABRC. (See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.126).

### **BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE** *Rissa tridactyla* Ruideag

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

**Winter/spring** Numbers were generally very low in Jan-Feb, but 120 passed Ardrishaig *Mid-Argyll* in 10 mins on 3 Jan, 90 passed Hynish *Tiree* in 1 hr on 6 Jan, and 470 passed Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* in 5 hrs on 9 Feb, indicating return movements from wintering areas towards breeding colonies. There were 230 at Eilean Glas (Loch Crinan) *Mid-Argyll* on 4 Apr.

**Breeding** Some 100 birds were back on ledges at Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree* on 7 Apr, when increasing numbers were also noted offshore. Birds were on nest sites at Kilchiaran *Islay* on 14 Apr. At Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree*, there were just 96 AONs on 20 May, with no eggs yet and many birds still nest-building. Numbers of AONs increased to 167 on 19 Jun. On 11 Jul there were estimated to be 202 pairs with 95 AONs and 116 medium to large chicks. Most of these fledged in the last week of Jul. At Uragaig *Colonsay* there were 17 AONs on the monitoring plot on 9 Jun. An estimated 75 pairs bred at Cnoc Carrach (The Oa) *Islay*. TIARG reported that at the Treshnish Isles *Mull* there were 507 AONs on Lunga, which is a 228% increase from numbers there in 2013. In addition there were up to 105 birds roosting on intertidal rocks, and on 29 Jun over 200 birds were foraging close to the islands.

**Autumn/winter** There were 500 passing Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* in 9 hrs on 17 Aug, 100 (mostly juveniles) off Glengorm *Mull* on 19 Aug, 460 flying past Easdale *Mid-Argyll* in 30 mins on 29 Aug, 800 (58% of which were juveniles) flying south past Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* in 5 hrs on 30 Aug and 800 (many being juveniles) off *Jura* on 30 Aug. After something of a drop in numbers in Sep, there were some large movements and flocks in Oct. There were 360 at Traigh Bhi *Tiree* on 3 Oct and 600 there on 4 Oct, 600 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 11 Oct, 2,000 there on 18 Oct, 727 at Aird *Tiree* on 19 Oct and 825 there on 22 Oct, 670 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 24 Oct, 1,100 passing there on 25 Oct (in 5 hrs), and 760 there in 3 hrs on 2 Nov. There were 1,400 feeding in Hough Bay *Tiree* on 15 Nov, and a flock of 900 far off Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 15 Nov. These are larger numbers in early winter than have been seen in most recent years, suggesting good feeding conditions through the early winter. Numbers were slightly smaller in Dec, but 240 passed Aird *Tiree* in 1 hr on 12 Dec; a large number for this time of year.

### **BONAPARTE'S GULL** *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*

**A vagrant: five records; Islay in Jun and Sep 1975, Tiree in Apr 2010, the Add Estuary, Mid-Argyll in Aug 2012 and Traigh nan Gilean and Loch a' Phuill, Tiree in Jun 2013.**

**Winter** A first-winter bird (2CY) was at the head of Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Jan [Jim Dickson], an adult was at Eilean Traighe (Ormsary) *Mid-Argyll* on 2-19 Mar [Davie Abraham, Keith Hoey, Jim Dickson et al] and this or another adult was at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 1 and 31 Dec [Jim Dickson, David Jardine, Stuart Crutchfield]. All records were accepted by the BBRC.

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

**Winter/spring** Although normally scarce in most of Argyll during winter, there were 130 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Jan, 100 feeding on earthworms at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 14 Jan, 55 in the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on 22 Jan, 45 at Mid Ardyne *Cowal* on 5 Feb and 50 at Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* on 16 Feb. In contrast, numbers on Argyll islands such as *Islay* and *Tiree* were generally small in Jan-Feb. There were 215 at Ormsary *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Mar, 240 at Airds Bay House *Mid-Argyll* on 15 Mar, 96 at *Tiree* on 17 Mar and 118 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 17 Apr (mostly 2CY birds).

**Breeding** On *Tiree*, there were slightly fewer breeding than in 2013 with about 150-180 pairs present in May. Productivity was high on *Tiree* with large numbers of fledged young by mid to late-Jun, and birds left colonies mostly during late Jul. At Duncuan island (Loch Gilp) *Mid-Argyll* 21 pairs fledged at least 12-17 young.

**Autumn/winter** The first juvenile heading south past Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* was seen on 1 Jul. The species was widely distributed in autumn and winter, though mostly in small numbers. However, there were 130 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Jul, 150 at Loch na Keal *Mull* on 13 Aug, 235 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Sep, 100 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Sep, 550 there on 7 Dec, 1,600 there on 26 Dec and 2,100 on 31 Dec.

**LITTLE GULL** *Hydrocoloeus minutus* Crann-fhaoileag

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

**Winter** An adult was at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 5 and 6 Jan. 2 were at the Sound of Gigha, *Kintyre* on 22 Jan and increased to 4 (an adult with 3 first-winters) at Rhunahaorine Point *Kintyre* on 25 Jan.

**Spring/summer** A first-summer (2CY) was with Kittiwakes off NE *Colonsay* on 18 May. A 2CY bird was seen hawking with terns at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 7 Jun, and a 3CY was there on 27 Jul.

**Autumn** A 2CY was with Common Terns at Lady's Rock (off SW Lismore) *Mull* on 19 Aug. 3 juveniles passed Aird *Tiree* on 6 Sep. One was off Bowmore *Islay* on 12 Oct. A first-winter (1CY) passed Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 24 Oct with another there on 25 Oct. A long staying adult was seen frequently at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* between 27 Oct and 31 Dec and was joined by a 1CY bird on 29 Nov and also seen with 2 other adults on 16 Dec. Three 1CY birds were foraging offshore at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 2 Nov.

**ROSS'S GULL** *Rhodostethia rosea*

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

No records.

**LAUGHING GULL** *Larus atricilla*

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

No records.

**MEDITERRANEAN GULL** *Larus melanocephalus*

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

**Winter** An adult was at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 16 Feb and this or another was at Inverneil burn *Mid-Argyll* on 2 Mar.

**Autumn/winter** On *Tiree* a first-summer (2CY) bird was at Crossapol on 27 Jul and had moved to Loch a' Phuill on 30 Jul and was last seen at Heylipol on 10 Aug. A juvenile was at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Jul and presumably the same individual was nearby at Loch Crinan between 12-30 Aug and 2 first-winters (1CY) were at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Aug. 2 juveniles were at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Aug. A 2CY bird was at Eilean Traighe (Ormsary) *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Aug and a juv./first-winter was there on 2-3 Sep. A juv./first-winter was at Grogport *Kintyre* on 27 Aug. An adult flew past Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 10 Sep. An adult was at Craignure *Mull* on 9 Oct and a 1CY was at Loch a' Phuill and moved to Traigh Bhi *Tiree* on 10 Oct. A marked increase in numbers occurred at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* from mid-Nov until the end of the year with a min. of 8 birds involved. 3 adults were there on 11 Nov increasing to 4 on 13 Nov and 5 (4 adults and a 2CY) on 21 Nov. Two 2CY birds were there on 1 Dec with 3 adults and a 1CY bird on 4 Dec with 2 1CY birds there on 9 Dec. Single adults were seen at Inverneil *Mid-Argyll* in Nov and an adult was at Ormsary *Mid-Argyll* on 30 Nov.

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

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

**Winter/spring** Widely distributed in winter across Argyll but mostly in small numbers. Large counts were: 220 at The Reef *Tiree* on 6 Jan, 120 at Heylipol *Tiree* on 7 Jan and 200 there on 13 Jan, 200 at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 15 Jan, 210 at Sorobaidh Bay *Tiree* on 16 Jan, 350 at Heylipol *Tiree* on 20 Jan, 321 at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 20 Jan, 238 at Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on 22 Jan, 230 at Heylipol *Tiree* on 26 Jan, 240 at Traigh Bhaigh *Tiree* on 28 Jan, 410 at *Tiree* on 29 Jan, 300 at Barsloisnoch *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Feb and 720 there on 15 Feb, 280 at *Tiree* on 18 Feb, and 280 there on 4 Mar. There were smaller flock sizes in Apr (when many birds were already back in colonies), the highest counts that month being 170 at Glenan Bay *Cowal* on 15 Apr, 170 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Apr, and 186 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 23 Apr.

**Breeding** Widely distributed, mostly in small numbers. On *Tiree*, there were: 80 pairs at Loch a' Phuill, 77 pairs at The Reef, 80 pairs at Crossapol, 16 pairs at Balevullin Pools, 5 pairs at Milton, 18 pairs at Balnoe, 18 pairs at Greenhill, 3 pairs at Loch Bhasapol, 4 pairs at Happy Valley, 10 pairs at Hough dunes, 7 pairs at Loch Aulaig, 18 pairs at Heylipol Church pool, 36 pairs at Druimbuidhe, 4 pairs at Ruaig Slaibh. Productivity on *Tiree* was good, with large numbers of fledglings from 20 Jun. Counts at other breeding sites include: 212 pairs fledged 165 young (where mink were controlled) at Kilmarnag Islands (Loch Etive) *Mid-Argyll*, 10 pairs at Eilean Mor (McCormaig Islands) *Mid-Argyll*, 7 pairs at Traigh nam Barc *Colonsay*, 7 pairs at Boghanachan an Obain *Colonsay*, and 5 pairs at Eilean Treadhrach (Oronsay) *Colonsay*. In the study area monitored by Clive Craik a total of 27 sites held 439 pairs. At 13 of these productivity was monitored and 360 pairs produced 229 fledglings (0.64 chicks per pair). Many sites were affected by mink whereas productivity was high in some sites where mink were controlled. The first dispersing juvenile passed Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 13 Jul, which fits with the observed timing of breeding at *Tiree*.

**Autumn/winter** Widely distributed, but often in small numbers. Large counts included: 550 at *Tiree* on 7 Aug and 150 there on 20 Aug, 150 at Kilmory Industrial Estate *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Sep, 198 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Nov, 190 at Hough Bay *Tiree* on 17 Nov, 125 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Dec, and 110 at Loch an Eilein *Tiree* on 29 Dec.

## **RING-BILLED GULL** *Larus delawarensis*

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

**Spring** First-winter (2CY) birds were at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 16 Apr [John Bowler] and at Ardrishaig (Loch Gilp) *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Apr [Jim Dickson, Chris Griffin]. Both records were accepted by the ABRC.

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

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

**Winter/spring** The first record was of 1 at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 18 Feb. Numbers increased in late Feb, with several people reporting their first sighting of the year towards the end of that month or in early Mar, later than usual. There were 50 at Milton *Tiree* on 17 Mar, 64 at Knockdon *Islay* on 14 Apr, and 45 at Loch Bhirceapol *Tiree* on 25 Apr.

**Breeding** On *Tiree*, there were: 62 pairs at Loch Bhirceapol, 45 pairs at Milton, 15 at Ceann a' Mhara, 9 at The Ringing Stone, 5 at Hough dunes, 5 at Ballevullin, 3 at Rubha Chraiginis, 2 at Ruaig Slaibh. Numbers at *Tiree* dropped from late Jul, with very few remaining after mid-Aug. In the study area monitored by Clive Craik, 5 colonies were visited, with 8 pairs at Abbot Isles (Loch Etive) *Mid-Argyll*, 5 pairs at Kilmaronag Islands (Loch Etive) *Mid-Argyll*, 2 pairs at Eilean Mor (Dunstaffnage) *Mid-Argyll*, 1 pair at Eilean Glas (Lismore) *North Argyll*, and 1 pair at Eilean Dubh (Lynn of Lorn) *North Argyll*.

**Autumn/winter** No particularly large numbers were reported in autumn, but there were 20 passing Hynish *Tiree* in one hr on 5 Aug, 14 at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Aug, 15 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Aug, 12 at Blairmore Farm (Loch Long) *Cowal* on 18 Aug and 25 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 10 Nov. Numbers declined during winter, with only 2 birds reported during Dec, 1 at Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 8 Dec and 1 at Dunoon *Cowal* on 18 Dec.

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

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

**Winter/spring** Widespread across Argyll, especially on sheltered coasts, at harbours, and on pasture land near the coast. There were: 710 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 3 Jan and 450 there on 1 Feb, 410 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Jan and 220 there on 11 Mar, 250 at Heylipol *Tiree* on 20 Jan, 216 in the Sound of Gigha *Kintyre* on 22 Jan and 192 there on 18 Mar, 370 at Barsloisnoch *Mid-Argyll* on 15 Feb, 200 at Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* on 16 Feb and 270 there on 11 Mar.

**Breeding** At The Oa *Islay* it was noted that some birds were attending nest sites as early as 19 Feb. On the Treshnish Isles *Mull*, breeding was confirmed on Lunga (6 pairs), Sgeir an Eirionnaich (1 pair), Sgeirean na Guisaich (1 pair). The average rate of change on Lunga between 1994 and 2014, is calculated at -12% per annum (TIARG). On *Tiree*, numbers of breeding pairs were: 30 at Milton, 10 at Loch Bhirceapol, >25 at The Ringing Stone, 22 at Rubha Chraiginis, 6 at Hough dunes, 5 at Balevullin, 12 at Ceann a' Mhara, and 2 at Balinoe. Good numbers of fledglings were about by mid Jul at the colonies on *Tiree*. There were about 80 pairs with about 60 fledglings at Eilean Mor (McCormaig Islands) *Mid-Argyll*. In the study area monitored by Clive Craik 18 sites held about 1,250 pairs. Productivity was high in some sites where mink were controlled, with an average of 1 chick per pair at 14 sites.

**Autumn/winter** Widespread, with highest counts: 160 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Aug and 150 there on 8 Nov, 129 at Holy Loch *Cowal* on 8 Sep and 201 there on 15 Dec, 162 at Oronsay airstrip (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 9 Dec. There were generally lower numbers reported than in most recent winters.

### **YELLOW-LEGGED GULL** *Larus michahellis*

**AMBER LIST A** *vagrant: one record; a bird at Loch Gruinart, Islay on 1-7 Sep 2002 (in this case the race/sub-species 'atlantis' was not ruled out).*

**Winter** An adult was at Drumlemble *Kintyre* on 21-22 Feb [Jim Dickson, Eddie Maguire et al]. Record was accepted by the SBRC. (See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.126).

### **AMERICAN HERRING GULL** *Larus smithsonianus*

**A** *vagrant: one previous record; a first winter bird seen on Tiree in 2007 (two records on Tiree from 2007 still under consideration by the BBRC).*

**Winter** A first-winter (2CY) was at Kilmichael farm and Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* from 6 Feb until 27 Mar [Dan Brown, Jim Dickson, Eddie Maguire et al].

*This occurrence proved to be very popular, attracted well over 300 birders to see it and was only the second mainland record for Scotland.*

### **ICELAND GULL** *Larus glaucooides glaucooides* Faoileag-liath

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

**Winter/spring** There were more records than last year and slightly above average numbers with around 25 individuals reported. *Cowal*: an 'un-aged' was near Arrochar on 28 May. *Islay*: single first-winter (2CY) birds were at Uiskentuie and Portnahaven in Jan; an adult was at Bruichladdich on 27 Jan and 'un-aged' was at Bowmore in Feb and 2 Mar, an adult was at Kilichiaran on 10 Feb, an adult was at the Airport/Duich area on 17 and 22 Feb, a 2CY was at Ballygrant on 1 Mar, a 2CY was at Ardnave and Loch Gruinart in Mar and a 2CY was at The Oa on 8 May. *Kintyre*: several records in the Laggan area (nr. Campbeltown) from 18 Feb until 24 Mar with 2 2CY birds, 2 3CY birds and an adult. Outwith the Laggan area, nearby there was a 2CY at Westport Marsh on 6 Apr, a 2CY was at Machrihanish SBO on 24 Apr and a 2CY was at Bellochantuy on 24 Apr. *Mid-Argyll*: a 3CY was at Loch Gilp on 19-20 Apr and an 'un-aged' at Loch Scammadale on 25 Apr. *Mull*: An 'un-aged' was at Loch na Keal on 14 Jan, a 3CY was at Killiechronan in Feb, an adult was at Eorobus on 9 Mar, an 'un-aged' was at Laggan Bay on 22 Mar, 2 2CY birds were at Loch Ba/ head of Loch na Keal on 28 Mar to 1 Apr, a 2CY was at Lochdon on 7 Apr, a 2CY was at Loch na Keal on 10 Apr, an adult was at Loch na Keal on 27 Apr and an 'un-aged' was at Craignure on 10 May. *Tiree*: a 2CY was at Loch an Eilein on 26 Mar.

**Winter** Only one report: a juvenile was at Eorsa, Loch na Keal *Mull* on 15 Dec.

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

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

**Winter/spring** A juv./first-winter (2CY) was at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 26-27 Jan and was subsequently seen between there and various locations across the Laggan from 18 Feb until 18 Mar. A third-winter (4CY) was found at East Backs (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 18 Feb and was seen frequently until 18 Mar. These are the first records of this race for *Kintyre*. A 2CY was at

Kames *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Feb. A 2CY was at Traigh nan Gilean and flew to Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 10 Mar.

**Winter** A juvenile (1CY) was at Eilean Traighe (Ormsary) *Mid-Argyll* from 28 Dec into 2015. After the remarkable numbers in Argyll during 2011-12 this is another good run of reports. There were at least 20 **Kumlien's** recorded in the UK / Ireland during 22-28 Jan 2014.

### **GLAUCOUS GULL** *Larus hyperboreus* Muir-mhaighstir

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

**Winter/spring** A better than average number of reports with around 35+ individuals (probably some overlap) of which up to 13+ birds were on *Tiree*. On *Colonsay*: an adult was at Port Mor on 6 Feb. *Kintyre*: an adult was at Port a' Bhorrain (nr. Glenbarr) on 7-10 Feb, an 'un-aged' was at Doirinn (Campbeltown Loch) on 10 Feb and a first-winter (2CY) was at Drumlemble on 27 Mar. *Mid-Argyll*: A 2CY was at Lingerton Landfill (Loch Gilp) on 6 Jan with an adult there on 7-8 Jan and 2 2CY birds there on 6 Feb, a 2CY was at Inveraray on 3 Feb and a 2CY was at Kames (Loch Melfort) on 13 Feb. *Mull*: An 'un-aged' was at Laggan Bay on 22 Mar, a 2CY was at Loch na Keal on 4 Apr and a 2CY was at Ulva Island on 11 Apr. *Islay*: a 3CY was at Uiskentuie on 2 Jan, an 'un-aged' was at Loch Gruinart on 3 Jan, a 2CY was at Bruichladdich on 4 to 26 Jan, an 'un-aged' was at Bowmore on 7 Feb, 2 adults and a 2CY were at Laggan Point on 24 Feb, a 2CY was at Loch Gruinart on 17 Mar and a 2CY was at The Oa on 29 Apr to 23 May. *Tiree*: a 2CY was at Milton on 13 Feb, an adult was at The Reef on 18 Feb, upto 8 or more 2CY birds and 5 or more adults were on the island in Feb with 5 adults and 6 2CY birds between Sandaig and Hough Bay on 21 Feb. Upto 2 adults and 6 2CY birds were on the island in Mar and the last 2CY bird was seen there on 23 Apr.

**Autumn/winter** Nine singles were recorded: an early report of an 'un-aged' bird from Loch Gorm *Islay* on 5 Oct and another report of an 'un-aged' bird from this area on 19 Dec. On *Tiree* a juvenile (1CY) was at The Reef on 26 Nov, a 1CY bird was at Hynish on 7 Dec, a 1CY bird was at Traigh Bhaigh on 17 Dec and a 1CY bird was at Baugh on 26 Dec. An 'un-aged' bird was at Oronsay Farm *Colonsay* on 13 Dec. An adult was at Loch na Cille *Mid-Argyll* on 26 Dec and a 1CY bird was at Fidden *Mull* on 30 Dec.

### **GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL** *Larus marinus* Farspag

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

**Winter/spring** Records were mostly of small numbers, from all coastal areas of Argyll but particularly on *Tiree*. Largest groups were: 35 at Druim Mor (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 3 Jan, 25 at Rubha Chraiginis *Tiree* on 4 Jan, 35 at Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Jan, 61 at Kames Bay (Loch Melfort) *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Jan and 28 there on 1 Mar, 50 at Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* on 16 Feb, 25 there on 11 Mar and 25 at Ardalum House (Ulva) *Mull* on 3 Mar.

**Breeding** On the Treshnish Isles *Mull*, breeding was confirmed on Sgeir an Eirionnaich (21 pairs), Lunga (8 pairs), Sgeir a' Chaisteil (1 pair), Sgeirean na Guisaich (4 pairs). On *Tiree*, there were 9 pairs at Loch Bhirceapol, 2 at Hough dunes, 3 at Rubha Chraiginis but the main colonies elsewhere were not checked. There were 5 pairs at Sleidmeall *Islay* and 6 pairs at The Oa *Islay*. In the study area monitored by Clive Craik 14 sites that were visited held at least 38 pairs. At 10 sites where productivity was measured, 34 pairs fledged 39 chicks (c.1.1 chicks per pair).

**Autumn/winter** Widely distributed on coasts of Argyll in small numbers. Larger groups included: 21 at Holy Loch *Cowal* on 8 Sep, 20 at Druim Mor (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 27 Sep, 25 there on 19 Oct, 39 on 20 Oct, 41 on 28 Oct and 47 on 14 Nov, 34 on *Tiree* on 10 Oct and 30 at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 22 Nov, 23 at Eilean nan Ron (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 17 Oct and 31

there on 17 Nov, 21 at Oronsay airstrip (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 17 Oct and 31 there on 24 Oct, and 21 at Bowmore *Islay* on 7 Nov.

**ROCK DOVE** *Columba livia* Calman-creige

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

**Winter/spring** The highest counts from the islands were: 200 at Craighens (Gruinart) *Islay* on 1 Jan, 42 on *Colonsay* on 4 Jan, 67 at Salum *Tiree* on 18 Feb, 70 at Kilchoman *Islay* on 6 Mar, and 28 at Kiloran Dunes *Colonsay* on 28 Apr. The highest counts from the mainland were: 20 at Tayinloan Jetty *Kintyre* on 2 Jan and 35 around Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* on 11 Mar.

**Breeding/summer** Birds were reported to be present during the breeding season in all areas except *Jura*, *North Argyll*, and *Tiree*, with breeding confirmed at Caol Isla (Port Askaig) *Islay*. A flock of 30 was at Balvicar *Mid-Argyll* on 2 Aug, 200 were at Oronsay Farm *Colonsay* on 26 Aug, and 45 were at Crossapol *Tiree* on 29 Aug.

**Autumn/winter** The largest count reported was 300 at Sunderland Farm *Islay* on 2 Nov. Other large counts were: 72 at Calgary *Mull* on 21 Sep, 95 at Middleton *Tiree* on 22 Sep, 164 on *Colonsay* on 22 Sep, and 120 at The Oa *Islay* on 10 Nov.



**Rock Dove**

*Jim Dickson*

**FERAL PIGEON** On the mainland, 65 birds were at Inveraray *Mid-Argyll* on 21 Feb and single birds were at West Tarbert *Kintyre* during the summer months. 15 were at Oban *Mid-Argyll* on 6 Apr, 4 were at Craignure *Mull* on 13 Apr and three reports were received from *Colonsay*: 6 birds were at Glassard on 28 Apr, 1 was with Rock Doves at Kiloran Dunes on the same day, and 1 was at Oronsay Farm on 15 Sep.

**STOCK DOVE** *Columba oenas* Calman-gorm

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

**Winter/spring** Birds were reported from near Largiebaan *Kintyre* on 8 Apr, near Garmony *Mull* on 28 Apr and 4 May, and at Loch a' Chumhainn *Mull* on 27 May.

**COMMON WOOD PIGEON** *Columba palumbus* Calman-fiadhaich

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

**Winter/spring** Higher counts were: 28 at Dunamuck *Mid-Argyll* on 26 Jan, 36 at Killiechronan *Mull* on 27 Feb, 100 at Loch Skerrols *Islay* on 5 Mar, and 100 at Ardyne Farm *Cowal* on 12 Mar. On *Tiree* up to 3 birds were seen at Balephuill, Carnan Mor and Mannal during Apr and May.

**Breeding/summer** No reports of breeding were received although birds were present in all areas, including at least one pair at The Lodge *Coll*. On *Tiree* 4 birds were at Carnan Mor on 7 Jun and 2 were at Balephuill on 20 Jun, one of which was singing but breeding did not take place. A flock of 50 birds were feeding on Blaeberry at Cnoc na Gabhar (Carradale) *Kintyre* on 16 Jul.

**Autumn/winter** No large flocks were reported, the highest counts being 30 at Loch Seil *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Nov and 30 at Gairletter Point *Cowal* on 8 Dec.

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

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

**Winter/spring** Higher counts were: 19 at Tayinloan Jetty *Kintyre* on 2 Jan, 10 at Bridgend *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Feb, 10 at Toberonochy (Luining) *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Mar, 12 at Arinagour *Coll* on 27 Apr, and up to 10 at various sites on *Tiree* during May. Smaller numbers were reported from all areas except *Cowal* and *Jura*.

**Breeding/summer** No breeding records were received although a pair was noted at Arduaine Gardens *Mid-Argyll* on 10 May. Up to 15 were seen regularly on *Tiree* during Jul and Aug.

**Autumn/winter** Birds were reported from *Coll*, *Islay*, *Kintyre*, *Mull*, and *Tiree*. There were 20 between The Oa and Port Ellen *Islay* on 24 Sep, 18 at Mannal *Tiree* on 28 Sep and 18 on Gigha *Kintyre* on 11 Oct.

**EUROPEAN TURTLE DOVE** *Streptopelia turtur* Calman-tùchan

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

**Spring** Single birds were seen feeding with Collared Doves at Kenovay *Tiree* on 17 May and at Balinoe *Tiree* on 30 May.

**Breeding/summer** A single bird was at Strath Farm (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 4 Jun.

**Autumn** Single birds were at Arinagour *Coll* on 24 Sep, and at Oronsay Colonsay on 29 Sep.

**COMMON CUCKOO** *Cuculus canorus* Cuthag

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

Birds were reported from all Argyll recording areas.

**Spring** First arrival was on *Mull* with reports from Torosay and Croggan (Loch Spelve) on 15 Apr followed by Maolachy (Loch Avich) and Gallanach (Minard) both *Mid-Argyll* on 16 Apr. Widespread arrival soon followed with birds reported from: *Islay* on 18 Apr, *Colonsay* and *Kintyre* on 19 Apr, *Cowal* on 20 Apr, and *North Argyll* and *Tiree* on 21 Apr.

**Breeding/summer** 18 singing male territories were noted on *Colonsay*. 4 birds were at Port Askaig *Islay* on 19 May, 4 were at Achadunan *Mid-Argyll* on 24 May, 4 were at Grasspoint *Mull* on 30 May, and 4 were at Jura House *Jura* on 12 Jun. Juvs. were first reported from *Colonsay* on 1 Jul, followed by: *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Jul, *Islay* and *Kintyre* on 16 Jul, and *Tiree* on 9 Aug. The final report of the year was of a single bird at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Sep.

**BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO** *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*

*A vagrant: one record; a first-winter bird found dead near Southend, Kintyre on 8 Nov 1950.*  
No records.

**YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO** *Coccyzus americanus*

*A vagrant: two records; one found dead on Colonsay on 6 Nov 1904 and one found dying at Barcaldine, North Argyll in late Sep 1969.*  
No records.

**BARN OWL** *Tyto alba* Comhachag

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

Two-thirds of the year's records came from *Islay*, with the remainder from: *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull*, *North Argyll*, and *Tiree*. Most records were of single birds although 4 were reported from RSPB Gruinart *Islay* on 21 Jul and 2 were reported several times on *Islay* in autumn/winter. Single birds were reported several times from the Lochgilphead/Moine Mhor/Kilmichael area of *Mid-Argyll*. A single bird was seen hunting at Kirkapol *Tiree* on 16 Nov.

Barn Owls had a very successful breeding season and can be seen from the table below.

Table 35. Outcome of monitored Barn Owl territories in Argyll in 2014. (ARSG per Roger Broad).

Area	Sites occupied	Sites where eggs laid	Sites successful *	Sites failed	Outcome unknown	Min no. large young/fledged	Young per successful site
Islay	2	2	1	0	1	2+	2.0+
North Argyll	1	1	1	0	0	3	3.0
Kintyre/Knapdale	35**	33	29	3	1	126+	4.34+
Cowal	14	14	14	0	0	49	3.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>180+</b>	<b>4.71***</b>

\* Fledged young or large young in nest on last visit

\*\* Sites occupied by 34 pairs (includes 3 repeat nesting attempts) and 1 single

\*\*\* Calculated for 14 nesting attempts (Kintyre 13, North Argyll 1) where fledged brood size accurately known.

## EURASIAN SCOPS OWL *Otus scops*

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

No records.

## SNOWY OWL *Bubo scandiacus*

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

No records.

## TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco* Comhachag-dhonn

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

Birds were reported from all areas except: *Coll*, *Colonsay*, *North Argyll*, and *Tiree*; all records were of 1 or 2 birds. This is a still a much under-recorded species and all records are welcome.

**Breeding** Six territories were located on the Moine Mhor *Mid-Argyll* in Feb. A pair nesting in a camera nest box at Otter Ferry *Cowal* had a clutch of 3 eggs on 8 Apr; chicks were seen in the garden on 3 May. Sixteen other sites are known to have been successful, raising 33 large young.

## LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus* Comhachag-adharcaiche

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

**Breeding** Two pairs on *Colonsay* raised a total of 7 young. Two fledged young were seen at Maymore *Cowal* on 18 Jun.

**Summer/autumn** Single birds were at Fishnish *Mull* on 29 Aug and at Balephuill *Tiree* on 14 Sep.

## SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus* Comhachag-chluasach

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

Birds were present during the year in all areas except: *Coll* and *Colonsay* with most records referring to one or two birds.

**Winter/spring** Several reports of singles, however there were: 3 at Loch na Keal *Mull* on 10 Apr, 3 at Capul Choiche (Glendaruel) *Cowal* on 16 Jun, and 2 at Lowlandman's Bay *Jura* on 17 Jun.

**Breeding** Breeding success appears to have been poor. In *Cowal*, 2 pairs fledged at least 3 chicks, in *Kintyre* a pair bred at Cnoc Eoghainn, and on *Mull* a pair is believed to have bred in the north of the island.

## EUROPEAN NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus europaeus* Sgraicheag-oidhche

**AMBER LIST A rare and irregular summer visitor and passage migrant: has bred in the past in Kintyre and Cowal. Only one accepted record since 2006.**

No records. (See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.126).

