
THE TENTH ARGYLL BIRD REPORT



**PUBLISHED BY THE
ARGYLL BIRD CLUB
1994**



COVER PICTURE

A SOOTY SHEARWATER photographed by Mary Macintyre on 27 August 1993 about 16km off Machrihanish (Kintyre). A record number (277) of this species passed Machrihanish Seabird Observatory on that date. Watchers from the observatory sailed west from Machrihanish and found about 50 Sooty Shearwaters, including this bird, among a flock of about 2000 Manx Shearwaters. Because of the exceptionally calm weather, the birds were reluctant or unable to fly and could be approached closely by boat.

THE TENTH ARGYLL BIRD REPORT

Edited by:
J.C.A. Craik

Assisted by:
T. ap Rheinallt

Systematic List by:
T. ap Rheinallt

Cover picture by:
Mary Macintyre

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Argyll Bird Club

The Argyll Bird Club was formed in 1985 and aims to play an active role in the promotion of ornithology and conservation in Argyll, in the District of Argyll and Bute, and in Strathclyde Region.

The club has steadily built up its membership to the present level of around 170. One day-long meeting is held in the spring and another in the autumn. These include talks, scientific papers and field trips. Conferences on selected topics are also organised occasionally. In 1986, the club held its first conference, a successful meeting between foresters and bird conservationists. This was followed, in 1987, by a memorable two-day conference in Oban on fish farming and the environment.

The club has close contacts with other conservation groups, both locally and nationally, including the British Trust for Ornithology, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the Scottish Ornithologists' Club and the Scottish Wildlife Trust.

The club promotes a greater interest in birds by participation in various recording schemes. Members receive four newsletters a year as well as the annual *Argyll Bird Report*. The report is distributed free to all members (one per family membership) and is the major publication of the club. Much of the annual subscription is used to pay for the report and newsletters. Corporate membership of the club is also available to hotels, companies and other bodies wishing to support bird conservation in Argyll.

If you would like to join the Argyll Bird Club then please write to the Membership Secretary for details (page 3). Subscriptions start on January 1 and include the newsletters and *Argyll Bird Report* published during the year. Back copies of most earlier reports are available from Nigel Scriven (address page 3).

Argyll Bird Club - Officials and Committee 1993/94

Chairman: R. Broad, 6 Birch Road, Killearn, Glasgow G63 9SQ.

Vice Chairman: S.J. Eccles, Roineachail, Benderloch, by Oban, Argyll PA37 1QP.

Secretary: Mrs J. Eccles (see S.J. Eccles above for address).

Treasurer: Miss F. MacDonald, 4 Gallanach, Lochgair, By Lochgilphead.

Membership Secretary: Dr J.A. McCulloch, Camus Beag, Lochgair, Lochgilphead PA31 8SD.

Committee: Dr T. ap Rheinallt, R. Broad, R. Clarke, Dr J.C.A. Craik, Mrs J. Eccles, S.J. Eccles, D.C. Jardine, Dr J.A. McCulloch, F. MacDonald, M. Madders, Dr S.J. Petty and N.J. Scriven.

Argyll Records Panel (ARP): Dr T. ap Rheinallt, R. Broad, D.C. Jardine, Dr A.R. Jennings and Dr M.A. Ogilvie.

Editor of the Argyll Bird Report: Dr J.C.A. Craik, Scottish Association for Marine Science, P.O. Box 3, Oban, Argyll PA34 4AD.

Editor of the Newsletter (The Eider): R. Clarke, Inverlussa House, Achnamara, Lochgilphead, Argyll PA31 8PT.

Further copies of this report can be obtained from: N.J. Scriven, Ardentinn Centre, Ardentinn, Dunoon, Argyll. Price £4 including postage.

Other Useful Addresses

SOC Recorder for Argyll: Dr T. ap Rheinallt, 19 Shore St., Port Wemyss, Isle of Islay PA47 7ST.

National Wildfowl and BOEE Count Organiser for Argyll: Dr M.A. Ogilvie, Glencairn, Bruichladdich, Isle of Islay PA49 7UN.

BTO Representatives for Argyll: *North Argyll including Mull, Coll and Tiree:* M. Madders (Carnduncan, Gruinart, Bridgend, Isle of Islay PA44 7PS). *Islay, Jura and Colonsay:* Dr M.A. Ogilvie (address above).

RSPB's Conservation Officer in Strathclyde: R. Broad (address above).

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Editorial

Argyll Bird Club was founded in 1985, largely through the efforts and initiative of one man, Dr Colin Galbraith. This, the tenth issue of the *Argyll Bird Report*, marks the passing of almost a decade since that event. This important anniversary is perhaps an appropriate time to look back to the first issue of this report.

Each of the following pairs of quotations, from *Argyll Bird Reports 1* and *10*, carries its own story. More details can be found under the respective species in those volumes.

Mute Swan	1983	Widespread breeding species.
	1993	Widespread but uncommon breeding species.
Greylag Goose	1983	Breeds Coll, Tiree and occasionally elsewhere.
	1993	Increasing breeding population Coll, Tiree and Mull. Also breeds Colonsay and occasionally elsewhere.
Red Kite	1983	(Species not mentioned).
	1993	Seven records in Argyll of this newly reintroduced species, including one of two birds.
Osprey	1983	Passage migrant.
	1993	Three pairs nested in Argyll.
Sand Martin	1983	Widespread and common where there are suitable breeding sites.
	1993	Uncommon and localised breeding species.
Pied Flycatcher	1983	Rare passage migrant. With the large numbers of suitable oakwoods, it is surprising that there are no confirmed breeding records.
	1993	Rare. Very localised breeder in oakwoods. Increase in breeding population in recent years is attributable to the Argyll Bird Club nestbox scheme. Thirteen pairs bred in boxes this year.
Yellowhammer	1983	Local but common in places. A flock of 80 on Mull in November 1981.
	1993	Localised breeding species... Population may be in decline and all records are welcome. No flocks reported this year were of more than ten birds.
Corn Bunting	1983	Very local breeding species with regular breeding only on Coll and Tiree, possibly Gigha.
	1993	Declining resident species which is facing extinction in Argyll. Recent breeding on Tiree only.

(In 1983 the list of observers acknowledged contained 92 names. In 1993 there were 194.)

Most of these changes in bird abundance and distribution are reasonably well known and some have causes that are understood. Others could be quoted that are no more than suggestive and that highlight the need for more systematic counts. One of the most valuable functions of bird reports such as this is to record such increases and decreases, both from year to year and over longer periods. No doubt similar changes will occur in Argyll over the next ten years. Whether they will be recorded in this journal depends not only on whether people count birds and send their records to the County Recorder, but equally crucially on whether someone with sufficiently expert knowledge can be found to carry out the considerable duties of that position.

Mike Madders resigned in 1993 and I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of Argyll Bird Club and the wider world of ornithology, of thanking him most warmly for his five years of work as Recorder for Argyll. People with such expert knowledge are thin on the ground in Argyll and it is with very great pleasure that we welcome Dr Tristan ap Rheinallt as the new Recorder. As a newcomer to the county, from nearby Arran, Tristan had scarcely arrived before he had to apply himself diligently to the task. The fruits of his labours can be read in the excellent Systematic List that forms the main part of this issue. Very many thanks to Tristan for his time, effort and attention to detail in this endeavour. As last year, thanks also to the team of compilers who assisted him. (As one of those compilers, who assisted with one small part of the List, I can really appreciate the enormous amount of work that both Mike and Tristan have devoted to correcting, reassembling and rewriting a long, detailed manuscript.)

Probably the most significant event in ornithology in Argyll in 1993 was the completion and opening of Kintyre Bird Club's Machrihanish Seabird Observatory on the far south-west coast of the Kintyre peninsula. This is believed to be the first bird observatory, in the sense of a place dedicated to daily observations and the keeping of records, on the west coast of Scotland. The credit for planning it, and for seeing those plans through to execution, goes largely to one man, Eddie Maguire. At a time when funds are scarce, this is a considerable achievement. The observatory is open all the year round, but intending visitors should ring Eddie on 0586-554823. The Observatory has produced its first report, covering the two years 1992-93, which can be obtained from Eddie Maguire.

The seawatching records from the Machrihanish Seabird Observatory, and extensive seawatching records from Tristan ap Rheinallt on Islay, together form a valuable element in the Systematic List.

Many thanks to the three other contributors to this issue: David Jardine, Arthur Jennings and Mike Madders. The range of subjects that they cover illustrates the kind of contribution that I would welcome in future issues of the *Argyll Bird Report*: papers on bird species found in Argyll, short notes, letters, book reviews, perhaps even a Ringing Report. Thanks also to Mary Macintyre for allowing us to use her striking photograph of a Sooty Shearwater, taken off Machrihanish in August 1993, on the cover of this report.

J C A Craik
Editor of Argyll Bird Report
April 1994

Systematic list for 1993

Tristan ap Rheinallt

19 Shore Street, Port Wemyss, Isle of Islay, Argyll PA47 7ST

INTRODUCTION

As last year, several compilers have contributed to the systematic list. They are: Roger Broad (raptors and breeding Schedule 1 species); Clive Craik (breeding seabirds); David Jardine (passerines); Mike Madders (Hen Harrier); and Malcolm Ogilvie (wildfowl). I have dealt with waders, passage and wintering seabirds, and all remaining species, and have also edited the systematic list as a whole. Any errors are therefore entirely my responsibility.

The format of the systematic list largely follows that of previous *Argyll Bird Reports*. I have, however, instigated a few changes. Firstly, within each species account I have reordered records for the current year to follow more strictly a chronological sequence, in the hope of achieving greater clarity and readability.

Secondly, I have inserted additional records from previous years into the systematic list where these concern: records of rarities accepted since the publication of the last *Argyll Bird Report*; scarce visitors or vagrants to Argyll; or species not featuring in the systematic list for the year in question.

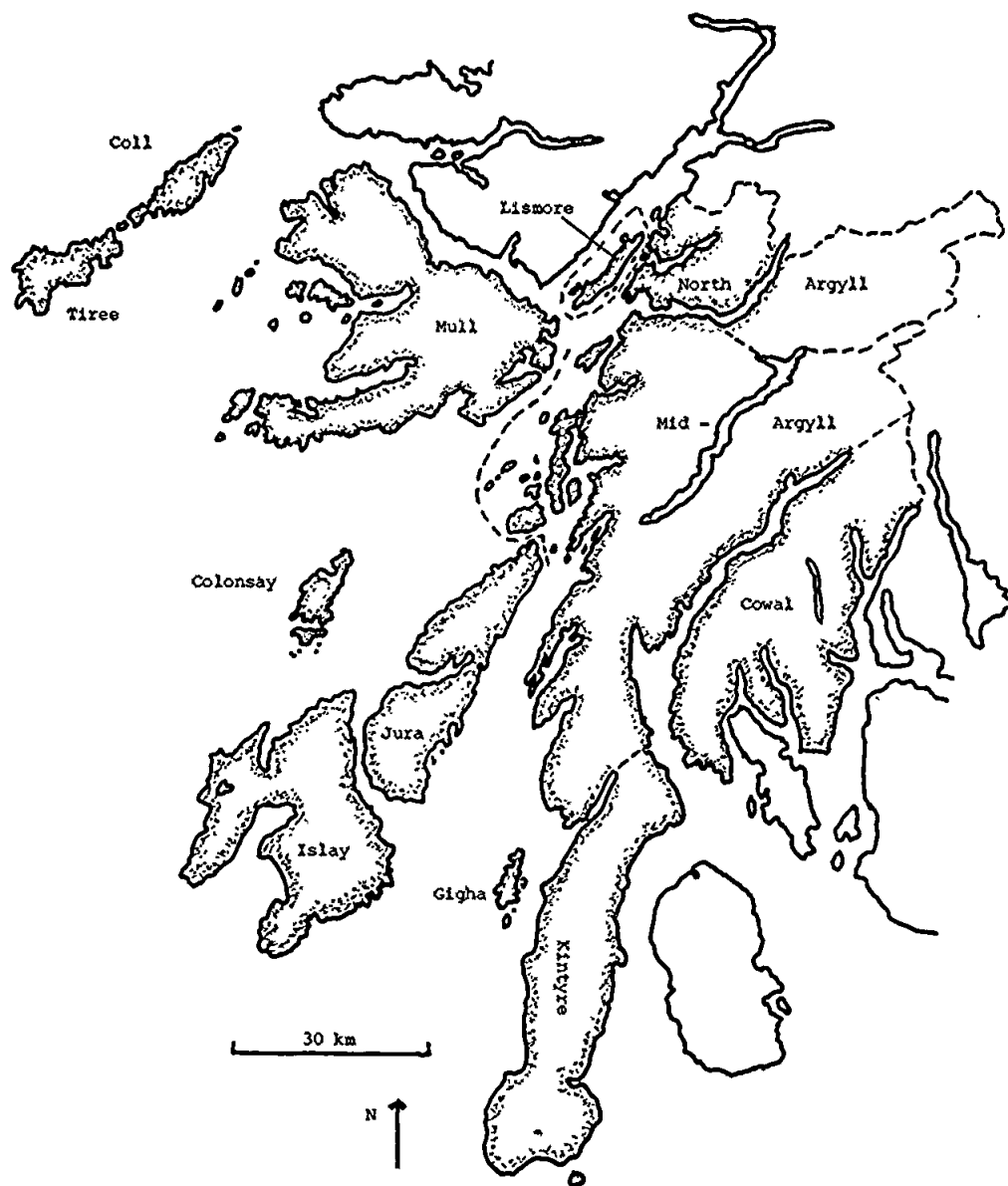
Thirdly, lists of pending and rejected records have been moved to the end of the systematic list, together with records for which details are still awaited. It should be noted that these records are listed for information purposes only, and do not form part of the data set for the year in question. With the exception of a few outstanding records from previous years, records of rare birds will in future appear once and once only in a systematic list, following acceptance by the relevant committee.

Lastly, I have re-introduced the practice of giving observers' names after accepted records of rarities, but only for those species considered by the British Birds Rarities Committee.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to all contributors who submitted records for this report. I have attempted to acknowledge by letter all records received since 1 September 1993 when I became recorder, and I intend to continue this practice in the future. A full list of contributors appears below; apologies will be due to any observer whose name has been inadvertently omitted. Comprehensive reports or particularly extensive data sets for specific areas were made available by John and Pamela Clarke (Colonsay), Gwen Evans (Tiree), John Halliday (Taynish NNR and Moine Mhor NNR), Eddie Maguire (Machrihanish area), Malcolm Ogilvie (Islay), Mike Peacock (Loch Gruinart RSPB

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Map showing the areas of Argyll used in this Report

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reserve), and Gordon Scott (Oban area).

I am indebted to Roger Broad, Clive Craik, David Jardine, Eddie Maguire and Malcolm Ogilvie for commenting on a draft version of the text. Finally, I am particularly grateful to Mike Madders for helping to make an initially daunting task more manageable, and for being constantly on hand to answer patiently my many questions.

Contributors in 1993

G M Adam, D J Adams, D Anderson, G Anderson, R A G Angus, T ap Rheinallt, Argyll Raptor Study Group, P & P Atherton, W Bachelor, C Baister, D J Barker, R Barnes, D Bateson, E Bignal, A Birkby, J Blatcher, M Bleaney, J Bradfield, R Braithwaite, S Brennan, Bristol Ornithologists' Club, R A Broad, D M Bryant, I D Bullock, J Burlison, K Butterworth, L Campbell, W Campbell, S Carmichael, G Carr, P Cashman, C Challen, C Chalmers, R J Chandler, S Clark, A A Clarke, J & P M Clarke, R A Clarke, E Clarkson, H M Cole, B Coles, Dr Colling, P & S Craddock, J C A Craik, L Crossan, T P Daniels, J Dawson, D Doyle, Earthwatch, S J & J M Eccles, J Edwards, D & H Egan, H Embleton, D Evans, G Evans, W Farrelly, M Finn, K Firth, Forest Enterprise, P Fraser, A French, J Gardner, D Garratt, J C Gibson, S Gibson, E A Graham, M Gregory, M Hall-Gardiner, J B Halliday, P Hampson, M C & J Harding, F Harmer, B Harrington, J M Harrison, A L Harvey, K Hay, S Hay, D Hendry, S & E Hennin, G Henry, C J Hill, J Hill, M V Jackson, C A Jaggard, S & Mrs James, M Jamieson, D C Jardine, G Jeffrey, A R Jennings, C M & A A Johnson, A W Jones, A C Knight, G Leather, R Leishman, A Liddle, R Lightfoot, B Little, Mr MacDiarmid, I MacDonald, R MacDonald, A MacKenzie, G MacLellan, E MacCallum, M Madders, E J Maguire, K Mann, J Martin, A Middleton, Milbuie Log 1993, C J & H J Millard, D Mitchell, J Morris, S Morris, F Muir, A Murray, P & R Newton, Northumberland & Tyneside Bird Club, M A Ogilvie, B Orr, S Palin, S & E Patrick, M A Peacock, M Pegrum, B Penistone, M Perrons, S Petty, M Phillips, D Piercy, R Pike, C Placido, J & A Plackett, R Porter, D & L Primrose, S Quinn, Mr & Mrs Redlof, S Ritchie, L Robertson, P Robinson, Mr & Mrs Rockall, I Rowlands, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, N N Russell, M C Sawbridge, A & B Scott, G Scott, Scottish Chough Study Group, Scottish Natural Heritage, N Scriven, R Seifert, C Self, C Shawley, C Shuttleworth, Mr & Mrs Simpson, N A Smith, A & C Southgate, P T & M J Staley, J Steele, J Stenning, U Steschulat, R Sutton, J Thorogood, C Travis, D Trigg, M L Trubridge, V Tulloch, M Usher, G Waite, WEA Summer School, L Weeks, S Welch, R & S Wergan, B Wethers, J Whitman, A Whyte, J S Whyte, D Wolstencroft, P Wolstenholme, K Wood, P F Woolley, B Zonfrillo.

BIRD RECORDING IN ARGYLL

Advice to contributors

The total number of records received in 1993 was down on previous years. Areas under-represented in the systematic list that follows are Gigha, Jura, Cowal, Coll, Lismore and North Argyll, and observers visiting these areas are asked to make a special effort to send in records in 1994.

It should be emphasised that many of the rarer breeding birds (e.g. divers, Little Tern) are particularly sensitive to disturbance, and their breeding sites should be avoided.

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The studies described below for these species have all been carried out by experienced personnel working for, or on behalf of, the conservation organisations.

When submitting records, sightings should be listed in Vooous order (as in this report) and should include the following details: species, number, sex and age if known, date and location. Please note these points in particular:

1. Euring codes should be used in addition to species names if possible: they speed up the process of data entry.
2. Ideally, the location should be given as a place name accompanied by a six-figure grid reference, but for many purposes a four-figure grid reference is adequate. Omission of the grid reference makes data entry much more laborious, and may also lead to ambiguity if two locations in the same area have the same name. Omission of the place name does not allow mistakes in the grid reference (very common!) to be rectified.
3. An estimate of the number of birds should always be given, even if an accurate count is not possible. Statements such as 'a few', 'several' or 'many' are of little value. Precise dates are also better than vague ones: for example, 'peak Jan count of 34 on the 23rd' is preferable to 'peak Jan count of 34'.

Observers are asked to consult this and previous reports for guidance about the kind of information required. Data entry for the report, and the preparation of quarterly summaries for the Argyll Bird Club's newsletter, would be greatly facilitated if observers sent in records regularly through the year. Records received after 31 January 1995 may not be included in the next report.

Rare birds

Details of rare species should be sent to me as soon as possible after the sighting. It is helpful if these records are submitted on a standard form, available free of charge from me. Details of the sightings will be judged locally or sent on to the Scottish Birds Records Committee (SBRC) or British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) as appropriate. Guidance on how to submit a record is widely available in the ornithological literature, but can be obtained directly from me if desired. Some useful pointers are given in previous Argyll Bird Reports.

Due to lack of time, I have not called on the services of the Argyll Records Panel (members listed in the Ninth *Argyll Bird Report*) for assistance in judging 1993 records of birds rare in Argyll. The responsibility for the acceptance or rejection of records of those species on the list published in the Seventh *Argyll Bird Report* (p. 7) is therefore solely my own. The same applies to some records of species whose submission to the Scottish Birds Records Committee is at the discretion of the local recorder.

It is my intention in 1994 to circulate records of local rarities to the Argyll Records Panel once more, after first revising the list of species to be considered by the panel. In the meantime, the list in the Seventh *Argyll Bird Report* should be used as a general guide to whether or not supporting details may be requested for any record.

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INTERPRETATION OF THE SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Species names and sequence follow the Voous order as in the 'British Birds List of the Birds of the Western Palearctic' (1984), with minor modifications to accord with current usage. The recommended new English names, introduced by the British Ornithologists' Union in its 'Checklist of Birds of Britain and Ireland (6th edition)' (1992), have not been adopted. Each species heading in the report contains the following information (BTO codes are no longer included):

Common name	Scientific name	Gaelic name	Euring code
e.g. RAVEN	<i>Corvus corax</i>	Fitheach	1572

Each heading is followed by a summary of the bird's known status and distribution within the Argyll region, together with any other relevant information. Significant 1993 records are then listed in approximate chronological order. In general, no more than one arrival or departure date is given for each area. The 12 areas are named on the accompanying sketch map (p. 8); I have incorporated the Garvellachs into Mid-Argyll.

For a very few species, there may be an entry even though no records were received in 1993: this applies to sedentary residents (e.g. Ptarmigan) or species for which the lack of records is considered particularly significant (e.g. Red-necked Phalarope).

For each species, records for 1993 may be followed by records from 1992 and earlier years, as explained above.

I have attempted to ensure that all place names in the systematic list feature on the 1:50,000 (Landranger Series) Ordnance Survey maps. An exception is The Laggan (Kintyre), which refers to the roughly triangular area west of Campbeltown, bordered by the B843, the A83, and Machrihanish Bay; in the past, goose counts in The Laggan have been referred to Machrihanish. Within this area, Westport Marsh (also absent from the map) is situated at approximately NR 65/25. On Mull, the Mishnish Lochs are the series of lochs extending from NM 46/52 to NM 48/53.

Kintyre Bird Club's newly established Machrihanish Seabird Observatory (SBO) is situated at Uisaed Point on the western outskirts of Machrihanish. Records from this location are comparable with those listed under 'Uisaed Pt' in previous *Argyll Bird Reports*.

The term 'Loch Gruinart' (Islay) in the report may refer to Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve or to parts of Loch Gruinart lying outside the reserve. No distinction has been made except where presenting records and counts of breeding species specific to the reserve itself, when the term 'Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve' has been used. The same reasoning applies to the use of the terms 'Moine Mhor' (Mid-Argyll) and 'Moine Mhor NNR (National Nature Reserve)'. I have used the former term to cover the whole area W to the landward edge of Loch Crinan and N to Barsloisnoch.

Most bar graphs use data from National Wildfowl Counts (NWC) and Birds of Estuaries Enquiry (BOEE) counts, the two having recently been amalgamated to form the Wetland Birds Survey (WeBS). The data in pie charts are from Scottish Natural

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Heritage (SNH) goose counts. However, some individual counts and a few complete bar graphs come from other sources. This year, counts from Loch Gruinart and Loch Indaal have been combined to form stacked bar graphs. This is thought to be justified because, although maximum counts for the two lochs may have been obtained on different dates each month, the amount of short-term movement between the two lochs is believed to be minimal for the species in question, and so the probability of double counting is low (M A Ogilvie, pers. comm.).

SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Species status categories

- R Resident and sedentary
- B Breeding species; breeding and wintering ranges may differ
- S Summer visitor; breeds unless otherwise stated
- P Passage visitor
- W Winter visitor
- I Recently introduced species; recorded in Argyll, may or may not breed ferally here
- V Vagrant; not recorded annually

Categories of the British list

- Category A Species recorded in an apparently wild state in Britain and Ireland at least once since 1 January 1958
- Category D Species which do not form part of the full list for various reasons, including:
 - Category D1 Species which would otherwise appear in Category A except that there is a reasonable doubt that they have ever occurred in a wild state (i.e. they are suspected to be escapes)

Others

- ad(s) adult(s)
- AON Apparently Occupied Nest-sites
- ARSG Argyll Raptor Study Group
- av average
- b/- brood of...
- BBRC British Birds Rarities Committee
- BOU British Ornithologists' Union
- c/- clutch of...
- est estimated
- F female
- FF females
- hr hour
- imm(s) immature(s)
- Is Island(s) or Isle(s)
- juv(s) juvenile(s)
- M male
- MM males

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max	maximum (the highest count for a given locality, with date, during the period being analysed)
min	minute
N, W, etc	points of compass
nc	not counted (in bar graph)
NNR	National Nature Reserve
nr	near
occ	occupied
pr(s)	pair(s)
Pt	Point
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SAMS	Scottish Association for Marine Science
SBO	Seabird Observatory
SBRC	Scottish Birds Records Committee
sp	species (unknown or unspecified)
10 km sq	National Grid square measuring 10 x 10 km (100 sq km)
#	all 1993 records included
>	direction of flight
-	no data available (in tables)

SPECIAL STUDIES CARRIED OUT IN 1993

Regular monitoring of certain species and groups of species in Argyll continued in 1993: examples are the goose counts carried out by SNH and the monthly wildfowl and wader counts at several locations. Other single-species studies, either new (e.g. Corncrake, Merlin) or continued from previous years (e.g. Hen Harrier), are briefly described in the species accounts.

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

(1) Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) study of seabird breeding success [J C A Craik]

As part of a wider study of seabird breeding success, selected species, principally Cormorant, Shag, Black-headed and Common Gulls, and Common and Arctic Terns, were monitored in a study area along the coast of mainland Argyll between Machrihanish and the Highland border. Almost all colonies were on small islands. In interpreting the results reported under different species, it should be borne in mind that feral North American mink, *Mustela vison*, are now present along the rocky shores of mainland Argyll at densities of one or two per km, that most gull and tern colonies in this study area are now severely affected by mink every year, and that local extinctions of several seabirds as breeding species have already occurred.

(2) Systematic seawatching at Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre) [E J Maguire et al.] and Frenchman's Rocks (Islay) [T ap Rheinallt]

Movements of seabirds, wildfowl and waders past these two locations were monitored regularly during certain months of the year. With a few exceptions, all individual birds flying past were identified and logged. Hours of observation during each month

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were as follows:

	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>Total</i>
Mach. SBO	0	0	0	159	145	91	56	60	511
F. Rocks	34.5	29	21.5	34	27	21	0	11.5	178.5

This information can be used to convert total counts in the systematic list to numbers per hour, and vice versa. For nearly all species, only hourly rates are presented in table form, since these permit direct comparisons between different months. It should be noted that the validity of directly comparing hourly rates between the two locations is questionable. This is because observations at Frenchman's Rocks were always made during the first few hours of daylight, when seabird movement is normally at a maximum, whereas those at Machrihanish SBO were more evenly spaced throughout the day. In the species accounts, tabular data for the two locations are limited to seabirds and are not given for waders and wildfowl which, on the whole, tended to pass Frenchman's Rocks in relatively low numbers. At both sites, the vast majority of birds flew >S during all months, and most of the tables exclude birds flying in the opposite direction.

ARGYLL BIRD RECORDS 1993

RED-THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata* Learga ruadh

0002

B W P Widely distributed but sparse breeding species. Breeding recorded in 26% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

There were counts of up to 7 birds from several areas, Jan - May, but only 2 locations held higher numbers: max 21 Loch Caolisport (Mid-Argyll), 30 Jan; max 15 Loch Indaal (Islay), Mar 20.

Breeding. Systematic survey work on Islay [Dr Colling] and in parts of Mull [RSPB] in 1993 has improved our knowledge of the distribution of this species. More remains to be done to complete the picture, and information on breeding success remains scant. Islay: breeding proved on 7 lochs. Cowal: breeding proved on 1 loch, pr reported from a second loch. Mid-Argyll: chicks seen on 2 lochs. Mull: 6 breeding prs located with additional prs on 2 other lochs. Coll: 10+ prs present but no fledged young were seen; failure possibly resulted from flooding during the incubation period following an earlier dry spell. N Argyll: 2 chicks hatched from a raft at 1 site. Southward migration during Aug - Oct was observed at Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre) and Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), peaking in Sep (see Table below) with a max of 24 >S (3 hr) at the latter site on Sep 25. The only other high count came from Loch Indaal (Islay), with a max of 20 on Oct 10.

Numbers of Red-throated Divers flying >S past Frenchman's Rocks (Islay) and Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre) in autumn 1993

	Total count			Numbers per hour		
	Aug	Sep	Oct	Aug	Sep	Oct
Machrihanish SBO	21	46	26	0.1	0.3	0.3
Frenchman's Rocks	8	92	46	0.2	3.4	2.2

BLACK-THROATED DIVER *Gavia arctica* Learga dhubh

0003

B W P Scarce, although probably under-recorded in winter. Breeding now only in Mid- and N Argyll.

1993

There were winter counts of 3 or fewer birds from Kintyre, Islay, Colonsay, Mid-Argyll and Mull. Kintyre: max 7 West Loch Tarbert, Apr 20. Islay: max 20 Loch Indaal, May 4, is unusually high.

Breeding. Argyll: 8 prs summered with additional birds present at 2 lochs (similar to 1992). Six prs are known to have laid eggs and 3 chicks were fledged. These included a brood of 2 - the first twins reared in Argyll for more than 9 years - which hatched on a raft. The overall success might well have been better had 1 breeding attempt not failed when the male was killed by a mammal. The increasing number of reports from inland lochs outside the usual nesting areas, noted in 1992, continued in 1993 with records from Colonsay, Cowal, Mid-Argyll and Mull [RSPB].

This species was scarce on passage during Sep and Oct at Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre) (4 >N and 4 >S in 304 hrs) and Frenchman's Rocks (Islay) (4 >S in 48 hr). All other records during Sep - Dec involved singles except for a max of 49 Sound of Gigha (Kintyre), Oct 26.

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GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer* Muir bhuachaill 0004
 W P The Argyll coast is an important wintering area. Summer-plumaged birds regularly recorded Apr - early Jun in all areas except Cowal. Pre-migratory gatherings occur off some coasts in early May. A few individuals summer.

1993

Winter counts included an estimated 30-35 birds on Colonsay, Feb - Mar. Elsewhere, numbers rose to a peak in late Apr - early May, with counts of 10 and over from 4 areas. Kintyre: 15 Sound of Gigha, Apr 4; max 40 West Loch Tarbert, Apr 20. Islay: max 30 Loch Indaal, May 4. Mull: max 12 Iona, Apr 30. Tiree: max 18 Gott - Milton, end Apr.

There were a total of 15 summer records (17 birds) between mid-Jun and mid-Sep, mostly from Islay and Mull, involving both immature birds and adults.

Autumn showed a typical pattern of records with an abrupt arrival late Oct, and smaller numbers reported thereafter. Kintyre: max 63 Sound of Gigha, Oct 26; 29 Machrihanish Bay, late Oct; 13 Kennacraig - Islay crossing, Nov 6. Islay: 11 Claggain Bay, Oct 24; max 9 Loch Indaal, Oct 26.

WHITE-BILLED DIVER *Gavia adamsii* Learga bhlar 0005
 V

1991

Kintyre: 1 Machrihanish Bay, May 5 [R H Hogg, W McKechnie]. This record, published in the 1991 systematic list, has been accepted by BBRC.

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis* Spagriton 0007

B W Uncommon. Breeds widely, mainly on small, low-lying eutrophic lochs. Breeding recorded in 18% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Small numbers gather in sheltered coastal waters in winter.