## COMMON SWIFT *Apus apus* Gobhlan-mòr

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

**Breeding/summer** The first arrivals are often seen in *Kintyre* but the 4 birds seen in Campbeltown on 28 Apr were noted as being a week earlier than normal. The main arrival started on 7 May with 2 birds again at Campbeltown *Kintyre* and 2 at Dunoon *Cowal*. Over the next two weeks low numbers of birds were seen over a wide area including in *Mid-Argyll* with 2 birds at both Inveraray and Lochgilphead on 8 May and 4 on 11 May at Bridgend. The first island records were of a single bird at The Oa *Islay* on 15 May and 6 over Tobermory *Mull* on 16 May, whilst *Tiree* saw 1 bird on 27 May and 2 on 19 Jul. A nest with 2 young was recorded in Kilmartin on 17 Aug and also in *Mid-Argyll* breeding was suspected at Kilmichael Glassary and East Lodge (Slockavullin). Counts of 20 or more birds included: 50 at Oban *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Jul, 25 at Dunollie (Oban) *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Aug and 20 at Treshnish *Mull* on 20 Jun. Pre-dusk gatherings were noted in Campbeltown *Kintyre* with: 22 on 1 Jul, 40 on 6 Jul, 85 on 18 Jul and 25 on 5 Aug. The main passage appeared to be complete with pairs seen at Bridgend *Mid-Argyll* on 23 Aug and Oban *Mid-Argyll* on 26 Aug but a further record noted a single bird at Grasspoint (Lochdon) *Mull* on 1 Sep.

#### **ALPINE SWIFT** *Apus melba* Gobhlan-monaidh

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

No records.

#### **EURASIAN HOOPOE** *Upupa epops* Calman-cathaidh

**A scarce passage migrant, with most records in spring.**

No records.

#### **EUROPEAN BEE-EATER** *Merops apiaster*

**A rare migrant: five or six records since the first in 1981. Last record was of two birds on Mull on 24 to 26 Apr 2010.**

**Spring** One was seen and photographed in Glen Aros *Mull* on 27 May [Craig Round et al]. Record was accepted by the ABRC. (See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.126).

#### **EUROPEAN ROLLER** *Coracias garrulus*

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

No records.

#### **COMMON KINGFISHER** *Alcedo atthis* Biorra-crùidein

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

**Winter/spring** There were a number of sightings of single birds around the head of Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* between 11 Jan and 1 Mar whilst 2 birds were noted in the same area on the Crinan Canal at Brackley on 15 Feb.

**Breeding/summer** The only summer records were of single birds at Salen *Mull* on 28 Jul and 12 Aug.

**Autumn/winter** Records were widespread and were all of single birds including: Castle Lachlan *Cowal* on 19 Sep, Carrick Castle *Cowal* on 27 Nov, Bridgend *Islay* on 18 and 20 Nov, Southend *Kintyre* on 2 Sep, Torrisdale *Kintyre* on 9 Sep, Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* on 17 and 29 Sep; in *Mid-Argyll* at Carsaig on 17 Sep, Connel on 23 Sep and Bellanoch and Inveraray both on 11 Oct and. Around the head of Loch Gilp *Mid-Argyll* there were a number of sightings of single birds between 10 Oct and 16 Dec. On *Mull* single birds were reported from: Aros Bay (Tobermory)

on 10 Sep and 2 Oct, Dervaig between 1 and 7 Sep, 19 Nov and 17 Dec and Gruline on 1, 17 and 26 Sep.

# **EURASIAN WRYNECK** *Jynx torquilla* Geocair

**RED LIST A** *a rare and irregular passage migrant in spring and autumn; eleven records since 1969. Last record was at The Oa, Islay in Aug 2013.*

No records.

# **GREEN WOODPECKER** *Picus viridis* Snagardach

*Rare: but recorded regularly in Cowal in recent years as well as in Mid-Argyll, Mull and N Argyll. Breeding may have occurred in Kintyre in 1998. All records required.*

**Breeding/summer** The only records were of a bird heard calling at Grasspoint (Lochdon) *Mull* on 30 Jun and a single bird at Crannich (Glen Aros) *Mull* on 5 Aug.

# **GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER** *Dendrocopos major* Snagan-daraich

*A resident breeder: widespread on the mainland and Mull, with occasional records on Islay.*

**Winter/spring** Birds were regularly reported from Otter Ferry *Cowal* and Kilmichael *Glen Mid-Argyll*. There were also records from sites in all mainland areas and *Mull*. On *Islay* single birds were seen at Ballygrant on 26 Feb and near Port Askaig on 19 and 23 Mar.

**Breeding/summer** Indications of successful breeding on the mainland were recorded from: *Cowal, Kintyre, Mid-Argyll and Mull*. Sightings of juvs. were reported from West Loch Tarbert *Kintyre* and Tayvallich *Mid-Argyll*.

**Autumn/winter** Sightings were reported from: *Islay, Mid-Argyll and North Argyll* including a bird flying over Balnagown Loch (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 29 Nov.

# **COMMON KESTREL** *Falco tinnunculus* Clamhan-ruadh

**AMBER LIST A** *widespread, but uncommon, breeding bird. The breeding population in some areas appears to be on the decline. There is emigration from some areas in autumn and immigration to others.*

During 2014 there were records from all Argyll recording areas. As usual sightings increased noticeably, in most recording areas, from mid-Aug onwards. Two records from Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* are interesting in this context. A probable juv., first detected *ca* 1km offshore, came in off the sea on 1 Aug and an adult male flew N past the observatory well out to sea on 15 Aug. Both were presumably migrants. Most records involve one or two birds but 6 were seen in the area of Loch Garasdale *Kintyre* on 18 Sep and 4 at Crackaig (nr. Treshnish Point) *Mull* on 1 Apr. There were also records of 3 birds together in late Aug and early Sep at sites on *Islay, Kintyre* and Lismore *North Argyll*. Again these could well represent migrant birds.

## **Breeding**

Table 36. Outcome of monitored Kestrel territories in Argyll in 2014. NB: includes data from Bute, which is outwith the Argyll Recording area.

Area	Sites occupied	Sites where eggs laid	Sites successful	Sites failed	Outcome unknown	Min number large young	Young per successful site
Islay/Jura	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Colonsay	2	2	2	0	0	4+	-
NWArgyll**	4	4	3	0	1	3+	-

Kintyre	3	2	2	0	0	8	-
Cowal	3	2	2	0	1	7	-
Bute	2	1	1	0	0	4	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3.50</b>

**\*\*** *includes sites located near the coast of North Argyll, Lismore, Kerrera and Seil.*

Several sites were located during more extensive fieldwork for the National Peregrine Survey but it is difficult to draw much conclusion from the welcome increase in the number of occupied sites reported in 2014. Inevitably, follow up breeding information at many of these sites is sparse and in many cases it is not reliably known whether the pairs were non-breeders, whether they laid eggs or there had been a failed breeding attempt. At the four sites where the fledged brood size was accurately known 16 young were reared (4.0 young/successful pair).

### **RED-FOOTED FALCON** *Falco vespertinus*

**A vagrant: three records; one at Machariach, Kintyre on 19 August 1990, one at Todd Hill, Kintyre on 12 July 2005 and one near Port Charlotte, Islay on 2 May 2010.**

No records.

### **MERLIN** *Falco columbarius* Mèirneal

**RED LIST** *Breeds very locally on open moorland and bogs: more widely distributed on passage and in winter on low coastal ground and farmland.*

Of around 200 records, the majority (at least 95 records) were on *Islay*, where birds were seen regularly throughout the year. *Tiree* also had records (over 50) throughout the year apart from early May to late Jul. There were at least 18 records from *Colonsay* (incl. Oronsay), especially during spring and autumn passage periods and Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* had at least 10 records, mostly during autumn. Elsewhere, there were relatively few records from: *Cowal*, *Jura*, *Mid-Argyll* and *Mull* and none from *Coll* or *North Argyll*.

**Breeding** Very few reports received. In *Cowal*, a pair was seen in the early season in the usual area but no nest was located and in a different (new) area an adult with a recently fledged juv. was found on 28 July. A traditional area for Merlins on *Islay* was apparently unoccupied again in 2014. [Fresh signs were found at a known site just north of the Argyll boundary into Highland RSG area]. (ARSG per Roger Broad).

**Autumn** The first bird back on *Tiree* was on 31 Jul with one or two regularly thereafter until the year's end.

### **EURASIAN HOBBY** *Falco subbuteo* Gormag

**A rare visitor: mostly in spring and autumn.**

**Spring/summer** An adult was seen at a site in *Kintyre* on 27 Jun [A. W. Lauder, N. T. Keogh, S. McAvoy].

**Autumn** An adult was seen at Scalasaig *Colonsay* on 14 Sep [David Jardine].

Both records were accepted by the ABRC. (See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.126).

### **GYRFALCON** *Falco rusticolus* Seabhag-mhòr-na-seilg

**A rare visitor: several records prior to 1950 but only eight recent records, between 1973 and 2014 with last record on Islay in 2010.**

No records. (See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.126).

**PEREGRINE FALCON** *Falco peregrinus* Seabag

*A widespread but scarce breeding species in all areas of Argyll, with about 70 occupied territories in 2005. There have been indications of a decline in numbers breeding away from coastal areas. Found throughout the year in most areas.*

Thanks in part to the National Peregrine Survey coverage there were records during 2014 from all recording areas. Of over 300 records received, about half were from *Islay*, followed by 74 from *Colonsay* (inc Oronsay), 50 from *Tiree* and 23 from *Mull*. 6 were found during a cliff survey of The Oa *Islay* on 26 Mar and 5 adults on *Colonsay* on 29 Jun. During the TIARG visit 28 Jun - 5 Jul, a single bird was seen on Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* most days, with sightings relating to at least 2 individuals, one of each sex. Prey recorded included: Sanderling, Feral Pigeon, Rock Dove (several) and Common Starling. One that tried its luck at an Arctic Tern colony on *Islay* was seen off smartly by two adults.

**Breeding** The table below includes site information direct from RSG workers as usual and, where available, from the 5 x 5 km squares that were surveyed in their entirety as a parallel survey on which the BTO were leading. The BTO are still pulling together the information available to them, and it is possible that some additional site information may still be found which would necessitate a revision of the figures in Table 37.

The survey of selected 5x5 km squares is the first National Peregrine Survey to begin without the specific objective of covering all known Peregrine sites. In Argyll a little less than half the known sites were surveyed in 2014 and some of these (mainly sites that have been unoccupied since before the 2002 National Survey) were only visited on one occasion. Since 2002, there have been 4 new Peregrine sites confirmed in Argyll.

Data from the comprehensive, near complete survey in 2002 is appended for comparison at the bottom of Table 37. A subset of this data is summarised in Table 38 and compares the sites that were surveyed in both 2002 and 2014 but it cannot be ruled out that single visit surveys at some sites in 2014 may have missed a few individuals. At face value, the figures suggest there has been no recovery in the number of occupied sites in Argyll in the last 12 years and there seems to have been a further decline. As well as sites occupied by pairs the occurrence of single birds at additional sites also appears to have declined.

The majority of occupied Argyll Peregrine sites seem to be within a few kilometres of the coast and there is nothing to suggest that inland (upland) sites have been reoccupied.

In 2014, a good series of data from coastal sites in Kintyre added considerably to the spread and depth of breeding information from other areas of Argyll. Extended good weather during the breeding season undoubtedly contributed to there being relatively few nesting failures in 2014. Nevertheless, a pair of adults reported trying to encourage their fledged brood of 3 into the air on 3 Sep suggests an extremely late nesting attempt.

Table 37. *Peregrines in Argyll and Bute 2014* (ARSG per Roger Broad). NB: includes data for *Bute*, which is outwith the Argyll Recording area.

Area [no. of known sites]	Sites checked	Sites occupied	Sites where eggs laid	Sites successful (large young)	Sites failed	Outcome unknown	Min no. large young	Young per successful site
Mull [18]	5	1 pr + 1 single	1	1	0	0	1+	1+
Islay & Jura [28]	6	5	5	5	0	0	6+	1.2+
Other	9	4	4	3	1	1	7	2.33

Islands * [13]								
Mainland (exc. Cowal) [50]	25	13 prs + 2 singles	11	10	1	0	5+	1.70
Cowal [26]	13	6	4	3	1	0	5+	1.66+
Bute [3]	3	3	1	1	0	0	2	2.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>32 pr + 2 single</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>38+</b>	<b>1.93**</b>
<b>2002 Survey</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>53 pr + 18 single</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>1.77</b>

\* Lismore, Coll, Tiree, Colonsay & Oronsay

\*\* calculated for the 16 pairs (all areas) where fledged brood size accurately known

Table 38. Comparison of sites monitored in both 2002 and 2014 National Surveys.

Year	Sites check- ed	Sites occupied	Sites where eggs laid	Sites successful (large young)	Sites failed	Outcome unknown	Min no. large young	Young per success- ful site
2014	57	29 pairs + 2 singles	23	20	3	0	35+	2.00**
2002	57	33 pairs + 10 singles	26	15	10	1	28	1.86**

\*\* Calculated for sites where fledged brood size accurately known (15 sites in both 2002 and 2014).

### **RED-EYED VIREO** *Vireo olivaceus*

*A vagrant: two records; singles at Arinagour, Coll on 3 Oct 1992 and at Caoles, Tiree on 9 Oct 2008.*

No records.

### **EURASIAN GOLDEN ORIOLE** *Oriolus oriolus*

**RED LIST A rare and irregular passage migrant: mainly in spring.**

No records.

### **BROWN SHRIKE** *Lanius cristatus*

*A vagrant: one record; a first-winter at Balephuill, Tiree from 22 Oct to 20 Nov 2011.*

No records.

### **RED-BACKED SHRIKE** *Lanius collurio*

**RED LIST A rare passage migrant: 17 records between 1954 and 2013.**

**Spring** An adult male was at Carnan Mor (Balephuill) Tiree on 26 May [John Bowler]. Record was accepted by the ABRC.

**LESSER GREY SHRIKE** *Lanius minor*

*A vagrant: three records; Mull in 1974, Coll in 1988 and Tiree in Aug 2008.*

No records.

**GREAT GREY SHRIKE** *Lanius excubitor* Feòladair-glas

*A rare passage migrant and winter visitor. Most recent records: Tiree in Nov 2008 and at Slockavullin, Mid-Argyll in Dec 2009.*

No records.

**WOODCHAT SHRIKE** *Lanius senator*

*A vagrant: two records; a juvenile near Port Ellen, Islay on 16 Sep 1996 and a female at Balephuill, Tiree on 19-21 May 2013.*

No records.



*Red-billed Choughs*

*Angus Hogg*

**RED-BILLED CHOUGH** *Pyrhcorax pyrrhcorax* Cathag-dhearg-chasach

*The Argyll islands hold almost the entire Scottish population. Islay is the stronghold, with smaller numbers on Oronsay and Colonsay. All records away from Islay are appreciated.*

**Winter/spring** On Oronsay most reports were from Oronsay RSPB Reserve where counts exceeded 10 birds on 5 occasions with a maximum of 15 on 19 Mar. On Islay monthly maxima at Ardnave were 55 in Jan, 50 in Feb and 46 in Mar. A colour-ringed bird at Balephuill Tiree on 30 Mar was the first on the island since 1987 but sadly was found dead at The Green on 15 Apr – it had been ringed at Killinalan Islay in summer 2012.

**Breeding/summer** A complete island survey on Oronsay and Colonsay found a total of 10-11 occupied sites; breeding performance was established at 10 sites – 9 successful nests fledged 19 young. Five non-breeding birds were also found. On Islay at Ardnave two fledged birds were noted on 5 Jul with the largest summer count producing 45 birds on 20 Aug. At The Oa the largest number recorded was 7 on 9 Jul.

**Autumn/winter** Records from Colonsay generally referred to flocks in single figures although 15+ birds were noted at Oronsay in Dec with a maximum of 17 on 31 Dec. On Islay Ardnave provided the largest flocks with: 35 on 18 Sep, 46 on 21 Oct and 48 on 6 Nov. Machir Bay returned 10+ records including 21 on 21 Oct, and 20 on 15 Nov.

**EURASIAN MAGPIE** *Pica pica* Pioghaid

*A local breeder restricted to Cowal. Elsewhere, has been a scarce and sporadic visitor (mainly in spring): in recent years appearing to be becoming more widespread.*

**Winter/spring** Most records came from the breeding areas in *Cowal* with a max. of 6 together in Dunoon on 20 Jan. On *Islay*, reports of possibly the same individual came from Port Ellen on 29 Mar and The Oa on 1-2 Apr. In *Kintyre* 1-2 birds were in Campbeltown from 28 Feb, 1 was at Muasdale on 17 Apr, 1 was at Peninver on 19 Apr, 1 was at Carradale on 28 Apr and 1 at Stewarton on 1 May. In *Mid-Argyll* 1 was at Furnace on 11 Apr, 1 was at Cairnbaan on 14 Apr, 1 was at Barsloisnoch on 18 Apr with 2 nearby at Drimvore on 19 Apr. On *Mull* 1 was at Tobermory from 25 May. In *North Argyll* 1 was nr. Cruachan visitor centre on 9 Apr, 1 was at Portnacraish on 3 May, 1 was at Barcaldine on 2 Jun and 1 was at Maoilean (Ardchattan) on 3 Jun.

**Breeding/summer** After 2 birds were reported from Campbeltown *Kintyre* as being present throughout Jul and Aug in 2013 a nest was located on 7 May. Hooded Crows attempted to rob the nest but it was strongly defended. Eventually continued harassment by Hooded Crows caused the nest to fail. Single birds were noted at Gruinart *Islay* on 7 and 10 Jul, Cruachan *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Jul and Tobermory *Mull* on 31 Jul and 15 Aug.

**Autumn/winter** Outwith the *Cowal* stronghold a single bird was noted at Butterbridge in Sep. In *Kintyre* 2 remained in Campbeltown until at least 24 Nov. In *Mid-Argyll* a single was at Lochgilphead on 10 Oct and 2 were at Gallachaille (Tayvallich) on 18 Oct. On *Mull* 3 were together at Craignure on 11 Oct. (see article on page 128).

## **EURASIAN JAY** *Garrulus glandarius* Sgraicheap

**A widely distributed (but scarce) woodland resident on most of the mainland: rarely reported from the islands. There is some immigration in autumn.**

**Winter/spring** With the exception of 3 birds seen at Aros Park *Mull* on 8 Feb all sightings were from widespread areas of *Cowal*, *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll*.

**Breeding/summer** Records of mainly single birds came from *Cowal* and *Mid-Argyll* but one was at Killiechronan Wood *Mull* on 19 May.

**Autumn/winter** The majority of records came from *Cowal* and *Mid-Argyll* where highest counts were only 3 birds at Ardencaple House (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Nov and 30 Dec and 3 at Drimfern *Mid-Argyll* on 19 Nov. On *Mull*, 2 were at Loch Beg on 29 Sep, 1 at Tobermory on 16 Oct and 27 Nov and 1 at Pennycross on 20 Nov. A single at Margadale (Bunnahabhain) *Islay* on 20 Nov was a rare record for the island.

## **WESTERN JACKDAW** *Corvus monedula* Cathag

**A resident breeder, common throughout much of mainland Argyll: scarce on Mull and does not breed on Coll or Tiree. Breeding colonies are often located in towns and villages.**

**Winter/spring** The largest flocks recorded were: 100 at Millhouse *Cowal* on 21 Feb, 90 at Barsloisnoch *Mid-Argyll* on 4 Apr, 85 at Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 29 Jan and 70 at Lochgilphead *Mid-Argyll* on 21 Feb. In other areas the highest counts were 17 on *Colonsay* on 19 Apr, 40 at Campbeltown *Kintyre* on 11 Mar and 29 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 16 Jan. There were no significant counts or data from *Jura*, *Mull* or *North Argyll*. Singles were on *Tiree* in Mar and Apr with 3 at Cornaigmore on 16 Apr.

**Breeding/summer** 340 were at Kilkivan Quarry (Drumlemble) *Kintyre* on 14 Jul with an estimate of 100+ pairs being the only breeding data given. 40 were at Ardencaple House (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Aug.

**Autumn/winter** Records from all areas except *Jura*. Large numbers were noted from mid-Oct with 70 at Crinan Ferry *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Oct with the flock then seen flying out to sea towards *Jura*. 350 were nearby at Barsloisnoch *Mid-Argyll* on 14 Oct. Unusually high numbers were recorded from the islands with 470 at Treshnish *Mull* on 13 Oct and 300 at Loch an Eilein *Tiree*

on 13 Oct, with up to 15 remaining on the island until the end of Dec. 67 were at Oronsay Farm *Colonsay* on 13 Oct and 7 at the Lodge *Coll* on 19 Oct.

### **ROOK** *Corvus frugilegus* Ròcas

***A resident breeder, common throughout much of Argyll, but scarce on Mull and does not breed on: Colonsay, Coll, or Tiree. There can be a post breeding influx of juveniles to some islands, e.g. Mull and Tiree.***

**Winter/spring** The only counts received with 40 or more birds were from *Kintyre* with: 60 in Campbeltown on 11 Mar, 46 at Largie Castle on 11 Mar, 40 at Back's Water on 11 Mar and 40 at Strath Farm on 12 Mar.

**Breeding/summer** 25 nests were counted at Connel *Mid-Argyll* on 23 Mar, 18 AON at Toberonochy (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 10 May, 26 AON at Baile Mor (Iona) *Mull* on 13 Apr and 40 AON at Achuaran (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 3 May.

**Autumn/winter** Counts of 30 or more included: 30 at Ardyne *Cowal* on 19 Dec, 80 at Bellochantuy *Kintyre* on 25 Sep, 300 at Port Charlotte *Islay* on 3 Aug, 138 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 6 Jul, 30 at The Oa *Islay* on 3 Aug, 80 at Kilmartin *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Aug and 60 on Luing *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Dec. Single juveniles were seen at Loch an Eilein and Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 27 Nov, with the former staying until the end of Dec.

### **CARRION CROW** *Corvus corone* Feannag-dhubh

***A sedentary resident: mainly in east Cowal and parts of Mid-Argyll, in a variety of, mainly low ground habitats. It hybridises readily with Hooded Crow where ranges overlap.***

**Winter/spring** Outwith the main breeding area in *Cowal*, there were widespread records of ones and twos from *Mid-Argyll*, however at least 4 were at Barsloisnoch on 1 Jan. 2 were at Backs Water (Kilmichael) *Kintyre* on 11 Mar. A single at Loch a' Phuill and Balephuill *Tiree* on 14 to 16 Apr was the first island record for several years. Singles were noted on *Islay* at Kinnabus (The Oa) on 22 Jan and Bowmore on 11 Mar.

**Autumn/winter** Outwith *Cowal* there were regular sightings of 1-4 birds in *Mid-Argyll* at Barsloisnoch, Lochgilphead, and the Add Estuary.

### **HYBRID CROW** *Corvus corone x cornix*

***Hybrids between Carrion and Hooded Crow are most prevalent where the ranges of the two species overlap. Any records are welcome as they will help to document the change in position of the hybrid zone, which is known to have moved north westwards in the past.***

**Winter/spring** Most reports came from *Cowal* with small numbers noted at Glen Croe and Innellan. Elsewhere, records came from Drumore *Kintyre* on 10 Mar and a count of 6 at Barsloisnoch *Mid-Argyll* on 1 Jan.

**Autumn/winter** Small numbers were noted in *Cowal* at Finart Bay, Gairletter Point, Stiallag (Loch Striven) and Holy Loch.

### **HOODED CROW** *Corvus cornix* Feannag-ghlas

***A widespread, and very common, resident breeding species.***

**Winter/spring** Widely reported in small numbers from all mainland areas with island records from *Islay*, *Jura*, *Mull* and *Tiree*. Larger flocks exceeding 10 birds included: *Colonsay* with 14 at Kiloran Meadows on 24 Apr and 60 at Druim Mor (Oronsay) on 26 Apr; *Cowal* with 50 at Arrochar on 12 Jan and 27 at Strone Farm on 14 Jan; *Islay* with 11 at Ballinaby on 6 Feb, a max. 65 at The Oa on 17 Feb and 20 at Ardnave on 11 May; *Kintyre* with 20 at North Craigs on 8 Mar and 22 nr. Campbeltown on 11 Mar; *Mid-Argyll* with 90 Barsloisnoch on 26 Jan, 22 at

Dubhchladach (West Loch Tarbert) on 15 Feb and 20 at Eilean Traig (Loch Etive) on 6 Apr; and on *Mull* with 24 at Calgary on 27 Feb and 17 at Gruiline on 18 Mar.

**Breeding/summer** Widely reported from all mainland areas. Island records included *Coll*, *Colonsay*, *Islay*, *Jura*, *Mull* and *Tiree*. A min. of 23 Ters. were noted on *Colonsay* where 2 out of 14 nests failed. The mean brood size (successful nests) was 3.08 (n=12). A nest was at Balephuill *Tiree* with 3 fledged young.

**Autumn/winter** Records from mainland areas generally referred to single figures. Large flocks tended to found on the islands including: 40 at Oronsay *Colonsay* on 15 Sep, 47 at The Oa *Islay* on 10 Nov and 32 at Calgary *Mull* on 5 Oct.

## **NORTHERN RAVEN** *Corvus corax* Fitheach

**A common resident breeding species on both the mainland and islands: large flocks may occur, especially in winter.**

**Winter/spring** There were records from all recording areas. Larger flocks exceeding 20 birds included: 54 at Lingerton Landfill (Lochgilphead) *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Jan; 28 at Gott Tip *Tiree* on 17 Mar and 26 at Balevullin *Tiree* on 28 Apr.

**Breeding/summer**

Table 39. Outcome of monitored Common Raven territories in Argyll in 2014. NB: the table includes data for Bute, which is outwith the Argyll Recording area.

Area	Sites checked	Sites occupied	Sites where eggs laid	Sites successful	Sites failed	Outcome unknown	Min no. young fledged	Young per successful site
<i>Tiree</i>	13	12	12	6	1	5	7	1.16
<i>Colonsay</i>	20	12	11	11	0	0	37+	3.36+
<i>Islay</i>	6	6	3	2	0	0	8	4.0
<i>MidArgyll</i>	13	12	10	6	0	4	17+	2.83+
<i>Kintyre</i>	6	6	5	4	0	1	15+	3.75+
<i>Bute</i>	21	16*	12	11	0	1	23+	2.09+
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>107+</b>	<b>3.78**</b>

\* includes one site occupied by single adult

\*\* calculated for 23 pairs (all areas) where fledged brood size accurately known.

**Autumn/winter** There were records from all recording areas except *Coll*, *Jura* and *North Argyll*. Numbers were generally in single figures but larger flocks included 23 on Oronsay *Colonsay* on 30 Aug, 34 at Ardnave *Islay* on 10 Oct and 16 at Cluanach (Bowmore) *Islay* on 28 Oct.

## **GOLDCREST** *Regulus regulus* Crìonag-bhuidhe

**A common resident breeding species: augmented by passage migrants in spring and especially autumn but scarce on Coll and Tiree.**

**Winter/spring** With the exception of two mainland records from *Mid-Argyll* all reports were from *Islay* (4) or *Tiree* (7). Counts included: 2 at Gruinart *Islay* on 3 Mar, 3 at Arduaine Gardens *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Mar and 4 at Balephuill *Tiree* on 27 Mar.

**Summer/breeding** Sightings were reported from all mainland and island areas. 7 were recorded at Carnan Mor *Tiree* on 5 Apr and 6 were at Knock, *Mull* on 4 Jun. Whilst there were widespread reports of singing males the only sightings of fledged young were from *Colonsay* on 24 May.

**Autumn/winter** Records came from a number of sites across *Colonsay* and *Islay*, with counts of 25 at Colonsay House *Colonsay* on 14 Sep and 25 at Port Askaig *Islay* on 23 Sep. 13 birds were counted on *Coll* on 18 Oct with a maximum of 10 seen at The Lodge (Arinagour). There were records from four sites on *Tiree* with the highest count of 5 at Balephuill on 29 Sep and 4 at Carnan Mor on 4 Oct with the last 2 at Balephuill on 4 Nov. Small numbers were present in *Cowal*, *Kintyre* and *Mid-Argyll* with a high count of 30 at Cairnbaan *Mid-Argyll* on 17 Oct.

**COMMON FIRECREST** *Regulus ignicapilla* Crìonag

**A rare migrant/visitor: ten records between 1980 and 2012.**

No records.

2012. One was seen in Tobermory *Mull* on 13 Nov and was accepted as the first record for *Mull* [Cain Scrimgeour, Ashley Howe, Ewan Miles].

**EURASIAN BLUE TIT** *Cyanistes caeruleus* Cailleachag-cheann-ghorm

**A widespread and common resident breeder: an infrequent visitor to Coll and Tiree.**

**Winter/spring** Reported from most locations including: *Colonsay* (2), *Islay* (3), *Kintyre* (3), *Mull* (3) and *Mid-Argyll* (4). A high count exceeding 10 was 14 at Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 25 Jan.

**Summer/breeding** Reported from: *Coll* (1), *Cowal* (3), *Islay* (4), *Jura* (1), *Kintyre* (2), *Mid-Argyll* (15), *Mull* (23) and *North Argyll* (8). Breeding was probably widespread but there was only one record from Tayvallich *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Jun.

**Autumn/winter** Reported from: *Colonsay* (3), *Islay* (7), *Mid-Argyll* (1) and *Mull* (1). Highest counts received were 6 at Loch Lossit *Islay* on 8 Sep and 5 at The Oa *Islay* on 11 Oct.



*Eurasian Blue Tit*

*Jim Dickson*

**GREAT TIT** *Parus major* Currac-bhaintighearna

**A widespread and common resident breeder: only an infrequent visitor to Coll and Tiree.**

**Winter/spring** Reported from: *Cowal* (1), *Colonsay* (1), *Islay* (5), *Kintyre* (2), *Mid-Argyll* (3) and *Mull* (6). No reports from: *Coll*, *Jura*, *North Argyll* or *Tiree*. Larger counts were 12 at Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 25 Jan and 10 at Eas Fors (Ulva Ferry) *Mull* on 3 Mar.

**Summer/breeding** Records from locations in: *Colonsay* (1), *Cowal* (5), *Islay* (13), *Kintyre* (5), *Mid-Argyll* (32), *Mull* (32) and *North Argyll* (8). Fledged young were sighted at Bridgend *Islay* on 8 Jun and Tayvallich *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Jun.