1993

Small groups of 5 or more birds were recorded during Jan - Mar in Mid- and N Argyll. Mid-Argyll: 5 Sound of Kerrera, Jan 13; 5 Lochan Dubh, Oban, 10 Mar. N Argyll: 8 Loch Etive, Jan 26, 5 on Feb 19.

Breeding. Kintyre: pr bred Westport Marsh. Islay: May records from 2 lochans, but no proof of breeding. Colonsay: recorded 2 locations, 1 pr definitely bred. Cowal: probably bred Loch Loskin. Mid-Argyll: 8 prs at breeding sites Oban area, at least 3 prs bred.

No count during the second winter period exceeded 4 birds.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus* Gobhlachan Iaparan 0009
 V Rare.

1993#

There was 1 spring record: a single at Loch Indaal (Islay) on Apr 25 and May 1. There followed a further 4 records between Aug and Dec. Kintyre: 1 ad >S Machrihanish SBO, Aug 8. Islay: 1 Loch Indaal, Nov 9. Cowal: 1 Blairmore, Dec 4. Mid-Argyll: 1 Loch Caolisport, Oct 24.

1992

Kintyre: 1 imm Machrihanish SBO, Sep 25-26.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

RED-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps grisegena* Gobhlachan ruadh 0010
W P Rare.

1993#

A single at Loch Indaal (Islay), Mar 6, was the first Argyll record since 1 at the same location on Oct 23 - Nov 25, 1991.

SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus* Gobhlachan mara 0011
W P Regular wintering species in some sealochs and sounds.

1993

As usual, Loch Indaal (Islay) held the majority of Argyll's wintering population, with a peak count of 40, Mar 5. Elsewhere, the highest count was 8 Sound of Gigha (Kintyre), May 4. All other records involved 1 or 2 birds. Kintyre: 2 West Loch Tarbert, Mar 5 and 7. Cowal: 2 Blairmore, Jan 13-22. Mid-Argyll: 2 Ganavan, Mar 4, 1 on Mar 10; 1 Loch Caolisport, Mar 20. Mull: 2 Salen, Jan 31; 1 Loch na Keal, May 9 and 14. Last 1 Pennyghael (Mull), May 20.

In autumn, 3 at Loch Indaal (Islay), Aug 26, built up to a max of 25 on Oct 26. The only other records came from Kintyre: 1 Machrihanish SBO, Sep 27; 6 Sound of Gigha, Oct 26.

FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis* Eun crom 0022
B W P Common but localised breeding species in Kintyre, Islay, Mid-Argyll, Mull, Tiree and Coll.

1993

Following a count of 30/hr passing Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), Mar 7, average hourly rates during May and Jun were found to be comparable with this figure (see Table below). Breeding. Counts were received only from Islay, Colonsay and Tiree. Islay: 70 AON Dun Athad, Apr 29; 30 AON Kilchiaran, Jul 21. Colonsay: 23 AON Turnigil, 514 AON Uragaig, 65 AON Kiloran Bay, all Jun 12 (25, 420, and 73 respectively in 1992). Tiree: 434 AON Ceann a'Mhara, Jul 18.

Rates of passage past Frenchman's Rocks (Islay) peaked in Jul and declined to a minimum during the Oct moult, before rising again in Dec, presumably as birds returned to their breeding sites. Generally lower numbers, and no Dec increase, occurred at Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre) (see Table below).

Average numbers of Fulmars moving >S per hour past Frenchman's Rocks (Islay) and Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre) in 1993

	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Machrihanish SBO	-	-	-	4	2	0	<1	<1
Frenchman's Rocks	33	43	139	101	39	3	-	95

CORY'S SHEARWATER *Calonectris diomedea* 0036
V

1993#

A single flew >S past Frenchman's Rocks (Islay) in a fresh southerly breeze, Sep 20 (accepted SBRC).

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

SOOTY SHEARWATER *Puffinus griseus* Fachadh dubh

0043

P Large numbers sometimes recorded Aug and Sep.

1993

A single flying >N past Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), May 20, is the first spring record for Argyll since 1983.

Autumn movement started with 1 >S Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), Jul 17; a total of 130 (103.5 hr) passed this site Jul - Oct. In Kintyre, a total of 462 (395 hr) flew >S past Machrihanish SBO, Aug - Oct, including a remarkable 277 on Aug 27, with another 50 on the sea 15 km out from Machrihanish the same day. Also, 73 were seen at sea S of Islay, Sep 4. The last record of the year was 2 >S Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), Oct 20.

1992

Kintyre: a total of 28 >S Machrihanish SBO, Aug 28 - Oct 14.

MANX SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus* Fachadh ban

0046/1

B P Very localised breeding species, colonies confirmed only on Sanda and Treshnish Is. Another colony may await discovery on the Garvellachs.

1993

The first record of the year was 1 on the Kennacraig - Islay crossing (Kintyre), Apr 8, followed by a substantial movement past Frenchman's Rocks (Islay) during May (see Table below).

Breeding. As in previous years, rafts were seen on the water off the Garvellachs (Mid-Argyll) during the summer, with 450 on Jun 11, 675 on Jul 2, and 1,950 on Jul 16. Breeding, however, has not yet been proven at this site.

Movement past Frenchman's Rocks (Islay) peaked in Jul and then declined, with few birds being seen in Oct. A similar trend was apparent from Aug at Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre). High single counts came from Kintyre and Islay. Kintyre: a raft of 2,000 birds 15 km out from Machrihanish, Aug 27. Islay: 826 >S (30 min) Saligo Bay, Jul 31, 464 >S (45 min) on Aug 3; 1,332 >S (1.5 hr) Frenchman's Rocks, Aug 29; 1,000 at sea S of Islay, Sep 4. With westerly winds in Dec, late singles were seen at Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Dec 13 and 15, and at Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), Dec 19.

Average number of Manx Shearwaters moving >S per hour past Frenchman's Rocks (Islay) and Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre) in 1993

	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Machrihanish SBO	-	-	-	18	10	<1	0	<1
Frenchman's Rocks	38	102	307	234	44	<1	-	<1

MEDITERRANEAN SHEARWATER *Puffinus yelkouan*

0046/2

V

1993#

Two flying >S past Frenchman's Rocks (Islay) during a large movement of Manx and Sooty Shearwaters, Aug 28 (accepted SBRC), represent 1 of only a few accepted Argyll records. However, this species may have been neglected in the past when it was considered to be a race of Manx Shearwater.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

STORM PETREL *Hydrobates pelagicus* Paraig 0052

B P Very localised breeding species, large colonies known only on Sanda and Treshnish Is. Breeding birds come ashore late May - Jun. Passage off W coasts Aug - Sep.
1993

No records were received from breeding colonies, but there were several sightings during Jun - Aug, following the first 1 off Staffa (Mull), Jun 11. **Kintyre**: a total of 8 >S (159 hr) Machrihanish SBO, Aug. **Islay**: a total of 33 >S (84.5 hr) Frenchman's Rocks, Jun 12 - Aug 28; 11 at sea S of Islay, Sep 4, 6 on Sep 5. **Colonsay**: 12 at tape in 70 min Port Mor, Jul 12, 28 in 60 min on Jul 13. **Mid-Argyll**: 4 Oban - Coll/Tiree crossing, Aug 13, 12 on Aug 14. There was also a late record of a dying bird picked up at Kames (Cowal), Dec 16.

LEACH'S PETREL *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* Gobhlan mara 0055

P Rare, but probably regular in autumn at some locations following strong westerlies.

1993#

Due to the absence of westerly winds during the autumn, there were few records. **Islay**: 1 found dead Machir Bay, Jul 9; 1 >S Frenchman's Rocks, Jul 28; 1 at sea S of Islay, Sep 4.

1992

Spring. **Kintyre**: 11 >S Machrihanish SBO, May 11, in a NW gale.

Autumn. **Kintyre**: 2 >S Machrihanish SBO, Aug 5, 3 >S on Aug 31, a total of 29 >S on several dates, Sep 1-14, and a remarkable 466 >S (5 hr), Sep 15. The May 11 and Sep 15 totals are apparently the highest spring and autumn one-day movements recorded in Scotland.

GANNET *Morus bassanus* Sulaire 0071

S P Does not breed in Argyll; nearest colonies are Ailsa Craig (40 km E of Mull of Kintyre) and Shiant Is (140 km N of Mull). Common inshore May - Sep. Often seen high up sealochs, usually those with wide mouths, such as Loch Caolisport and West Loch Tarbert.

1993

A few birds were reported in Feb. **Colonsay**: 2 Ardskenish, Feb 13. **Cowal**: 1 Blairmore, Feb 28. **Mid-Argyll**: 2 Port Mor, nr Kilberry, Feb 28.

Significant movement during May - Oct was reported at Machrihanish SBO (**Kintyre**), at Frenchman's Rocks (**Islay**) (see Table below), and at Port Mor (**Colonsay**), where there was a max of 100/hr in early Jul. Of a sample of 4,269 passing Machrihanish SBO (**Kintyre**), Aug - Oct, 85% were ads and only 2% juvs, while of 8,189 passing Frenchman's Rocks (**Islay**), Sep and Oct, only 0.6% were juvs. Late singles flew >S past Machrihanish SBO (**Kintyre**), Dec 3, and Frenchman's Rocks (**Islay**), Dec 1, 2, 19 and 28.

Average numbers of Gannets moving >S per hour past Frenchman's Rocks
(Islay) in 1993 (total counts were not recorded at Machrihanish SBO)

May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
127	194	166	184	191	53	-	<1

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo* Sgarbh

0072

R W Breeds in Kintyre, Mid-Argyll, Mull, Lismore and N Argyll. Less numerous than Shag. Small numbers occur on some inland waters, often moving to the coast in autumn.

1993

During Jan and Feb, counts exceeding 10 birds were received from only 3 locations. Islay: max 22 Loch Indaal, Jan 29. Cowal: max 43 Blairmore, Feb 8; 14 Holy Loch, Feb 28.

Breeding. Kintyre/Mid-Argyll/N Argyll: in the SAMS study area, at 1 recently discovered colony with 24 active nests on May 30, 56 large chicks were counted Jun 27, and probably fledged (2.3 chicks/pr); mink predation was not noted. Kintyre: 22 nests, 74 eggs Glunimore Is (Sanda group), May 2. Lismore: ca 5 prs on inaccessible cliffs Eilean Dubh, Lynn of Lorn, May 29.

An unusual summer record for Colonsay was a single >N Rubh' Aird Alanais, Jul 3. Autumn counts were highest in Sep and Oct. Kintyre: max 14 Machrihanish SBO, Sep 13. Islay: max 41 Loch Indaal, Oct 18. Cowal: max 21 Holy Loch, Oct 16. N Argyll: max 30 Port Appin, Oct 24.

Of 209 aged Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Aug - Dec, 25% were ads.

SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* Sgarbh an sgumain

0080

R W Very common coastal species, rare inland. Breeds rocky slopes and cliffs, singly and in small or large colonies.

1993

Counts were relatively low in winter and spring, though numbers peaked at 82 at Calgary Bay (Mull), Jun 1.

Breeding. Kintyre/Mid-Argyll/N Argyll: in the SAMS study area, 6 colonies varying in size from 3 to 55 prs (active nests) held a total of 139 prs, with 128 medium to large chicks, Jun 27 - Jul 15 (0.92 chicks/pr). Mink were preying on chicks and eggs at 2 of these colonies, where a total of 58 prs reared fewer than 6 large chicks. Colonsay: first eggs Apr 20; 20 nests av c/2.33, av b/2.17 Port Ban, Jun - Jul; 7 nests av b/2.29 Urugaig, Jul. Tiree: 58 AON Ceann a'Mhara, Jun 12, 41 on Jul 18. Lismore: ca 10-15 prs on inaccessible cliffs Eilean Dubh, Lynn of Lorn, May 29.

The highest counts of the autumn were: 127 Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), Sep 17; 400 Balnahard (Colonsay), Nov 11. Of 1,106 aged Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Sep - Dec, 55% were ads.

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea* Corra ghritheach

0122

Widespread. Breeds in all areas. Breeding recorded in 7% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

No counts during the first winter period exceeded 10 birds.

Breeding. Little information was received. Colonsay: 3 nests at new site. Mid-Argyll: 1 nest Ardanaiseig, Loch Awe. Mull: at least 6 prs at 2 sites, some other known sites unoccupied.

The highest counts of the autumn were: 15 Loch Gruinart (Islay), Sep; 13 Holy Loch (Cowal), Oct 16.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor* Eala 0152

R Widespread but uncommon breeding species, both inland and at sheltered coastal locations. Scarce breeder in Kintyre; absent from Colonsay. Emigration from some breeding localities in winter. Many Argyll birds now fitted with darvic rings - all records of these birds required. Breeding recorded in 25% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

During Jan - Mar, a few locations produced counts of 10 birds or more. Islay: up to 10 Port Ellen, Mar. Mid-Argyll: up to 13 Ulva Lagoons, Jan; up to 13 Oban Bay, Jan.

Breeding. Kintyre/Mid-Argyll/N Argyll: in the SAMS study area, 7 prs breeding in gull colonies were monitored. One pr with 8 eggs, in a colony where a mink was killed on 10 May after preying on gull eggs, successfully reared 5 young. The other 6 prs were in colonies in which mink, preying heavily on gull eggs and chicks, were not controlled; all 6 failed to rear any young, most of them apparently deserting during incubation.

A total of 28 other prs were recorded in Argyll; success may not have been high. Kintyre: 2 prs in S Kintyre, 1 brood seen. Islay: at least 6 prs, but only 3 broods thought to have been reared. Jura: prs at Craighouse, Inverlussa, broods seen Jun. Cowal: 3 prs, 2 broods seen. Mid-Argyll: 8 prs, 4 broods Jun, 1 nest deserted probably due to mink. Mull: 2 prs, 1 brood Jun. Tiree: 6 prs, 3 broods, 1 nest deserted. Numbers in autumn were generally higher than in spring, with several counts of 10-40+ birds. Islay: up to 10 Loch Indaal, Oct. Cowal: up to 15 Holy Loch, Nov. Mid-Argyll: up to 13 Ulva Lagoons, Sep; up to 10 Achnamara, Sep; up to 37 Loch Craignish, Oct. Tiree: 40-42 Loch a'Phuill, Jul - Sep. N Argyll: up to 15 Loch Etive, Jul.

BEWICK'S SWAN *Cygnus columbianus* Eala bheag 0153

V

1993#

All records were in late Oct and Nov. Kintyre: 5 ads The Laggan, Nov 7 and 8. Islay: 1 with Mutes, Port Ellen, Oct 30; 2 ads Ardnave Loch, Nov.

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus* Eala bhan 0154

W P Common passage species, small numbers winter. A few birds summer in most years and breeding has been recorded.

1993

Birds were reported from 7 areas during Jan - Apr. Kintyre: up to 10 The Laggan, Jan - Mar, 16 in Apr. Islay: 1-6 various localities, Jan - Apr; max 45 Loch Gruinart, Apr 4. Colonsay: 10 Oronsay, Mar 23. Cowal: 18 Loch Eck, Jan 27; 13 Tighnabruaich, Mar 16; 9 Loch Riddon, Apr 22. Mid-Argyll: 6 Ulva Lagoons, Jan 24; 8 Loch Leathan, Mar 7; 1-4 at 6 other localities, Jan-Apr. Mull: 4 Loch Poit na h-I, Jan 20; 2 Loch Sguabain, Feb 17. Tiree: 4-5 in Mar and Apr.

Birds were still present in summer on Tiree, with 7 in May, at least 3 during Jul, and 2 Loch Stanail, Aug 17.

The first returning birds were seen at the end of Sep, with 2 Ardnahoe Loch (Islay),

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Sep 26, 7 >S Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Sep 29, and 1 Loch Gruinart (Islay), Sep 30. Autumn passage peaked in Oct on Islay, with up to 42 Loch Gorm, 52 Loch Gruinart, and 70 Loch Indaal; numbers were lower in Nov, with up to 16 Loch Gruinart, 20 Loch Indaal, and 18 Loch na Nigheadaireachd. In Kintyre, movement past Machrihanish SBO was highest in Oct, with 34 birds (91 hr) recorded, but numbers nearby at The Laggan peaked in Nov, with up to 36 birds. Counts were received from 3 other areas, Oct - Dec. Colonsay: up to 11, Oct - Dec. Mid-Argyll: 11 Ulva Lagoons, Oct 17. Tiree: max 6 Lochan Eilein, Nov 28; 16 whole island, Dec 13-27.

BEAN GOOSE *Anser fabalis* Muir gheadh 0157

V Most records from Islay.

1992

Kintyre: 1 The Laggan, Oct 20, with 2 Pink-footed Geese in a flock of White-fronted Geese. This is the first Argyll record since 1985.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus* Geadh gorm 0158

PW Very few winter.

1993

Small numbers were reported from 4 areas during the first winter period. Kintyre: 5 The Laggan, Jan - Apr. Islay: up to 8, various localities, Jan - Apr. Mid-Argyll: 1 Moine Mhor, Jan 17 and Feb 8. Tiree: 1 on Mar 31. Late birds were present Tiree in May: 2 Kilmaluag, May 12; 1 Balinoe, May 24.

Autumn passage was more pronounced than usual with an exceptionally high count of 500 >E (1 hr) over Connel (Mid-Argyll), Sep 24, followed by large numbers on Islay, early Oct. At Loch Gruinart (Islay), there were 224 on Oct 5, falling to 108 on Oct 7. In Kintyre, 3 were at The Laggan from Oct 10. More birds than usual remained through Nov and Dec. Kintyre: up to 10 The Laggan, Nov, 18 in Dec. Islay: 30 various localities, Nov 27; 10 Loch Gorm, Dec 28. Mid-Argyll: 1 Moine Mhor, Nov 27 - Dec 11. Tiree: up to 6 in Nov, 8 in Dec. Coll: 1, Nov 23 and Dec 12.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons* Geadh bhlar 0159

W Birds are of the Greenland race *A. a. flavirostris*. Regular wintering in all areas except Cowal. Argyll holds ca 40% of the world population in winter, mainly on Islay. A small population breeds ferally on the Rhinns (Islay).

1993

Birds were recorded in 8 areas, Jan - Apr, with highest numbers on Islay, reaching 11,000 in Mar (Fig. 1). Elsewhere, only Kintyre held over 1,000 birds, with 993 Rhunahaorine, Apr 1, and up to 1,058 The Laggan, Apr (Fig. 2). During late Mar - early Apr, Coll and Tiree each held over 500 birds, with smaller numbers in Mid-Argyll (mostly on the Tayvallich peninsula), Colonsay and Mull (Fig. 3). Outside these areas, 28 were at Loch Laich (N Argyll), Jan 17. Late records of 8 >N Port Wemyss (Islay), May 23, and 3 >N Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), May 29, may refer to feral birds which summered on the Rhinns.

The first returning birds were 6 Loch Gruinart (Islay), Sep 25, with 21 there on Sep 26. Numbers during the second winter period were rather similar, on the whole, to those at the beginning of the year. On Islay, numbers exceeded 11,000 during Oct and Nov (Fig. 1), and, as in the first winter period, Kintyre was the only other area

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holding over 1,000 birds, with 1,038 Rhunahaorine, Dec 1, and up to 1,180 The Laggan, Nov (Fig. 2).

Birds were reported from 5 other areas. **Colonsay:** 150 Loch Fada, Dec. **Mid-Argyll:** 256 Tayvallich peninsula, Nov 27; 159 Moine Mhor, Nov 2, but only 27, late Nov - Dec. **Mull:** 41 Fiddien, 29 Nov. **Tiree:** max 470, Nov 28 (complete count). **Coll:** max 865, Dec 12 (complete count).

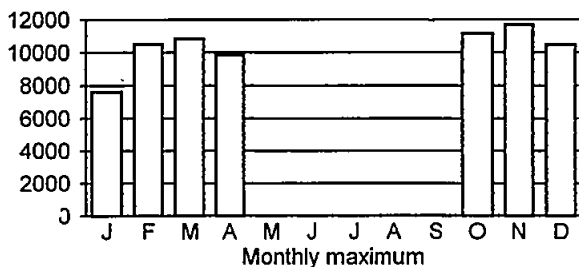


Fig. 1 Numbers of White-fronted Geese on Islay in 1993

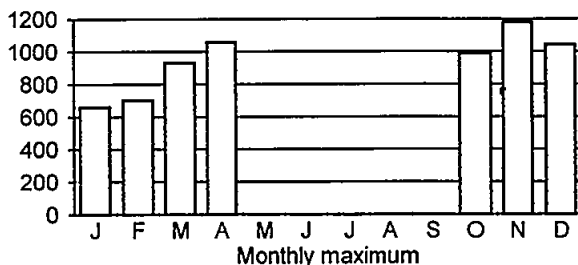


Fig. 2 Numbers of White-fronted Geese at The Laggan (Kintyre) in 1993

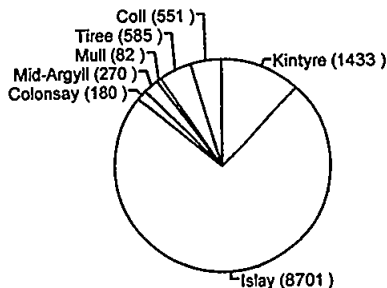


Fig. 3 Numbers of White-fronted Geese in Argyll areas, Mar 27 - Apr 1 1993

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GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser* Geadh glas

0161

B W P Increasing breeding population, Mull, Tiree and Coll. Also breeds Colonsay and occasionally elsewhere. Those breeding in the islands are presumably native birds that have colonised from the Outer Hebrides. Breeding recorded in 6% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Birds were recorded from 8 areas during Jan - Apr. Highest counts came from Cowal, with 500 Ardlamont, Mar 3 and 5. Numbers on Coll and Tiree exceeded 400 birds during late Mar - early Apr, while 3 other areas also held over 100 birds (Fig. 4). Kintyre: 200 Rhunahaorine Mar 14, 227 on Apr 1; up to 300 The Laggan (Fig. 5). Colonsay: 126 on Mar 28. Mid-Argyll: up to 429 Moine Mhor (Fig. 6). Smaller numbers of birds, some being migrants and others residents, were reported from other sites in these areas, and also from Islay (up to 23, Jan - Mar) and Mull (Fig. 4). Two late migrants were at Portnahaven (Islay), May 3.

Breeding. Breeding was reported from Colonsay, Mid-Argyll, Mull and Tiree. Colonsay: est 25 prs in Jun; 72 on Aug 15. Mid-Argyll: bred Loch Nell and Oban. Mull: 1-2 prs bred Staffa, Mishnish Lochs and Loch Poit na h-I, with summer counts from several other locations. Tiree: ca 80 prs with at least 203 young, Jul; 892 Loch Riaghain area, Aug 10.

Returning migrants were noted from Sep, with particularly high numbers on Tiree by the end of the year. Kintyre: 378 Rhunahaorine, Dec 1; up to 470 The Laggan (Fig. 5). Islay: up to 46, Sep - Dec. Colonsay: 150 Loch Fada, Dec 17. Mid-Argyll: up to 200 Moine Mhor (Fig. 6). Tiree: 1,037-1,061, Nov 28 - Dec 27 (complete counts). Coll: 249-339, Nov 15 - Dec 12 (complete counts).

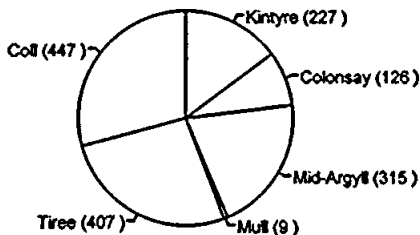


Fig. 4 Numbers of Grey Lag Geese in Argyll areas, Mar 27 - Apr 1 1993

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

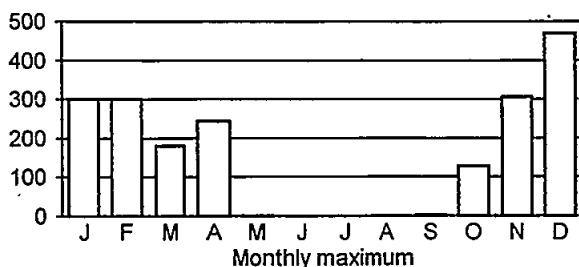


Fig. 5 Numbers of Greylag Geese at The Laggan (Kintyre) in 1993

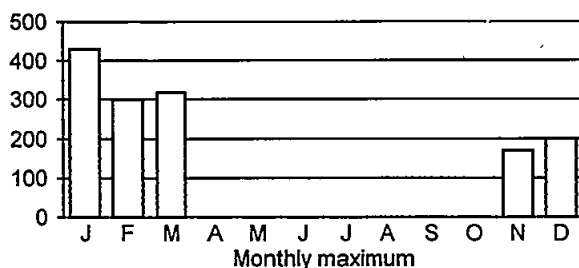


Fig. 6 Numbers of Greylag Geese at Moine Mhor (Mid-Argyll) in 1993

SNOW GOOSE *Anser caerulescens* Geadh ban 0163

I V A small feral breeding population exists on Mull and winters mainly on Coll. Stragglers among wintering Greenland Whitefronts may be genuine vagrants.

1993

A single white-phase bird with Greenland White-fronted Geese on Islay, Oct 6 - Dec 31, may have been a genuine vagrant.

The feral population numbered 41 on Coll, Mar 30, with 1 bird on Tiree, Mar 31. There was no count of breeding prs on Mull, but 27 (including ca 10 blue-phase birds) were at Treshnish Pt, Jun 17. During the second winter period, 40 were on Coll, Nov 23, and 41 on Dec 12.

CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis* Geadh dubh 0166

B W V Resident population on Colonsay and occasional breeding attempts elsewhere. A transatlantic origin seems possible for medium-sized and small individuals regularly seen in small numbers in winter goose flocks on Islay.

1993

On Islay, up to 6, Jan - Apr (mostly small or medium-sized) and 2, Oct - Dec (1 small, 1 medium-large) were perhaps genuine vagrants.

Feral birds were reported from Colonsay and Mid-Argyll, with breeding in both areas. Colonsay: est 20-25 prs in Jun; 3 broods on Jun 12-13; est 70 in Oct - Dec. Mid-Argyll: 1-2 Loch Nell, Mar and Apr; 4 ads and 9 young Loch Ederline, Jul 22.

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BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis* Cathan

0167

W All regions except Cowal. Very large numbers of birds from the Greenland population winter on Islay. A few birds occasionally summer, and at least some of these are probably injured. A few also breed ferally on the Rhinns (Islay).

1993

Over 20,000 were present on Islay during Jan - Apr, peaking in Mar (Fig. 7). There were also unusual numbers in Jan and Feb at several mainland localities, presumed to be birds from Islay whence several thousand emigrated during a prolonged period of severe gales in the first half of Jan. Kintyre: 45 Machrihanish, Jan 15; 912 Rhunahaorine, Jan 18; both were highest-ever counts for the sites. Colonsay: est 400, Jan - Feb, 650 in Mar. Cowal: 27 Toward Pt, Jan 12. Mid-Argyll: 100 Moine Mhor, Jan 22. Mull: 15 Gribun Sands, Jan 24-29. Tiree: 984 on Mar 31. Coll: 364 on Mar 30.

Twenty migrants flew >N up the Sound of Iona (Mull), Apr 29, and the last 2 on Islay were at Ardnave, May 14.

Birds were present during the summer on Colonsay (1 The Strand, Jun 12) and Tiree (1 Lochan Eilein, Jun 16; 3 Loch Riaghain, Aug 10, 4 on Sep 4).

The first returning bird was 1 Loch Gruinart (Islay), Sep 24, with 200 on Sep 25, and over 25,000 from late Oct (Fig. 7). Elsewhere, 3 flew >S past Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Oct 9, but records from other areas were restricted to Nov and Dec. Colonsay: est 300, Nov - Dec. Mid-Argyll: 300 Tayvallich peninsula, Nov 27. Tiree: 645-690, Nov - Dec. Coll: 125 on Nov 23, 187 on Dec 12.

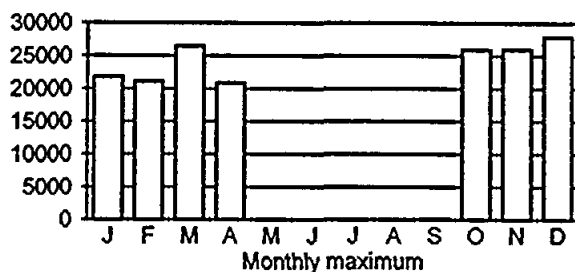


Fig. 7 Numbers of Barnacle Geese on Islay in 1993

BRENT GOOSE *Branta bernicla* Geadh got

0168

W P Uncommon passage species. Very few winter. Most birds seen in Argyll are of the light-bellied race, *B b hrota*, which breeds in NE Greenland and on Queen Elizabeth Is off Arctic Canada, wintering mainly in Ireland.

1993

The only records during Jan - Mar came from Islay, with 4 Loch Indaal, Jan - Mar, and 1 Loch Gorm, Jan 25. Migrants passed through Islay in Apr: 5 Loch Indaal, Apr 13, increasing to 147 on Apr 22; 23 Loch Gorm, Apr 14. A total of 26 were at Gott Bay (Tiree), May 1, and 19 were at Loch Indaal (Islay), May 3. Last 1 >S, Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), May 26.

Autumn migration was concentrated in Sep, with the first birds seen on Sep 8 in

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

Kintyre (40 >S Machrihanish SBO) and **Islay** (20 >S Frenchman's Rocks; 16 Loch Indaal). A further 4 flew >S past Machrihanish SBO (**Kintyre**) and a further 44 >S past Frenchman's Rocks (**Islay**) during Sep. Elsewhere on **Islay**, up to 30 were present Loch Indaal, 8 at Loch Gruinart, and 6 at Portnahaven during the month. Fewer birds were seen during Oct - Dec. **Kintyre**: 7 past Machrihanish SBO, Oct 6-22; 1 Machrihanish Bay, Oct 25 - Nov 3; 3 Sound of Gigha, Oct 26. **Islay**: 4 Loch Gruinart, Oct - Dec, but 7 on Oct 25; 2 Loch Indaal, Oct - Dec, but 7 on Dec 24. No records were received from any other areas.

DARK-BELLIED RACE *B b bernicla*:

1993

Two were at Loch Gruinart (**Islay**) during Oct and Nov.

SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna* Cra-gheadh

0173

B W Widespread breeding species, especially on sandy coasts. Majority are absent Aug - Nov when the birds migrate to moulting grounds. Breeding recorded in 39% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Large numbers were present at Loch Gruinart (**Islay**), Jan - May, with fewer at Loch Indaal (Fig. 8). Elsewhere, numbers were small, with only 4 counts exceeding 10 birds. **Kintyre**: 20 Westport Marsh, Mar 7. **Mid-Argyll**: up to 12 Loch Crinan, Apr, 30 in May. **N Argyll**: 13 Loch Laich, Mar 21.

Breeding. Following the national survey in 1992, coverage of breeding sites in 1993 was sporadic. **Islay**: at least 5 prs Loch Gruinart; at least 4 prs Loch Indaal. **Colonsay**: 13 prs in Jul, 4 broods totalling 21 juvs.

Numbers of returning birds on **Islay** built up to 150 in Dec (Fig. 8). Elsewhere, birds were scarce, with the only count exceeding 10 being 16 Loch Riddon (**Cowal**), Dec 5.

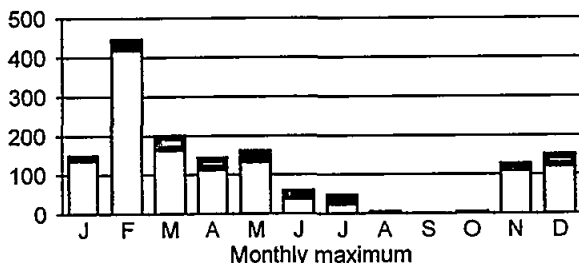


Fig. 8 Numbers of Shelduck at two sealochs on Islay in 1993

Black: Loch Indaal White: Loch Gruinart

MANDARIN *Aix galericulata*

0178

R Very rare: bred Cowal 1991 and 1992.