**Autumn/winter** Reported from: *Islay* (11), *Kintyre* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (2), *Mull* (3), *North Argyll* (2) and *Tiree* (1). No reports from *Cowal*. The only counts of 5 or more were 6 at Loch Lossit *Islay* on 8 Sep and 10 at the north end of Lismore *North Argyll* on 29 Nov. A bird at Mannal *Tiree* on 9-11 Oct was unusual.

**EUROPEAN CRESTED TIT** *Lophophanes cristatus* Gulpag-stuic

**A vagrant: two records; one near Water of Tulla, North Argyll in November 1991 and one at Tobermory, Mull in Oct to Nov 2002.**

No records.

**COAL TIT** *Periparus ater* Smutag

**A widespread and abundant resident breeder: except on Coll and Tiree. Found almost exclusively in woodland: especially conifers.**

**Winter/spring** Reported from: *Colonsay* (2), *Cowal* (2), *Jura* (1), *Kintyre* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (2), *Mull* (2) and *North Argyll* (1). No reports from *Coll*, *Islay* or *Tiree*. Larger counts were 6 at Corra Farm *Cowal* on 25 Jan and 4 at Kiloran *Colonsay* on 18 Mar.

**Summer/breeding** Reported from: *Coll* (2), *Colonsay* (1), *Cowal* (4), *Islay* (6), *Kintyre* (2), *Mid-Argyll* (11), *Mull* (9) and *North Argyll* (5). Indications of successful breeding were reported from Ballygrant *Islay* on 30 May and The Lodge (Arinagour) *Coll* on 9 Jul.

**Autumn/winter** Reported from: *Coll* (1), *Islay* (8), *Kintyre* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (1), *Mull* (2) and *North Argyll* (1). Counts included: 15 at The Lodge (Arinagour) *Coll* on 19 Oct, 10 between Port Askaig and Ballygrant *Islay* on 23 Sep and 4 between Port Ellen and Ardbeg *Islay* on 25 Sep.

**WILLOW TIT** *Poecile montanus* Currac-ghiuthais

**RED LIST A vagrant: one record; near Water of Tulla, North Argyll on 1 Jun 1991.**

No records.

**EURASIAN SKYLARK** *Alauda arvensis* Uiseag

**RED LIST A widespread breeding species: common in some areas. Many emigrate in winter, with remaining birds mainly in coastal and low lying localities.**

**Winter/spring** Reported from sites at: *Colonsay* (4), *Cowal* (3), *Islay* (47), *Mid-Argyll* (4), *Mull* (2) and *Tiree* (3). The largest counts were on *Islay* including: 125 at Lyrabus on 1 Jan, 45 at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 16 Jan, 100 at Bowmore on 25 Feb, 230 at Grainel on 7 Mar and 50 at Creag an Uisgean (The Oa) on 31 Mar. Elsewhere there were 20 at Fidden *Mull* on 20 Jan, 43 at Oronsay airstrip *Colonsay* on 20 Feb, 36 at Ardalanish *Mull* on 24 Feb, 50 at Glen More *Mull* on 27 Feb, 90 at Tayinloan Village *Kintyre* on 28 Feb, 100 at Port Ramsay (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 1 Mar, 60 at Loch Laich *North Argyll* on 1 Mar and 65 at Barsloisnoch *Mid-Argyll* on 21 Mar.

**Summer/breeding** Reported from sites at: *Coll* (6), *Colonsay* (7), *Cowal* (1), *Islay* (42), *Jura* (1), *Kintyre* (9), *Mid-Argyll* (13), *Mull* (30), *North Argyll* (2) and *Tiree* (3). Counts included: 20 at Ardnave *Islay* on 11 May, 20 at Saligo Bay *Islay* on 12 May and at least 6 males holding territories on Lunga (Treshnish Isles) *Mull* at the end of Jun (TIARG).

**Autumn/winter** Reported from sites at: *Colonsay* (10), *Islay* (13), *Mull* (2), *North Argyll* (2) and *Tiree* (4). Higher counts included: 31 at Aird Luing (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 2 Aug, 22 at Rubha Dubh Allt na Muice (The Oa) *Islay* on 9 Sep, 50 at Clachan Mor *Tiree* on 13 Sep, 40 near the American monument (The Oa) *Islay* on 24 Sep, 51 at Oronsay airstrip *Colonsay* on 24 Sep, 28 at Ardnave *Islay* on 26 Sep, 25 at Baugh *Tiree* on 6 Oct, 40 at Lyrabus *Islay* on 14 Oct and 75 at Whitehouse *Tiree* on 22 Nov, the last report of the year.

**SHORE LARK (HORNED LARK)** *Eremophila alpestris*

*A vagrant: one record of three birds; on Islay on 18 to 19 Oct 1976.*

No records.

**GREATER SHORT-TOED LARK** *Calandrella brachydactyla*

*A vagrant: three records; one on Tiree in Aug 2008, another Tiree in Oct 2010 and one on Oronsay, Colonsay in Oct 2011.*

No records. (See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.126).

**SAND MARTIN** *Riparia riparia* Gobhlan-gainmhich

**AMBER LIST** *A summer visitor: localised breeding species and passage migrant. All breeding records required.*

**Spring** The first bird was at Carradale Bay Kintyre on 12 Mar followed on 26 Mar by 3 at the Moss of Achnacree North Argyll and 4 at Skeroblin Loch Kintyre. One at Loch Leathan Islay on 29 Mar was followed by 20 at Kintallen (Tayvallich) Mid-Argyll on 31 Mar. Birds were reported from: Mull on 1 Apr, Cowal on 3 Apr, and Tiree on 16 Apr.

**Breeding/summer** At least 60 AOB were at Millhouse Cowal and more than 50 pairs nested at Loch a'Phuill Tiree with a further 34 pairs at 6 other sites on Tiree. Five AOB were found at Kiloran Dunes Colonsay, 25 AOB were at Killinallan Islay on 27 Jun, 40 AOB were at Kilmartin gravel pit Mid-Argyll on 23 May, and 10 AOB were at Derryguaig Mull on 18 Jun.

**Autumn** 20 were at Loch Garasdale Kintyre on 1 Aug. On Tiree, up to 125 were seen at Loch a'Phuill and up to 35 at Loch an Eilein and Loch Bhasapol during Aug. Numbers quickly declined in Sep and the last bird was seen at Mannal Tiree on 28 Sep.

**BARN SWALLOW** *Hirundo rustica* Gobhlan-gaoith

*A widespread, common, summer visitor and passage migrant.*

**Spring** The first arrival, two weeks earlier than last year, was at Kilmichael Glen Mid-Argyll on 30 Mar and was followed by: 1 at Saligo Bay Islay on 1 Apr, 1 at Torluisk House Mull on 3 Apr, 2 at Kennacraig Kintyre and 1 at Colintrave Cowal on 5 Apr, and 1 at Ruaig Tiree on 8 Apr. Reports were widespread from 15 Apr although 30 at Largiemore Cowal on 1 May and 30 at Slochd na Feola Mull on 10 May were the only large concentrations reported.

**Breeding/summer** Breeding was confirmed from Islay, Mid-Argyll, Mull, North Argyll, and Tiree with the first fledglings noted at Balephuill Tiree on 28 Jun.

**Autumn** Post-breeding flocks started to build in Aug with 200 at Upper Ballywilline Kintyre on 9 Aug and 150 at Kintallen (Tayvallich) Mid-Argyll on 27 Aug. It was noted that many left late in the month. Despite this there were some large flocks still around in Sep with: 80 at Balephuill Tiree on 4 Sep, 60 at Crinan Ferry Mid-Argyll on 5 Sep, 70 at Kiloran Farm Colonsay on 13 Sep, and 60 still around Tiree on 28 Sep. Small numbers were recorded in Islay, Kintyre and Tiree in Oct before the final bird was seen at Eilean Traighe (Ormsary) Mid-Argyll on 12 Nov.

**COMMON HOUSE MARTIN** *Delichon urbicum* Gobhlan-taighe

**AMBER LIST** *A common summer visitor on the mainland: less numerous on the islands with only one recently recorded breeding attempt on Tiree.*

**Spring** First arrivals were 2 birds at Doire Darach (Loch Tulla) North Argyll on 2 Apr followed by 6 at Dunaverty Bay Kintyre on 7 Apr. Three were at Tobermory Mull on 8 Apr, 2 at RSPB Loch Gruinart Islay on 9 Apr, 1 at Strathlachlan Cowal on 15 Apr, and 2 at Ormsary Mid-Argyll on 22 Apr, after which reports became widespread. The largest flocks reported were 10, at

Coillabus *Islay* on 23 Apr and at Largiemore *Cowal* on 1 May, and 20 at Benmore Lodge (Loch Ba) *Mull* on 22 May.

**Breeding/summer** Breeding was reported from: *Mid-Argyll, Mull*, and *North Argyll*. A flock of 100 was at Drimfern *Mid-Argyll* on 23 Jul.

**Autumn** A flock of 25 was at Kilchoman *Islay* on 24 Aug, 20 were at Bridgend *Mid-Argyll* on 30 Aug, and 30 were at Balmeanach (Gribun) *Mull* on 2 Sep after which singles were reported from: Cairnbaan *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Sep, Killean *Kintyre* on 17 Sep, and West Hynish *Tiree* on 21 Sep. The final bird was at Craighens (Gruinart) *Islay* on 16 Oct.

### **RED-RUMPED SWALLOW** *Cecropis daurica*

**A vagrant: one record; a bird seen at Loch Tuath, Mull on 5 Jul 2011.**

**Spring** One was seen briefly at Ceann a' Mhara *Tiree* on 20 May [John Bowler]. Record was accepted by the SBRC.

### **LONG-TAILED TIT** *Aegithalos caudatus* Cìochan

**A widespread and fairly common resident: scarce on Colonsay and a rare visitor to Coll and Tiree.**

**Winter/spring** Reported from: *Cowal* (3), *Islay* (5), *Jura* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (1), and *Mull* (3). No reports from *Colonsay*, *Coll*, *Kintyre*, *North Argyll* or *Tiree*. Counts included: 9 at Kilfinan Bay *Cowal* on 18 Feb, 8 at Lephinchapel *Cowal* on 27 Mar, 6 at Ardtalla *Islay* on 16 Feb, 8 at Keills *Jura* on 16 Feb and 14 at Lochdon *Mull* on 25 Jan.

**Summer/breeding** Reported from: *Colonsay* (2), *Cowal* (1), *Islay* (2), *Kintyre* (2), *Mid-Argyll* (5) and *Mull* (4). Breeding was indicated with fledged birds seen at: Uragaidh *Colonsay* on 24 May with 17 birds, Colonsay House *Colonsay* on 25 May with 14 birds, Bridgend *Islay* on 29 May, Birdfield (Minard) *Mid-Argyll* on 30 May with 4 birds and at Connel *Mid-Argyll* on 16 Jun with 6 birds.

**Autumn//winter** Reported from: *Colonsay* (3), *Islay* (8), *Kintyre* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (9) and *Mull* (4). Counts of 10 or more included: 10 between Port Askaig and Ballygrant *Islay* on 23 Sep, 12 at Loch Allan *Islay* on 24 Oct, 10 at Sunderland Farm (Kilchoman) *Islay* on 10 Nov, 14 at Cairnbaan *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Nov, 11 at Kilmichael Glen *Mid-Argyll* on 28 Nov and 15 at Croggan (Loch Spelve) *Mull* on 8 Nov.

### **GREENISH WARBLER** *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

**A vagrant: two records; one trapped on 27 May 1983 at the Mull of Kintyre lighthouse, later taken into care and died, and one trapped at Sanda, Kintyre on 31 Jul 1987.**

No records.

### **YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER** *Phylloscopus inornatus* Ceileiriche-buidhe

**A rare passage migrant: at least 33 records between 1954 and 2013, the majority on Tiree. A record 12 or 13 individuals were recorded in 2013.**

**Autumn** Two were on *Tiree*, with birds at Balephuill on 6 -8 Oct and another there on 8 Oct and one of these birds nearby at Main Road Farm, Balephuill on 9 Oct [John Bowler, Jim Dickson]. Two were caught together during a regular ringing session at Glenlussa Forset *Kintyre* on 11 Oct [Neil Brown]. All records were accepted by the ABRC.

### **WESTERN BONELLI'S WARBLER** *Phylloscopus bonelli*

**A vagrant: one record; at Carnan Mor, Tiree on 8 Sep 2006 and confirmed as a Western.**

No records.

**BONELLI'S WARBLER (EASTERN or WESTERN)** *Phylloscopus bonelli* or *P. orientalis*  
*A vagrant: one record; a singing male on Islay in May 1976, was not specifically assigned to either Western or Eastern Bonelli's Warbler.*  
No records.

**WOOD WARBLER** *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* Ceileiriche-coille  
**RED LIST** *A scarce but widely distributed summer visitor to mature broadleaved woodlands. Infrequent on Islay and Jura and only occurs as a rare passage migrant on Coll and Tiree.*  
**Spring/breeding** First arrivals were singles noted at Gartnagrenoch (Barnluasgan) *Mid-Argyll* on 21 Apr, at Glenmore (Kilmelford) *Mid-Argyll* on 22 Apr, at Aros Park *Mull* on 25 Apr, at Loch nan Druimnean (Kilmelford) *Mid-Argyll* on 25 Apr, at Ardgartan, *Cowal* on 26 Apr, at Brainport Bay (Minard) *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Apr and 6 were at Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* on 28 Apr. In May and Jun birds were seen or heard singing in suitable woodlands in mainland Argyll with records from: *Mid-Argyll* (11 sites: Ardeatle, Auchgoyle Bay, Brainport Bay, Dun Mhuirich, Glenamachrie, Kilmichael Glassary Loch Awe, Loch Barnluasgan, Portsonachan, Strone Hill and Taynish NNR); *Mull* (8 sites: Aros Park, Feith Bhan, Grasspoint, Killiechronan Wood, Langamull Woods, Loch Buie, Salen Forest and Ulva Island); and *North Argyll* (3 sites: Balure of Shian, Benderloch and Na Maoilean). 1 at Carnan Mor *Tiree* on 18 May was clearly a migrant.  
**Summer/autumn** There were reports of singles at Ardgartan *Cowal* on 22 Jul and at Gleann Mor (Port Charlotte) *Islay* on 25 Aug.

**COMMON CHIFFCHAFF** *Phylloscopus collybita* Caifean  
*A summer visitor and local breeding species: occasionally recorded in winter. More frequent on passage on some of the islands.*  
**Spring/breeding** Early birds were noted at Kiloran Bay *Colonsay* on 2 Mar and at Kinnabuss (The Oa) *Islay* on 12 Mar. Then singles at Balephuill *Tiree* on 24 Mar, Torosay *Mull* on 26 Mar, Lilly Loch (Dunlossit) *Islay* on 26 Mar, Baugh *Tiree* on 27 Mar, Carnan Mor *Tiree* on 28 Mar and Arduaine Gardens *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Mar. Thereafter arrivals were more widespread and numerous, and from Apr to the end of Jul, singing males and territorial birds were widely reported from sites in: *Coll* (1), *Colonsay* (7), *Cowal* (5), *Islay* (17), *Kintyre* (3), *Mid-Argyll* (23), *Mull* (17), *North Argyll* (5) and *Tiree* (1).  
**Autumn/winter** During Sep, 1-2 birds were noted from *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll* and *Tiree* however a max. of 4 were at Balephuill *Tiree* on 29 Sep. In Oct mainly singles were noted at *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Islay* and *Tiree*. In Nov, singles were noted on *Islay* and *Tiree* but 2 were at Gleann Mor (Port Charlotte) *Islay* on 23 Nov. In Dec, singles were at Kames *Cowal* on 1 Dec and Heylipol *Tiree* on 5 Dec.  
Single birds showing features of the 'Scandinavian' race *abietinus* were noted on *Tiree* at Balephuill, The Glebe, Loch a' Phuill and Milton between 7 Oct and 30 Nov.

**'SIBERIAN' CHIFFCHAFF** *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*  
*A rare visitor: an eastern race of Chiffchaff, still regarded as a sub-species of Common Chiffchaff, rather than a distinct separate species. Rare in Argyll, although small numbers of this race occur during late autumn in Scotland.*  
**Autumn/winter** Singles were seen at Balephuill *Tiree* on 21 Oct, 3 Nov and 30 Nov and at Whitehouse *Tiree* on 22 Nov. A single was seen at Kilchoman *Islay* on 6 Nov.

**WILLOW WARBLER** *Phylloscopus trochilus* Ceileiriche-giuthais

**AMBER LIST** A *widespread and abundant summer visitor*.

**Spring/breeding** The first arrivals were a few days earlier than average, with singles at Balephuill *Tiree* and RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 31 Mar, 1 at Bridgend *Mid-Argyll* and 1 at Kilmichael Glen *Mid-Argyll* on 1 Apr, 4 at Gleann Mor (Port Charlotte) *Islay* on 3 Apr, 4 at Loch Allan *Islay* on 4 Apr and 1 at Craignure *Mull* on 5 Apr. Arrivals were then more widespread from 6 Apr, with birds reported to the end of Apr from sites in: *Coll* (3), *Colonsay* ('abundant'), *Cowal* (4), *Islay* (39), *Kintyre* (2), *Mid-Argyll* (39), *Mull* (11), *North Argyll* (2) and *Tiree* (10). High counts of singing males were noted at Kilmichael Forest *Mid-Argyll* with 28 Ters. on 18 Apr during a BBS transect and 50 singing males at Strone *Cowal* on 18 Apr. During May to Jun, breeding was widespread and numerous with birds reported from sites in: *Coll* (5), *Colonsay* ('abundant'), *Cowal* (3), *Islay* (16), *Jura* (2), *Kintyre* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (39), *Mull* (48), *North Argyll* (13), and *Tiree* (5). Fledged juveniles were noted on *Tiree* with 3 pairs with first fledglings on 26 Jun, 10 pairs feeding fledged juveniles at 4 sites (one pair with f/5 Balephuill) and several fledged families seen at Arinagour *Coll* on 9-10 Jul.

**Autumn** Only small numbers were noted from late Aug, with reports of singles from *Islay* between 25 Aug and a last report there at Bolsay on 13 Oct, and from *Tiree* between 22 Aug and a last report there at Vaul on 6 Oct, with max. of 4 at Balephuill on 3 Sep.

**EURASIAN BLACKCAP** *Sylvia atricapilla* Ceann-dubh

*A scarce but increasing summer visitor and regular passage migrant especially in autumn: an increasing number winter in Argyll.*

**Winter** The only report was of a male feeding at a bird table at Ardnacross, *Kintyre* on 27 Jan.

**Spring/breeding** The first arrival/migrant was a male at Balephuill, *Tiree* on 2 Apr followed by 3 more single males on the island until 5 Apr. Males were seen at Lochdon, *Mull*; Kinnabus (The Oa) *Islay* and Bridgend *Mid-Argyll* on 6 Apr. More widespread arrivals were noted after 13 Apr, and until the end of Jul birds were reported from sites in: *Coll* (1), *Colonsay* (7), *Cowal* (3), *Islay* (28), *Kintyre* (4), *Mid-Argyll* (31), *Mull* (21), *North Argyll* (8) and *Tiree* (9). For *Tiree* most reports were of migrants, however there was one probable breeding attempt at Balephuill.

**Autumn** There were only two reports in Aug: a single at Craignure Bay *Mull* on 28 Aug and 2 at Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 31 Aug. Reports thereafter came from *Coll* (1), *Islay* (7) (between 6 Oct and 3 Nov, with max. 2 at The Oa on 6 Oct), *Kintyre* (with 2 at Achanadriane on 18 Sep), *Mid-Argyll* (with singles at Kilmartin on 18 Oct and Kintallen (Tayvallich) on 14 Nov), *Mull* (5) (with max. 3 at Craignure on 22 Nov with the last bird of the year at Lochdon on 3 Dec), and *Tiree* (between 7 Sep and 20 Nov with island peaks of 6 on 23 Sep, 4 on 7 Oct and 4 on 13 Oct).

**GARDEN WARBLER** *Sylvia borin* Ceileiriche-garaidh

*A scarce but increasing summer visitor: breeding in woodland and scrub habitats.*

**Spring/breeding** First arrivals of single singing males were at Loch Laich *North Argyll* on 23 Apr, at Colonsay House Gardens *Colonsay* on 26 Apr, at Brainport Bay *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Apr and at Auchgoyle Bay *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Apr. There were no further reports until a single at Dun Mhuirich, *Mid-Argyll* on 9 May then reports were more widespread from sites in: *Cowal* (1), *Jura* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (7), *Mull* (3) and *North Argyll* (1). Migrants were seen on *Tiree* at Carnan Mor (Balephuill) on 27 May and 3 Jun, and a bird was in song at Barrapol on 28 May.

**Autumn** Single migrant birds were seen on *Tiree* at Hynish on 6 Sep and Balephuill on 22, 30 Sep and 9 Oct.

## **BARRED WARBLER** *Sylvia nisoria*

*A rare passage migrant: twelve records: all have been in autumn and the majority on Tiree.*

**Autumn** Four records, all were first-winter birds on *Tiree*. One was at Lower Vault on 6-8 Sep [Keith Gillon, John Bowler], one was at Balephuill on 8-12 Sep with another there on 12 Sep and a new bird there on 21 Sep [John Bowler]. All records were accepted by the ABRC.

## **LESSER WHITETHROAT** *Sylvia curruca* Gealan-coille Beag

*A rare/scarce passage migrant in both spring and autumn: most recent records have been from the islands.*

**Spring** An elusive singing male was at Carnan Mor *Tiree* on 11 May and another singing male there on 27-28 May.

**Autumn** There were six reports of singles, all from *Tiree*, with birds at Balephuill on 3 Sep, Balinoe on 5 Sep, Balevullin on 6 Sep, Ruaig on 8 Sep and Kilmoluaig (Cornaigmore) on 16 Oct.

## **‘SIBERIAN’ LESSER WHITETHROAT** *Sylvia curruca blythi*

*Recently reinstated as a race and not currently assessed. DNA analysis can be used to separate from the Central Asian race *S. c. halimodendri*.*

**Autumn** A bird seen and photographed at Balephuill *Tiree* on 19, 22 and 23 Oct showed the characteristics of the eastern race *blythii* often referred to as ‘Siberian’ Lesser Whitethroat [John Bowler].

## **COMMON WHITETHROAT** *Sylvia communis* Gealan-coille

*A summer visitor with numbers fluctuating from year to year: breeding is most widespread in low lying areas, particularly in coastal scrub.*

**Spring/breeding** An early male appeared at Balephuill *Tiree* on 18 Apr. Widespread arrival occurred during the last week of Apr, with singles at Kintallen (Tayvallich) *Mid-Argyll* on 24 Apr, Balephuill *Tiree* on 25 Apr, a pair at Arinagour *Coll* on 26 Apr, singles at Tullochgorm and at Macfarlane's Loch *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Apr and on *Islay* with singles at Bruichladdich on 28 Apr, at Portnahaven on 29 Apr, at Caol Ila, Port Charlotte and RSPB Loch Gruinart on 30 Apr. Birds, almost all singing males, were then widely recorded through to early Jul from sites in: *Colonsay* (56 Ters. with 3 Ters. on *Oronsay*), *Coll* (2), *Cowal* (3), *Islay* (22), *Jura* (1), *Kintyre* (2), *Mid-Argyll* (28), *North Argyll* (1) and *Mull* (31).

**Autumn** Reports of up to 3 birds (adult and juvs.) were from sites in: *Colonsay* (3), *Cowal* (1), *Islay* (6) and *Mid-Argyll* (4). The last record was one at Bolsay (Port Charlotte) *Islay* on 27 Sep. There were no autumn reports from *Coll*, *Kintyre*, *Jura*, *Mull* or *North Argyll*.

## **SUBALPINE WARBLER** *Sylvia cantillans*

*A vagrant: one record; a bird of the ‘eastern race’ *S. c. albiatriata* was at Balephuill, Tiree on 28 May 2012.*

No records.

## **COMMON GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** *Locustella naevia* Ceileiriche-leumnac

**RED LIST** *A summer visitor: breeding locally in open habitats with dense ground vegetation, including young conifer plantations. Numbers fluctuate from year to year.*

**Spring/breeding** An exceptionally early bird was heard singing at Aros Moss (nr. Campbeltown airport) *Kintyre* on 17 Mar. (The first bird noted in the UK in 2014 was a bird singing at Spurn, Yorkshire on 9 Mar followed by one at Grimsby, Lincolnshire on 16 Mar). Our next report was

at Portnahaven *Islay* on 15 Apr with widespread arrivals of singles from 19 Apr; however 13 singing males were located on *Colonsay* on 25 Apr, 3 were at Portnahaven *Islay* on 26 Apr, 4 were near Port Ellen *Islay* on 26 Apr, 4 were at 'Lochgilphead Meadows' (nr. Cairnbaan) *Mid-Argyll* on 26 Apr and 4 were at Balephuill *Tiree* on 29 Apr. Singing birds were at sites in: *Coll* (1), *Cowal* (5), *Islay* (18), *Kintyre* (2), *Mid-Argyll* (23), *Mull* (8), *Colonsay* (14) and *Tiree* (4). No reports were received from *Jura* or *North Argyll*.

**Autumn** The latest reports were on Luing *Mid-Argyll* with singles at Black Mill Bay and at Rubh' Aird Luing on 2 Aug.

### **BOOTED WARBLER** *Iduna caligata*

**A vagrant: two records; one at Balemartine, Tiree on 20 Sep 1998 and one at Balephetrish, Tiree on 31 Aug to 2 Sep 2006.**

No records.

### **ICTERINE WARBLER** *Hippolais icterina*

**A rare passage migrant: four records; on Islay 28 Aug 1976; at Taynuilt in Jun 1984; on Tiree in Jun 1987 and on Islay on 4 to 5 Sep 1993.**

No records.

### **MELODIOUS WARBLER** *Hippolais polyglotta*

**A vagrant: one record; at Totronald, Coll on 8 Jun 2012.**

**Autumn** A first-winter bird was seen and photographed at The Glebe (Scarinish) *Tiree* on 18 Sep to 4 Oct [Jim Dickson, Bill Allan, John Bowler]. Record was accepted by the SBRC.

### **SEDGE WARBLER** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* Uiseag-oidhche

**A locally common summer visitor: breeding in suitable habitats.**

**Spring/breeding** The first arrival was at Loch Tallant *Islay* on 18 Apr with a more widespread arrival from 25 Apr, with singles at Portnahaven *Islay* and 4 there on 26 Apr, 3 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 26 Apr, singles at Kinnabus (The Oa) and Port Ellen *Islay* on 26 Apr, Achamore, Arinagour and Druim Buidhe *Coll* on 27 Apr, Loch na Cille, *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Apr, 7 singing on *Tiree* with 1 at Balemartine, 3 at Balephuill and 3 at Loch Bhassapol on 28 Apr, and 6 singing males at Loch Gorm *Islay* on 28 Apr. During May, singing males were widespread at sites in: *Coll* (3), *Colonsay* (widespread), *Islay* (27), *Jura* (1), *Kintyre* (3), *Mid-Argyll* (14), *Mull* (20), *North Argyll* (1) and *Tiree* (6). Sites with more than 10 or more birds included Lower Glen Astle *Islay* with 10 on 19 May and a *Tiree* island total of ca100 singing birds by mid-May.

**Autumn** There were five reports in Aug, including a count in a small area of Glean Mor (Port Charlotte) *Islay* of 20 on 25 Aug. There were four reports in Sep, with the last singles at Crinan Ferry *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Sep and at Meningie *Tiree* on 11 Sep.

### **BLYTH'S REED WARBLER** *Acrocephalus dumetorum*

**A vagrant: two records; one at Carnan Mor, Tiree on 3 Jun 2008 and one at Balephuill, Tiree in Sep 2011.** No records.

### **MARSH WARBLER** *Acrocephalus palustris*

**RED LIST A rare passage migrant: two records; one at Balephuill, Tiree on 8-10 Jun 2007 and one at Carnan Mor, Tiree on 28 May 2012.**

**Spring** One was at Mannal *Tiree* on 28 May [John Bowler]. Record was accepted by the SBRC.

**EURASIAN REED WARBLER** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

*A rare visitor in spring and summer: eight records; all but one from the islands.*

**Autumn** A first-winter was trapped and ringed at Aros Moss (nr. Campbeltown airport) *Kintyre* on 9 Aug [Neil Brown]. Record was accepted by the ABRC.

**CEDAR WAXWING** *Bombycilla cedrorum*

*A vagrant: One record; a juvenile was at Vaul, Tiree on 21 to 29 Sep 2013. Only two previous UK records: Noss, Shetland on 25-26 Jun 1985 and in Nottingham from 20 Feb to 18 Mar 1996.*

No records.

**BOHEMIAN WAXWING** *Bombycilla garrulous* Canarach-dearg

*An irruptive winter visitor in varying numbers: not seen every year but some large influxes have occurred recently.*

No records.

**EURASIAN NUTHATCH** *Sitta europaea*

*A rare but increasing visitor: currently spreading north in Scotland.*

**Spring** One was calling at Taynult *Mid-Argyll* on 2 Mar. One was at Blarghour (Loch Awe) *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Apr. One was at Inverawe House *North Argyll* on 19 Apr. One was at Lochgair *Mid-Argyll* on 20 Apr and one was at Lochawe village *Mid-Argyll* on 26 Apr.

After a record number of 12 birds at 11 sites in 2013 spread over the year this is a poor showing with only five records in spring.

**EURASIAN TREECREEPER** *Certhia familiaris* Snaigear

*A widespread and fairly common resident: rare on Tiree and Coll.*

**Winter** The first record of the year was one at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 17 Jan. Other winter records were all of singles at sites in *Islay* (7), *Cowal* (4), *Mid-Argyll* (2) and *Mull* (2).

**Spring/breeding** There was one record of confirmed breeding with an occupied nest at Auchoirk Farm (near Kames) *Cowal* on 14 Apr. Other records from suitable habitat suggest probable breeding and these were from sites in *Colonsay* (1), *Islay* (11), *Mid-Argyll* (3), *Mull* (8) and *North Argyll* (3). There were no records from *Coll*, *Jura*, *Kintyre* or *Tiree*.

**Autumn/winter** On *Colonsay* there were 5 at Colonsay House on 14 Sep. On *Islay* there were 3 at Port Askaig on 23 Sep, and 3 at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 1 Oct, with singles at 3 other sites. *Coll* had 1 at the Lodge (Arinagour) on 18 Oct, and on *Mull* there was 1 at Aros Castle on 24 Nov. There were no records from *Cowal*, *Jura*, *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll*, *North Argyll* or *Tiree*.