1993#

A pr at the N end of Loch Eck (**Cowal**), Apr 27, was the only record.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

WIGEON *Anas penelope* Glas lach

0179

B W P Scarce and irregular breeding species. Common winter visitor to all areas.
1993

Counts exceeding 50 birds during Jan - Apr were received from several areas, with the highest numbers in Islay and Kintyre. Kintyre: up to 244 Westport Marsh, Jan - Mar. Islay: over 400 Jan and Feb (Fig. 9). Mid-Argyll: up to 144 Loch Crinan (Fig. 10); 110 Balvicar Bay, Seil, Feb 22. N Argyll: up to 75 Loch Laich, Jan - Mar; up to 60 Loch Etive, Feb.

Breeding. There were more breeding season reports than usual, though breeding was confirmed only in Islay (apparently a first record) and N Argyll. Islay: b/3 on pool at Laggan, Jun 3; pr probably bred, Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve; pr Port Ellen pond, May 5. Mid-Argyll: pr Sior Loch, May 22; 4 River Add and 2 MM Ardentallen Pt, Jun; 2 Loch Crinan, Jul. Mull: 1 Lochdon, Jun and Jul. Tiree: pr Orisgal, May 30. N Argyll: 5 prs Loch Tulla, Apr 28, 2 prs on May 22, 1 F + b/5 on Jun 5.

Numbers during Sep - Dec were generally higher than in Jan - Apr, with particularly high counts from Loch Indaal (Islay) (Fig. 9) and Loch Crinan (Mid-Argyll), where a count of 687 on Oct 11 was the highest for several years (Fig. 10). Other counts exceeding 100 birds came from 4 areas. Cowal: 245 Holy Loch, Oct 17. Mull: up to 140 Lochdon, Oct. Tiree: 109 Loch a'Phuill, Sep 9. N Argyll: up to 108 Loch Laich, Oct.

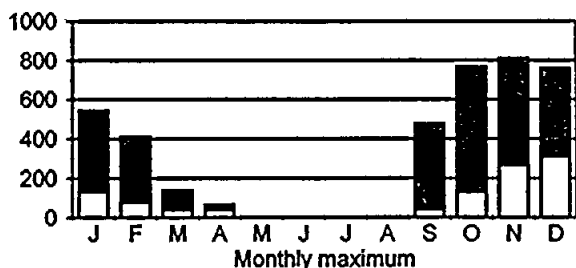


Fig. 9 Numbers of Wigeon at two sealochs on Islay in 1993
Black: Loch Indaal White: Loch Gruinart

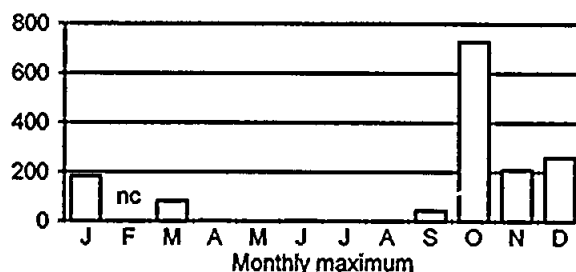


Fig. 10 Numbers of Wigeon at Loch Crinan and River Add (Mid-Argyll) in 1993

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

AMERICAN WIGEON *Anas americana*

0180

V

1992

Tiree: 1 M An Faodhail, May 19-21 [I D Bullock, A C Knight] (accepted BBRC). The bird was 1 of a pr, but the identity of the female was considered only as 'probable' by BBRC. Perhaps surprisingly, this is only the second Argyll record, following 1 on Islay in 1989-90.

GADWALL *Anas strepera* Lach glas

0182

B W P Scarce breeding species.

1993#

A single M at Westport Marsh (**Kintyre**), Feb 16 onwards, was joined by a F on Apr 4, but not recorded subsequently. Breeding. On **Islay**, a pr was present Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve from Apr 26 and seen copulating; only the M was seen from mid-May into Jul, but 3 were present on Jul 25; breeding was suspected but not proved. There were only 2 autumn records: 1 F Loch a'Phuill (**Tiree**), Sep 9, and 1 F >N Machrihanish SBO (**Kintyre**), Oct 11.

TEAL *Anas crecca* Crann lach

0184

B W P Widespread but uncommon breeding species. Common winter visitor. Breeding recorded in 20% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

By far the highest numbers during Jan - Mar were reported from **Islay**, with over 300 present during Jan (Fig. 11); 350 Ardnave Loch, Feb 15, and 410 on Mar 8, may have included some of the Loch Gruinart birds. Other counts exceeding 50 birds were received from Westport Marsh (**Kintyre**), with up to 70 in Apr, and Loch Crinan (**Mid-Argyll**), with up to 70 in Jan.

Breeding. **Islay**: at least 11 prs with broods, Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve, Jun.

Flocks were more widespread during Aug - Dec than during Jan - Mar. **Islay**: up to 111 were present at Loch Indaal, Aug, while numbers at Loch Gruinart peaked much later, with over 850 in Dec (Fig. 11); 72 Loch Tallant, Nov 16. **Colonsay**: est 75, Oct - Dec. **Mid-Argyll**: up to 82 Loch Crinan, Oct, 50 in Nov and Dec. **Mull**: 90 Lochdon, Sep 28. **Tiree**: 262 Loch a'Phuill, Sep 7. **N Argyll**: 47 Loch Laich, Oct 24; 65 Benderloch saltmarsh, Nov 18.

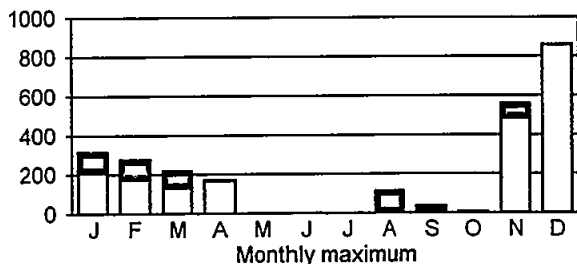


Fig. 11 Numbers of Teal at two sealochs on Islay in 1993
Black: Loch Indaal White: Loch Gruinart

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos* Lach

0186

B W P Common breeding and wintering species. Breeding recorded in 67% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

By far the highest numbers during Jan - Mar were reported from Islay (Fig. 12). Few other counts exceeded 20 birds. Mid-Argyll: 33 Loch Nell, Mar 25. Mull: 30 Kinloch, Loch Scridain, Jan. N Argyll: 20-22 Loch Etive, Jan - Mar.

There were no significant breeding records, but moulting flocks were reported in summer from several areas. Islay: see Fig. 12. Colonsay: 11 Port Sgibinis, Jul 14. Mid-Argyll: 23 MM Loch Feochan, May 16, 35 MM on Jun 6. Tiree: 21 The Reef, Jul 17; 31 Loch Bhasapol, Jul 29.

During Aug - Dec, numbers at Loch Indaal and Loch Gruinart (Islay) rose to a total of 200-300 (Fig. 12). Large numbers were also present at Loch a'Phuill (Tiree), with 198 on Aug 15 and 160 on Sep 9, and Loch Crinan (Mid-Argyll), with up to 115 in Aug, decreasing to 37 in Nov. A few other counts exceeded 20 birds. Kintyre: up to 20 Machrihanish SBO, Nov. Colonsay: 37 Loch Fada, Oct 10. Cowal: 26 Holy Loch, Oct 16. Mull: 40 Aros Castle, Aug 17.

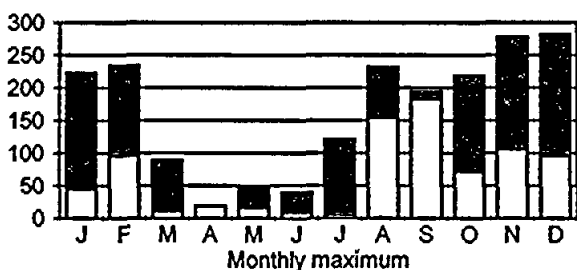


Fig. 12 Numbers of Mallard at two sealochs on Islay in 1993
Black: Loch Indaal White: Loch Gruinart

PINTAIL *Anas acuta* Lach stiùireach

0189

B W P Very scarce breeding species. Localised in winter, mainly recorded Islay and Tiree. A small but increasing flock regularly winters on Islay.

1993

The regular wintering population on Islay numbered up to 38 Loch Indaal, Jan - Mar, and up to 4 Loch Gruinart, Jan and Feb. The only other record was 1 M nr Beinn nam Fitheach (Colonsay), Mar 8.

Breeding. Islay: 2 prs were reported during Apr and May at the same potential breeding site as in spring 1992; there was an unconfirmed report of a brood in May. Tiree: at least 1 pr summered but no broods seen. Single birds, presumably non-breeders, were also reported in May on Islay (1 F Claggain Bay, May 23) and Colonsay (1 M Port Mor, May 1).

Autumn migrants were observed at Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), with 1 on Sep 16 and 21, 5 >S on Sep 29, 2 >S on Oct 16, and 1 on Nov 7 and 8. There were also

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

records from 3 other areas, with highest numbers on Islay. Islay: up to 4 birds Loch Gruinart, Sep - Dec; 28 Loch Indaal, Oct 18, decreasing to 8 on Dec 15. Colonsay: 1 F East Loch Fada, Nov 24. Tiree: 7 FF on 3 lochs, late Aug - early Sep; pr Loch a'Phuill, Dec 2.

GARGANEY *Anas querquedula* Lach crann 0191

S Rare non-breeding summer visitor.

1993#

A single M was at Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve (Islay), May 11-12, then a pr on May 18-24; breeding may have occurred but was not confirmed.

SHOVELER *Anas clypeata* Lach a'ghuib leathainn 0194

B W P Most records from Islay and Tiree.

1993

At the beginning of the year, birds were recorded only from Islay, with up to 8 Loch Gruinart and up to 23 Loch Indaal, Jan - Mar.

Breeding. During the breeding season, records were widespread, with confirmed breeding on Islay and Tiree. Kintyre: 2 MM and 1 F Westport Marsh, Mar-May, where breeding occurred in 1992; 1 M nearby at Kilchenzie, Apr 15. Islay: at least 9 broods Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve, May and Jun; 2 MM Carnain pools, Loch Indaal, Apr 27, 2 prs on May 1; 1 M Loch Clach a'Bhuaille, May 5. Colonsay: 2 prs Ardskenish, May 2, 1 on Jun 12. Tiree: single broods seen on 3 lochs, at least 8 prs and 6 MM at 8 other sites.

Other than 1 F Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Sep 30 - Nov, all records for the second winter period came from Islay. Up to 18 were present Loch Gruinart, Oct - Dec, and up to 5 were at Loch Indaal, Nov.

POCHARD *Aythya ferina* Lach mhasach 0198

W No proven breeding in recent years. Wintering flocks generally small.

1993

Records during Jan - Apr concerned relatively few birds, the highest count being 13 Loch Leathan (Mid-Argyll), Jan 9. Most other records were of 1-3 birds. Islay: 1 Loch Ballygrant, Mar 5; 1 Loch Skerrols, Apr 5. Colonsay: up to 7, Jan - Mar. Mid-Argyll: 1 Loch Seil, Feb 8; 3 Loch Nell, Feb 17. Mull: 1 Loch Assapol, Feb 8. Last 2 Allt Osda (Cawal), Apr 10.

The first returning individual was at Loch Assapol (Mull), Aug 18, with a gap of a month until the next record: 1 >S Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Sep 19. Large numbers were present on Islay, Oct - Nov: 170 Loch Gorm, Oct 25, 25 on Nov 7; 220 Loch Skerrols, Oct 29, 155 on Nov 30; 15 Loch Ballygrant, Nov 12. Other records came only from Cawal and Mid-Argyll. Cawal: 3 Millhouse, Oct 23; 2 Loch Eck, Nov 24. Mid-Argyll: 10 Melfort, Dec 10; 8 Lochan Taynish, Dec 24.

RING-NECKED DUCK *Aythya collaris* 0200

V

1991

Islay: 1 M Ardnave Loch, Jan 27 - Apr 22 [M A Peacock, A J Stanbury et al]. This record, published in the 1991 systematic list, has been accepted by BBRC.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula* Lach thopach

0203

B W Scarce breeding species, with about 50 prs in Argyll. Breeding recorded in 12% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Common winter visitor.

1993

Several areas reported counts of 10-25 birds during Jan - Apr. Islay: 20 Ardnave Loch, Jan 1. Colonsay: up to 14, Jan - Mar. Mid-Argyll: 10 Loch Leathan, Feb 9, 14 on Apr 17; 11 Lochan Dubh, Oban, Mar 5; 12 Dubh Loch, Inveraray, Mar 6. Tiree: 25 Lochan Eilein, Apr 13.

Breeding. Birds were present in several known breeding areas, but there were very few confirmed breeding records. Kintyre: 2 MM Westport Marsh, Apr 20-24. Islay: prs or MM on 3 lochs. Colonsay: 1 M and 2 FF East Loch Fada, Jul; pr + b/3 West Loch Fada, Jul 5. Mid-Argyll: 11 MM Loch Nell, Jun 15. Tiree: broods, prs or MM on 6 lochs. In addition, there were May reports from Mull, outside the known breeding range in recent years (BTO Atlas, 1988-91): pr Loch Poit na h-I, May 2; 2 Loch Ba, May 5.

Counts during Oct - Nov were generally a little higher than during Jan - Apr, with an apparent concentration of birds on Islay. Islay: 21 Loch Gorm, Oct 25; 31 Loch Skerrols, Oct 26, 45 on Nov 30; 15 Ardnave Loch, Oct 27, 22 on Nov 10; 14 Loch Ballygrant, Oct 30 and Nov 12. Colonsay: up to 10, Oct - Dec. Mid-Argyll: 20 Dubh Loch, Inveraray, Oct 6.

SCAUP *Aythya marila* Lach mhara

0204

W P Large wintering flock at Loch Indaal, Islay. Scarce elsewhere. Occasionally summers.

1993

Nearly all records came from Loch Indaal (Islay), where numbers declined steadily from Jan to May; a few birds were still present in Jul and Aug, increasing to several hundred, Oct - Dec (Fig. 13). Except for a few scattered birds elsewhere on Islay, the only other records came from Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), where 22 flew >S (451 hr), Aug - Nov.

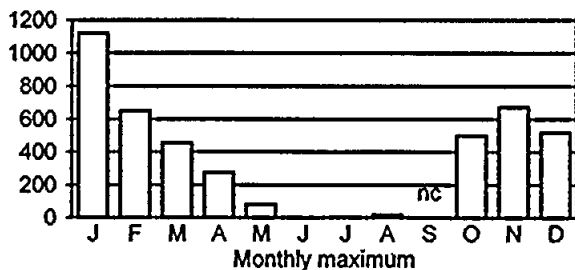


Fig. 13 Numbers of Scaup at Loch Indaal (Islay) in 1993

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

EIDER *Somateria mollissima* Lach lochlannach 0206

B W P Common in all areas. Breeding recorded in 66% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Large flocks of moulting drakes and first-year birds gather at some sites, Jun - Aug. Many Argyll breeding birds winter in the Firth of Clyde.

1993

During the first winter period, the highest count was 214 Loch Indaal (Islay), Jan 22. Two other locations reported counts of 100 birds or more: 100 Oronsay (Colonsay), Jan 5; max 106 Oban Bay (Mid-Argyll), Feb 11.

Breeding. Colonsay: average 3.15 young in 19 broods. No other significant records. A particularly large flock totalling 750 birds was at Gribun (Mull), Aug 18. Other moulting flocks exceeding 100 birds were reported from 3 locations. Islay: max 311 Loch Indaal, Jul 23. Cowal: 187 Blairmore, Jul. N Argyll: 106 Ardmucknish Bay, Jun 23.