**WREN** *Troglodytes troglodytes* Dreathann-donn

*A common resident breeder in all areas: numbers often decline following hard winters, additional birds winter on the islands.*

Birds were probably widespread and numerous in all recording areas, although not always reported for all areas through the year. First confirmed breeding was of fledged young on 25 Apr at Colonsay House *Colonsay*, with other fledged young reported from *Tiree* in Jun.

**COMMON STARLING** *Sturnus vulgaris* Druid

**RED LIST A** *common resident on: Coll, Islay, part of Kintyre, and Tiree: less common on most of the mainland. Flocks containing juveniles appear in many parts in late summer and numbers are boosted by immigration in winter from north-west Europe.*

**Winter** Reported from all areas except *Coll*, *Cowal*, *Jura* and *North Argyll*. Larger flocks (over 100) were widespread but mainly on the islands. On *Tiree* there were 400 at The Reef on 28 Jan, followed by 900 at Whitehouse on 18 Feb, 1,000 at Kennovay on 28 Feb, dropping to 600 on 18 Mar and 900 at Sorobaidh Bay on 20 Mar. *Mull* had a flock of 200 at Cnoc an t-Suidhe (Ross of Mull) on 24 Feb. On *Colonsay* the Oronsay flock rose from 390 on 23 Jan to 638 on 6 Feb. Smaller numbers on *Islay* with the flock on The Oa peaking at 165 on 10 Mar. At Toberonochy (Luig) *Mid-Argyll* there were 750 on 25 Jan. In *Kintyre* 2,000 at Drumlemble on 11 Feb was the biggest flock of the period, and 900 were seen at nearby Machrihanish SBO on 13 Feb.

**Breeding** From Apr to Jun breeding birds were widely reported from all areas. An adult feeding young was reported at Minard *Mid-Argyll* on 19 May, and the first reported fledglings were on 25 May at Loch na Cille *Mid-Argyll*. The mass fledging on *Tiree* was on 29 and 30 May. From mid-Jun, flocks of adults with juveniles built up widely with the largest aggregations on *Tiree* (150 on The Reef on 23 Jun), and *Islay* (200 at Kilchoman on 7 Jul).

**Autumn/winter** Moderate flocks up to 100 birds in autumn were recorded from all areas except *Jura*. From Aug onwards some substantial flocks built up, probably including migrant birds, with some notable examples: 500 at Kiloran Farm *Colonsay* on 13 Sep, 500 at Claddach (Portnahaven) *Islay* on 25 Oct, 800 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 12 Oct and the 1,700 at Drumlemble *Kintyre* on 21 Oct being the largest. Numbers on *Tiree* were substantial too, building from 900 at Ruaig on 11 Aug to 1,500 at Mannal on 6 Oct, and reaching 1,600 on the island on 26 Oct (800 at Mannal & 800 at Sorobaidh Bay). *Tiree* numbers remained high through to the end of the year with 1,200 at Loch an Eilean on 28 Dec.

## **ROSY STARLING (ROSE-COLOURED STARLING) *Sturnus roseus* Druid-dhear**

*A rare summer and autumn visitor: has occurred more frequently in recent years.*

**Spring/summer** An adult, probably male, was at Bunessan *Mull* on 11-14 Jun [Rev. J. Collard, Bryan Rains et al] and one, probably a 2CY male, was at Port Ellen *Islay* on 23-26 Jun [David Livingstone, David Wood et al].

**Autumn** A juvenile was at Meningie (near Loch a' Phuill) *Tiree* on 25-27 Oct [John Bowler]. All records were accepted by the ABRC.

## **WHITE-THROATED DIPPER *Cinclus cinclus* Gobha –uisge**

**AMBER LIST A** *widespread resident breeder but scarce on Islay and generally absent from: Coll, Colonsay, and Tiree.*

**Winter/spring** Four birds were reported at Bridge of Orchy *North Argyll* on 14 Jan, while two bird sightings came from Tobermory *Mull* on 23 Jan, Arrochar *Cowal* on 17 Feb and Afon Orchy *North Argyll* on 23 Mar. Single birds were reported from nine locations in *Mid-Argyll*, two sites in *Cowal* and two sites in *Islay*.

**Breeding** Birds present in suitable habitat, in pairs or with young, were noted at: Lower Killeyan, Bridgend to Woollen Mill (River Sorn) and Sound of Islay *Islay*; from 12 locations around *Mull*; from at least four locations in *Mid-Argyll* and one site in *Kintyre*.

**Autumn/winter** From Aug to the end of Dec most reports were of single birds spread throughout Argyll, with sightings of two birds from: Kilfinin Bay *Cowal* on 12 Oct, Creag an Uisgean (Oa), *Islay* on 2 Sep, Lusragan Burn (Connel) *Mid-Argyll* Oct-Nov, Kilmichael Glen *Mid-Argyll* on 28 Nov and Loch Tulla *North Argyll* on 23 Nov.



**White-throated Dipper**

*Errol Crutchfield*

**RING OUZEL** *Turdus torquatus* Dubh-chreige

**RED LIST A** *summer visitor; breeding very locally in upland areas but declining in numbers: more widespread, though still very scarce, on migration.*

**Spring** Only two spring migrants noted; a male at Carnan Mor *Tiree* on 18 Apr and a male at Clachan Hill (Glen Fyne) *Mid-Argyll* also on 18 Apr.

**Breeding** Birds were reported from five sites: at Arrochar *Cowal*, Tom a' Bhuachaille (Glen Fyne) *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* at: Cruachan Power Station, Stob a' Choire Odhair and Aonach Eagach.

**Autumn** No reports.

**COMMON BLACKBIRD** *Turdus merula* Lon-dubh

**A widespread breeding species: common and locally abundant resident. There is immigration in winter and noticeable autumn passage in some years with some remaining during winter.**

**Winter/spring** In late winter birds were widely reported in small numbers from all areas. Counts of 10 or more included: 10 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 10 Jan, with 24 there on 17 Jan, 25 at Largiemore, *Cowal* on 11 Jan, 15 at Foreland *Islay* on 16 Jan and 33 on *Colonsay* on 28 Feb.

**Summer/breeding** Birds were noted and assumed breeding at sites in: *Colonsay* (2), *Cowal* (7), *Islay* (26), *Jura* (3), *Kintyre* (8), *Mid-Argyll* (27), *Mull* (57), *North Argyll* (9), *Tiree* (3) and *Coll* (3). The first bird noted on eggs was at Corra Farm *Cowal* on 8 Apr, with chicks noted there on 20 Apr. Fledged young were noted on *Colonsay* on 24 Apr. Counts of 10 or more included: 16 nr. Woollen Mill *Islay* on 4 May, 10 at Slochd na Feola (Ross of Mull) *Mull* on 10 May and 15 on Kerrara *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Jun.

**Autumn/winter** Throughout this period birds were widely reported in single figures. Groups of 10 or more included: 12 at Balephuill *Tiree* on 1 Oct, 120 at Craighouse *Jura* on 9 Oct, 20 at

Bruichladdich *Islay* on 16 Oct, 10 at Lakefield Farm (Taynuilt) *Mid-Argyll* on 18 Oct and 60 (mainly males) in Campbeltown *Kintyre* on 8 Nov.

**FIELDFARE** *Turdus pilaris* Liath-thruisg

**RED LIST A** *a passage migrant and winter visitor: abundant in autumn but relatively few remain in winter or pass through in spring*

**Winter/spring** More large flocks were noted in this period than in 2013, with 9 reports of flocks of 50 or more birds: Millhouse *Cowal* (84 on 5 Feb), Barsloisnoch *Mid-Argyll* (330 on 15 Feb) falling to (130 by the 27 Feb), Balephuill *Tiree* (100 on 9 Mar), Gearach *Islay* (71 on 20 Mar). In spring, reports of large flocks came from Port Charlotte *Islay* (170 on 3 Apr) with a steady passage N of over 100 birds reported from Sound of Islay the next day; at Claonaig *Kintyre* (425 on 5 Apr). The last spring report was of 7 at Linne a' Dhuais (Bunessan) *Mull* on the 10 May.

**Autumn/winter** The first report was of 6 birds at Port Charlotte *Islay* on 9 Oct. Numbers remained low until November, then flocks of 100 or more noted at: Campbeltown Loch area *Kintyre* (720 on 1 Nov), Kilchoman *Islay* (200 on 5 Nov), Storakaig *Islay* (2,400 on 7 Nov) with over 3,500 in total on *Islay* that day, Milton *Tiree* (300 on 7 Nov), Oronsay *Colonsay* (362 on 8 Nov), around *Tiree* (140 on 17 Nov). Numbers declined in December slightly however counts of 100 more at: RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* (101 on 9 Dec) and Graniel (W) *Islay* (320 on the 12 Dec). Some of these flocks contained other thrush species, particularly redwings.



*Song Thrush*

*Jim Dickson*

**SONG THRUSH** *Turdus philomelos* Smeòrach

**RED LIST A** *a widespread and common resident breeding species with some locally bred birds departing in the autumn. There is a noticeable autumn passage, with other birds arriving for the winter.*

**Winter/spring** Widely reported in low numbers. Larger flocks included: 10 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 10 Jan, 4 at Oronsay Farm *Colonsay* on 25 Jan, 7 at Coshandrochaid (nr. Tayvallich) *Mid-Argyll* on 26 Jan, 4 at Kinabus (The Oa) *Islay* on 26 Feb and 6 at Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 6 Mar. In comparison to last year, no marked influx was noted.

**Summer/breeding** There were 213 records of breeding, or presumed breeding birds in all areas of Argyll. The first nest building noted was at Balephuill *Tiree* on 4 Apr. 20-30 singing males were on *Tiree* on 1 May. Higher counts included: 14 nr. Woollen Mill *Islay* on 4 May, 12 on Kerrera *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Jun, and 12 at Kilchoman *Islay* on 11 Jul with a post breeding group of 19 there on 7 Aug.

**Autumn/winter** Notable counts included: 20 around Ballygrant area *Islay* on 23 Sep and 10 around The Rhinns *Islay* on 24 Sep. 22 were on Kerrera *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Dec.

### **REDWING** *Turdus iliacus* Sgiath-dhearg

**RED LIST A** *passage migrant and winter visitor: abundant in autumn but relatively few remain during winter. Occasional individuals are recorded in late spring or summer. The species bred on Mull in 1991 but there have been no subsequent breeding records.*

**Winter/spring** There were regular reports during Jan to Apr, with just a few remaining into May. Flocks of 40 or more were noted at: *Tiree* (200 on 18-19 Feb, 250 on 19 Mar and 90 on 1 Apr); Corran View *Mull* (80 on 3 Mar), Gearach *Islay* (71 on 20 Mar), Oronsay *Colonsay* (135 on 1 Apr), Dun Cholla *Colonsay* (67 on 1 Apr), Port Charlotte *Islay* (65 on the 3 Apr). Last spring record was on *Tiree*, a bird in full song on 28 May.

**Autumn/winter** The first arrival was of 2 birds at Sunderland Farm *Islay* on 4 Oct, followed by generally small numbers in early Oct, however 100 were on *Tiree* on 8 Oct. Main arrivals occurred in mid-Oct to mid-Nov with flocks of 100+ birds noted at: Kildalton *Islay* (600 on 16 Oct), Barran (Kilmore) *Mid-Argyll* (250 on 16 Oct), Balephuill *Tiree* (280 on 16 Oct), Dalvore (Moine Mhor) *Mid-Argyll* (200 on 19 Oct), Lakefield Farm *Mid-Argyll* (150 on 19 Oct), The Oa *Islay* (350 on 21 Oct), island count *Tiree* (650 on the 28 Oct), Campbeltown area *Kintyre* (500 on the 1 Nov), The Rhinns *Islay* (200 on 2 Nov), Lossit *Islay* (140 on 4 Nov), Kilchoman *Islay* (150 on 5 Nov), Killinallan *Islay* (175 on 5 Nov), The Lagaan *Kintyre* (700 on 7 Nov), Milton *Tiree* (300 on 8 Nov), an island count *Tiree* (1,500 on 17 Nov). In Dec the only notable count was of 400 around *Tiree* on the 12 Dec.

### **MISTLE THRUSH** *Turdus viscivorus* Smeòrach-mhòr

**RED LIST A** *widespread but thinly distributed resident breeding species. On Coll and Tiree it is only an occasional visitor. Flocks are sometimes seen on passage.*

**Winter/spring** During Jan to Feb there were just two reports of 5 or more birds: at Millhouse *Cowal* with 7 on the 11 Feb and on *Colonsay* with 5 on 26 Feb. The most unusual record during late winter came from *Tiree* with 2 birds at Scaranish on 27 Jan.

**Breeding** Pairs were noted and territories held, with presumed breeding from late Feb with sites at: *Cowal* (14), *Islay* (12), *Jura* (1), *Kintyre* (2), *Mid-Argyll* (13), *Mull* (15) and *North Argyll* (3). A single migrant bird was noted on *Tiree* on 1 Apr.

**Autumn/winter** From early Aug to Sep, only one flock in double figures was reported: 22 at Treshnish NW *Mull* on 2 Sept. Records from Oct to Dec mostly involved 1-4 birds, however a flock of 10 were at Port Charlotte *Islay* on 20 Oct.

### **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** *Muscicapa striata* Breacan-glas-sgiobalta

**RED LIST A** *summer visitor breeding widely, but sparsely, in mature woodlands; particularly where there are gaps in the canopy or along edges. Regular passage migrant on the islands.*

**Spring** The first arrivals noted were at Maolachy *Mid-Argyll* on 8 May, Eilean na Beithe *Mull* on 15 May, Kinnabus (The Oa) *Islay* on 17 May, and Glengorm *Mull* on 18 May. There was an obvious arrival on 19 May with 2 at Balephuill and 1 at Vaul on *Tiree*, singles at Pennyghael and Killiechronan Wood *Mull* and 1 at The Oa *Islay*. Birds were more widespread in the rest of May with additional records from Balephuill (6) and Carnan Mor (5) *Tiree*, Benmore Lodge (3) and Loch Buie *Mull*, Colonsay House and Baleromindubh *Colonsay*, Kilchoman (2), RSPB Loch Gruinart, Ballygrant Woods and The Oa *Islay*, Lussa River (2) and Ardlussa *Jura* and Ormsary *Mid-Argyll*.

**Breeding** Possible, probable or confirmed breeding birds were recorded in Jun-Aug from sites in: *Cowal* (1), *Islay* (3), *Kintyre* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (10), *Mull* (6), *North Argyll* (2), and *Tiree* (1), although none bred on the latter island. There were no records from *Coll* or *Colonsay*. Families were noted on 19 Jul at Kintallen (Tayvallich) *Mid-Argyll*, on 20 Jul at Ardgarten *Cowal*, on 22 Jul at Glengorm *Mull* and at Cruachan Power Station *North Argyll*.

**Autumn** The last passage birds as usual were on *Tiree*; at Balephuill on 1 Sep with 2 there on 22 Sep and 1 remaining to 24 Sep. Elsewhere, the last sightings were 3 on 5 Sep at Drimfern *Mid-Argyll* and 1 on 16 Sep at Bonawe Furnace *Mid-Argyll*.

## **EUROPEAN ROBIN** *Erithacus rubecula* Brù-dhearg

**A widespread and common resident breeder: a migrant only on Tiree. Small numbers now breed regularly on Coll. Autumn passage is noticeable on the islands with many migrants over-wintering.**

**Winter/spring** In late winter, birds were widespread in all areas including high counts of 15 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 17 Jan, 11 on *Colonsay* on 28 Feb and 14 at Kiloran Bay *Colonsay* on 2 Mar. The last bird was noted on *Tiree* on 31 May with a very unusual mid-summer record there of 1 at Balephuill on 22 Jun.

**Breeding** Records of possible to confirmed breeding were from sites in: *Coll* (1), *Colonsay* (1), *Cowal* (5), *Islay* (9), *Jura* (1), *Kintyre* (5), *Mid-Argyll* (20), *Mull* (40) and *North Argyll* (10), the latter including the highest total to date of 7 pairs at the Cruachan Power Station study site.

**Autumn/winter** Birds were widespread in all areas in winter. The first passage birds on *Tiree* were 3 on 20 Aug with high counts of 10 at Balephuill on 21 Sep, 25 around the island on 30 Sep and 10 between Mannal and Balemartine on 11 Oct. High counts elsewhere included 12 at Bridgend Woods *Islay* on 29 Oct, 24 around the north end of Lismore *North Argyll* on 29 Nov and 14 on Kerrera *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Dec.

## **COMMON NIGHTINGALE** *Luscinia megarhynchos* Spideag

**RED LIST A vagrant: four records; one on Islay in April 1973; one at West Loch Tarbert, Kintyre in May 1989; one at Balephuill, Tiree on 2 May 2004 and one at Vaul, Tiree on 8 Sep 2011.**

No records.

## **BLUETHROAT** *Luscinia svecica*

**A rare passage migrant: five records; a female in Kintyre in May 1975; and males of the red-spotted race 'svecica' on Coll in 1994, on Colonsay in 2009 and on Tiree in 2009; also a first-winter on Tiree in Oct 2010.**

No records.

## **RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER** *Ficedula parva*

**A rare passage migrant: six records; on Islay in Nov 1974 and Oct 1975, Colonsay and Gigha in 2010 and two singles on Tiree in Oct 2012.**

**Spring** Two on *Tiree*: a female or 2CY was at Carnan Mor (Balephuill) on 6 Jun and a male was at Balephuill on 19 Jun [John Bowler].

**Autumn** Two on *Tiree*: a first-winter was at Greenhill (nr. Sandaig) on 30 Sep [Jim Dickson, John Bowler] and another first-winter was at Carnan Mor and Balephuill on 8-9 Oct [John Bowler, Jim Dickson, Janet Hunter]. All records were accepted by the ABRC.

## **COLLARED FLYCATCHER** *Ficedula albicollis*

**No previous Argyll records.**

**Spring** An adult male was seen and photographed at Carnan Mor (Balephuill) *Tiree* on 27 May [John Bowler]. Record was accepted by the BBRC and this now becomes a new species for Argyll. (See article on page 139).

## **EUROPEAN PIED FLYCATCHER** *Ficedula hypoleuca* Breacan-glas

**RED LIST A scarce summer visitor and passage migrant breeding very locally in oak woods in parts of the mainland and possibly Mull. An increase in the breeding population in recent years was attributable to the Argyll Bird Club nest-box scheme but numbers now appear to be declining; possibly due to Pine Marten predation of boxes. Rare but near-annual on passage on the islands, especially Tiree.**

**Spring** There were just two reports in spring, an unconfirmed record of a bird trapped in a greenhouse at Tayvallich *Mid-Argyll* on 14 May and a female at Carnan Mor (Balephuill) *Tiree* on 6 Jun.

**Breeding** No records.

**Autumn** An immature at The Glebe (Scarinish) *Tiree* on 22 Sep was a typical autumn passage record.

## **BLACK REDSTART** *Phoenicurus ochuros* Ceann-dubhan

**RED LIST A less than annual passage migrant: most records have been in spring (late Mar to May) or late autumn (Oct to mid-Nov).**

**Spring** A female-type bird was at Balinoe *Tiree* on 29 Apr [Jim Dickson, John Bowler].

**Autumn/winter** A female/imm. type was at Tayinloan Jetty *Kintyre* on 28 Nov-3 Dec [Katie Pendreigh, Stuart Crutchfield].

## **COMMON REDSTART** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* Ceann-dearg

**AMBER LIST A summer visitor: locally common in open woodland. It is a scarce passage migrant on: Coll, Colonsay, Islay and Tiree.**

**Spring** First arrivals were at Balephuill *Tiree* on 15 Apr, Beinn Buidhe (Calgary) *Mull* on 20 Apr and at Dunamuck *Mid-Argyll* on 21 Apr. These were followed by arrivals at The Manse (Scarinish) *Tiree* on 23 Apr, Barnaline Lodge and Crinan Ferry *Mid-Argyll* on 24 Apr, Loch Nell *Mid-Argyll* on 25 Apr, Brainport Bay *Mid-Argyll* on 27 Apr, The Oa *Islay* and Taynish NNR *Mid-Argyll* on 28 Apr.

**Breeding** Birds were widespread in May-Jul with records from 7 sites in *Mid-Argyll*, 5 sites on *Mull*, 1 site in *North Argyll*, RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* and Barrs (Loch Etive) *North Argyll* in May only and Towards Quay and Loch Tarsan *Cowal* in Jul only. Birds were still calling at Brainport Bay *Mid-Argyll* until 22 Jun although the only confirmed breeding record was of birds on the point of fledging at Allt a' Bheoil-ath Dheirg (Loch Ba) *Mull* on 13 Jun.

**Autumn** There was just one late record: an adult male at Moine Mhor *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Aug.

**BLUE ROCK THRUSH** *Monticola solitarius*

*A vagrant: one record; a first summer male present at Skerryvore, Tiree on 4 to 7 Jun 1985 and found dead on 8 Jun. Accepted as the first record of a genuinely wild bird in Britain.*

No records.

**WHINCHAT** *Saxicola rubetra* Gocan

**RED LIST** *A sparse but widespread, summer visitor*

**Spring** Arrival dates were similar to previous years with first arrivals noted at: Crackaig *Mull* on 20 Apr, Ormaig (Ulva) *Mull* on 22 Apr, Ath Mhic Mhairtein *Mid-Argyll*, Kintraw (Loch Craignish) *Mid-Argyll* and Cruachan (Treshnish) *Mull* all on 24 Apr, Bragleenbeg House (Loch Scammadale), *Mid-Argyll*, Gearach *Islay* and *Colonsay* all on 25 Apr, Ardnave Loch *Islay* and Strone Road End *Cowal* both on 26 Apr, Ballochroy Glen, *Kintyre* and Avinlussa *Islay* both on 28 Apr, with scattered records from 4 other sites on *Islay* and 1 more site on *Mull* by the end of Apr. Elsewhere, by the end of May, records had also been received from sites in: *Colonsay* (1), *Cowal* (1), *Islay* (8), *Mid-Argyll* (12), *Mull* (7), and *Tiree* (1).

**Breeding** Possible or probable breeding was recorded at sites in: *Cowal* (1), *Islay* (8), *Kintyre* (1), *Jura* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (13), *Mull* (13) and *North Argyll* (1), and confirmed breeding was recorded at Inveroran (Loch Tulla) *North Argyll* where 3 fledglings were seen on 29 Jun and at Crinan Ferry *Mid-Argyll* where a family with 3 juveniles was seen on 19 Aug.

**Autumn** The last birds were 1 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 16 Sep, 2 at Loch Beg *Mull* on 29 Sep and a very late bird at Machrihanish Holiday Park *Kintyre* on 22 Oct.

**EUROPEAN STONECHAT** *Saxicola torquatus* Clacharan

*A widespread resident, but some leave breeding areas during winter. Numbers can decline dramatically after severe winters.*

**Winter/spring** To the end of Mar, single birds and pairs were noted at sites in: *Colonsay* (2), *Cowal* (1), *Islay* (10), *Kintyre* (1), *Mid-Argyll* (4), *Mull* (2), *North Argyll* (2), and *Tiree* (5). There were no records from: *Coll* or *Jura*

**Breeding** Breeding was possible or probable at sites in: *Coll* (4), *Colonsay* (39 territories, not including Oronsay), *Cowal* (5), *Islay* (22), *Jura* (1), *Kintyre* (4), *Mid-Argyll* (13), *Mull* (24), and *Tiree* (10) and was confirmed at sites in: *Coll* (1), *Colonsay* (1), *Islay* (3), *Mid-Argyll* (4), *Mull* (3), *North Argyll* (1) and *Tiree* (4) with the first fledglings noted on 6 May at Loch Buie *Mull*. 23 were counted at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 6 Jul and 60 around Bowmore *Islay* on 13 Sep, suggesting a good breeding year.

**Autumn/winter** From Oct to Dec birds were recorded at sites in: *Colonsay* (6), *Islay* (26), *Mid-Argyll* (2), *North Argyll* (1) and *Tiree* (scattered singles and pairs around the island). Peak counts included 40-50 birds around *Islay* on 12 Oct and 14 at Killinallan *Islay* on 5 Nov.

**NORTHERN WHEATEAR** *Oenanthe oenanthe* Brù-gheal

*A common summer visitor; and passage migrant.*

**Spring** First arrivals were a little earlier than in 2013 with the first on 7 Mar at Auchencorvie *Kintyre* and other early birds on 12 Mar at Saligo, Ardnave and The Oa *Islay*, on 13 Mar at Loch na Keal and Fidden *Mull*, on 15 Mar at West Hynish *Tiree*, on 17 Mar at Rhunahaorine Point *Kintyre*, and on 20 Mar at Dubh Loch *Colonsay* and Rockside *Islay*. Birds were noted more generally thereafter to the end of Apr at sites in: *Coll* (7), *Colonsay* (11), *Cowal* (7), *Islay* (35), *Kintyre* (5), *Mid-Argyll* (17), *Mull* (9) and *Tiree* (7). Higher counts were: 10 at The Oa *Islay* on

26 Mar, 10 at Fidden *Mull* on 30 Mar, 25 at Crackaig *Mull* on 1 Apr, 25 on *Tiree* on 5 Apr including 11 at Traigh Bhi, 23 at Haunn *Mull* on 6 Apr and 10 at West Hynish *Tiree* on 20 Apr.

**Breeding** Confusion can arise where some birds will have started breeding while others are still on migration. From May to end Aug records of possible/probable breeders were noted at sites in: *Coll* (3), *Colonsay* (7), *Cowal* (3), *Islay* (35), *Kintyre* (4), *Mid-Argyll* (18), *Mull* (61), *North Argyll* (5) where the first young were noted at Cruachan on 6 Jun and *Tiree* where successful breeding was widespread with the first brood noted on 21 Jun. Probable passage birds included 12 together at Balephuill *Tiree* on 3 May and 9 near the shore at Loch Crinan *Mid-Argyll* on 6 May.

**Autumn** Only small numbers (6 or less) were seen at sites in: *Coll* (2), *Colonsay* (14), *Islay* (14), *Kintyre* (4), *Mid-Argyll* (1), *Mull* (2), and *Tiree* (2). The last of the year were 2 late birds at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 25 Oct.

#### **‘GREENLAND’ WHEATEAR** *Oenanthe. o. leucorhoa*

**A scarce passage migrant: probably under-recorded.**

**Spring** The first of spring was at Loch a’ Phuill *Tiree* on 26 Apr with many then seen around *Tiree* to mid-May with high counts of 25 around the island on 29 Apr and 15 at Hough Bay on 15 May. The only other records came from Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* where single males were present briefly on 8 and 18 May.

**Autumn** The majority of autumn records also came from *Tiree*, with the first 7 at West Hynish on 3 Aug and then regular sightings including peaks of 60 around the island on 15 Sep, 30 on 22 Sep and 6 at Balemartine on 4 Oct with the last at Heylipol on 26 Oct. Elsewhere the only records were of 1 at Bowmore *Islay* on 13 Sep and 1 at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 16-17 Sep.

#### **DUNNOCK** *Prunella modularis* Gealbhoonn-nam-preas

**AMBER LIST A** *widespread resident breeder although nowhere numerous. It is scarce on Coll and Jura and does not breed on Tiree. Recent observations would suggest that birds are quite frequent in pre-thicket/thicket conifer plantations as well as in more traditional habitats. Increased numbers in autumn presumably relate to migrants.*

**Winter** To the end of Mar 1-5 birds were reported from all areas apart from *Coll* and *Mull*. Larger numbers reported were not necessarily flocks, but counts in an area.

**Breeding** Birds were recorded in all areas except *Jura*, but probably bred in all areas except *Tiree*. The only confirmed breeding was a clutch of 4 at Balerominmore *Colonsay* on 19 May and fledged young at Arinagour *Coll* on 9 Jul.

**Autumn/winter** From Aug-Dec 1-4 birds were reported from all areas except *Jura* and *North Argyll*.

#### **HOUSE SPARROW** *Passer domesticus* Gealbhoonn

**RED LIST A** *resident breeding bird commonly associated with human habitation. Distribution is rather localised in sparsely inhabited areas. Larger flocks gather in late summer and autumn where traditional agriculture persists.*

**Winter/spring** There were reports from all areas except *Coll*, *Jura*, *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll*. Flocks were small, however flocks of over 20 were noted on *Colonsay* and *Tiree*. At Oronsay Farm *Colonsay* numbers peaked at 51 on 16 Jan. On *Tiree* the island total reached 110, made up of several flocks at Balephetrish, Balephuill, Kenovay and Baugh, the largest aggregation being 60 at Baugh on 25 Jan.

**Summer/breeding** Reported from all areas except *Jura*. First fledglings were reported on 5 May at Torr an Sgrithinn (Lochbuie) *Mull*. First fledglings were noted at Balephuill *Tiree* on 11 May,

17 days earlier than last year. Post breeding flocks then began to build, with 50 at Balephuill on 14 Jul, and 100 at Port Charlotte *Islay* on 16 Jul.

**Autumn/winter** Reported from Aug onwards from all areas except *Coll*, *Cowal* and *Jura*. Sightings of 20 or more included: 30 at Sleidmeall (Ardnave) *Islay* on 1 Aug, 40 at Port Charlotte *Islay* on 3 Aug, 30 at Connel *Mid-Argyll* on 21 Aug and 30 at Fidden *Mull* on 27 Aug. At Oronsay Farm *Colonsay* numbers peaked at 93 on 28 Aug. The largest flocks were on *Tiree* with 220 noted at Ruaig on 1 Sep, and numbers at Balephuill consistent around 60 through to Dec.

**EURASIAN TREE SPARROW** *Passer montanus* Gealbhoonn-nan-craobh  
**RED LIST** *Nowadays mostly a very scarce migrant but after a gap of nearly 30 years breeding took place on Islay in 2009.*

**Spring** Singles were at Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 25 Apr and at Carradale *Kintyre* on 1 May.

**WESTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL** *Motacilla flava flavissima* Breacan-buidh  
**RED LIST** *A scarce passage migrant: birds of the Blue-headed race M. f. flava occur from time to time, and there have been at least two records of the Grey-headed race M. f. thunbergi (in 1985 and 2005).*

**Autumn** A first-winter was at Barrapol *Tiree* on 4 Oct [John Bowler, Jim Dickson]. Some aspects of the plumage indicated, although not conclusively, that it was of the Grey-headed race *M. f. thunbergi*. Record was accepted by the ABRC.

**CITRINE WAGTAIL** *Motacilla citreola*  
*A vagrant: one record; a first-winter bird was at Loch a' Phuill, Tiree on 27 to 29 Sep 2012.*  
No records.

**GREY WAGTAIL** *Motacilla cinerea* Breacan-baintighearna  
**RED LIST** *Widespread resident breeding species, although does not breed on Tiree and Coll; some emigration in winter.*

**Winter/spring** Singles were recorded in *Islay* and *Mid-Argyll* in Jan and Feb and in *Mull* in Feb. Birds more widespread and numerous in Mar with: 2 at Otter Ferry *Cowal* on 10 Mar, 3 on the Crinan Canal *Mid-Argyll* on 17 Mar, 2 at Aros Castle *Mull* on 18 Mar, and 1 at Cruachan Power Station *North Argyll* on 18 Mar.

**Breeding/summer** Pairs were reported at several sites in *Cowal* but breeding was only confirmed at: Connel and Inverliever Forest *Mid-Argyll*, Benmore Lodge (Loch Ba) *Mull*, and Cruachan Power Station *North Argyll*.

**Autumn/winter** Reports of 3 birds were received from: Blairmore Farm (Loch Long) *Cowal* on 15 Sep, Loch Garasdale *Kintyre* on 17 Sep, and Ardbeg *Islay* on 1 Oct. One bird was reported at Balephuill *Tiree* on 7 Oct. Reports of 1 or 2 birds continued through Oct and Nov from: *Cowal*, *Islay*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull*, and *North Argyll*.

**PIED WAGTAIL** *Motacilla alba yarrellii* Breac-an-t-sìl  
*A widespread and common breeder: absent from many areas in winter. Returning birds generally arrive in late Feb to early Mar and depart Aug-Oct.*

**Winter/spring** Recorded from all areas except *Coll* and *Jura*. Larger groups included 19 at Point Sands Holiday Park *Kintyre* on 2 Jan, 15 at Barsloisnoch *Mid-Argyll* on 15 Feb, and 18 at Chiscan (The Laggan) *Kintyre* on 28 Feb. Numbers increased noticeably in Apr with 50 reported roosting in a reed bed at Balephuill *Tiree* on 23 Apr.

**Breeding/summer** Recorded in all areas with breeding confirmed in: *Coll, Colonsay, Mid-Argyll, Mull, North Argyll* and *Tiree*. Notable gatherings included 47 at Loch na Cuilce *Mull* on 25 Jun and 15 at Kilchoman *Islay* on 30 Jul.

**Autumn/winter** Recorded in all areas except *Coll* and *Jura*. There were some large passage gatherings from Aug through to Sep: 30 on Lismore *North Argyll* on 30 Aug, 50 at the Add estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Sep, and 35 at Barrapol *Tiree* on 27 Sep. Numbers declined during Oct and, after 15 at Balephuill *Tiree* on 7 Oct, only single figure reports were received.

**‘WHITE’ WAGTAIL** *Motacila alba alba*

**A passage migrant, usually recorded in spring; extent of autumn passage obscured by identification difficulties. May have bred.**

**Winter/spring** First arrival was at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 20 Mar followed by 1 at Oronsay Farm *Colonsay* on 22 Mar. Birds had reached Crossapol Point *Tiree* by 2 Apr. Daily passage at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* was noted from 10 Apr. Flocks of 15 at Druim Mor (Oronsay) *Colonsay*, 15 at Caolas *Tiree*, and 12 at Carskey Bay *Kintyre* all on 19 Apr suggest a significant arrival. A pre-roost gathering of at least 100 was noted at Balephuill *Tiree* on 23 Apr. Daily passage at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* peaked at 30 on 28 Apr and 7 May. Small numbers were reported throughout May from: *Colonsay, Islay, Kintyre, Mull* and *Tiree*. Passage at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* continued in small numbers up to 21 Jun.

**Autumn/winter** Autumn passage at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* started on 16 Aug and continued almost daily in small numbers throughout the period. Elsewhere: 30 were at Kilbride (Seil Island) *Mid-Argyll* on 29 Aug, 8 were at Balnagown Loch (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 30 Aug, 10 were at the Add estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 11 Sep, 13 were at Traigh nam Barc *Colonsay* on 13 Sep, and 20 were at Sorobaidh Bay *Tiree* on 17 Sep. The final record was from Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 17 Oct.

**RICHARD’S PIPIT** *Anthus richardi*

**A vagrant: three records; singles on Islay, on 28 Sep 1971 and 10 Sep 1973 and on Colonsay on 18 Oct 2013.**

No records.

**TREE PIPIT** *Anthus trivialis* Riabhag-choille

**RED LIST** **A summer visitor breeding commonly on the mainland: also widespread on Jura and Mull, but very scarce on Islay.**

**Spring** A blanket arrival this year with birds reported from: Ardnaclach (Appin) *North Argyll* and Corra Farm (Otter Ferry) *Cowal* on 14 Apr; Loch Ba *Mull*, Uillt Ruadha *Islay*, Tullochgorm (Minard) *Mid-Argyll*, and Lochawe *North Argyll* on 15 Apr. Singing males were reported widely across: *Cowal, Jura, Mid-Argyll, Mull*, and *North Argyll* from 18 Apr.

**Breeding/summer** Breeding was confirmed at Claggain Bay *Islay* and Knock *Mull*. The last singing bird was noted at ‘S Airde Beinn *Mull* on 21 Jun.

**Autumn** A bird was at Sligrachan *Cowal* on 25 Jul. The last record was of one at Loch Beg *Mull* on 28 Sep.

**MEADOW PIPIT** *Anthus pratensis* Snàthag

**AMBER LIST** **An abundant breeding species: most leave higher ground and some islands in winter, and significant flocks occur on passage. Those wintering in Argyll occur mainly in coastal and low lying localities.**

**Winter/spring** Larger flocks included: 24 at Millhouse *Cowal* on 11 Feb, 80 at Westport Marsh *Kintyre* on 11 Mar, 120 at Balephuill *Tiree* on 12 Mar, ‘many hundreds’ at The Oa *Islay* on 26

Mar, 38 at Druim Mor (Oronsay) *Colonsay* on 1 Apr, and 160 at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 2 Apr as breeding birds returned.

**Breeding/summer** Birds were reported during the breeding season from all areas. Breeding was confirmed from: *Colonsay, Islay, Mid-Argyll, Mull, North Argyll* and *Tiree*.

**Autumn/winter** Flocks were noted from mid-Jul onwards with: 40 at The Reef *Tiree* on 17 Jul, 21 on wires at Bridgend *Mid-Argyll* on 2 Aug, 60 at Heylipol *Tiree* on 4 Aug, 120 at Carnan Mor *Tiree* on 1 Sep, 160 at the Add estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 4 Sep, and 60 at Loch Garasdale *Kintyre* on 18 Sep. Flock sizes declined in October and thereafter most reports were in single figures.

### **RED-THROATED PIPIT** *Anthus cervinus*

**A vagrant: one record; at Tobermory, Mull on 7 May 1975.**

No records.

### **EURASIAN ROCK PIPIT** *Anthus petrosus petrosus* Gabhagan

**A common resident breeding species on coasts, sea lochs and islands with some emigration and passage in autumn: scarce passage and winter visitor elsewhere.**

**Winter/spring** Single figure reports were received from all areas except *Jura* and *Tiree*. 10 were reported from Bunessan *Mull* on 10 May.

**Breeding/summer** Breeding was confirmed in: *Colonsay, Cowal, Mid-Argyll, Mull*, and *Tiree*, including on the McCormaig Isles *Mid-Argyll* and the Treshnish Isles *Mull*. About 90 birds were counted between Gartbreck and Laggan Point *Islay* on 20 Jul, a distance of ca 3km.

**Autumn/winter** Reports included: 10 at Gairletter Point *Cowal* on 20 Oct, 46 at Ardnave Point *Islay* on 3 Nov, 23 at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 9 Nov, 18 at Hough Bay *Tiree* on 15 Nov, and 31 at Tayinloan *Kintyre* on 6 Dec.

### **'SCANDINAVIAN' ROCK PIPIT** *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

**A Rock Pipit sub-species. Rare visitor but true status in Argyll is still unclear. Only one accepted record, from Mull on 13 May 2011.**

**Spring** One in summer plumage was at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 18 May [Eddie Maguire]. This individual was in an unusually bright plumage and gave rise to much debate over its identity. The ABRC referred this record to the SBRC and it was accepted as this race.

*Some other 'possibles' were reported in spring, however none showed all the spring plumage characteristics required to conclusively separate them from A. p. petrosus.*

### **WATER PIPIT** *Anthus spinoletta*

**AMBER LIST A vagrant: only one accepted Argyll record; at West Hynish, Tiree on 19 Nov 2013.**

No records.

### **BUFF-BELLIED PIPIT** *Anthus rubescens*

**A vagrant: one record; a first-winter bird at Ruaig, Tiree on 27 Sep 2012.**

No records.

### **BRAMBLING** *Fringilla montifringilla* Breacan-caorainn

**An uncommon winter visitor in varying numbers: there have been a few summer records.**

**Winter/spring** Few reports from just 3 areas. On *Mull* there were 2 at Gruline House on 27 Jan and 1 at Killiechronan on 17 Feb. In *Mid-Argyll* there was 1 at Drimfern (Glen Aray) on 1 Feb

and another, or the same, on 3 Mar and 9 were at Oakfield (Lochgilphead) on 4 Apr. On *Islay* there were 5 at Corsapol on 8 Feb.

**Autumn/winter** A very early bird was noted at Bowmore *Islay* on 13 Sep. First of the main autumn influx was an unprecedented arrival of 56 birds at Balephuill *Tiree* on 1 Oct, which increased to 80 by 13 Oct, with many less numerous sightings around the island during this period, the last on *Tiree* being 6 at Balephuill on 27 Oct. 2 were at Oronsay Farm *Colonsay* on 28 Oct and 1 was at Abhainn a'Chuirn on 9 Nov. On *Islay* singles were at Kilchoman on 27 Sep, 23 Oct and 1 Nov, at The Oa on 8 Oct and 3 there on 11 Oct. RSPB Loch Gruinart had singles on 13 and 16 Oct, while there were singles at Ardbeg on 21 Oct and at Bunnahabhainn on 16 Nov. The first on *Mull* were 2 at Balmeanach (Fishnish) on 12 Oct followed by 1 at Lochdon on 3 Nov. In *Kintyre* there was 1 on Gigha on 11 Oct and 2 at Machrihanish SBO on 13 Oct with 1 there on 17 Oct and 1 by Campbeltown Loch on 3 Nov. In *Mid-Argyll* 1 was at Cairnbaan on 26 Oct and again on 1 Nov.

### **COMMON CHAFFINCH** *Fringilla coelebs* Breacan-beithe

**An abundant resident breeder: except on Coll (breeds only in very small numbers) and Tiree. Foraging flocks gather outwith the breeding season when numbers are augmented by winter visitors.**

**Winter/spring** Reported from all areas except *Coll* and *North Argyll*. Few counts of 50 or more included: 80 at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 16 Jan, 120 on 30 Jan, and 60 at Leanach (Strachur) *Cowal* 10 Feb.

**Summer/breeding** Widespread and recorded in all areas. Probably breeding in all these areas including *Coll* but not *Tiree*, where it was present in early Apr but disappeared until 1 was seen at Balephuill on 17 Jun. The first fledglings were noted at Tullochgorm *Mid-Argyll* on 17 May, a month earlier than last year.

**Autumn/winter** Reports were widespread, and from all areas except *Jura*. Counts of 50 or more included: 50 at Cairnbaan *Mid-Argyll* on 28 Aug, 50 at Ford *Mid-Argyll* on 8 Nov and 140 at Keills *Islay* on 16 Nov.

### **HAWFINCH** *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* Gobhach

**RED LIST A rare visitor: 19 records between 1953 and 2013.**

**Spring** A male was at Urugaig *Colonsay* on 26 Apr [A. Jones, P. Jones, C. Seymour, David Jardine]. One was at Killiechronan *Mull* on 6-7 May [Jan Fuller, Alan Scofield]. One was at Kilchoman schoolhouse (near Gruinart) *Islay* on 7 May [Mary Redman]. Records were accepted by the ABRC. (See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.126).

### **COMMON ROSEFINCH** *Erythrura erythrura*

**A scarce to rare visitor which may have bred: 19 records between 1989 and 2013, mostly in May and Jun however more frequent reports of juveniles in the autumn recently.**

**Spring** An adult female or 2CY was at Balephuill *Tiree* on 28 May [John Bowler].

**Autumn** Record numbers. A juvenile was at Balephuill *Tiree* on 12 Sep [John Bowler]. A juvenile was at Balemartine *Tiree* on 4 Oct [John Bowler, Jim Dickson]. A juvenile was at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 12 Nov [Eddie Maguire, Iohmar McMillan] and a juvenile was at Bunessan *Mull* on 30 Nov [George Newall]. All records were accepted by the ABRC.

### **EURASIAN BULLFINCH** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* Corcan-coille

**AMBER LIST A widely but thinly distributed resident. Scarce or absent on most of the islands apart from Islay and Mull. Flocks occur in winter.**

**Winter/spring** Early year records from *Mid-Argyll*, *Cowal* and *Islay* were all in single figures, except a report of 10 at Doire Darrach (Loch Tulla) *North Argyll* on 14 Jan.

**Breeding** Noted across all areas except *Coll*, *Colonsay* and *Tiree*. First confirmed breeding was a pair with 3 young at Cnoc nan Gabhar (Carradale) *Kintyre* on 16 Jul. Post-breeding adults with juvs. were noted at Toberonochy (Luing) *Mid-Argyll* on 2 Aug, Loch Ba *Mull* on 4 Aug, Croig *Mull* on 5 Aug, Cairnbaan *Mid-Argyll* on 10 Aug, Dubh Loch Mor *North Argyll* on 26 Aug and Ardencaple House (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 7 Oct.

**Autumn** Records were from *Islay* (7 sites), *Kintyre* (2 sites), *Mid-Argyll* (8 sites), *Mull* (5 sites) and *North Argyll* (4 sites). One flying over Carnan Mor *Tiree* on 8 Oct was notable.

## **EUROPEAN GREENFINCH** *Chloris chloris* Glaisean-daraich

**A locally common resident and partial migrant: with fewer breeding on the islands than on the mainland. Small groups are widespread outside the breeding season.**

**Winter/spring** Early year records were generally in single figures from all areas except *Coll*, *Colonsay*, *Jura* and *North Argyll*. A few groups of 10 or more were seen in *Kintyre*: 14 at Tayinloan on 4 Jan, and 10 at Westport Marsh on 11 Jan.

**Breeding** Reported present in all areas except *Jura*, but confirmed breeding (fledged young) only from *Colonsay*.

**Autumn/winter** Reported present in all areas except *Cowal*, *Jura*, *Mull* and *North Argyll*, mainly in single figures. A few post-breeding flocks (notably low counts) of adults and juveniles with 10 or more including: 14 at Oronsay airstrip *Colonsay* on 28 Aug, 14 at Oronsay Farm *Colonsay* on 21 Sep, and 12 at Balemartine *Tiree* on 16 Nov.

## **COMMON LINNET** *Linaria cannabina* Gealan-lìn

**RED LIST A sparsely distributed partial migrant, breeding mainly on Islay, Tiree, and in Kintyre. Flocks occur locally in some areas in autumn with most reports from Colonsay, Islay, and Kintyre.**

**Winter/spring** First of the year were 2 at Balemartine *Tiree* on 14 Jan, being the first mid-winter record for the island. The only Feb report was 1 at Corsapol *Islay* on 12 Feb. More appeared there in Mar: 2 at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 11 Mar, 1 at Rockside on 20 Mar and 1 at Sanaigmore on 26 Mar. Birds also arrived in *Tiree* with 3 at Balephuill and 1 on The Reef on 27 Mar being the first. A single was noted at Craigs (Kilchenzie) *Kintyre* on 8 Mar and 4 were at Dunadd *Mid-Argyll* on 31 Mar.

**Breeding** Recorded as present, mostly in single figures, from all areas except *Cowal* and *Jura*. Some flocks were still about in Apr, apparently not having settled to breed on *Islay*: 60 at Newton House (Bridgend) on 18 Apr, 22 at Saligo Bay on 26 Apr. Such groups were smaller on *Tiree*: 11 at Kilmoluaig/Cornaigmore on 13 Apr and 12 at Balephuill on 20 Apr. The first confirmed breeding were fledglings at Balephuill on 13 Jun. Fledged birds were also found on Eilean Mor (McCormaig Islands) *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Jul. During Jul family groups joined to make larger flocks on *Tiree* with 15 at Vaul and 35 on The Reef, both on 31 Jul.

**Autumn/winter** Reports came from all areas except *Coll*, *Cowal*, *Jura*, and *North Argyll*. Substantial flocks grew in Sep, declined in Oct and disappeared during Nov. Peak numbers included: 400 at Oronsay airstrip *Colonsay* on 27 Sep, 200 at Saligo Bay *Islay* on 24 Sep, 500 at Killegruer (Glenbarr) *Kintyre* on 16-20 Sep and on *Tiree*: 160 at Balevullin on 30 Aug, 160 at Mannal on 8 Sep, 160 at Balephetrish on 29 Sep and 160 at Loch a'Phuill on 1 Oct.

## **TWITE** *Linaria flavirostris* Gealan-beinne

**RED LIST A local resident, mainly in coastal areas on the mainland and islands; winter flocks may comprise resident and migrants birds.**

**Winter/spring** Reported from all areas apart from *Coll, Cowal, Jura* and *Mid-Argyll*. The largest flocks were on *Islay* with 200 at Craighers (Gruinart) on 1 Jan, 150 at Kilchoman on 20 Jan, and 150 at Corsapol on 31 Mar. Other flocks over 50 were at RSPB Loch Gruinart and The Oa. Numbers on Oronsay *Colonsay* peaked at 45 on 7 Mar. *Tiree* could boast 240 on 29 Jan, split equally between The Reef and Sandaig. There were still 100 at Hynish on 13 Feb, although *Tiree* numbers declined after that. In *Kintyre* there were 20 at Tayinloan Jetty on 2 Jan, and the 8 at Machrihanish SBO on 11 Mar included birds that had been colour-ringed in previous autumns.

**Breeding** A few flocks persisted into Apr, as at Sanaigmore *Islay* with 40 on 11 Apr. By May these had scattered and birds were singing and displaying. Birds were reported from all areas except *Cowal, Jura* and *North Argyll*. The first fledged young were seen at Carnan Mor on *Tiree* on 14 Jun, on *Islay* at Ardnave on 18 Jun and on *Colonsay* at Port Sgibinis on 18 Jun. After this family groups began to form into small flocks. Such a group of 20 was seen on Eilean Mor (McCormaig Isles) *Mid-Argyll* on 12 Jul. Numbers on Oronsay *Colonsay* started to build reaching 50 by 29 Jul.

**Autumn/winter** While reported in all areas except *Coll, Cowal* and *Jura*, the largest flocks were found on *Islay, Tiree* and *Colonsay*. As usual the best area on *Islay* is The Oa, where the regular flock peaked at 540 on 10 Nov. Elsewhere on *Islay* significant flocks included 200 at Saligo on 24 Sep, 150 at Balinaby on 24 Oct, 140 at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 30 Oct and 100 at Kilchoman on 29 Oct. On *Colonsay* the Oronsay airstrip flock built up from 50 on 1 Aug peaking at 250 on 25 Sep, and there were still 45 there on 28 Dec. The best site on *Tiree* was at The Reef, which peaked at 220 on 13 Oct. In *Kintyre*, unusually there was a flock of 30 seen on the sea wall opposite the Royal Hotel on 20 Sep, with 20 seen again on 30 Sep.

*In Kintyre the Machrihanish SBO Twite Study continued catching and colour-ringing during Sep, Oct and Nov, with 195 caught in Sep and 26 in Oct. See the ringing report for more results of Twite movements.*

## **LESSER REDPOLL** *Acanthis cabaret* Dearcan-seilich

**RED LIST A** *locally common partial migrant, breeding locally; numbers fluctuate from year to year. Post breeding flocks gather from July and most birds move south for the winter.*

**Winter/spring** First reports were 25 at Allt a Bheoil-ath Dheirg (Loch Ba) *Mull* on 4 Feb, a notable high count of 160 at the Moine Mhor *Mid-Argyll* on 13 Feb, then 6 at Ardgarten *Cowal* on 8 Mar. A single was at West Tarbert *Kintyre* on 29 Mar. Groups of up to 4 on *Tiree* in the second half of Apr were migrants and did not stay to breed.

**Breeding** Reported as present in single figures in all areas. Successful breeding must have taken place widely, but the only report was a small fledgling being fed on 13 Jun at Kintallen (Tayvallich) *Mid-Argyll*. At least 10 pairs were on *Colonsay* and at least 8 pairs at RSPB Loch Gruinart *Islay* on 6 Jul.

**Autumn/winter** It was not until 30 Aug that notable flocks were reported, with 80 at Port Ramsay (Lismore) *North Argyll*, followed by 68 at Loch Garasdale *Kintyre* on 15 Sep, 40 on Ulva Islands (Loch Sween) *Mid-Argyll* on the same day, and 20 at Corsopol *Islay* on 11 Oct. There were smaller flocks in these areas and on *Tiree*, where the peak was 15 at The Reef on 27 Sep.

## **COMMON REDPOLL** *Acanthis flammea*

**Includes Mealy Redpoll** *C. f. flammea* & **Greenland Redpoll** *C. f. rostrata* (latter now sometimes known as *North-western Redpoll*, which includes *islandica*). *A scarce passage migrant: and irregular winter visitor.*

**Spring/summer** One, possibly more, were at Urugaig *Colonsay* on 19 May [David Jardine], one was at Calgary *Mull* on 22 May and one was at Dervaig *Mull* on 24 May [David Hatfield]. On *Tiree*: 4 were at Balephuill on 28 and 30 Apr with a max. of 4 there on 20 May [John Bowler].

**Breeding** On *Tiree*: a singing male was at Balephuill on 15-23 Jun. 4 fledged juveniles were at Balephuill on 22-31 Aug from a nest at Balemartine, with juveniles remaining into Sep [John Bowler].

**Autumn** On *Tiree*: a max. of 12 were at Balephuill in Sep, with only single birds in Oct [John Bowler].

Birds of the NW race *C. f. rostrata* were on *Tiree* at Balephuill, with the first one there on 21 Sep and 3 there on 22-30 Sep. A max. of 15 were there on 1-4 and 8 Oct, with the last bird there on 6 Nov. Very large Greenland (NW) type birds were noted at Balephuill on 29-30 Oct, 1 and 3-6 Nov [John Bowler]. (See list of rejected, pending etc. records on p.126).

## **ARCTIC REDPOLL** *Acanthis hornemanni*

***A vagrant: three records: two of the Scandinavian/Russian race exilipes (Coues's Redpoll) with one on Islay on 22 Sep 2001 and the other on Tiree on 23 Oct 2004 and one of the nominate Greenland/Arctic Canada race hornemanni (Hornemann's Redpoll) on Islay on 10 Apr 2012.***

No records.

## **COMMON CROSSBILL (RED CROSSBILL)** *Loxia curvirostra* Cam-ghob

***An irruptive species: large numbers breed in good cone years but few stay when cones are scarce.***

**Winter/spring** Widely reported mostly in single figures from *Mid-Argyll* (10 sites), including song at Achnamara on 18 Feb. Elsewhere reported from *Cowal* (3 sites), *Islay* (2 sites) and *Mull* (4 sites). Larger flocks included 20 at An Sidhean (Glen Bellart) *Mull* on 12 Feb, and 20 at Otter House (Kilfinan) *Cowal* on 18 Feb.

**Breeding** Fledged young were noted from High Barnakill/Dunadd *Mid-Argyll* on 8 May and Birdfield (Minard) *Mid-Argyll* on 11 May and from Benmore Lodge (Loch Ba) *Mull* on 9 May. Widely recorded as present across *Mid-Argyll* (12 sites) and *Mull* (13 sites). A flock of 20 at Doire Darrach (Loch Tulla) on 1 May was one of 3 records in *North Argyll*. 2 were at Loch Allan (Keills) *Islay* on 28 Apr and 6 were at Ballimony (Rhinn) *Islay* on 30 May. 3 were at Barr an Taolinn (Kilfinan) *Cowal* on 27 Apr and 1 was at Colonsay House *Colonsay* on 26 Apr.

**Autumn/winter** Two flying over Carnan Mor *Tiree* on 30 Sep were notable. Reported in small numbers from *Kintyre* (4 sites), *Mid-Argyll* (4 sites), *Mull* (5 sites), and *Cowal* (1 site).

## **EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH** *Carduelis carduelis* Lasair-choille

***A widely distributed resident but absent as a breeding species on Tiree with recent breeding on Coll and Colonsay. Flocks occur in autumn.***

**Winter/Spring** Reported in single figures from all areas except *Coll*, *Cowal*, *Jura* and *North Argyll*. Flocks of 10 or more included: 10 at Kenovay *Tiree* on 4 Jan and 17 at Balinoe *Tiree* on 4 Jan, 40 at Cullipool Quarry (Luig) *Mid-Argyll* on 25 Jan, and a flock of 40 seen over the sea at Machrihanish SBO *Kintyre* on 2 Apr and 18 there on 12 Apr.

**Breeding** Reported present from all areas. First fledged brood reported at Colonsay House *Colonsay* on 25 May. Other reports of recently fledged birds from Kilchoman *Islay* on 8 Jun, Kintallen (Tayvallich) *Mid-Argyll* 15 Jun and Balvicar (Seil) *Mid-Argyll* on 17 Jun. On *Tiree* a fledged brood at Balephuill on 7 Jun was only the island's second successful nest. A late brood of fledglings was at Port Charlotte *Islay* on 6 Aug and a later brood recorded at Tullochgorm *Mid-Argyll* on 16 Aug.

**Autumn/winter** Autumn flocks were larger and more numerous than earlier in the year, and birds were found in all areas except *Jura*. Flocks over 30 were common through Aug and Sep. On *Islay* there were 200 on the High Road B8016 on 22 Aug, 40 at Rockside (Kilchoman) on 12 Sep, 45 at Kilchoman on 17 Sep, and 80 at RSPB Loch Gruinart on 26 Sep. On *Mull* there were 200 at Tobermory on 13 Aug and 30 at Haunn (Treshnish) on 29 Sep. In *Mid-Argyll* there were 45 at Add Estuary on 28 Aug, rising to 65 on 5 Sep, and 30 were at Eilean Traigh (Ormsary) on 31 Dec.

#### **EURASIAN SISKIN** *Spinus spinus* Gealag-bhuidhe

**A locally common partial migrant: present in all areas apart from Coll and Tiree where it is an occasional visitor. Numbers fluctuate from year to year depending on cone crops.**

**Winter/spring** Relatively few reports, mostly in single figures, from *Islay*, *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll*, *Mull* and *North Argyll*. Few larger flocks were reported, all *Mid-Argyll*: 10 at Cullipool Quarry (Luing) on 25 Jan, 30 at Cairnbaan on 13 Mar, and 13 at Lochgair on 15 Mar. 2 on *Coll* on 27 Apr and 3 on *Tiree* on 28 Apr were late migrants.

**Breeding/summer** Present in all areas except *Coll* and *Tiree*. A few late groups around not yet settled to breed included: 21 at West Tarbert *Kintyre* on 26 Apr and 3 May, and 30 at Carsaig Bay *Mid-Argyll* on 3 May. Breeding confirmed only from *Mid-Argyll*: feeding young at Cairnbaan on 11 May, and first fledged young at Kintallen (Tayvallich) on 11 May. Thereafter some merging of family groups led to some smaller flocks appearing again: e.g. 24 at West Tarbert *Kintyre* on 6 Jul.

**Autumn/winter** Reports declined and were mostly in single figures from all areas except *Colonsay* and *Jura*. Larger groups were noted only on *Islay*: 20 at Loch Lossit on 8 Sep and 10 at Ballygrant Woods on 29 Oct. 1 was on *Tiree* on 11-12 Oct and 2 were on *Coll* on 18 Oct.

#### **SNOW BUNTING** *Plectrophenax nivalis* Gealag-an-t-sneachda

**RED LIST** *Occurring annually in varying numbers (on passage and in winter): along the coast and in the hills and has probably bred in North Argyll.*

**Winter/spring** One was at The Reef and 2 at Sandaig *Tiree* on 4 Jan. 2 were on Maol nan Damh (above Craignure) *Mull* on 23 Jan. A regular single was at Ardnave *Islay* from Jan to Mar, with singles at 3 other sites during Mar: Ballinaby, RSPB Loch Gruinart and Claddach with the last single at Claddach on 17 Apr.

**Autumn/winter** First of the autumn was a single at Carnan Mor *Tiree* on 28 Sep. Ones and twos were present around the island until the last at Traigh nan Gillean on 14 Dec. The first on *Islay* were 5 at Sleidmeall (Ardnave) on 10 Oct, then regularly in the Ardnave area peaking at 20 on 9 Nov, and seen at 5 other sites around the island. There were singles around Oronsay *Colonsay* through Oct and Nov. A single was at (Craighouse) *Jura* on 5 Nov. On the mainland, a flock of 25 were in Glen Massan *Cowal* on 2 Dec. In *Mid-Argyll* 8 were at Crinan Ferry (Add Estuary) on 9 Nov, and 4 were at Tayinloan Jetty *Kintyre* on 18-19 Nov. The last of the year was a single at Claonaig Bay *Kintyre* on 28 Dec.

#### **LAPLAND BUNTING** (LAPLAND LONGSPUR) *Calcarius lapponicus*

**AMBER LIST** *A scarce passage migrant: recorded most frequently in autumn.*

**Winter/spring** Singles were at Loch a' Phuill *Tiree* on 20 Jan and An Dun Broch (Lismore) *North Argyll* on 1 Mar, 3 were at Eilean Mhic Coinnich *Islay* on 25 Mar, 1 was at Fidden *Mull* on 30 Mar and 1 was at Oronsay airstrip *Colonsay* on 6 to 9 Apr.

**Autumn/winter** Autumn movement began on 7 Sep with one on Oronsay *Colonsay*. Most subsequent records were from *Tiree*: singles at Carnan Mor on 20 Sep, at Hough on 18 Nov, and at Gott Tip on 15 Dec. The last of the year was a single at Port Mor *Colonsay* on 26 Dec.