Counts during Sep - Dec were generally lower than these, with numbers at Loch Indaal (Islay) declining to 100-150 birds later in the year. In N Argyll, 166 were at lower Loch Creran, Oct 24.

Of 2,639 birds sexed at Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Sep - Nov, 74% were MM.

KING EIDER *Somateria spectabilis*

0207

V

1993#

A record of 1 ad M at Port Ellen (Islay), Oct 13 [R Seifert, U Steschulat] (accepted BBRC), is the sixth accepted record for Argyll and the first since 1979.

LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis* Eun buchainn

0212

W P Uncommon winter visitor, mostly offshore.

1993

There were only a few records during Jan - Apr. Kintyre: 6 Sound of Gigha, Apr 4. Islay: 3 Loch Indaal, Jan and Feb. Tiree: 2 Balephetrish Bay, Apr 8.

Many more were reported Oct - Dec. First 1 Loch Indaal (Islay), Oct 18. Kintyre: 2 >N Machrihanish SBO, Oct 22, 2 >S on Oct 30, 3 present Oct - Dec; 5 Sound of Gigha, Oct 26. Islay: up to 13 Loch Indaal, Nov, up to 16 in Dec; 1-5 at 6 other coastal sites, Oct - Dec. Mid-Argyll: 1 F Dunollie, Oban, Nov 26, perhaps same 1 Ganavan, Dec 20-31. Tiree: 15 Balephetrish Bay, Dec 2.

COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra* Lach bheag dubh

0213

B W P Very rare breeding species in Islay and Mid-Argyll. Present throughout the year in the Sound of Gigha (Kintyre) and at Loch Indaal (Islay); scarce winter visitor elsewhere, although birds may be present well offshore.

1993

During the first winter period, numbers at Loch Indaal (Islay) peaked at 101 in Mar, while 80 were in the Sound of Gigha (Kintyre), Apr 4. Also in Kintyre, 6 were at West Loch Tarbert, Mar 5.

Breeding. Islay: up to 9 prs present at usual breeding site May - Jun and 1 pr at suitable breeding site elsewhere; 1 F + b/2 Saligo Bay, Aug 1. Mid-Argyll: up to 5 (3 MM, 2 FF) at 1 site, May 1 - Jun 6; recorded for the second year in succession from this former breeding loch following a gap since the last record in 1985.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

Other summer records came from Loch Indaal (Islay), peak monthly counts being 22 on Jun 25 and 55 on Jul 24. Also on Islay, 46 flew >S (50.5 hr) past Frenchman's Rocks, Jun and Jul.

In autumn on Islay, 178 were at Loch Indaal, Aug 29, and 236 on Nov 22; southward passage past Frenchman's Rocks peaked in Oct, with 35 >S (21 hr); also, 40 were at Machir Bay, Oct 29. Except for smaller numbers at Loch Indaal, the only other records came from Kintyre, with 33 >S (236 hr) Machrihanish SBO, Sep and Oct, and smaller numbers seen Nov and Dec; also, 52 were in the Sound of Gigha, Oct 26.

VELVET SCOTER *Melanitta fusca* Lach dubh

0215

W Scarce.

1993#

Records were confined to 3 locations, Oct - Dec. Kintyre: 1 F Machrihanish SBO from Oct 25, 2 FF from Nov 7, 2 FF and 1 M from Dec 23; also, 6 MM flew >S past this location, Oct 30; 1 Sound of Gigha, Oct 26. Tiree: 2 MM Balephetrish Bay, Dec 2.

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula* Lach bhreac

0218

W Common. Birds present Sep - May; a few individuals summer.

1993

Counts of 10-20 birds were received from several locations in Islay, Cowal, Mid-Argyll, Mull, and N Argyll, during Jan - mid-Apr. Counts exceeding this number came from 3 areas only. Islay: 37 Loch Indaal, Jan 29, 38 on Feb 27. Mid-Argyll: 22 Loch Feochan, Apr 3. Mull: 21 Lochdon, Apr 21.

Birds were absent May - Aug, with the exception of 1 F Port na Saille, Loch Spelve (Mull), Jul 19.

On Islay, 4 returning individuals were present Loch Indaal, Sep 28, but birds were not widespread until mid- to late Oct. With the exception of 23 Ganavan (Mid-Argyll), Dec 26, counts exceeding 20 birds came only from Islay: 33 Loch Indaal, Oct 18; 22 Loch Gorm, Oct 25; 25 Kilnaughton Bay, Nov 6.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator* Siolta dhearg

0221

B W Common. Breeding recorded in 52% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Large moulting flocks gather at some offshore sites, Jul - Aug.

1993

Except for Loch Indaal (Islay) (Fig. 14), no counts during Jan - Apr exceeded 25 birds.

No significant breeding records were received. During the summer period, numbers of moulting birds on Islay reached a pronounced peak in Jul (Fig. 14). Smaller flocks of up to 40 birds were recorded at several other locations, Jun - Sep. Mid-Argyll: up to 15 Loch Crinan, Aug, 32 in Sep. Mull: 30 Duart Bay, Aug 17; 25 Scallastle Bay, Aug 20; 32 nr Gruline, Sep 5. Tiree: 37 Gunna, Jun 8. Coll: 35 Crossapol Bay, Jul 29.

Highest numbers during Oct - Dec were also on Islay (Fig. 14). The only other count exceeding 40 birds was 56 Sound of Gigha (Kintyre), Oct 26.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

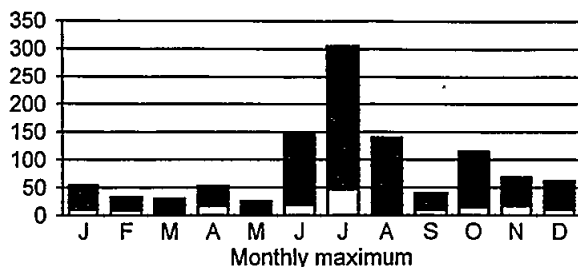


Fig. 14 Numbers of Red-breasted Merganser at two sealochs on Islay in 1993
 Black: Loch Indaal White: Loch Gruinart

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser* Siolta

0223

B W Scarce breeding species, mainly Mid-Argyll, with an estimated 40-50 prs. Drakes may gather Loch Awe prior to late May moult migration.

1993

Recorded widely Jan - Mar in Mid-Argyll, with a few records from N Argyll. Mid-Argyll: 1-5 birds at up to 20 separate locations. N Argyll: 1-3 at 4 locations.

Breeding season records were received from many sites, but the only confirmed breeding record was of 1 F + b/2, Loch Nell (Mid-Argyll), Jun 27. Most other records were also from Mid-Argyll. Cowal: prs Loch Eck and Dunan in Apr. Mid-Argyll: probably bred Ardchnonnell; also present head of Loch Fyne, River Add, Ardentallen Pt, and 5 locations in the Oban area. Mull: 1 Kellan, May 23.

Autumn migrants were seen at Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), with a total of 3 >S on Sep 10 and 11. On Mull, 6 were at the mouth of the River Lussa, Aug 17, and 4 at Aird Fada, Loch Scridain, Nov 10. Birds were also present at several sites in Mid-Argyll, Sep - Dec.

RUDDY DUCK *Oxyura jamaicensis*

0225

V

1993#

A record of a single M in eclipse, Duntrune Castle, Loch Crinan (Mid-Argyll), Oct 25, was only the fourth for Argyll and the first since 1988.

RED KITE *Milvus milvus* Clamhan gobhlach

0239

I V Genuine vagrants have occurred in the past, but most recent records refer to birds released in Highland Region as part of a re-introduction project begun in 1989. All records are requested, ideally with details of activity and presence/absence of wing tags.

1993#

The first record was 1 Foreland House (Islay), Feb 23-24. There were 6 further records during Jun - Sep. Kintyre: 2 together Glen Breackerie, Sep 30. Gigha: 1 on

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

Jun 6 may have been present for 2 weeks. Islay: 1 Loch Gorm, Jun 30. Cowal: 1 Tighnabruaich, Sep 9. Mid-Argyll: 1 circling over Kilninver, Aug 8. N Argyll: 1 nr Ben Cruachan, Aug 23.

WHITE-TAILED EAGLE *Haliaeetus albicilla* Iolair mhara 0243

I A total of 82 birds were released on the island of Rum between 1975 and 1985 as part of the Nature Conservancy Council's re-introduction programme. An additional 10 chicks were imported from Norway and released in N Scotland in 1993. All records are requested, ideally with details of age, activity and presence/absence of wing tags.

1993

Breeding. Scotland: 8 prs attempted to breed; 4 successful prs reared 5 young. In Argyll, there were sightings of dispersing and wandering individuals in 10 months of the year, including those below. Islay: a minimum of 3 individuals, including 1 ad seen from the ferry on Apr 10. Jura: 1 imm Kinuachdrachd, Sep 3. Cowal: 2, possibly 3, individuals Jan - Mar, including 1 ad seen from a helicopter between Strachur and Loch Eck.

MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus* Clamhan Ioin 0260

V Most records in spring and autumn.

1993#

There were two records, both of F/imms. In spring, 1 was at Rubha na Faing (Islay), May 19; in autumn, 1 was at Machrihanish (Kintyre), Sep 16.

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus* Breid air toin 0261

B W P Sparse but widespread breeding species. Breeding recorded in forty-eight 10 km sq in Argyll. A total of 471 Argyll chicks have been fitted with wing-tags during 1990-93, as part of a national study by RSPB; details of all sightings of these birds are requested.

1993

Monthly counts at winter roosts in 2 areas were received. Islay: up to 5 Loch Gruinart, Feb, 7 in Mar. Mid-Argyll: up to 13 Moine Mhor, Jan, 11 in Feb, 7 in Mar.

Breeding. Argyll: in terms of breeding success, 1993 was disappointing. Heavy rainfall, snow and freezing conditions affected all breeding areas in mid-May, while high rainfall in Jun and Jul is likely to have reduced the hunting efficiency of ads. Fifty-seven nests were monitored. The median laying date for the first egg of 34 clutches was May 8 (range Apr 24 - Jun 7). Mean initial clutch size for 37 nests was 4.14. The mean number of chicks hatching in 41 broods was 3.32 and the mean number fledging in 53 broods was 2.19 (1988-93 mean = 2.51). A total of 100 young were fitted with wing tags, and some have since been seen as far afield as the Isles of Scilly, Cornwall, Somerset, and Easter Ross (shot). At least 9 FF and 3 MM wing-tagged during 1990-92 bred in Argyll in 1993 [M Madders, ARSG].

Outside known breeding areas, birds were reported during summer from Colonsay, Tiree and Coll.

During the second winter period, peak monthly roost counts were received from 3 locations. Kintyre: 2 Aros Moss, Oct, 4 in Nov, 3 in Dec. Islay: 2 Loch Gruinart, Oct, 12 in Nov, 5 in Dec. Mid-Argyll: 8 Moine Mhor, Oct, 4 in Nov, 8 in Dec.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

GOSHAWK *Accipiter gentilis* Glas sheabhadh 0267
 ? Very scarce. With much suitable habitat available, colonisation is probably only a matter of time, and may even have taken place already.

1993#

Two reports of single FF were received, from Glen Lean (Cowal), May 1, and Lochdon (Mull), Jul 22.

1992

Kintyre: 1 imm M Machrihanish area, Sep 30 and Oct 3.

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus* Speireag 0269
 B W P Widespread. Breeding recorded in 36% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

No significant records.

BUZZARD *Buteo buteo* Clamhan 0287
 B W Common in all areas. Breeding recorded in 78% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Breeding. Colonsay: 19-22 prs attempted to breed, mean clutch size 1.92 and mean brood size at fledging 1.83 [D C Jardine]. Tiree: 2 prs fledged 3 young. Mid-Argyll: 1 pr Taynish NNR laid 5 eggs and reared 1 chick.

No other significant records.

GOLDEN EAGLE *Aquila chrysaetos* Iolair 0296
 B W Breeding in all areas. Imms tend to wander in winter and may be recorded in areas where breeding does not occur. Breeding recorded in 39% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

At least 4 birds were reported outside the usual areas during Mar - May. Mid-Argyll: 2 (including 1 imm) Kerrera, Apr 5. Tiree: 1 imm Milton, May 9. Coll: 1 imm Acha, Mar 3.

Breeding. Argyll: complete monitoring information was obtained for 51 home ranges. Productivity was considerably better than in 1992. Four home ranges were apparently unoccupied; birds were present in 47, with prs occupying 38. A total of 35 prs were proved to breed; eggs hatched in 27 nests, and 28 chicks fledged from 24 sites. An adult F found injured, and subsequently put down, had injuries probably inflicted by another eagle [RSPB, M Gregory, ARSG].

In autumn, a wandering ad was reported from Fladda, Treshnish Is (Mull), Sep 14.

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus* Iolair iasgach 0301
 S P Very scarce breeding species; recent re-colonist.

1993

Singles were reported from 4 areas during Apr and May. Islay: 1 Loch Gruinart, May 14 and perhaps the same 1 Bridgend, May 24. Colonsay: 1 The Strand, May 28. Cowal: 1 Portavadie, Apr 16 (drowned in fish farm netting). Mull: 1 Aros Park, May 14.

Breeding. Argyll: slow but steady progress was maintained with, for the first time

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since recolonisation, 3 prs nesting and laying clutches. One pr failed during incubation and the other 2 each successfully reared 1 chick. An additional bird summered at another site [RSPB].

Wandering or returning birds were reported from several areas, Jun - Sep. Islay: 1 Loch Gruinart, Aug 12. Jura: 1 Tarbert area, Jun 25 - Jul 5. Mid-Argyll: 1 Loch Sween area, Jul 16 - Aug 15; up to 4 stayed in the Crinan area, Aug - mid-Sep. Mull: 1 Tioran, Aug 24.

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus* Clamhan ruadh 0304

B W P Widespread but uncommon. Breeding recorded in 41% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Marked decrease in breeding population over past 10 years reported from Kintyre. Population in some other areas appears to fluctuate from year to year. Emigration from some areas in autumn (eg Mull).

1993

No significant records.

MERLIN *Falco columbarius* Meimeal 0309

B W P Scarce breeding species, probably under-recorded.

1993

Breeding. Argyll: 1993 was the first year of a 2-year RSPB survey and this resulted in systematic coverage of selected 10 km sq and more extensive coverage of other areas, particularly Islay and Mull. In the region as a whole, singles or prs were present at 16 sites, with 9 confirmed breeding attempts; 7 successful prs fledged at least 17 chicks. Productivity at monitored sites was generally lower than usual as a result of poor weather. The following comments are indicators of changing status or improved knowledge. Islay: singles or prs in 5 areas and reported from a sixth; breeding confirmed at 2 sites. Jura: 1 new site located. Colonsay: birds summered, but no breeding attempt detected. Cowal: evidence of an expanding population, apparently unrelated to better coverage; present 3 areas, 2 successful nesting attempts recorded; reported from several additional areas. Mull: no confirmed breeding attempts; only 1 bird seen, at 1 known site. Coll: birds summered, apparently reoccupying an area vacant for several years [RSPB, ARSG].

Outside the breeding season, Merlins were more widely encountered, the majority of reports coming from the post-breeding period (Aug - Sep). Most records were from the islands and the mainland coastal strip. Kintyre: up to 3 The Laggan, winter months. Islay: widespread singles, Aug - Oct. Mull: regular winter months Kilfinichen. Tiree: singles on 3 dates in early April, up to 2, mid-Aug - mid-Sep. N Argyll: 1 Benderloch, Nov 18.

GYRFALCON *Falco rusticolus* Seabhag mor na seilg 0318

V

1990

Islay: 1 first-summer M (white-phase), Loch Gruinart and Sunderland, Apr 17 [M A Ogilvie, M A Peacock]. This record, published in the 1990 systematic list, has been accepted by BBRC.

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PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus* Seabhag 0320

B W P Sparse but widespread breeding species in all areas. Breeding recorded in 50% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Breeding recorded in fifty-two 10 km squares in 1991 survey [RSPB et al].

1993

Breeding. Argyll: with the exception of Cowal, where monitoring of sites was reasonably comprehensive, few systematic monitoring data are available for 1993. Of the 17 Argyll sites for which full details are available, 1 site was vacant and 16 were occupied by prs. Eggs were laid at 14 sites and the 10 successful sites fledged at least 18 chicks [ARSG].

Outside the breeding season, birds were widely reported throughout Argyll. There were 2 unusual records from Rubha na Faing (Islay): 1 juv carrying a Little Auk, Dec 12, and 1 ad lifting another Little Auk from the sea, Dec 31.

RED GROUSE *Lagopus lagopus* Coileach fraoich 0329

R Sparsely distributed in moorland and young forestry habitats. Slight increase in recent years? Breeding recorded in 20% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

On Colonsay, where the species is of irregular occurrence, 1 was reported from Scalasaig, Nov 9. No other significant records.

PTARMIGAN *Lagopus mutus* Tarmachan 0330

R Very localised, generally above 800m. Breeding recorded in 5% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). All records required.

1993

No records.

BLACK GROUSE *Tetrao tetrix* Caoileach dubh 0332

R Locally distributed. Recent increase in numbers as a result of birds colonising forestry plantations. Breeding recorded in 21% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

With 1 exception, all records were from the period Jan - Jun, many at lek sites. Islay: 1 Bridgend, Jun 4. Cowal: 3 Kames golf course, Jun 6. Mid-Argyll: up to 15 at 4 sites in the Oban area, Jan - Jun; max 6 nr Loch Leathan, Apr 27; 7 Tibertich, nr Kilmartin, May 21. Mull: 1 Glen Aros, May 17.

Breeding. A single F + b/2 was seen, Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve (Islay), Aug.

CAPERCAILLIE *Tetrao urogallus* Capull coille 0335

R Very rare.

1993#

Two MM at a Cowal lek, and 1 F + b/2 seen later at the same location, represent the first confirmed breeding record in Argyll since the BTO Atlas, 1968-72.

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa* Cearc thomain dhearg chasach 0358

I Birds introduced to several areas, but populations may not be self-sustaining. Some introduced hybrid Red-legged Partridge x Chukar on Islay.

1993

No records received.

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- GREY PARTRIDGE** *Perdix perdix* Cearc thomainn 0367
 R I Very localised distribution. Birds introduced in several areas, but this does not appear to result in self-sustaining populations. All records required.
 1993#
 The only records related to presumed releases on Islay: 9 nr Portnahaven, Jun 23; 9 Loch Gruinart, 24 Nov, with 11 nearby on 28 Nov.
- QUAIL** *Coturnix coturnix* Gearradh gort 0370
 S Rare and irregular visitor.
 1993#
 One calling Gott (Tiree), Jun 21, was the only record.
 1992
 Kintyre: 1 Machrihanish Airfield, Jun 29; 1 Stewarton, several dates, Jul.
- PHEASANT** *Phasianus colchicus* Easag 0394
 R Widespread and common. Birds annually reared and released on many estates. Breeding recorded in 41% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).
 1993
 No significant records.
- GOLDEN PHEASANT** *Chrysolophus pictus* 0396
 I Birds introduced to a small number of estates and gardens. A feral population of ca 20 birds exists at Gruline, Mull.
 1993#
 A single F was seen nr Gruline (Mull), Jan 23, and 2 FF were there on Feb 20.
- WATER RAIL** *Rallus aquaticus* Snagan allt 0407
 B W P Scarce, but under-recorded.
 1993
 There was only a single record during the first winter period: 1 dead on road nr Oban (Mid-Argyll), Jan 29.
 Breeding. Islay: 2 singing MM Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve, at least 1 pr bred. One or more birds were still present to the end of the year.
 The only other definite record was 1 Balephetrish (Tiree), Aug 31.
- SPOTTED CRAKE** *Porzana porzana* Traon breac 0408
 S Rare and irregular. First breeding record for Argyll in 1993.
 1993#
 Breeding. Two prs were present at Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve (Islay) during the summer; the sighting of a juv on Sep 10 constitutes the first evidence of breeding in Argyll this century.
- CORNCRAKE** *Crex crex* Traon 0421
 S Localised distribution. Breeding mainly on Islay, Colonsay, Tiree and Coll.
 1993
 Breeding. Argyll: a comprehensive survey, as part of a national survey co-ordinated by the RSPB, found that the Argyll population, concentrated in the Inner Hebrides and totalling 160 calling birds, now represents approximately one-third of the British

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population. Numbers of calling birds in individual areas were as follows: Islay 9, Colonsay 10, McCormaig Is (Mid-Argyll) 1, mainland Mull 1, Iona (Mull) 4, Treshnish Is (Mull) 2, Tiree 111 and Coll 20. The only mainland Argyll records were at Glen Daruel (Cowal) and Kilmelford (Mid-Argyll). Continued declines on some islands were offset by the Tiree figure which is the highest number recorded in recent years.

Positive management for Corncrakes on RSPB reserves continues to give grounds for optimism for this globally threatened species. On Islay, Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve recorded its first instance of proven breeding, while on Coll, the RSPB reserve attracted 13 calling birds (cf 10 in 1992).

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus* Cearc uisge 0424
B W Very localised. Breeding recorded in 16% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).
1993

Breeding. Islay: 8 broods recorded Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve. Colonsay: 1 juv, Jul 16. Mid-Argyll: 1 juv Bellanoch, Aug 15 and 28. Tiree: 1 juv Loch a'Phuill, Sep 10. N Argyll: pr + b/1 Benderloch.

Other records during the year came from Islay (1 nr Bridgend and 1 Loch Ballygrant, Mar 5; 1 Easter Ellister, Aug 18 and Sep 26), Mid-Argyll (1 Crinan Canal, Jan 8; 1 Oban, Mar 4 and 24), and Mull (1 Loch na Cuilce, May 19). Since Moorhens are largely sedentary, most of these locations were probably breeding sites.

COOT *Fulica atra* Lach a bhlair 0429
B W Uncommon. Breeding recorded in only 2% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).
1993

During Feb - Apr, birds were reported from 2 locations. Cowal: up to 4 Loch Loskin, Dunoon, Mar and Apr. Mid-Argyll: up to 7 Loch Nell, Feb and Mar.

Breeding. Kintyre: 2 prs bred Westport Marsh. Also, a pr was still present Loch Nell (Mid-Argyll), Jun 15, well outside the known breeding range in recent years (BTO Atlas, 1988-91); there are other recent summer records from this site.

There were a further 4 records during Aug - Oct. Islay: 1 Loch Skerrols, Aug 20; 1 Loch Lossit and 1 Loch Ballygrant, Oct 30. Colonsay: 1 Loch Fada, Nov 14.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus* Gille brighde 0450
B W P Widespread and common. Breeding recorded in 70% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).
1993

By far the highest counts during the first winter period came from Islay (Fig. 15). Elsewhere, only 3 counts exceeded 60 birds. Colonsay: 188 The Strand, Feb 13. Cowal: 80 Holy Loch, Apr 10. Mid-Argyll: max 90 Loch Crinan, Mar 8.

Breeding. Islay: minimum 21 prs, Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve. Colonsay: estimated total 70 prs.

Substantial numbers of non-breeders were present Loch Gruinart and Loch Indaal (Islay) through the summer. Numbers there peaked in Jun, and declined subsequently (Fig. 15). In Kintyre, a total of 1239 flew >S (159 hr) past Machrihanish SBO, Aug, but only 55 (145 hr) in Sep. Four other areas reported counts of 60 or more birds. Colonsay: 100 Oronsay, Dec 4. Cowal: 244 Holy Loch, Oct 17. Mid-Argyll: up to

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70 Loch Crinan, Aug; 88 Loch Gilp, Aug 14; 125 Ardrishaig, Sep 23. N Argyll: 80 Ledaig Pt, Nov 1.

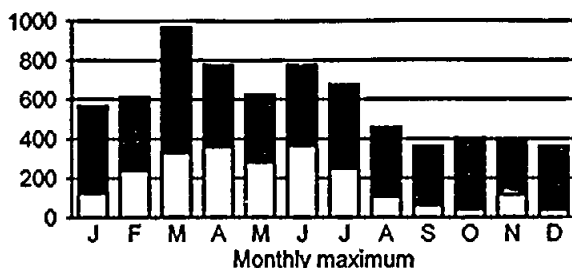


Fig. 15 Numbers of Oystercatcher at two sealochs on Islay in 1993
Black: Loch Indaal White: Loch Gruinart

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula* Trilleachan traghad 0470
B W P Widespread and common. Breeding recorded in 55% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

There were counts of up to 40 birds from several areas, Jan - May, but larger numbers were reported only from Islay and Tiree. Islay: numbers of wintering birds peaked in Feb, with a second peak of migrants in May (Fig. 16). Tiree: 82 The Reef, Apr 17; 70 Balephetrish Bay, May 7; 50 Hough Bay, May 8.

Breeding. Colonsay: numbers reduced by comparison with previous years. No other significant records.

Groups of non-breeders appeared to be present on Islay all summer (Fig. 16).

The first returning migrants were reported mid-Jul, with 5 Kiloran Bay (Colonsay), Jul 16. Numbers built up by late Jul, with 93 Balephetrish Bay (Tiree), Jul 24, and 60 Ledaig Pt (N Argyll), Jul 30. On Islay, numbers increased to a pronounced peak in Dec (Fig. 16). Three other counts, Sep - Dec, exceeded 40 birds. Colonsay: 250 The Strand, Nov 13. Mull: 54 Kintra, Sep 29. Tiree: 73 Vault Bay, Sep 15.

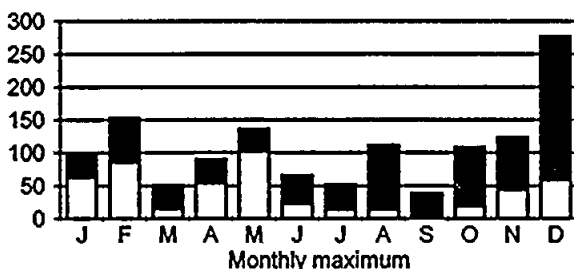


Fig. 16 Numbers of Ringed Plover at two sealochs on Islay in 1993
Black: Loch Indaal White: Loch Gruinart

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DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus* Amadan-mointich 0482
P Scarce. Has bred N Argyll and probably Islay. All records required.
1993

For the first time since 1986, no records of this species were received.

AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis dominica* 0484/1
V First occurrence in 1992.
1992

Colonsay: 1 Traigh nam Barc area, Oct 3-5 [D C Jardine, J A Jardine, J Clarke, P H Clarke] (accepted BBRC). See pp. 81-83 in this report for more details of this sighting.

GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria* Feadag 0485
B W P Sparse but widespread breeding species. Upland afforestation has greatly reduced available breeding habitat in some areas. Breeding recorded in 28% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).
1993

The highest counts during Jan - May were from **Islay** and **Tiree**. **Islay:** 300 Ardnave, Jan 1, 500 on Mar 6; max 91 Loch Indaal, Jan 29; up to 800 Loch Gruinart, Mar. **Tiree:** max 1,400 Tiree Airport, Apr 10. Other areas held much smaller numbers. **Jura:** 8 An Dunan, May 9. **Colonsay:** up to 130, Jan - Mar. **Mull:** max 104 Fiddien, May 2, with a few records of small numbers elsewhere.

Breeding. Possible breeding was reported from only 3 localities. **Islay:** 2 Beinn Bhan, Jun 5. **Mull:** 3 Fiddien, May 31. **Mid-Argyll:** 2 Creag nan Iallag, Knapdale, Mar 20. There were also 2 isolated records of presumed non-breeders: 1 Ceann a'Mhara (**Tiree**), Jun 11; 1 Balnahard (**Colonsay**), Jun 30.

Numbers built up again during Jul and Aug on **Tiree**, with 110 Hough, Jul 28, and 310 nearby on Aug 23. Other areas did not report large numbers until Oct. **Kintyre:** up to 240 The Laggan, Oct. **Islay:** 200 Ardnave, Oct 17; max 300 Loch Indaal, Oct 24; 50 The Oa, Oct 24; up to 163 Loch Gruinart, Oct, 550 in Nov, 137 in Dec. **Colonsay:** up to 120, Dec.

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola* Trilleachan 0486
P W Uncommon passage migrant. A few winter.
1993

Most records during Jan - May were from Loch Gruinart and Loch Indaal (**Islay**), with 7 at the former site, Jan 7, and 1 or 2 at the latter site, Feb - May; nr Loch Gruinart, 1 was at Gortantaoid, Mar 18. The only record from elsewhere was 1 Oronsay (**Colonsay**), Jan 25. Last 1 Loch Gruinart (**Islay**), Jun 6.

The first returning migrant was at Loch Gruinart (**Islay**), Aug 24. During the autumn, most records were again from **Islay**, but 4 areas were represented in total. **Kintyre:** 3 Machrihanish SBO, Sep 16, also 6 >S and 1 >N, Sep 14 - Oct 4. **Islay:** 7 >S Frenchman's Rocks, Sep 20; an exceptionally high total of 69 Loch Gruinart, Sep 20, with 26 still present Oct 19; max 5 Loch Indaal, Oct 25. **Colonsay:** 2 The Strand, Oct 18. **Tiree:** 1 Hough Bay, Sep 30.

A few birds remained through Nov and Dec. **Islay:** 1-5 Loch Gruinart and Ardnave, Nov and Dec; 4 Loch Indaal, Nov 22 and Dec 15. **Colonsay:** 7 The Strand, Nov 13.

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LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus* Carracag

0493

B W P Localised breeder and widespread wintering species associated with rough pasture, arable fields and machair. Breeding recorded in 48% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Counts exceeding 50 birds during Jan - Mar were received from 4 areas. Kintyre: up to 110 The Laggan, Jan, fewer in Feb and Mar. Islay: influx in Feb, with up to 1,585 Loch Gruinart, after only 161 in Jan; 106 Loch Indaal, Feb 27, 109 on Mar 20. Colonsay: 150 Kiloran Bay area, Feb; substantial predation by Peregrine all year. Cowal: 70 Ardlamont Pt, Mar 3.

Breeding. Kintyre: 6 prs bred Westport Marsh; this is the sole remaining breeding location in S Kintyre for this once common species. Islay: at least 260 prs bred Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve. Colonsay: 83 prs bred (full count); good breeding success due to cull of Hooded Crows. Mid-Argyll: only 1 or 2 prs now breeding along the coastal stretch between Castle Sween and Pt of Knap. Tiree: eggs first noted Apr 7; 10 prs Vaul, 4 prs Soa. A few other scattered breeding records were received.

The highest counts during Sep - Dec came from Kintyre, Islay, Cowal and Tiree. Kintyre: an influx in Dec, with up to 800 The Laggan, after only 39 in Nov. Islay: up to 365 Loch Gruinart, Nov. Cowal: 150 Ardlamont Pt, Nov 13. Tiree: up to 320 Balephetrish, Sep.

KNOT *Calidris canutus* Luatharan gainmhich

0496

W P Uncommon passage migrant with main passage Aug - Sep. A few winter.

1993

The only records during Jan - May were from Islay, with 1 Loch Indaal, Feb 27, up to 12 in Mar, and up to 16 in Apr. Last 6 Loch Indaal, May 23.

The first returning migrants were 20 Loch Gruinart (Islay), Jul 16. Autumn records were dominated by a large southward passage in Kintyre, with 1,083 >S (304 hr) Machrihanish SBO, Aug and Sep, including a remarkable 741 >S (5 hr) on Aug 29; this may well be the highest-ever count for Argyll. Counts were received from 4 other areas. Islay: 68 Loch Indaal, Aug 18; 99 >S (4.5 hr) Frenchman's Rocks, 4-8 Sep. Mid-Argyll: 7 Crinan Ferry, Aug 13. Mull: 15 Lochdon, Aug 15. N Argyll: 4 Ledaig Pt, Aug 10. There were a few reports of smaller numbers in the same areas, Jul - Oct.