## **WHITE-THROATED SPARROW** *Zonotrichia albicollis*

*No previous Argyll records of this North American bunting (sparrow).*

**Spring** A singing male was seen and photographed in a garden nr. Otter Ferry Cowal on 19 Jun [Tom & Shirley Callan, Jim Dickson et al]. Record was accepted by the BBRC and becomes a new species for Argyll. (See article on page 140).

*There are 20 previous Scottish records of this species with only one other on the mainland at Caithness in 1970.*

## **YELLOWHAMMER** *Emberiza citrinella* Buidheag-bhealaidh

**RED LIST** *A localised resident which is absent from Coll and Tiree and appears to be declining elsewhere. Currently, most birds breed near the coast. All records are welcome.*

**Winter/spring** Seven were on Luing Mid-Argyll on 29 Mar (1 at Cuan Point, 2 at Toberonochy and 4 at Black Mill Bay) and singles noted at 5 other Mid-Argyll sites. There were reports from 3 sites on Islay: Bowmore had 4 on 25 Feb, Kildalton had 6 on 24 Mar and Glenegedale had 1 on 26 Mar. On Mull there were 24 at Loch Don on 18 Mar, and a single at Fionnphort on 10 Mar. In Cowal there were 4 at Kilfinan on 2 Jan and 1 at Cora Farm on 10 Mar. In Kintyre there was 1 at Glenbarr Abbey on 9 Mar, and on Jura there were 6 at Lealt on 26 Mar.

**Breeding** Present in small numbers where they occurred. No evidence of confirmed breeding reported, but probable where found: Islay (5 sites), Jura (3 sites), Mid-Argyll (10 sites), and Mull (8 sites). No reports from Coll, Colonsay, Cowal, Kintyre, North Argyll and Tiree.

**Autumn/winter** Most reports were from Islay with 7 sites and counts of 15 at Persabus on 24 Oct and 6 at Bowmore also on 24 Oct. Elsewhere singles were at 4 sites across Mid-Argyll however 4+ in Lochgilphead on 26 Dec. There were two sites with singles on Mull and a single bird at Jura Forest Jura on 19 Aug.

## **ORTOLAN BUNTING** *Emberiza hortulana*

*A vagrant: one record; at Craignuire, Mull on 9 and 10 May 2009.*

No records.

## **RUSTIC BUNTING** *Emberiza rustica*

*A vagrant: two records; at Easter Ellister, Islay on 23 May 1980 and one at Hynish, Tiree on 4 Jun 1987.*

**Spring** Two records at Balephuill Tiree: a female or 2CY male on 21 May and an adult male in full song on 2-3 Jun [John Bowler]. A male, probably a 2CY bird was at Iona Mull on 27 May [Geoffrey Pain]. All records were accepted by the SBRC.

## **LITTLE BUNTING** *Emberiza pusilla*

*A vagrant: two records; one found dead at Skerryvore Lighthouse (about 15 km south-west of Tiree), on 27 Sep 1985 and one at Milton, Tiree on 23 Oct 2007.*

No records.

## **YELLOW-BREASTED BUNTING** *Emberiza aureola*

*A vagrant: one record; at Kenovay, Tiree on 5 Sep 1981.*

No records.

## **COMMON REED BUNTING** *Emberiza schoeniclus* Gealag-lòin

**AMBER LIST** *A locally distributed resident breeder: while nowhere abundant, small flocks sometimes gather outwith the breeding season.*

**Winter/spring** Most frequent, widespread and numerous on *Islay*, being regular at RSPB Loch Gruinart with peak counts of 17 on 5 Jan and 15 on 30 Jan, and ones and twos at 5 other sites across the island. On *Colonsay* it was regular at Oronsay Farm with a peak of 11 on 10 Feb, and found in single figures at 4 other sites. On *Tiree*, it was present at 4 sites with 5 at Hynish and 5 at Meningie on 19 Feb and up to 5 at Balephuill during Mar-Apr. On *Mull* there were 4 at Loch Pottie on 10 Feb and 16 at Ghillecaluim (Glen More) on 27 Feb. In *Kintyre* held 2-3 birds at Tayinloan during Jan-Feb. Other records were from *Mid-Argyll*, with a cluster round Kilmichael Glassary and a peak of 3 pairs at Bridgend on 19 Jan. There were 9 at Ardantrive Bay (Kerrera) on 19 Jan and a single at Drimfern (Glen Aray) on 30 Mar.

**Breeding** Reported present in all areas except *Jura*, with only single sites given for *Coll* (Druim Buidhe), *North Argyll* (Barcaldine Castle), *Kintyre* (Grenmanuilt Hill) and only 2 on *Cowal* (Strone Farm and Powder Dam), probably reflecting observer cover rather than scarcity. On *Colonsay* there were 4 Ters. on Oronsay and 48 on *Colonsay* reflecting more complete observer cover. On *Tiree* there were odd pairs scattered across the island at reedy sites. On *Mull* there were singles or pairs at 7 sites over the island, which was similar to *Islay*, but with 12 sites represented, and only one (Ballygrant Woods) with confirmed breeding (carrying food) on 30 May. In *Mid-Argyll* there were also 12 sites across the area, with confirmed breeding (carrying food) at Black Mill Bay (Luing) on 31 May.

**Autumn/winter** Reports from all areas except *Coll*, *Jura*, *Mull* and *North Argyll*. Widely reported across *Islay* (12 sites) mostly in single figures, but 'a fall' of 100 noted at Bolsay (Port Charlotte) on 11 Nov. In *Mid-Argyll* reports from 4 sites included a loose flock of 28 at Crinan Ferry on 12 Oct and 9 at the north end of Kerrera on 29 Dec. On *Tiree* there were up to 10 on the island across several scattered sites to the end of the year. Other reports were in single figures from *Cowal* (1 site) and *Kintyre* (2 sites).

## **BLACK-HEADED BUNTING** *Emberiza melanocephala*

**A vagrant: eight records; all of singles, during May to Jul, the last record being on Colonsay in Jun 2005.**

No records.

## **CORN BUNTING** *Emberiza calandra* Gealag-bhuachair

**RED LIST A former resident on Tiree and Coll but has recently become extinct. Last accepted report was in Aug 2006 on Coll.**

No records.

## **BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD** *Molothrus ater*

**A vagrant: one record; at Ardnave Point, Islay on 24 Apr 1988 and was the first British record.**

No records.

## **AMERICAN REDSTART** *Setophaga ruticilla*

**A vagrant: one record; a female or first-winter bird at Portnahaven, Islay on 1 Nov 1982. This remains the only Scottish record to date.**

No records.

## **NORTHERN PARULA** *Parula americana*

**A vagrant: one record; a first-winter at Balephuill, Tiree on 25-29 Sep 2010. This remains the only Scottish record to date.** No records.

## Escapes and Introductions

This section includes species which are not on the British list or whose occurrence in the UK is EXCLUSIVELY within Categories B, D or E (see definitions of categories on p.17). Other species, whose occurrence in Argyll arises partly or wholly from introduced birds which may not or do not form self-sustaining breeding populations, include White-fronted Goose, Snow Goose, Barnacle Goose, Mandarin Duck, Red Kite, Red-legged Partridge, Grey Partridge and Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon). These are dealt with in the main systematic list.

Other Category E species recorded in Argyll include: Swan Goose, Ross's Goose, Emperor Goose, Ruddy Shelduck, Cinnamon Teal, Wood Duck, Muscovy Duck, Pelican sp., Flamingo sp., Harris Hawk, Indian Peafowl, Green Pheasant, Reeves Pheasant, Eagle Owl, Ring-necked Parakeet, Red-headed Bunting, Zebra Finch and White-rumped Munia.

### **BLACK SWAN** *Cygnus atratus*

**Category E.** *An infrequent visitor to Argyll, often seen with Mute Swans.*

An adult was seen on *Mull* at Mishnish Lochs on 7 Mar, Lochdon on 7 Apr and Glen Forsa on 19 Jun. Possibly the same bird (a colour ringed female) was at Campbeltown Loch *Kintyre* and at Peninver *Kintyre* from 4 Aug to 19 Sep and later seen at the Add Estuary *Mid-Argyll* on 5 Oct. It was back at Campbeltown Loch on 16 Oct and had wandered north again to Loch Sween *Mid-Argyll* on 24 Oct and stayed until 23 Nov. From the darvic ring 'NIY' it had originated from Raphoe Castle Estate in Co. Donegal (per Rab Morton).



*Black Swan*

*Eddie Maguire*

### **RÜPPELL'S VULTURE** *Gyps rueppellii*

**Category E.**

An adult female (called Gandalf) appeared on *Islay* near Duich on the auspicious date of 1 Apr, having flown off during a display at the 'World of Wings' falconary centre in Cumbernauld on 23 Mar. Strong easterly winds had perhaps helped it make its way some 160 km west to Islay. Malcolm Ogilvie and Peter Roberts were able to recapture the rather hungry bird and return it to the centre in Cumbernauld via a stop in Balloch to hand it over, where BBC Scotland were keen to broadcast the story!

## 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 25.

Species	Recording area	Date(s)	Committee
Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Mid-Argyll</i>	02/03/2014	SBRC
Nightjar	<i>Garvellachs</i>	21/05/2014	ABRC
Nightjar	<i>Jura</i>	17/09/2014	ABRC
Bee-eater	<i>Islay</i>	18/04/2014	ABRC
Honey Buzzard	<i>Luing</i>	12/09/2014	ABRC
Short-toed Lark	<i>Oronsay</i>	23/10/2014	SBRC
Semipalmated Sandpiper	<i>Coll</i>	25/08/2014	BBRC
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	<i>Tiree</i>	26/08/2014	BBRC
Lesser Scaup	<i>Tiree</i>	1-30/10/2014	BBRC
Lesser Scaup	<i>Islay</i>	23/10/2015	BBRC

Most records are rejected not because the committee in question is convinced that a mistake has been made, but because the evidence provided is insufficient to establish the identification.

The following records of species on the BBRC, SBRC or ABRC for 2014 or before are still in circulation or being reviewed around the relevant rarity committees. In some instances the decision has been delayed pending receipt of further details.

Species	Recording area	Date(s)	Committee
Lesser Canada Goose ( <i>B. c. hutchinsii/minima</i> )*	<i>Islay and Tiree</i>	Various records 2002-2013	BBRC
‘Northern’ Eider	<i>Tiree</i>	07/04/2012	BBRC
‘Northern’ Eider	<i>Tiree</i>	16/05/2013	BBRC
Gyr Falcon	<i>Tiree</i>	May/Jun 2009	BBRC
Macronesian Shearwater	<i>Kintyre</i>	07/09/2000	BBRC
Long-billed Dowitcher	<i>Islay</i>	30/12/2009	BBRC
American Herring Gull	<i>Tiree</i>	22/03/2007	BBRC
American Herring Gull	<i>Tiree</i>	07/05/2007	BBRC
American Herring Gull	<i>Mid-Argyll</i>	29/12/2014 to 04/03/2015	BBRC
Thayer’s Gull	<i>Islay</i>	27/02- 24/04/2014	BBRC

\* BBRC is currently reviewing the identification criteria for this species.

Details of the following claimed 2014 records of species on the BBRC, SBRC and ABRC lists have not been received.

Species	Place	Recording Area	Date(s)
Todd's Canada Goose ( <i>B. c. interior/parvipes</i> )	Kilmichael Farm	Kintyre	18/2 & 18/3/2014
Lesser Canada Goose ( <i>B. c. hutchinsii/minima</i> )	Gruinart	Islay	5 & 10/10/2014
Hawfinch	Pennyghael	<i>Mull</i>	19/05/2014
Hobby	Portnacroish	<i>North Argyll</i>	04/06/2014
Common Rosefinch	Head of Loch Fyne	<i>Mid-Argyll</i>	15/06/2014
Common (Mealy) Redpoll	Ulva Island	<i>Mull</i>	08/07/2014
Long-tailed Skua	Kintyre-Islay Ferry	<i>N Gigha/Islay</i>	24/08/2014
Little Ringed Plover	Bellochantuy	<i>Kintyre</i>	20/05/2014
Sabine's Gull	Gunna Sound	<i>Tiree</i>	14/09/2014
Wilson's Storm Petrel	Tayinloan Jetty	<i>Kintyre</i>	24/10/2014
Reed Warbler	Calgary	<i>Mull</i>	09/05/2014
Gyr Falcon	Rockside	<i>Islay</i>	03/10/2014

**Anyone who saw any of these birds is encouraged to send in details. The records will not be referred to again in future reports unless details have by then been forwarded to the ABRC, BBRC or SBRC.**



*Sparrowhawk*

*Eddie Maguire*

# Magpies in Argyll

*Paul Daw*

The Eurasian Magpie (*Pica pica*), a member of the crow family (Corvidae), is found in a variety of habitats across England, Wales and N Ireland, but is more localised in Scotland and almost absent from the Highlands. Magpies have increased in much of Britain in numbers and range, especially since the 1960s (108% increase UK wide between 1967 and 2002 and 59% increase in Scotland 1994-2003). Despite this they have made little progress in Argyll and this paper examines possible reasons for this. It also challenges some of the accepted wisdom concerning the species, in particular the views expressed by most authorities that they are very sedentary birds and are averse to crossing the open sea.

## Historical distribution

Historical evidence appears to indicate that Magpies were formerly more widespread in Argyll.

The New Statistical Account of Scotland 1834-45 mentions Magpies in Argyll parishes as follows: **Ardchattan North Argyll** (N. of Loch Etive): listed under birds of prey as the ‘jay-pyot’ (*C. Pica*). **Inveraray Mid-Argyll**: listed among birds ‘which either inhabit or have occasionally been killed’ in the parish. **Killean & Kilchenzie Kintyre** (W. Kintyre): Magpie included in list of birds ‘which visit the parish’. The author says the list ‘may serve as a specimen for all of Kintyre’. **Skipness Kintyre** (E. Kintyre): mentioned under ‘birds of prey’. Magpies are not specifically mentioned in any other parishes. However the general reliability of this source may be open to question as the entry for **Strathlachlan Cowal** parish does not mention Magpies but says ‘The eagle pays occasional visits and some years ago one of that species carried off, killed, and devoured a child about three years old’(!)

Later in the nineteenth century H.D. Graham (1890) says: “The Magpie is well known on the mainland, but a very unusual straggler on the islands” and Harvie-Brown & Buckley (1892) mention two being killed at Calgary *Mull* in 1876 but that none have been seen there since. They also say Magpies are commoner in the ‘south districts about Ardchattan and Bunawe (sic.) but less abundant on the north side of the River Awe and central districts of the area.’

From the above it would appear that until the mid nineteenth century Magpies were fairly widespread, at least in parts of Argyll. Subsequently corvids were widely persecuted by gamekeepers, farmers and gardeners and Magpies suffered disproportionately, being easy to shoot. By 1938 they were common only in parts of the Central Lowlands and very scarce or non-existent in all other lowland areas. The population recovered slowly after World War II and it was not until the mid-1990s that the increase and range expansion in Scotland became more marked (Forrester et al. 2007).

## BTO Atlas records

According to the three BTO Atlases, there has been relatively little change in the distribution of Magpies in Argyll.

The **68-72 Atlas** (Sharrock 1976) contains confirmed breeding records for NM94 *North Argyll* (which is possibly an error), NN00 *Cowal/Mid-Argyll* (probably Strachur), NR96 *Cowal*, NS09 *Cowal*, NS16 *Cowal*, and NS17 *Cowal*. However, there is no mention in the Scottish Bird Reports for this period of any breeding records outwith *Cowal*. Perhaps contrary to expectations, the **68-72 Atlas** showed more confirmed breeding records here than either of the two subsequent breeding atlases. The six 10km squares with confirmed breeding were: NM94 (Appin area of North Argyll), NN00 (Inveraray, Mid-Argyll - Strachur area, Cowal), NR96 (Portavadie - Ardlamont area, Cowal), NS09 (Strathlachlan - Glenbranter area, Cowal), NS16 (Toward area, Cowal) and NS17 (Dunoon area, Cowal). George Newall (*pers. comm.*) tells me that when he first saw Magpies in Cowal in the early 1970s they were more numerous in the Innellan area and only later became commoner in Dunoon itself.

The verification process for the **68-72 Atlas** was less stringent than for subsequent volumes and the editor notes 'it is probable that the maps... still contain 50-100 minor errors...' (Sharrock 1976). This could well be an underestimate as there is no mention of the error that came up most often when validating the **07-11 Atlas**; namely incorrect reporting of grid references by observers. In this context the record for NM94 must be open to some doubt. It is a long way from any other confirmed breeding records and although the Argyll Bird Club (ABC) database has records of single birds in the Barcaldine area between 1996 and 2004 there has never been any suggestion of breeding and none of the subsequent atlases (including winter) has any records at all for this 10km square.

The NN00 breeding record almost certainly refers to Strachur rather than Inveraray as the only record in the database from the Inveraray area is one at the caravan park (Dalchenna - NN0806) in November 2003.

The **81-84 Winter Atlas** (Lack 1986) includes records for 11 Argyll 10km squares. Of these, seven (NN10, NR97, NS07, NS08, NS16, NS18 and NS19) are in *Cowal*, one (NR85) in *Kintyre*, two (NR76 and NR89) in *Mid-Argyll* and one (NN11) partly in *Cowal* and partly in *Mid-Argyll*. All are shown as small dots (1-20 records) apart from NS07, which is shown as a large dot (44+ records). However, there are no records for Dunoon NS17 (the source of most ABC records) and NS07 covers the Colintrave area of Cowal. This is probably a mapping error as it seems most unlikely that there were 44+ Magpies in the Colintrave area! Danielle and Graham Clark (*pers. comm.*) who have lived at Colintrave for many years agree that this is out of the question. So this dot should almost certainly be in NS17.

The **88-91 Atlas** (Gibbons *et al.* 1993) shows a curious set of records for Argyll. Confirmed breeding is indicated only for NN00 (Inveraray/ Strachur - presumably Strachur), NN10 (E of Strachur) and NS18 (Sandbank/Ardentinny). There are sight records for NS09 (Castle Lachlan/Glendaruel), NS19 (Glenbranter/Carrick Castle) and NN01 (Loch Awe/Glen Aray) but no records at all for NS17 (Dunoon/Bullwood etc) or NS16 (Innellan/Toward) the core breeding areas for Magpies in Argyll. As there is a confirmed breeding record for Innellan in the 1990 Argyll Bird Report (ABR 7: 49) there may be another mapping error here, or possibly a lack of contributors to that Atlas in the Dunoon area.

The **07-11 Atlas** (Balmer *et al.* 2013) shows Confirmed breeding for NS16 and NS17, as one would expect, and there is a probable breeding record NN00 (most likely Strachur). Also, possible breeding records for NS07, NR88 and NR98 but these are likely to be wandering birds that happened to be seen in potential breeding habitat during the breeding season.

All the Atlases show Magpies as more or less ubiquitous in Northern Ireland and most of the Republic of Ireland. Some of the highest densities occur in Northern Ireland and the greater Dublin area (Gibbons *et al.* 1993, Balmer *et al.* 2013).

### **A sedentary species?**

Most studies of Magpies have found them to be a very sedentary species (eg Wernham *et al.* 2002). Birkhead conducted a ten year study of Magpies in the Rivelin Valley to the east of Sheffield. He found that “In our study all magpies were highly sedentary, and the median distance moved between breeding attempts in successive years was just 25 metres. There was no difference between males and females. In terms of territories, 95% of birds moved less than one territory distance between years. Even over several years there was no tendency for dispersal distance to increase”. During this period he and his research students colour ringed 854 chicks, virtually every nestling hatched in the study area and some from the area immediately around it (Birkhead 1991). He says that “...we regularly searched all surrounding areas for colour-ringed birds, and in ten years of enthusiastic Magpie recording by the Sheffield Bird Study group we had only 4 reported sightings of individuals more than 2km from where they had been ringed” (Birkhead 1989).

The **81-84 Winter Atlas** (Lack 1986), in common with many other authorities, says of Magpies that ‘the species is non-migratory and remarkably sedentary in Britain and Ireland’. Clearly the Magpies appearing in various far flung parts of Argyll are unaware of this! Like most other sources *Birds of Scotland* states that the Magpie is a sedentary species that usually disperses only short distances. However, of the 27 recoveries in Scotland (as at 2007), 21 had moved less than 9 km, five 10-99 km and one more than 100 km. The latter had moved 163 km in two months (Forrester *et al.* 2007), from Tarbet, Loch Lomond to Aberdeenshire. However, in this context, it should be noted that relatively few Magpies are ringed in Britain and even fewer in Scotland. During the 8 years 2006-2013 only 238 Magpies were ringed in Scotland (fewer than 30 a year), *cf* tens of thousands of Blue Tits, Blackbirds, Common Chaffinches etc. Even in Britain and Ireland as a whole, only 4,185 Magpies were ringed during this period compared to hundreds of thousands of each of the more commonly caught species. So it’s perhaps not surprising that there were only 8 recoveries in Scotland during 2006-2013. Six of these had moved 5km or less, one had moved 16km and one 42km (<http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/ringing/publications/online-ringing-reports>).

Another possible factor is that most of the studies have been carried out in areas where Magpies are numerous and present in high population densities. It would make a certain amount of sense if the birds leave their home territory in spring (males specifically do that in some species) and stop when they find possible mates. In an area with many Magpies they are not going to have to travel far, whereas in an area like Argyll they may just keep going?

### **Magpie records in Argyll**

With the exception of the, possibly doubtful **68-72 Atlas** breeding record in NM94, until 2014 all Argyll breeding records are within the *Cowal* recording area. Most are around Dunoon but there are a few elsewhere, including Strachur, which has a long history of Magpie records dating back to at least the 1960s. The confirmed breeding records in all three atlases for the 10km square NN00 almost certainly refer to Strachur rather than Inveraray (there are no Magpie

records at all from Inveraray in the ABC database). The small and apparently long standing population at Strachur could represent a relict population that survived from before the extensive planting of conifers, possibly supplemented by occasional wanderers from Dunoon via Loch Eck.

Nevertheless, since records began to be kept systematically in Argyll (from 1981 onwards) significant numbers of Magpies have been reported well away from the core breeding area. There are 357 Magpie records in the ABC database. Nearly half of these relate to the core breeding area in *Cowal* and a good many are repeat records of individual birds seen at one location over a period of time. Removing these, as far as is possible, leaves a total of 196 records outwith *Cowal*.

#### Geographical spread of records.

The breakdown by recording areas is as follows (repeat sightings of what was obviously the same bird at the same locations are not included in the totals for *Kintyre*, *Mid-Argyll* and *Mull*):

*Coll* – no records.

*Colonsay* – one record, of a bird used as a call bird in a Larsen trap which was released on the island at the end of the breeding season in 2001 by John Bridges. At this time it was at least 2 yrs old (M Ogilvie, D C Jardine *pers comm.*).

*Cowal* – 166 records (44.6% of all records). Removing records from core breeding area around Dunoon leaves a total of 25.

*Islay* – 36 records (1981-2014) from various sites on the island, all concerning single birds. Some almost certainly involved multiple sightings of wandering long staying individuals e.g. sightings at several locations between May 2002 and May 2003 (19 records) and between March and June 2011 (10 records). Allowing, as far as possible, for these, there may only have been 13 or 14 individuals involved, possibly fewer. A contact of John Bowler's on Islay says that in their opinion Magpies generally don't last very long on Islay as the island remains relatively well kept for legally controlled corvid species. However, as experience on *Colonsay* has shown, Magpies are also used by keepers in crow control.

*Jura* - no records: although the bird on the Oa peninsula *Islay* on 16 May 2002 was reportedly seen earlier on Jura.

*Kintyre* - 74 records (1984-2014) from throughout the recording area including: Southend, Campbeltown, Machrihanish, Peninver (several), Muasdale, Gigha, Skipness and Tarbet, and also from Gigha. All were of single birds, except two birds in Campbeltown in 2013 and 2014. A pair was reported visiting an apparent nest site near the top of a tall conifer in Campbeltown *Kintyre* in May 2014 but this nest was thought to have been predated by Hooded Crows (E. Maguire *pers. comm.*).

*Mid-Argyll* – 35 records (1984-2014) (excluding repeat sightings). However it is very difficult to be certain about repeat sightings and records, especially in the Lochgilphead area, which *could* relate to a fairly small number of long staying individuals.

*Mull* – 14 records (1984-2010) (excluding repeat sightings, but all records in the years 2000, 2005 and 2008 could refer to single wandering individuals, which would reduce the total to 9 birds).

*North Argyll* - 15 records (1988-2010) but all the records at Barcaldine Oct 1997 to Mar 1998 and the two records at Achnacree more (nr. Benderloch) in 1999 probably refer to the same individuals, so the true total is probably nearer 9.

*Tiree* - One seen in January 1986 was reportedly seen again in the spring of that year. It is possible that this bird came via *Coll* having made the sea crossing from the north of *Mull*. It's

also at least a possibility that this, like the bird on *Colonsay*, was introduced in some way. A further, but perhaps less likely, possibility is that it was a ship assisted visitor. John Bowler (*pers comm.*) thinks the deliberate introduction theory plausible especially considering lack of further records and the absence of records from *Coll*, which has more suitable habitat for the species (including conifer plantations) and is rather closer to *Mull*.

Considering the geographical spread of records and the dates involved, all these reports could relate to a relatively small number of wandering individuals. However there are several instances of almost simultaneous records from widely separated locations.

#### Temporal pattern of records

Table 1. shows the monthly pattern of Argyll Magpie records 1981-2014, both overall and excluding the Dunoon area:

Table 1. *Monthly & Quarterly totals of Argyll records.*

Month	Total records excluding core breeding area around Dunoon*	% total	Total of all records
January	9	4.6	40**
February	16	8.2	29
March	24	12.2	33
April	60	30.6	76
May	24	12.2	30
June	11	5.6	27
July	6	3.1	16
August	4	2.0	9
September	7	3.6	16
October	14	7.1	20
November	13	6.6	43
December	8	4.1	20
<b>Total</b>	196		359
<b>1<sup>st</sup> quarter</b>	48	24.5	
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> quarter</b>	95	48.5	
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> quarter</b>	18	9.2	
<b>4<sup>th</sup> quarter</b>	35	17.9	
<b>Total</b>	196		

\* edited, as far as possible, to remove repeat sightings of the same individuals.

\*\*22 of these are notional 1 Jan records indicating records for the whole year.

For the records outwith the Dunoon area repeat sightings of the same individual have, as far as possible, been discounted so that these are the first records of an individual at a given location. There is clearly a striking peak in April when over 30% of records occur. One aspect of Magpies social behaviour is the so called Ceremonial Gatherings that begin in December and reach their peak in April, just prior to the breeding season. They usually consist of 8-10 birds, although there are large spectacular gatherings of up to 50 birds. Gatherings occur on the ground or in the trees - the birds, noisily chasing each other. George Newall's record of 22 birds in one tree in Dunoon on 29 Jan 2005 was probably such an event (ABR 20:132). Although not fully understood it is thought that these gatherings represent different stages in territory acquisition

(Birkhead & Clarkson 1985). It is possible that the record peak in April involves immature birds that have been unable to acquire a territory locally and are motivated to look elsewhere. However, without an intensive ringing programme in the Dunoon area there is no empirical evidence to support this theory. Interestingly, Neville McKee also refers to an April peak of passage birds at Copeland Bird Observatory, Northern Ireland.

### Clusters of records

That several individuals are simultaneously involved in Magpie movements in Argyll is demonstrated by clusters of records on the same dates or within a day or two at widely separated locations. For example, on 26 March 1999 there were birds at both Connel and Kintallan (near Tayvallich), *Mid-Argyll* and one was at Campbeltown *Kintyre* on 29 March 1999. Again, between 4 April and 7 April 2002 there were records at Craignish Castle *Mid-Argyll*, Barcaldine *North Argyll* and Loch Poit na h-I (Pottie) *Mull*.

The Magpie is a relatively large, distinctive species that is easily recognised by people with only a passing interest in birds. They also have a (largely undeserved) reputation as a pest and predator of garden birds and are thus more likely to be reported than most other birds. It therefore seems likely that (despite the small number of birders in Argyll) a good proportion of the Magpies that do occur in Argyll, away from the Dunoon area, will have been reported.

### **Where do they come from?**

#### Wanderers from Cowal.

Despite the Magpie's reputation as a sedentary species, some individuals do move considerable distances. Of only 27 recoveries quoted in *Birds of Scotland*, five had moved 10-99 km and one 163 km in two months. The paucity of published records of such movements is probably a function of the very small numbers of Magpies ringed.

Records in the Lochgilphead *Mid-Argyll* area could relate to birds that have flown across Loch Fyne from the Otter Ferry area (e.g. birds at Otter Ferry *Cowal* and Minard *Mid-Argyll* in late March 2005 and one seen on 10 November 2013 both at Ballimore, near Otter Ferry and at Minard). They might also be birds flying north from *Kintyre*.

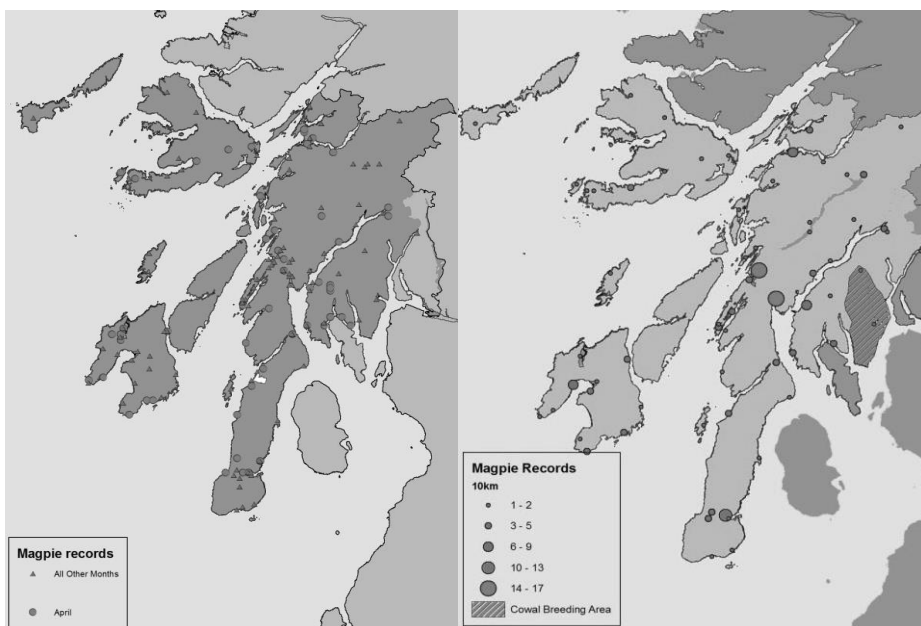
While this paper was in preparation three sightings of birds by the A83 road, in Glen Kinglas *Cowal*, were reported. One was at the Junction with the A815 Dunoon road (NN1909) on 11 Apr 2014 and what was presumably the same individual was at Butterbridge (NN2309) on 16 Sept 2014 and on the following day. These could all refer to the same bird, which may have made its way up the A815 from Strachur or, just possibly, up Glen Croe (A83) from Arrochar and over the Rest and be Thankful (NN2207 - altitude 269m).

Those from the south Knapdale and north *Kintyre* area could be wanderers from *Mid-Argyll*/south *Kintyre* or birds that had flown from Portavadie *Cowal* to Tarbert *Kintyre*. Sightings in the Oban *Mid-Argyll* and *North Argyll* areas might derive from birds that had moved north up the west coast from Lochgilphead or roughly along the route of the A85 (e.g. records at Lochawe and Connel). Birds seen in south *Kintyre* could have moved south from *Mid-Argyll* or possibly be immigrants from Northern Ireland.

Sightings on *Mull* might involve birds coming from the mainland via Lismore *North Argyll* or Kerrera *Mid-Argyll*. Both involve relatively short sea crossings: 5 km or *ca* 3 miles in the case

of Kerrera and less for Lismore. The *Islay* records could be the result of island hopping via *Jura*. The sea crossing from the mainland (near Keills, Loch Sween *Mid-Argyll*) to Tarbert on *Jura* is only *ca* 7km (4.5 miles) and one of the *Islay* birds was reportedly seen initially on *Jura*. Alternatively, birds could possibly have come via Gigha *Kintyre*, involving a sea crossing of 16km (10 miles). It's just possible that birds could have flown direct from Northern Ireland, although, even from Rathlin Island, this would entail a sea crossing of 30 km (18.6 miles).

Malcolm Chattwood has kindly produced various maps showing the distribution of Argyll Magpie records. Map 1 below shows records outwith the core breeding area and highlights April records (dots). One possible interpretation of the distribution shown is that it shows individuals moving westward around the coast of Cowal and through the glens, thus avoiding higher ground. Map 2 shows locations where records were most numerous.



Map 1. (left) *Magpie records in Argyll 1981-2014 (circles – April records, triangles – records in other months)*

Map 2. (right) *Magpie records in Argyll 1981-2014 by 10km square with core breeding within Cowal area shown hatched.*

(A larger colour version of these maps is available in the version on the Publications page of the Argyll Bird Club Website at [http://argyllbirdclub.org/?page\\_id=5050](http://argyllbirdclub.org/?page_id=5050) )

### Immigrants from Northern Ireland?

Many authorities state that Magpies are reluctant to cross water and there are accounts of birds attempting to cross from Sweden to Denmark, a distance of 24 km (*ca* 15 miles), but returning, apparently ‘panic stricken’ (Cramp & Simmons 1985). However, Eddie Maguire (*pers. comm.*) has long suspected that birds seen in the south of *Kintyre* and the Campbeltown area in particular, might come from Northern Ireland. There is certainly a healthy population there (Balmer *et al.* 2013) and some time ago I asked the Northern Ireland bird recorder, George Gordon, for his opinion regarding the possibility of migration across the North Channel. He in turn approached Neville McKee of the Copeland Bird Observatory (Copeland Islands ASSI is located off the County Down coast of Northern Ireland and comprises Big Copeland, Lighthouse Island and Mew Island). Neville’s reply was most illuminating:

### Magpies at Copeland Bird Observatory

“Outside the breeding season, numbers present vary from 0-4 mostly but can be up to 12 sometimes, and even more occasionally during spring passage. They regularly cross to Mew, but can also be seen commuting to and from Big Copeland. We also, on occasion, see flocks migrating to and from Scotland in season. The passage is most notable in spring, especially April. Flocks of up to 20 have been seen going out so far that they disappear from telescope view. Ours always seem to be travelling to and from Portpatrick, which of course we and they can see as it is only 14 miles away. On some days in spring up to 50 have been recorded on or over the island. They can be a great height, perhaps 200 metres. While sea-watching we also pick them up in the scope in autumn, far out to sea and heading towards us from Galloway. Magpie days usually involve other corvids, particularly Carrion Crows. In the numbers these occur (up to 20 and sometimes more) I assume these are heading back to Scotland after a winter in Ireland. Maybe we should make an effort to ring more of these crows. I would imagine that Magpies, if from Ireland, would cross from Torr Head to the Mull of Kintyre.” (N McKee *pers comm.*).

Given that the distance across the North Channel from Torr Head to the Mull on Kintyre is slightly less (20 km or 12.4 miles) than from Portpatrick to the Copeland Islands there would appear to be no reason why some Magpies should not make the crossing from Northern Ireland to Argyll.

### Deliberate introductions.

Magpies may sometimes be trapped although according to Birkhead (1991) this is, for adults at least, difficult and time consuming. However young taken from nests have been kept as ‘pets’ in the past and the *Colonsay* example demonstrates that they may be released or escape elsewhere. This might explain the bird on *Tiree*, which is otherwise difficult to account for.

### Ship assisted ‘migrants’.

For birds seen on *Mull*, *Islay* and *Tiree*, the possibility of ship assisted ‘migrants’ e.g. on ferries or fishing boats, exists. It’s difficult to imagine that a large, striking and noisy bird like the Magpie could ‘hitch a lift’ undetected: in which case one imagines it might have been reported. On the whole this seems an unlikely explanation for Magpies appearing on the Argyll islands.

## **Why has a breeding population not become established outwith Cowal?**

### **Habitat Requirements**

Magpies are chiefly birds of open lowland or lightly wooded country. They inhabit both broad-leaved and coniferous woods, wherever glades, clearings or more open stands occur, and especially near margins of natural or cultivated grasslands and croplands. They avoid both densely forested and treeless regions and precipitous rocky terrain. The spread into suburban and even inner city areas is a relatively recent phenomenon, chiefly since the 1950s (Cramp & Simmons 1985). Birkhead (1991) established that prime breeding habitat for Magpies was grazing land, defined as grassland occupied by livestock, usually horses or cattle. The animals keep the grass short and their droppings help to attract many of the invertebrates, like dung flies and beetles, that magpies eat.

### **Habitat in Argyll**

Magpies formerly occurred at least in *Kintyre* and *North Argyll* and there is certainly still suitable habitat in south *Kintyre* and to a limited extent in *North Argyll*. Areas of grazing land still occur in parts of *Mid-Argyll* (especially in the Lochgilphead/Kilmartin area). However for Magpies to become re-established there would require a small core of individuals to be present together at the right season.

### **Altitude**

There is in Britain a fairly close correlation between Magpie density/distribution and altitude. Although a large part of *North Argyll* would be unsuitable for this reason, much of the remainder is relatively low lying. It is possible though, that the higher ground to the west and north of the core breeding area around Dunoon could act as a partial barrier to range expansion.

### **Extensive conifer plantations**

Danielle Clark first suggested to me that the dense conifer plantations that have been extensively planted in Argyll since the late 1940s might act as a barrier to the spread of a breeding population. Certainly this is the major difference in the general habitat since the nineteenth century, when Magpies were more widespread. They are said to avoid forested areas and most of the core breeding area around Dunoon is surrounded by such plantations. Although Magpies are widespread in parts of Scandinavia (e.g. Finland) with extensive conifer forest cover, these are in the main native forests with open glades etc. rather than the dense plantations frequent in Argyll. It may be that this limits the spread to the immediate periphery of the core area and that the relatively few individuals that manage to bypass the forestry by travelling around the coast or through the glens are insufficient to re-establish a breeding population? However there is extensive harvesting taking place in the area to the west and south west of Dunoon, which could provide opportunities for Magpies to extend their range. Alternatively, it may be that birds from Northern Ireland (if such there be) represent the best chance of Magpies re-establishing themselves.

### **Predators**

Another possible factor that may have affected the spread of Magpies in Argyll is the increase in potential predators, which may well slow dispersal from the relatively low-density breeding population in *Cowal*. Common Buzzards, Eurasian Sparrowhawks, Peregrine Falcons, Common Ravens and crows are much more abundant now than in the past (M Daw *pers. comm.*). Some continental studies have shown that high densities of Hooded Crows impact on Magpies (D Jardine *pers. comm.*)

### Diet and Persecution.

Magpies have an extremely varied diet: in summer mainly grassland invertebrates, such as beetles, flies, caterpillars, spiders, worms and leatherjackets and in winter, more plant material, such as wild fruits, berries and grains, with the addition of household scraps and food scavenged from bird tables or chicken runs, pet-foods etc. They will eat carrion at all times and catch small mammals and birds. Occasionally, Magpies prey on larger animals such as young rabbits. During the breeding season they will take eggs and young of other birds but all the studies that have been carried out show no evidence that increased numbers of Magpies have caused declines in songbirds. They confirm that populations of prey species are not determined by the numbers of their predators. Availability of food and suitable nesting sites are probably the main factors limiting songbird populations

([https://www.rspb.org.uk/discoverandenjoynature/discoverandlearn/birdguide/name/m/magpie/effect\\_on\\_songbirds.aspx](https://www.rspb.org.uk/discoverandenjoynature/discoverandlearn/birdguide/name/m/magpie/effect_on_songbirds.aspx)).

If they do manage to re-establish themselves outwith *Cowal*, it is to be hoped that they will not be persecuted as vermin. Magpies I would maintain, are intelligent, harmless and beautiful birds and would be a welcome addition to our avifauna.

### **Conclusions**

Magpies in Britain have long been considered to be sedentary birds, which are averse to crossing the open sea. In this paper I have presented evidence that questions this view and put forward suggestions as to why, despite range expansion and increased population density elsewhere in Britain, they have not spread significantly in Argyll. It will be interesting to see if the extensive conifer harvesting currently taking place will provide opportunities for Magpies to extend their range

### **Acknowledgements**

I am particularly grateful to Malcolm Chattwood who spent much time producing various versions of the distribution maps to better illustrate this account. The following have made helpful comments and suggestions on earlier drafts of the paper, many of which have been incorporated in this version: John Bowler, Danielle Clark - De Bisschop, Michael Daw, Jim Dickson, David Jardine, Eddie Maguire, George Newall, Steve Petty and an anonymous referee. Any remaining errors are solely the responsibility of the author.

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*Magpies*

*Margaret Staley*

## **Collared Flycatcher on the Isle of Tiree, 27 May 2014: first record for Argyll**

*John Bowler*

Late May to mid-June 2014 was quite simply the best period to date for scarce and rare spring migrant passerines on the Isle of Tiree. An exceptional prolonged spell of light NE and E based winds combined with frequent bands of misty rain over the Inner Hebrides throughout the latter half of May and the first half of June resulted in an unparalleled and almost daily arrival of continental drift migrants. First up was a Red-rumped Swallow, the first for Tiree, spiralling in misty conditions over the western headland of Ceann a' Mhara on 20 May with 6 House Martins and 17 Swallows. The following morning I spotted a female or immature male Rustic Bunting in our garden at Balephuill, as I fed the sparrows in the drizzle. Numbers of scarcer migrants such as Spotted Flycatchers, Blackcaps and Whitethroats steadily increased around Balephuill over the next few days as the light NE winds continued and on the evening of 26 May, I found a splendid male Red-backed Shrike on the scrubby hill-side above our house at Carnan Mor, the first spring record of this species for the island.

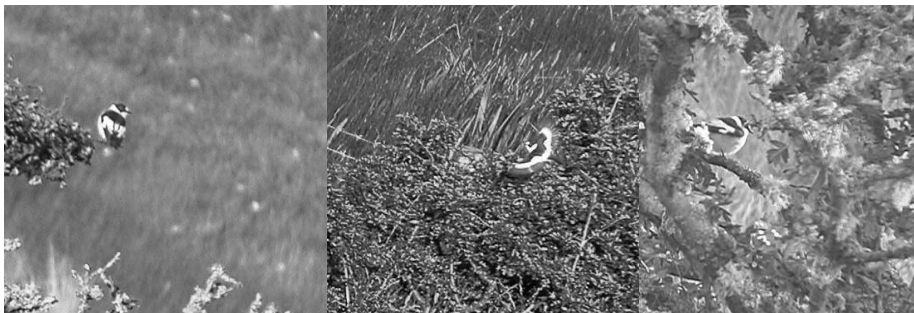
At about 18.00 hrs on the following evening (27 May), I headed back up to Carnan Mor to try to photograph the shrike. However, there was no further sign of it, so instead I checked through the bushes and picked out a Lesser Whitethroat and a Garden Warbler in amongst the Whitethroats and Spotted Flycatchers, all scarce non-breeding migrants on the island. As I watched the largest patch of bushes, a striking black and white flycatcher, which had been lurking unseen in a dense ancient hawthorn, flew out and perched up in more open bushes nearby. Even when first seen in flight, I immediately knew this was not a male Pied Flycatcher. The large white wing flashes appeared to join up with a bold white rump in flight and there was an obvious broad white collar behind the black crown – it was a male Collared Flycatcher!

Keeping as still as possible, despite my shock at finding such a rare bird, I took out my Nikon Camera and photographed the bird from a distance of about 30 m as it sat atop a thin old hawthorn in low evening light. The bird was quite mobile, fly-catching and moving around through the bushes. I moved a little towards it and it quickly worked its way back to the main bush clump from where it had originated. Here it fed largely on the opposite side of the bushes to me, but I was able to get closer and watch it by sitting still at the edge of the clump. Knowing there were no other birders on the island, I simply watched and photographed the bird as it fed in the hawthorns for over an hour. The bird mostly kept to cover whilst feeding, fly-catching from perches within the bushes and sallying up to catch small insects flying within the branches. It only perched in the open when I first found it and after I had left the hillside.

This was a small neat black and white flycatcher, very similar to Pied Flycatcher in shape, size and actions but differing in key plumage points, particularly in the larger amount of white present. Most prominently it had a bold and broad cleanly white collar bending up high around the nape separating the black crown from the black mantle, as well as a large rounded white patch on the forehead. The white patch on the wing was also very extensive with a large club-shaped extension reaching the front edge of the base of the primaries. Flight views revealed a large white rump patch that almost appeared to join up with the white wing flashes, whilst the tail was all black, lacking the white edges of Pied Flycatcher. The plumage above was shiningly

black and together with the broad and cleanly white collar, large white rump and large white forehead patch suggested to me that this bird was an adult male.

The bird was still visible on the scrubby hill-side by scanning from our garden gate at Balephuill until 19.50 hrs but I did not see it after that. I checked for the flycatcher the following morning (28 May) but it had clearly moved on, although there was a newly arrived Redwing in full song in our garden at Balephuill, a Marsh Warbler fresh in nearby at Mannal and a Common Rosefinch later that evening in our garden. A singing male Rustic Bunting in our garden on 2-3 June, a female-type Red-breasted Flycatcher at Carnan Mor on 6 June and a stunning male Red-breasted Flycatcher in our garden on 19 June completed a truly amazing spring on Tiree!



*Collared Flycatcher*

*John Bowler*

## **White-throated Sparrow, Cowal Peninsula, Argyll on 19 June 2014: first record for Argyll.**

*Jim Dickson*

Awakened by a phone call from Tom Callan on 19 June, I heard something like ‘morning Jim....think I have a White-throated Sparrow in my garden....have checked the field guides and pretty sure that’s what it is’. My usual doubting self quickly tried to think of something to question his reasoning for this seemingly unlikely record which was miles nearer to Glasgow than the usual hotspots for this kind of vagrant, like Tiree or Islay. A short discussion on the head pattern seemed to clinch it when Tom mentioned the yellow bits in front of the eye when seen head on! I suggested Tom put more seed down and said I’d be there within a couple of hours as Otter Ferry was on the ‘wrong side’ of Loch Fyne; such is the nature of the highly convoluted coastline of Argyll.

I arrived at Tom’s lovely garden about 11:15 hrs only to be told it had been there all morning but had now disappeared! Tom had first seen it sometime after 7:30 hrs through his patio door windows and it had at times been on the door steps! It had been seen chasing off Dunnocks and had fed more or less constantly for almost three hours. Tom had taken some photos and from these the bird was clearly a very smart White-throated Sparrow.

After about 30 minutes waiting behind the patio window and with no show, we decided to have a look about outside just in case it was resting under a bush or behaving in a Dunnock-like fashion. Another 30 minutes went by and the usual fears were starting to creep in. Back into the house, back to the patio doors and there it was on the lawn about 5 metres away! A great new species for Argyll and a nice Scottish tick. After a few photos were taken I discussed with Tom that there may be some Scottish birders that would like to see this bird, especially those that hadn't seen one in the Northern Isles where just about all Scottish occurrences have been from. It was felt than on balance there would be some interest, but as this was not a 'mega rarity' and indeed, is the most common transatlantic landbird to the Northern Isles, then his and his wife's private life would not be too unduly disrupted. Always a difficult judgement to make particularly when a bird can really only be best viewed from within a person's garden and in this case from inside the house! After a bit of hesitation Tom decided it was okay to put the news out and potentially looked forward to meeting some new birding folk. At this point Angus was given the go-ahead to put the news out. At least one group of birders managed to see it later that afternoon, however there was no sign of it the following day with disappointment for three groups of birders.

**Description:** A very smart sparrow or bunting like bird not dissimilar in size to a House Sparrow but with a more bunting like build and showing a fairly long tail. This bird was clearly a bunting like passerine that appeared to show most topographical features found on the inside cover of a field guide!

The most striking feature immediately apparent was the head markings, particularly the broad white supercillium, white chin/throat and on closer view through binoculars the black lateral crown stripes, eye-stripe and the contrasting white medial crown stripe. Also noticeable, particularly when the bird was viewed face on, was the bright yellow fore-supercillium just above the eye to the upper mandible base.

In many ways the bird resembled an eastern bunting cf Yellow-browed or even a Rustic at times, however the underparts were clearly not pale and streaked as with these bunting species but a fairly uniform grey wash from the ear-coverts, sharply bordering the white chin/throat to the sides. The belly and undertail appeared more whitish with brown tones on the flanks.

The upperparts were rich chestnut brown with very narrow fine black and white streaking very similar to a Reed Bunting, as were the closed wings/tertials, showing a nice mix of darker and paler brown tones. The greater coverts were neatly tipped white forming narrow 'wing bars' and the upper tertial was narrowly edged white.

The rump and upper-tail coverts were un-streaked and were a dull brownish grey. The tail appeared long brown and with no white outer tail feathers.

The bill was conical bunting or sparrow like and steely grey in colour. The iris was a deep chestnut brown and the legs were pale brown/ dull pink in tone.

Not heard to call however, it sang on at least one occasion and was very distinctive. A fairly high pitched tuneful whistle given slowly and deliberate with two initial high note whistles followed by three disyllabic descending more drawn-out whistles...the mnemonic '*O-oh sweet Canada Canada Canada*' was spot on.

# Argyll Ringing Recoveries

## Selected Highlights From 2014

*Nigel Scriven*

The individuals and groups that are involved in ringing birds in Argyll are many and varied, and there is no single Argyll Ringing Group to co-ordinate and collate ringing activities and the data generated. The information below is gleaned from the BTO on-line ringing report for 2014, which is a tiny selection from the vast quantity of information held on the national ringing database <http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/ringing/publications/online-ringing-reports> Birds included in this report may include records from previous years that only found their way into the BTO database in 2014, and had not previously been reported. Details for Argyll are found listed under the Argyll bird recording area. It is from these that birds ringed, or later found in Argyll are selected. Criteria for selection include foreign recoveries, interesting movements within the British Isles, and age of bird. Distances are from point of original ringing, not where previously seen, if there were multiple sightings. Please report any rings found or read in the field to [www.ring.ac](http://www.ring.ac)

Abbreviations: control = caught by ringer c-rings read = colour rings read in field

Species/ Ring No.	Age Finding Details	Date ringed Date found	Location /distance/direction/ time difference
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<b>MUTE SWAN</b>		<i>Widespread resident. Long-lived birds. Local movements.</i>	
<b>W04335</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> -yr	24-12-2001	Hessilhead, Beith, Ayrshire
	Alive c-rings	13-11-2014	L Gilp, Mid-Argyll 63km WNW 12y 10m 20d
<b>W12424</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> -yr male	22-04-2006	Auchenharvie, Ayrshire
	Alive c-rings	31-07-2012	Tarbert Harbour, Mid-Argyll 47km WNW 6y 3m 9d
	Alive c-rings	13-11-2014	Loch Gilp, Mid-Argyll 61km NW 8y 6m 22d
<b>WHOOPEE SWAN</b>		<i>Iceland breeder. Winters Scotland</i>	
<b>ISR</b>	Adult female	02-08-2010	Hegragastadir, Hegrane, Skagafjörður <b>Iceland</b>
<b>A8890</b>	Freshly dead	23-10-2014	Iona, Mull 1,255km SSE 4y 2m 21d

<b>WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE</b>		<i>Greenland race, breeds in Greenland, winters in UK</i>	
<b>1302356</b>	Adult male	12-12-2012	Ballinaby Islay
	Alive neck collar seen	21-04-2014	Vorsabaer, Floi, Arnes, <b>Iceland</b> 1200km NW 1y 4m 9d
<b>1372655</b>	Adult male	22-11-2013	Aoradh, Loch Gruinart, Islay
	Unknown	01-05-2014	Midkot, Bergþorshvoll, V-Landeyjar, <b>Iceland</b> 1168km NW 0y 5m 9d
<b>1372661</b>	Adult male	15-01-2014	Grulinbeg, Islay
	Dead	22-10-2014	Kross Rangárvallasýsla <b>Iceland</b> 1160km NW 0y 9m 7d

<b>GREYLAG GOOSE</b>		<i>Some breed in UK, some breed Iceland &amp; winter in UK</i>	
<b>5226955</b>	Adult fem.	08-07-2002	Loch An Eilein, Tiree

<b>5227158</b>	Freshly shot	03-09-2014	Heylipol, <i>Tiree</i> 0km 12y 1m 26d
	Adult male	02-07-2006	Loch An Eilein, <i>Tiree</i>
<b>5258529</b>	Freshly shot	24-01-2014	Heylipol, <i>Tiree</i> 0km 7y 6m 22d
	Adult female	04-07-2009	Loch An Eilein, <i>Tiree</i>
	control	05-07-2014	Loch An Eilean, <i>Tiree</i> 0km 5y 0m 1d
<hr/>			
<b>SNOW GOOSE</b>			<i>Long lived, but didn't go far</i>
<b>1350920</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> -yr male	06-07-2002	Port-Na-Luing, <i>Coll</i>
	Dead	01-10-2014	Loch Breachacha, <i>Coll</i> 3km 12y 2m 25d
<hr/>			
<b>BARNACLE GOOSE</b>			<i>Breeds Greenland, winters UK, shot in Iceland &amp; Scotland</i>
<b>1097888</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> -yr male	04-11-1995	Gruinart Farm, Loch Gruinart, <i>Islay</i>
	Freshly shot	18-10-2014	Medalland, <i>Vestur-Skaftafellssýsla</i> <b>Iceland</b> 1,083km NW 18y 11m 14d
<b>1291052</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> -yr male	17-11-2000	Gruinart Farm, Loch Gruinart, <i>Islay</i>
	Freshly shot	11-10-2014	Hornafjördur <i>Austur-Skaftafellssýsla</i> <b>Iceland</b> 1,060km NNW 13y 10m 24d
<b>1290584</b>	Adult male	12-11-2000	Gruinart Farm, <i>Islay</i>
	Freshly shot	04-10-2014	Svinafell, Oraefi, <i>Austur-Skaftafellssýsla</i> <b>Iceland</b> 1,077km NNW 13y 10m 22d
<b>1291123</b>	Adult	10-11-2001	Gruinart Farm, <i>Islay</i>
	Freshly shot	18-10-2014	Medalland <i>Vestur-Skaftafellssýsla</i> <b>Iceland</b> 1,083km NW 12y 11m 8d
<hr/>			
<b>EIDER</b>			<i>Local breeder</i>
<b>MA04489</b>	Adult female	10-05-2004	Burnt Islands <i>Cowal/Bute</i>
	Freshly dead	11-04-2014	Largs <i>Ayrshire</i> 23km SE 9y 11m 1d
<hr/>			
<b>MANX SHEARWATER</b>			<i>Middle-aged bird</i>
<b>FB22696</b>	Adult	28-06-2006	Lunga, Treshnish Isles, <i>Mull</i>
	control	01-07-2014	Lunga, Treshnish Isles 0km 8y 0m 3d
<hr/>			
<b>STORM PETREL</b>			<i>Long-lived breeding birds, site fidelity &amp; between colony movements</i>
<b>2405347</b>	Adult	26-06-1991	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	control	30-06-2014	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i> 0km 23y 0m 4d
<b>2630447</b>	Adult	26-07-2011	Twinyess, North Ronaldsay, <i>Orkney</i>
	control	01-07-2014	Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i> 396kmSW 2y 11m 5d
<b>2676506</b>	Adult	20-07-2013	Annagh Head, Belmullet, <i>Mayo</i>
	control	30-06-2014	Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i> 342km NE 0y 11m 10d
<b>2665864</b>	Adult	31-07-2012	Sanda Island, <i>Kintyre</i>
	control	13-06-2014	Priest Island <i>Highland</i> 299kmN 1y 10m 13d
<hr/>			
<b>GANNET</b>			<i>Long lived</i>
<b>1307291</b>	Nestling	29-09-1985	Ailsa Craig <i>Ayrshire</i>
	Long dead	13-09-2014	Mull of Kintyre 43km W 23y 2m 17d
<hr/>			
<b>CORMORANT</b>			<i>Interesting movements</i>
<b>5248699</b>	Nestling	13-06-2010	Glas Eilean, Port Ann, Loch Fyne, <i>Mid-Argyll</i>
	Freshly dead	14-01-2014	Upper Lough Erne, near Lisnaske <i>Fermanagh</i>
	(in net or cage)		242km SW 3y 7m 1d

<b>5248942</b>	Nestling Unknown (ring only)	10-06-2012 Glas Eilean, Port Ann, Loch Fyne <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 09-11-2014 Eilean A' Choic, Tarbert <i>Kintyre</i> 19km SSW 2y 4m 30d
<hr/>		
<b>SHAG</b>		<i>Long lived birds</i>
<b>1322666</b>	Nestling Freshly dead	23-06-1993 Sanda Island <i>Kintyre</i> 26-07-2014 Machrihanish <i>Kintyre</i> 20km NNW 21y 1m 3d
<b>1366980</b>	Nestling Alive c-rings	21-06-1999 Lunga, Treshnish Isles, <i>Mull</i> 30-06-2014 Lunga, Treshnish Isles, <i>Mull</i> 0km 15y 0m 9d
<hr/>		
<b>GREY HERON</b>		<i>Interesting movements</i>
<b>1285755</b>	Nestling Freshly dead	20-05-2014 Garvard Point, <i>Colonsay</i> 18-08-2014 Omagh <i>Tyrone</i> 181km SSW 0y 2m 29d
<b>1504652</b>	Nestling Dead	06-07-2014 Eilean Eoghainn, West Loch Tarbert <i>Kintyre</i> 07-09-2014 St Andrews, <i>Fife</i> 180km ENE 0y 2m 1d
<b>1285752</b>	Nestling Dead	20-06-2013 Garvard Point <i>Colonsay</i> 15-03-2014 Inveruglas, L Lomond 97km ENE 0y 8m 23d
<hr/>		
<b>HEN HARRIER</b>		<i>Interesting movement</i>
<b>FR31383</b>	Nestling fem Freshly dead	17-06-2013 Balerominmore <i>Colonsay</i> 11-05-2014 Newbiggin <i>Cumbria</i> 259km ESE 0y 10m 24d
<hr/>		
<b>BUZZARD</b>		<i>Long-lived bird</i>
<b>GH67850</b>	Nestling Long dead	11-06-2004 Loch Fada, <i>Colonsay</i> 31-12-2014 Oronsay <i>Colonsay</i> 8km SSW 10y 6m 20d
<hr/>		
<b>OSPREY</b>		<i>UK and international movements</i>
<b>1421537</b>	Nestling Alive c-rings Alive c-rings	27-06-2013 Site Confidential, near Loch Awe <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 24-08-2013 Puslinch Marsh, Yealm Estuary <i>Devon</i> 668km S 0y 1m 28d 20-09-2014 Lopwell Dam, River Tavy, near Tavistock: <i>Devon</i> 653km S 1y 2m 24d
<b>1469211</b>	Nestling Alive c-rings	07-07-2014 Site Confidential, near Cairnbaan <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 17-09-2014 near Tavy/Tamar Confluence <i>Devon</i> 630km S 0y 2m 10d
<b>1469206</b>	Nestling Alive c-rings	07-07-2014 Site Confidential, near Loch Awe <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 03-09-201 Broome Pits <i>Norfolk</i> 608km SE 0y 1m 27d
<b>1421553</b>	Nestling fem Alive c-rings	12-07-2007 Site Confidential, near Loch Awe <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 01-07-2014 Tillypronie, Aboyne <i>Aberdeenshire</i> 163km ENE 6y 11m 19d
<b>1408004</b>	Nestling Alive c-rings	28-06-2007 Aucharroch Wood <i>Angus</i> 21-07-2014 Cruachan, Inverliever Forest <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 144km WSW 7y 0m 23d
<b>1469212</b>	Nestling Alive c-rings	07-07-2014 Site Confidential, near Cairnbaan <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 23-09-2014 Santander Bay <b>Spain</b> 1,407km S 0y 2m 16d
<b>1421547</b>	Nestling Alive c-rings	10-07-2013 Site Confidential, near Ardfern <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 10-11-2014 Lamin Lodge, Kombo North <b>Gambia</b> 4,849km SSW 1y 4m 0d

<b>PEREGRINE</b>		<i>Interesting movement</i>	
<b>GC66266</b>	Nestling	06-06-2010	Loch Eck <i>Cowal</i>
	Freshly dead (predated)	24-02-2014	An Caol Islet, Fort William, Loch Linnhe <i>Highland</i> 84km N 3y 8m 18d
<b>OYSTERCATCHER</b>		<i>Long lived and well travelled bird</i>	
<b>FA71871</b>	Adult male	14-09-2004	Dawlish Warren, <i>Devon</i>
	Alive c-rings	17-06-2005	Garvard <i>Colonsay</i>
	Alive c-rings	20-05-2014	Garvard <i>Colonsay</i> 632km NNW 9y 8m 6d
<b>KITTIWAKE</b>		<i>Long lived birds and international movement</i>	
<b>EG08129</b>	Adult	18-06-2001	Port Ban <i>Colonsay</i>
	Alive c-rings	16-06-2014	Port Ban <i>Colonsay</i> 0km 12y 11m 29d
<b>EG88957</b>	Adult	22-06-2004	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	control	01-07-2014	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i> 0km 10y 0m 9d
<b>ISR</b>	Nestling	04-08-2004	Andridsey, Kjalarnes, Kjósarsýsla <b>Iceland</b>
<b>577222</b>	Dead	19-02-2014	Ganavan Bay, Oban <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 1,251km SE 9y 6m 15d
<b>BLACK-HEADED GULL</b>		<i>International movement</i>	
<b>ES13750</b>	Nestling	22-06-1998	Kilmaraonaig Islands, Loch Etive
	Alive (ring read in field)	18-03-2014	Zabeliskio Savart, Kedainiu R. <b>Lithuania</b> 1837km E 15y 8m 24d
<b>MEDITERRANEAN GULL</b>		<i>International movement</i>	
<b>PLG</b>	Nestling	06-06-2004	Zastow Karczmiski, Wilkow Lubelskie) <b>Poland</b>
<b>FN27458</b>	Alive c-rings	18-03-2014	Lochgilphead <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 1868km WNW 9y 9m 12d
<b>COMMON GULL</b>		<i>Firth of Clyde movement</i>	
<b>EY64014</b>	Nestling	20-06-2013	Hunterston <i>N Ayrshire</i>
	Freshly dead (bird of prey)	07-03-2014	near Kildonald Bay, Campbeltown <i>Kintyre</i> 48km WSW 0y 8m 15d
<b>HERRING GULL</b>		<i>Interesting contrast of movements</i>	
<b>GF60876</b>	Nestling	05-07-1997	Eilean Nan Caorach, Lismore <i>North Argyll</i>
	Alive ring read in field	14-04-2014	Port Appin <i>North Argyll</i> 2km 16y 9m 9d
<b>GC02312</b>	Nestling	03-07-2006	Sanda Island <i>Kintyre</i>
	Alive ring read in field	26-01-2014	Radipole Lake, Portland <i>Dorset</i> 558km SSE 7y 6m 23d
<b>GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL</b>		<i>Long lived local bird</i>	
<b>HT84595</b>	Nestling	25-06-2003	Sanda Island <i>Kintyre</i>
	Freshly dead (injury)	28-05-2014	Sanda Island <i>Kintyre</i> 0km 10y 11m 3d
<b>COMMON TERN</b>		<i>Interesting movements of long distance migrant</i>	

<b>SX66704</b>	Nestling	08-07-1997	Glas Eileanan, <i>Mull</i>
	Freshly dead (injury)	23-02-2014	Playa Jandia, Costa Calma Fuerteventura: <b>Spain</b> 3225km SSW 16y 7m 15d
<b>ST08226</b>	Nestling	04-07-2012	South Shian, Benderloch <i>North Argyll</i>
	Dead (bird of prey)	17-12-2014	St Michael's Church, Exeter <i>Devon</i> 656km S 2y 5m 13d
<b>SR63221</b>	Nestling	09-07-2011	South Shian, Benderloch, <i>North Argyll</i>
	Dead	26-05-2014	Llanes, Asturias <b>Spain</b> 1457km S 2y 10m 17d

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<b>GUILLEMOT</b>			<i>Winter storms claim Argyll breeding birds</i>
<b>GK95485</b>	Nestling	07-07-1980	Isle of Canna <i>Highland</i>
	control	02-07-2014	Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i> 64km S 33y 11m 25d
<b>R72509</b>	Adult	23-06-2007	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	Freshly dead	17-02-2014	Charmouth <i>Dorset</i> 682km SSE 6y 7m 25d
<b>X12272</b>	Adult	24-07-1994	Sanda Island <i>Kintyre</i>
	Freshly dead	20-02-2014	Hastings Sussex 641km SE 19y 6m 27d
<b>T77296</b>	Nestling	27-06-1990	Sanda Island <i>Kintyre</i>
	Freshly dead	16-02-2014	Hayle Cornwall 564km S 23y 7m 20d
<b>R47226</b>	Nestling	25-06-2003	Sanda Island <i>Kintyre</i>
	Long dead	08-03-2014	Chesil Beach <i>Dorset</i> 562km SSE 10y 8m 11d

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<b>RAZORBILL</b>			<i>Winter storms claim Argyll breeding birds</i>
<b>M36673</b>	Nestling	30-06-1980	Fair Isle <i>Shetland</i>
	Freshly dead	17-02-2014	Bruichladdich <i>Islay</i> 503km SW 33y 7m 18d
<b>M68723</b>	Nestling	26-06-1990	Great Saltee Island <i>Wexford</i>
	Freshly dead	10-02-2014	Muasdale, <i>Kintyre</i> 392km N 23y 7m 15d
<b>M55390</b>	Adult	24-06-1991	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	Freshly dead	08-03-2014	Abbotsbury <i>Dorset</i> 696km SSE 22y 8m 12d
<b>M72691</b>	Adult	27-06-1998	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	Freshly dead	20-02-2014	Trenow Cove, Perranuthnoe <i>Cornwall</i> 711km S 15y 7m 24d
<b>K04527</b>	Adult	11-06-2011	Port Ban <i>Colonsay</i>
	Long dead	08-03-2014	Chesil Beach <i>Dorset</i> 659km SSE 2y 8m 25d
<b>K04528</b>	Adult	11-06-2011	Port Ban <i>Colonsay</i>
	Freshly dead	24-02-2014	Burton Bradstock <i>Dorset</i> 644km SSE 2y 8m 13d
<b>M63570</b>	Adult	24-06-1987	Sanda Island <i>Kintyre</i>
	Freshly dead	02-03-2014	St Brelade Bay, Jersey <b>Channel Islands</b> 716km SSE 26y 8m 6d

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<b>BLACK GUILLEMOT</b>			<i>Interesting movement of long lived bird</i>
<b>FR18271</b>	Nestling	13-07-1991	Rockabill <i>Dublin</i>
	Long dead	12-04-2014	Ormsary <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 257km N 22y 8m 30d

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<b>PUFFIN</b>			<i>February storm off France claims Argyll breeding birds</i>
<b>ET80392</b>	Adult	21-06-1999	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	Freshly dead	09-02-2014	Barbatre, <i>Vendee France</i> 1,099km SSE 14y 7m 19d
<b>EW50146</b>	Adult	26-06-2011	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>

	Freshly dead	14-02-2014	Les Moutiers-En-Retz <i>Loire-Atlantique</i> <b>France</b> 1092km SSE 2y 7m 19d
<b>EX12708</b>	Adult	24-06-2013	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	Long dead	12-02-2014	Saint Anne la Palud, Plonevez-Porzay <i>Finistere</i> <b>France</b> 940km S 0y 7m 19d
<b>EW18185</b>	Adult	25-06-2008	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	control	28-07-2011	Sule Skerry <i>Orkney</i> 313km NNE
	Freshly dead	15-02-2014	Plage Des Conches, Longeville-Sur-Mer <i>Vendee</i> <b>France</b> 1173km SSE 5y 7m 21d
<b>ET80392</b>	Adult	21-06-1999	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	Freshly dead	09-02-2014	Barbatre <i>Vendee</i> <b>France</b> 1099km SSE 14y 7m 19d
<b>EW50249</b>	Adult	26-06-2011	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	Freshly dead	10-02-2014	le Croisic <i>Loire-Atlantique</i> <b>France</b> 1057km SSE 2y 7m 15d
<b>EW18377</b>	Adult	21-06-2008	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	Freshly dead	13-02-2014	Plage de Mane Guen, Plouharnel <i>Morbihan</i> <b>France</b> 1015km SSE 5y 7m 23d
<b>EW18279</b>	Adult	21-06-2008	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	Freshly dead	13-02-2014	Port Creux, la Turballe <i>Loire-Atlantique</i> <b>France</b> 1050km SSE 5y 7m 23d
<b>EW50254</b>	Adult	25-06-2008	Lunga, Treshnish Isles:
	Freshly dead	28-02-2014	la Tremblade <i>Charente-Maritime</i> <b>France</b> 1247km SSE 5y 8m 3d
<b>EX12560</b>	Adult	28-06-2012	Lunga, Treshnish Isles <i>Mull</i>
	Freshly dead	16-02-2014	le Vivier, Biscarrosse Plage <i>Landes</i> <b>France</b> 1386km SSE 1y 7m 19d
<b>ES64155</b>	Adult	29-06-1994	Lunga, Treshnish Isles:
	Dead	22-02-2014	Vensac <i>Gironde</i> <b>France</b> 1290km SSE 19y 7m 24d
<b>EL52947</b>	Adult	27-06-2006	Lunga, Treshnish Isles:
	Freshly dead (oiled)	03-02-2014	Grande Plage, Quiberon <i>Morbihan</i> <b>France</b> 1026km SSE 7y 7m 7d
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<b>TAWNY OWL</b> GN12440	Nestling fem control	<i>Forestry Commission nest box study</i>	
		17-05-2001	Glenbranter Forest, Strachur <i>Cowal</i>
		02-05-2014	Ardentinn <i>Cowal</i> 13km SE 12y 11m 15d
<hr/>			
<b>SAND MARTIN</b> <b>Z174509</b>	First-year control	<i>Autumn migration movement</i>	
		20-07-2014	Calliburn Croft <i>Kintyre</i>
		28-07-2014	Warrington <i>Lancs</i> 306km SE 0y 0m 8d
<hr/>			
<b>WILLOW WARBLER</b> <b>HKJ561</b>	First-year control	<i>Autumn migration movement</i>	
		20-07-2014	Aros Moss <i>Kintyre</i>
		23-08-2014	Dunes de Mont St Frieux, Dannes <i>Pas-de-Calais</i> <b>France</b> 725km SE 0y 1m 3d
<hr/>			
<b>SEDGE WARBLER</b>		<i>Interesting movements</i>	

<b>D653022</b>	First-year Male control	03-09-2013	Ballinamorrhagh, Curracloe: <i>Wexford</i>
<b>D401195</b>	Adult Female control	26-05-2014	Aros Moss <i>Kintyre</i> 343km N 0y 8m 23d
		14-05-2014	Calf of Man <i>Isle of Man</i>
		29-06-2014	Aros Moss <i>Kintyre</i> 164km NNW 0y 1m 15d
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<b>GOLDFINCH</b>			<i>Mobile species</i>
<b>L817499</b>	Adult control	15-01-2012	Thornhill <i>Dumfries and Galloway</i>
		12-01-2014	Kilmartin <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 147km NW 1y 11m 28d
<b>L812425</b>	First-year Male control	08-08-2012	Lanark <i>South Lanarkshire</i>
		14-04-2014	Kilmartin <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 120km WNW 1y 8m 6d
<hr/>			
<b>SISKIN</b>			<i>Very mobile species</i>
<b>D907394</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> -yr male control	02-03-2014	Chilworth <i>Surrey</i>
		02-05-2014	Kilmartin <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 635km NNW 0y 2m 0d
<b>Y899583</b>	First-year male control	24-02-2013	Harston <i>Cambridgeshire</i>
		01-05-2014	Kilmartin <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 572km NW 1y 2m 7d
<b>L905722</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> -yr fem	03-03-2012	Brookhouse <i>Lancashire</i>
	Freshly dead	02-03-2014	Tobermory <i>Mull</i> 355km NW 1y 11m 27
<b>D969469</b>	male	22-03-2014	Branch End, Stocksfield <i>Northumberland</i>
	Freshly dead	04-09-2014	Tarbert <i>Kintyre</i> 244km WNW 0y 5m 13d
<b>D430300</b>	Adult male	22-04-2013	Drummond, Inverness <i>Highland</i>
	Freshly dead	30-03-2014	Pennyghael <i>Mull</i> 164km SW 0y 11m 8d
<hr/>			
<b>TWITE</b>			<i>Interesting movements and site fidelity</i>
<b>V879489</b>	1st-yr fem control	06-10-2012	Machrihanish B O <i>Kintyre</i>
		29-01-2014	Heysham <i>Lancashire</i> 240km SE 1y 3m 23d
<b>Y316032</b>	Adult Male control	14-10-2013	Machrihanish B O <i>Kintyre</i>
		29-01-2014	Heysham <i>Lancashire</i> 239km SE 0y 3m 15d
<b>L974510</b>	Juvenile Male control	04-07-2012	Sanda Island, <i>Kintyre</i>
		10-11-2014	Heysham <i>Lancashire</i> 220km SE 2y 4m 6d
	control	29-10-2014	Point of Ayre <i>Isle of Man</i> 144kmSE 0y 1m 19d
<b>L586061</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> -yr fem control	24-09-2014	Machrihanish <i>Kintyre</i>
		30-11-2014	Point of Ayre <i>Isle of Man</i> 144km SE 0y 2m 6d
<hr/>			
<b>LESSER REDPOLL</b>			<i>Interesting movements and a foreign movement</i>
<b>L690318</b>	Adult male	25-10-2012	Seacroft, Skegness <i>Lincolnshire</i>
	Freshly dead	05-05-2014	Strachur <i>Cowal</i> 486km NW 1y 6m 10d
<b>L542665</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> -yr	19-03-2013	Warsop <i>Nottinghamshire</i>
	Freshly dead	15-05-2014	Coshandrochaid, Tayvallich <i>Mid-Argyll</i> 424km
	hit by car		NW 1y 1m 26d
<b>D200195</b>	Adult fem control	28-05-2013	Aros Moss <i>Kintyre</i>
		22-03-2014	Bourne Farm <i>W Midlands</i> 401kmSE 0y 9m 22d
<b>X351718</b>	Adult Female control	24-07-2010	Sanda Island <i>Kintyre</i>
		30-01-2014	Blauberg <i>Antwerpen Belgium</i> 843km SE 3y 6m 6d
<hr/>			
<b>SNOW BUNTING</b>			<i>Passage through Islay</i>
<b>FRP</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> -yr fem	23-02-2014	Calais <i>Pas-de-Calais France</i>
	Alive c-rings	23-03-2014	Ardnave <i>Islay</i> 770km NW 0y 1m 0d

# Recent Literature on Argyll birds

*Bob Furness, David Jardine and Blair Urquhart*

Here we present a brief bibliography in alphabetical order by author name, of recent publications that relate to birds in Argyll, with a short description where considered appropriate. This bibliography adds to the one in Argyll Bird Report Volume 25. It includes new material not listed in the previous report but published by the end of 2015. Web pages where publications can be accessed are listed where appropriate.

**Bowler, J. 2015. Vagrant Nearctic waders on the Isle of Tiree, Argyll. Scottish Birds 35: 173-179.** *This paper points out the importance of Tiree not only as a migratory staging post for waders breeding in Iceland, Greenland and NE Arctic Canada, but also for vagrant Nearctic waders. Data on 121 birds are tabulated, including 45 buff-breasted sandpipers, 43 pectoral sandpipers, 17 American golden plovers, 5 semipalmated sandpipers, 4 Baird's sandpipers, 4 white-rumped sandpipers, and single lesser yellowlegs, spotted sandpiper and dowitcher. Most occur in September. In a Scottish and UK context, these numbers are remarkable, especially the numbers of buff-breasted sandpipers.*

**Burgess, M.D., Bellamy, P.E., Gillings, S., Noble, D.G., Grice, P.V. and Conway, G.J. 2015. The impact of changing habitat availability on population trends of woodland birds associated with early successional plantation woodland. Bird Study 62: 39-55.** *Trends in young woodland availability influenced population trends and abundance of tree pipit and lesser redpoll, but not 10-km square occupancy. The declining availability of young coniferous woodland contributed to the population trends of these species in England. The lack of sufficient temporal data inhibited the authors' ability to test this properly in Scotland, but this is like to be the case in Argyll, which has significant areas of conifer forest which are now approaching harvest.*

**Challis, A., Wilson, M., Holling, M., Roos, S., Stevenson, A. and Stirling-Aird, P. 2015. Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme Report 2014.**

*This annual summary of Raptor Monitoring in Scotland provides results provided by the Argyll Raptor Study Group and others for Argyll and puts these in a national context for 2014.*

**Gillings, S., Balmer, D.E. and Fuller, R.J. 2015. Directionality of recent bird distribution shifts and climate change in Great Britain. Global Change Biology 21: 2155-2168.** *Poleward shifts of organisms with global warming are nothing new, but this paper is worth a read for several reasons. Firstly, it illustrates the high quality outputs that can be derived from 'citizen science'. The bird data were gathered by tens of thousands of volunteers coordinated by the BTO in the 1988-91 and 2008-11 bird atlas surveys, providing intensive coverage of every corner of the country. Secondly, the analysis shows not only clear effects of climate change on the distributions of our birds, but also a variety of different responses by different species. Not all have moved 'polewards' but some appear to have moved more in response to changes in rainfall patterns than in response to temperature. And thirdly, several of the populations declining most rapidly in Southeast England have actually increased in numbers in West Scotland including Argyll.*

**Gillon, K. 2015. Cedar Waxwing, Tiree, June 2015 – the second Argyll and third Scottish record. *Scottish Birds* 35: 280-281.** *Following the second Scottish record of this species, on Tiree in September 2013, a bird was found at Scarinish, Tiree, on 10 June 2015.*

**Haywood, D.B., Ewing, S.R., Baxter, A., Douse, A., Stanbury, A. Whitfield, D.P. and Eaton, M.A. 2015. Changes in the abundance and distribution of a montane specialist bird, Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*, in the UK over 25 years. *Bird Study* 62: 443-456.** *The number of dotterel breeding in the UK declined by 57% between 1987/88 and 2011, from 980 to 423 breeding males. There has been a contraction of the species' geographical range as well as declining numbers on core sites. These findings may signify the occurrence of important ecological changes, with possible drivers including land-use/habitat change, nitrogen deposition and climate change. Dotterel occasionally breeds in North Argyll.*

**Heward, C.J., Hoodless, A.N., Conway, G.J., Aebischer, N.J., Gillings, S. and Fuller, R.J. 2015. Current status and recent trend of the European Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola* as a breeding bird in Britain. *Bird Study* 62: 535-551.** *The breeding woodcock population in Britain was estimated at 55,241 males and this species is well represented in Argyll. The woodcock's population size and breeding range appear to be declining severely across Britain, including Argyll. Regional variation in the rate of decline might be explained by the distribution of large coniferous woodlands.*

**How, J. and Gilbert, G. 2015. Habitat selection by Greenland White-fronted Geese at RSPB Loch Gruinart, Islay. *Scottish Birds* 35: 99-104.** *Unlike most other geese in Scotland, Greenland white-fronted geese have been showing a decline in numbers. The Islay population declined from 13,000 in 1999 to 5,000 in 2013. This paper analyses monthly field-by-field goose counts from 1984 to 2013 within the Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve. Analysis shows a habitat preference for flooded and wet rush pasture and wet grassland. This is informing RSPB management of the site for these geese.*

**Jardine, D.C. and Fisher, I.A. 2015. Site fidelity of Great Northern Diver with a deformed bill. *Scottish Birds* 35: 160-161.** *An individual with a deformed bill was at Scalasaig, Colonsay in spring 2014 and again in spring 2015. This observation of fidelity to a wintering site in two successive years fits with other anecdotal observations of wintering site fidelity in great northern divers. Strong winter site fidelity has also recently been reported from satellite tracking of this species in North America, 85% returning to the same wintering site each year (Paruk et al. 2015 *Condor* 117:485-493).*

**Ogden, R., Heap, E., McEwing, R., Tingay, R. and Whitfield, D.P. 2015. Population structure and dispersal patterns in Scottish golden eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* revealed by molecular genetic analysis of territorial birds. *Ibis* 157: 837-848.** *A study of golden eagle DNA extracted from moulted feathers in territories throughout Scotland. Birds from the Western Isles showed differences from birds in the rest of Scotland, indicating low dispersal between the Outer Hebrides and mainland. Sampling included many home ranges in Argyll, especially those in Mull.*

**Ogilvie, M. 2014. Gandalf, a Ruppell's griffon vulture, visits Islay. *Scottish Birds* 34: 165-167.** *Malcolm Ogilvie explains how he was persuaded that the phone call from a farmer friend on Islay on 1 April to tell him that there was a vulture on the island was not an April fool. Having escaped from Cumbernauld on 23 March 2014, Gandalf flew to Islay where she was*

*found sitting on open moorland on 1 April. She was caught and returned to her owner, but the story is worth a read.*

**Rivers, S.L. 2015. Ring-billed Gulls in Scotland 2005-2014. *Scottish Birds* 35: 269-274.** *Reviews records of ring-billed gull in 2005-2014. A high proportion of all records of this species were from Argyll or the Outer Hebrides. Many records are of returning birds with a northward passage in the first half of the year especially into Argyll and the Outer Hebrides (such as the infamous individual at Oban each spring from 2005 to 2013). A bird ringed as a vagrant in Norway subsequently recovered back on North American breeding grounds raises the possibility that birds may be deliberately commuting across the Atlantic rather than just 'lost' in Europe. With a confirmed successful breeding by ring-billed gull paired with a common gull in Northern Ireland in 2004 and an apparently unsuccessful breeding attempt involving a ring-billed gull and a common gull at a colony in Scotland in 2009, we should look out for ring-billed gulls at Argyll common gull colonies!*

**RSPB 2015. Argyll lek report 2015: Annual report on Black Grouse lek surveys and findings in Argyll. RSPB, Glasgow.** *In 2015, 95 displaying males were recorded at 34 lek sites throughout Argyll. At 16 sites monitored in 2014 and 2015, numbers declined by 6% between the two years. Most leks held only one or two males, the largest leks being 9 males at Fiargall on Forestry Commission Scotland land and 5 males on a farm NE of Loch Aweide. Two of the remaining recognised strongholds for the species in Argyll are the Ardtaraig estate and the Loch Nant & Kilchrenan area.*

**Summers, R.W., Boland, H., Colhoun, K., Elkins, N., Etheridge, B., Foster, S., Fox, J.W., Mackie, K., Quinn, L.R. and Swann, R.L. 2014. Contrasting trans-Atlantic migratory routes of Nearctic purple sandpipers *Calidris maritima* associated with low pressure systems in spring and winter. *Ardea* 102: 139-152.**  
and

**Summers, R. and Colhoun, K. 2014. Confirmation that Arctic Canada is the breeding area for the majority of purple sandpipers wintering in Scotland and Ireland. *Scottish Birds* 34: 336-338.** *Deployment of geolocators on purple sandpipers wintering in Scotland and Ireland showed that these birds almost all breed in Arctic Canada, with slightly different staging and migration patterns in autumn and spring.*

**Taylor, J., Broad, R.A. and Jardine, D.C. 2015. Successful breeding by close-nesting White-tailed Eagles and Osprey. *Scottish Birds* 35: 221-222.** *This short note describes how a pair of white-tailed eagles nested directly visible and only 440m from an established osprey nest and both pairs fledged young, despite some previous literature suggesting that white-tailed eagles may evict ospreys.*

**Urquhart, C., Fox, A.D., Francis, I., Griffin, L., Mitchell, C. and Stroud, D.A. 2015. Greenland white-fronted goose. Version 1.0. In *The Species Action Framework Handbook*, Gaywood MJ, Boon PB, Thompson DBA, Strachan IM (eds). Scottish Natural Heritage, Battleby, Perth.**

**<http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A1590815.pdf> and [www.snh.gov.uk/speciesactionframework](http://www.snh.gov.uk/speciesactionframework)**  
*The Greenland white-fronted goose was listed for 'conservation action' within the SNH Species Action Framework because of significant declines in its small wintering population since the 1990s, much of which occurs in Argyll. Declines have occurred because of decreases in breeding success in Greenland. Scottish Government has prioritised Greenland white-fronted*

goose in its goose management policy with work underway to establish the best means of habitat management, and research to understand population dynamics better. The projects and management are outlined in the framework report.

**Ward, R.M. 2015. Treshnish Isles Auk Ringing Group Report for 2014.**

[http://www.tiarg.org/annual\\_reports/2014.pdf](http://www.tiarg.org/annual_reports/2014.pdf) The report presents observations and data collected in 2014 in this annual series. A team of 8 people were on the Treshnish Isles from 28 June to 5 July 2014 in the 36<sup>th</sup> expedition. Where relevant, data from this expedition report are included in this bird report under individual species accounts. The expedition report also includes records of mammals and Lepidoptera, ringing totals and ring recovery data.

**Wilson, M.W., Austin, G.E., Gillings S. and Wernham, C.V. 2015. Natural Heritage Zone Bird Population Estimates. Scottish Windfarm Bird Steering Group (SWBSG) Commissioned Report No. 1504.**

[http://www.swbsg.org/images/SWBSG Commissioned Report No 1504.pdf](http://www.swbsg.org/images/SWBSG_Commissioned_Report_No_1504.pdf)

This report uses data from the Bird Atlas 2007-2011 to estimate numbers of birds of 24 breeding species and another four species of wintering wildfowl of particular concern in the context of wind farm impacts, in each of the 21 defined 'Natural Heritage Zones' of Scotland. NHZ 14 (Argyll West and Islands) is most of Argyll and Bute plus Arran, but with Mull forming part of NHZ 6 (Western Seaboard) and Coll & Tiree forming part of NHZ 3 (Coll, Tiree & the Western Isles). So these NHZs don't map on too well to the Argyll Bird Recording area we use, but are considered as suitable regions for assessing wind farm impacts on regional bird populations. In that context, this report is likely to be used as a key reference for appropriate regional population estimates for birds that may be affected by developments such as wind farms. The analysis used timed tetrad bird counts to generate relative densities of the selected bird species across Scotland, apportioning the total population (sometimes extrapolated to the present time from historical counts and estimated trends since the count) by NHZs in relation to these relative densities, together with lower and upper 95% confidence limits for these estimates. This is an ingenious use of the Atlas data but seems to diverge from reality in some cases. For example, the report estimates that there were 67 black grouse males in Argyll West and Islands (NHZ14). However, the actual counts of black grouse by the RSPB lek surveys are not mentioned or compared. Lek surveys counted 95 males in Argyll in 2015 and higher numbers in earlier years, so the apportioning from Atlas data seems to be a serious underestimate of this population. Another surprising estimate in the report is the extrapolation that there are now 12,832 pairs of great skuas in Scotland, rather than the 9,634 pairs counted in Seabird 2000. Yet actual colony count data show a decrease of 600 pairs at Foula which is by far the largest colony and a decrease of 700 pairs at Hoy, the second largest colony so it is difficult to imagine where the extra thousands of pairs are. A great deal of care needs to be given in using the numbers in this report.

**Wotton, S.R., Eaton, M., Ewing, S.R. and Green, R.E. 2015. The increase in the Corncrake *Crex crex* population of the United Kingdom has slowed. Bird Study 62: 486-497.**

Numbers of corn crakes in the UK increased from 829 singing males in 2003 to 1,166 singing males in 2009, and to 1,274 singing males in 2014. Argyll remains a stronghold for the species in the UK with about half of the UK total, but there has been very little expansion of range away from the core breeding areas.

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Sandpiper, Semipalmated	67	Storm-petrel, Leach's	40
Sandpiper, Spotted	69	Storm-petrel, White-faced	15
Sandpiper, White-rumped	66	Storm-petrel, Wilson's	15
Sandpiper, Wood	70	Swallow, Barn	100
Scaup, Greater	28	Swallow, Red-rumped	101
Scaup, Lesser	28	Swan, Bewick's	16
Scoter, Common	31	Swan, Black	125
Scoter, Surf	31	Swan, Mute	15
Scoter, Velvet	31	Swan, Whooper	16
Shag, European	41	Swift, Alpine	89
Shearwater, Balearic	39	Swift, Common	88
Shearwater, Cory's	38	Teal, Blue-winged	27
Shearwater, Great	38	Teal, Cinnamon	125
Shearwater, Macronesian	39	Teal, Eurasian	24
Shearwater, Manx	38	Teal, Green-winged	24
Shearwater, Sooty	38	Tern, Arctic	78
Shelduck, Common	22	Tern, Black	77
Shelduck, Ruddy	125	Tern, Bridled	76
Shoveler, Northern	27	Tern, Caspian	77
Shrike, Brown	93	Tern, Common	78
Shrike, Great Grey	94	Tern, Forster's	77
Shrike, Lesser Grey	94	Tern, Gull-billed	77
Shrike, Red-backed	93	Tern, Little	76
Shrike, Woodchat	94	Tern, Roseate	78
Siskin, Eurasian	122	Tern, Sandwich	77
Skua, Arctic	73	Tern, Whiskered	77
Skua, Great	73	Tern, White-winged Black	77
Skua, Long-tailed	73	Thrush, Blue Rock	113
Skua, Pomarine	72	Thrush, Mistle	110
Skylark, Eurasian	99	Thrush, Song	109
Smew	32	Tit, Blue	98
Snipe, Common	72	Tit, Coal	99
Snipe, Great	15	Tit, Crested	99
Snipe, Jack	71	Tit, Great	98

Tit, Long-tailed	101	Warbler, Willow	103
Tit, Willow	99	Warbler, Wood	101
Treecreeper, Eurasian	106	Warbler, Yellow-browed	101
Turnstone, Ruddy	61	Waxwing, Bohemian	106
Twite	119	Waxwing, Cedar	106
Vireo, Red-eyed	93	Wheatear, 'Greenland'	114
Wagtail, Citrine	115	Wheatear, Northern	113
Wagtail, Grey	115	Whimbrel	59
Wagtail, Pied	115	Whinchat	113
Wagtail, White	116	Whitethroat, Common	104
Wagtail, Yellow	115	Whitethroat, Lesser	104
Warbler, Barred	103	Wigeon, American	23
Warbler, Blyth's Reed	105	Wigeon, Eurasian	23
Warbler, Booted	105	Woodcock, Eurasian	71
Warbler, Garden	103	Woodpecker, Great Spotted	90
Warbler, Grasshopper	104	Woodpecker, Green	90
Warbler, Greenish	101	Wren	106
Warbler, Icterine	105	Wryneck, Eurasian	90
Warbler, Marsh	105	Yellowhammer	123
Warbler, Melodious	105	Yellowlegs, Greater	69
Warbler, Reed	106	Yellowlegs, Lesser	70
Warbler, Sedge	105		
Warbler, Subalpine	104		
Warbler, Western Bonelli's	101		



*Common Crossbills*

*Jim Dickson*



*Woodcock*

*Margaret Staley*

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