Other than 2 Ledaig Pt (N Argyll), Nov 1, all Nov and Dec records were from Islay, with the highest counts 21 Loch Indaal, Nov 22, and 28 on Dec 15.

SANDERLING *Calidris alba* Luatharan glas

0497

W P Uncommon passage migrant with main passage May and Aug. A few winter, mainly on Islay and Tiree. Occasionally recorded in summer.

1993

Highest counts during Jan - May came from Islay and Tiree. Islay: 6 Ardnave Pt, Feb 15; 13 Loch Gruinart, Mar 31. Tiree: 12 Hynish, Apr 11; 22 Gott Bay, May 4; 20 Hough Bay, May 8. There were other records of 5 or fewer birds from Islay, Colonsay, and Mull. Last 32 Camas Cuil an t-Sabh, Iona (Mull), Jun 1.

The first returning birds were 6 Traigh Shorobaidh (Tiree), Jul 20, followed by migrants in several areas, Aug and Sep, and a few records Oct - Dec. Kintyre: 97 >S

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(304 hr) Machrihanish SBO, Aug and Sep. **Islay:** 20-30 Loch Gruinart/Ardnave, Aug - Oct; 6 Loch Indaal, Aug 18. **Tiree:** 60 Vaul Bay, Aug 2 and Sep 15; 10 Balephetrish Bay, Sep 1. There were other records of 5 or fewer birds from **Islay**, **Mid-Argyll** and **Tiree**.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta* Luatharan beag **0501**
P Scarce.

1993#

There were no spring records, but 2 early autumn migrants were at Bruichladdich (Islay), Jul 8. There were a further 4 records in Aug and Sep. **Kintyre:** 3 >S Machrihanish SBO, Sep 11, 1 >S on Sep 20. **Islay:** 1 Traigh an Luig, Aug 18; 3 Loch Gruinart, Sep 20, 1 to Sep 25.

1992

Kintyre: singles past Machrihanish SBO, Aug 25 and Aug 29, 3 on 23 Sep, 2 on 25 Sep.

PECTORAL SANDPIPER *Calidris melanotos* **0507**
V Rare migrant, mostly autumn.

1993#

A single juv with Dunlins at Machrihanish SBO (**Kintyre**), Sep 10, was the only record of this less than annual visitor.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea* Luatharan crom **0509**
P Scarce and irregular.

1993#

There were 2 records, 1 in spring and 1 in autumn. **Islay:** 1 Loch Gruinart, May 19. **Kintyre:** 2 >S Machrihanish SBO, Sep 27.

1992

Kintyre: 1 >S Machrihanish SBO, Oct 3.

PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima* Luatharan rioghail **0510**
W P Widely distributed along rocky coasts Aug - May.

1993

Birds were reported during Jan - May from 4 areas, but there were no mainland records. **Islay:** up to 12 Bruichladdich, Mar and Apr; 1 Loch Gruinart, Apr 29. **Colonsay:** 1 The Strand, Feb 7; 5 east coast, Mar 6; 2 Oronsay, May 8. **Mull:** 4 Loch Scridain, Jan 13; 12 Staffa, May 8. **Tiree:** 9 Hynish, Apr 18; present Balephetrish Bay, Apr and May, max 30 on May 6. Last 1 Loch Gruinart (**Islay**), May 14. First returning migrant 1 Machrihanish SBO (**Kintyre**), Sep 27, then 1 Gott Bay (**Tiree**), Sep 29. Other records came from **Kintyre** and **Islay** only. **Kintyre:** 2 Machrihanish SBO, Nov 3 to end year, 3 >S on Nov 8, 1 >S on Nov 9. **Islay:** up to 15 Bruichladdich, Nov and Dec; 1 Ardnave Pt, Nov 10; 6 Portnahaven, Dec 24.

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina* Graillig **0512**

B W P Very localised breeding species. Breeding recorded in 20% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Majority recorded on passage with smaller numbers wintering.

1993

High counts during Jan and Feb came from **Islay** (Fig. 17) and **Colonsay** (max 250

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

The Strand, Feb 7). Numbers on Islay then decreased, but peaked again in May (Fig. 17), when migrants were reported from other areas. Mull: max 60 Camas Cuil an t-Sabh (Iona), May 9. Tiree: max 400 Balephetrish Bay, May 7. Last migrants 13 Iona (Mull), Jun 1.

Breeding. Possible or probable breeding was reported from 3 areas. Islay: 4 singing MM Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve. Colonsay: 1 pr. Tiree: 3 sites.

Returning migrants were seen from late Jul, with numbers close to or exceeding 1,000 on Islay during Sep - Dec (Fig. 17). Counts exceeding 60 birds were received from only 4 other areas. Kintyre: 180 >S (304 hr) Machrihanish SBO, Aug and Sep. Colonsay: 320 The Strand, Dec 4. Mull: 75 Lochdon, Oct 1. Tiree: 76 Loch a'Phuill, Sep 10.

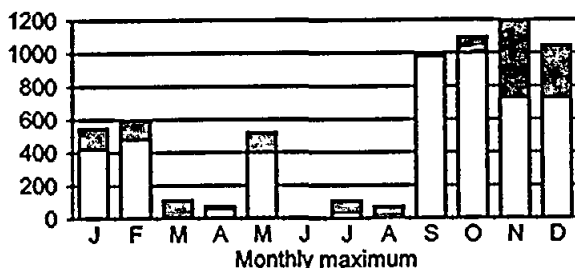


Fig. 17 Numbers of Dunlin at two sealochs on Islay in 1993
Black: Loch Indaal White: Loch Gruinart

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax* Gibeagan

0517

P Scarce and irregular passage migrant, mainly in autumn.

1993#

There were no spring records.

The first autumn migrants were 2 Miodar (Tiree), Aug 16. There were further records from 3 areas to Oct 10. Kintyre: singles >S Machrihanish SBO, Aug 19, Sep 2 and 24. Islay: singles Loch Gruinart, Aug 24 - Oct 10, 3 on Sep 10. Tiree: 1 Loch a'Phuill, Sep 9.

JACK SNIBE *Lymnocyrtus minimus* Gobhrag bheag

0518

W P Probably under-recorded.

1993#

There were 4 records during Jan - Apr. Islay: 1 Loch Gruinart, Jan 22; 1 Ardilistry Bay, Apr 27. Mid-Argyll: 1 Castlesween, Mar 20. Tiree: 1 Balephetrish, Apr 16. The only records for the second winter period were singles at Benderloch (N Argyll), Nov 4 and 18.

SNIBE *Gallinago gallinago* Naosg

0519

B W P Widespread, locally common. Breeding recorded in 51% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

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Breeding. Islay: 34 drumming birds, Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve. Colonsay: 48 prs (complete count). No other significant records.

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola* Coileach coille 0529

B W P Widespread but under-recorded distribution. Breeding recorded in 35% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

No significant breeding records. The highest counts were 11 Rubha Garbh (Colonsay), Dec 11, and 8 Kilfinichen Bay area (Mull), Dec.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa* Cearra ghob 0532

P Scarce.

1993

First 4 Kilchenzie (Kintyre) Apr 15, then migrants recorded Kintyre, Islay and Tiree to May 21. Kintyre: up to 2 Westport Marsh, Apr 20-28. Islay: present Loch Gruinart, Apr 18 - May 21, max 24 on Apr 22; 2 Ardnave Loch, Apr 26; 1 Machir Bay, May 17. Tiree: 2 Loch a'Phuill, Apr 24.

The first returning migrants were 5 Loch Gruinart (Islay), Jul 23, then birds were recorded more widely to Sep 10. Kintyre: singles >S Machrihanish SBO, Aug 3 and 13. Islay: 1 Loch Gruinart, Aug 24; 1 Loch Indaal, Aug 20. Mid-Argyll: 2 Bellanoch, Jul 28. Tiree: 1 Cornaigmore, Sep 5; 11 Loch a'Phuill, Sep 10. There was a late autumn record of 2 Duntrune Castle, Loch Crinan (Mid-Argyll), Oct 25, followed by a winter record of 1 Loch Indaal (Islay), Dec 15.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica* Cearra ghob mhor 0534

W P Uncommon passage migrant, most records in autumn. Wintering birds on Islay and small numbers elsewhere. Now regular Islay in summer.

1993

On Islay, numbers peaked at well over 300 birds in Feb (Fig. 18). Counts from other areas during Jan - May did not exceed 11 birds. Kintyre: 1 >N Machrihanish SBO, Apr 6. Colonsay: up to 6 birds, Jan - Mar. Mid-Argyll: up to 11 Loch Crinan, Jan - Mar; 3 Ganavan, May 10. Mull: 1 Lochdon, Apr 21 and May 2. Tiree: 4 records, Apr 10-29, max 8 Gott Bay, Apr 13.

Between May 10 and Jul 19, birds were absent from all areas except Islay (Fig. 18). Small numbers were present in several areas during Jul - Dec, but except for Islay (Fig. 18), counts did not exceed 15 birds. Kintyre: 1 >S Machrihanish SBO, Aug 9. Colonsay: 1 The Strand, Nov 21. Mid-Argyll: present Loch Crinan, Aug - Dec, numbers peaking at 6 in Dec. Mull: up to 6 Lochdon, Aug and Sep. Tiree: present Jul 19 to Sep 29, max 15 Loch a'Phuill, Aug 15. Coll: 1 Breachacha, Jul 27.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

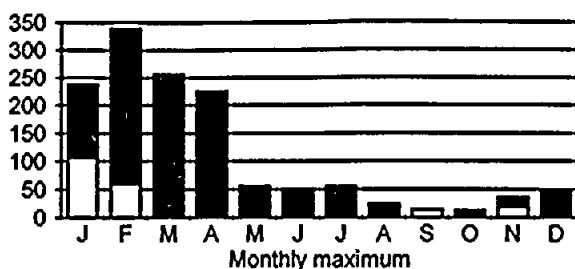


Fig. 18 Numbers of Bar-tailed Godwit at two sealochs on Islay in 1993
Black: Loch Indaal White: Loch Gruinart

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus* Eun bealltain

0538

P Uncommon. Main passage May and Aug. Possibility of a few individuals summering?

1993

First 2 Hynish (Tiree), Apr 11. Other spring records came from Islay, Colonsay, Cowal, Mid-Argyll, Mull and Tiree. Islay: up to 19 birds Loch Indaal, Apr - May. Colonsay: 6 present May. Cowal: 44 Ardyne Pt, May 2; 22 Ardlamont Pt, May 9. Mid-Argyll: 2 Linne Mhuirich, May 20. Mull: max 21 Iona, May 1; max 14 Fiddon, May 18. Tiree: 8 Balephetrish Bay, May 7. There were several smaller counts from the same areas. There were few reports after mid-May but 1 Loch Gruinart (Islay), Jun 2, and 1 Lochdon (Mull) Jun 10, might have been late migrants.

The following records cannot be ascribed with any confidence to spring or autumn migration: 1 Rubha na Faing (Islay), Jun 24; 1 Loch Gruinart (Islay), Jun 30; 1 Loch na Gile (Tiree), Jul 4.

Birds were recorded more frequently on Islay from mid-Jul: 2 >S Frenchman's Rocks, Jul 17, 1 >S on Jul 31; 1 Port Charlotte, Jul 25. Most other autumn records concerned singles, Aug - mid-Sep, in Islay, Mid-Argyll, Mull, and Tiree. In Kintyre, 20 flew >S (159 hr) past Machrihanish SBO, Aug, max 8 on Aug 3. Last 1 Rubha na Faing (Islay), Sep 19.

CURLEW *Numenius arquata* Guilbneach

0541

B W P Common. Breeding recorded in 50% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

During Jan - Apr, counts exceeding 100 birds were received from 3 areas. Kintyre: numbers at The Laggan peaked at 310 in Jan, with up to 300 in Feb. Islay: numbers peaked in Feb (Fig. 19). Cowal: max 141 Holy Loch, Apr 10.

Breeding. Kintyre: 2-3 prs Aros Moss and Machrihanish Airfield. Islay: 19 prs Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve. Mid-Argyll: 4 prs Moine Mhor NNR.

A few groups of birds, including some non-breeders, were still present during Apr - Jun at Loch Gruinart and Loch Indaal (Islay); numbers there increased rapidly to a peak in Aug, and then gradually declined (Fig. 19). At The Laggan (Kintyre), autumn numbers peaked later, with up to 400 birds in Oct. The highest counts received from other areas were 200 Loch a'Phuill (Tiree), Aug 15, and max 90 Holy Loch (Cowal), Oct 17.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

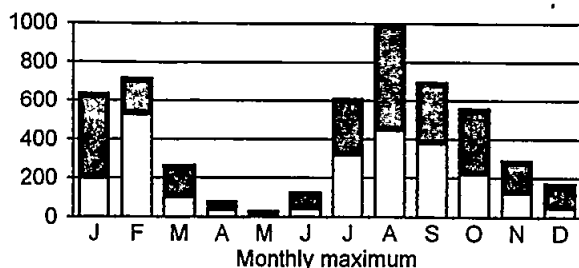


Fig. 19 Numbers of Curlew at two sealochs on Islay in 1993
 Black: Loch Indaal White: Loch Gruinart

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus* Gearradh bhreac

0545

P Scarce.

1993#

A single >S Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Oct 29, was the only record.

REDSHANK *Tringa totanus* Cam ghlais

0546

B W P Localised breeder. Breeding recorded in 40% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Widespread passage migrant and wintering species.

1993

Counts exceeding 20 were reported during Mar and Apr. **Kintyre:** 50 Machrihanish SBO, Apr 20, was highest-ever spring count there. **Islay:** max 20 Loch Indaal, Mar 20; max 51 Loch Gruinart, Mar 31. **Cowal:** 28 Holy Loch, Apr 10.

Breeding. **Kintyre:** 2 prs Westport Marsh. **Islay:** minimum 68 prs Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve. **Colonsay:** 22 prs (complete count). **Mid-Argyll:** 3 prs probably bred River Add.

Counts during Aug - Dec were generally not as high as those in Mar and Apr. **Kintyre:** 236 >S (304 hr), Machrihanish SBO, Aug and Sep. **Islay:** max 18 Loch Indaal, Dec 15; max 20 Loch Gruinart, Dec 16. **Colonsay:** 24 The Strand, Nov 13. **Cowal:** 26 Holy Loch, Oct 17.

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia* Deoch bhuidhe

0548

B W P Very scarce breeding species (only in Mull and N Argyll in recent years). Breeding recorded in 4% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Small numbers on passage with a few birds wintering in some localities.

1993

Small numbers were recorded during Jan - Apr from 4 areas. **Islay:** max 3 Loch Indaal, Apr 5. **Colonsay:** max 3, Jan - Mar. **Mid-Argyll:** 1 Ardpark House, West Loch Tarbert, Feb 28, was the only record. **Mull:** max 3 inner Loch Scridain, Jan - Mar; also several records May.

Breeding. **Mull:** prs displaying in 2 areas, Apr - May. **N Argyll:** up to 4 birds close to usual breeding area, Apr - May.

The first autumn records away from breeding areas were 2 Loch Indaal (**Islay**), Jul 2,

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and 1 The Strand (Colonsay), Jul 3, with other Jul records from Kintyre, Tiree, and Coll. There were many records Aug - Oct, with highest counts 19 Mull, mid-Aug, and 11 The Strand (Colonsay), Oct 18. There were no Nov records, and only 2 in Dec: 1 Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Dec 5; 3 inner Loch Scridain (Mull), Dec 30.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola* Luatharan coille

0554

P Scarce.

1993#

A single at Loch Gruinart (Islay), May 12-24, was the only record.

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos* Luatharan

0556

S P Widespread and common breeding visitor. Breeding recorded in 68% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

There was a widespread arrival mid-Apr, with the first 1 Claggain Bay (Islay), Apr 14, followed by 1 Loch Eck (Cowal), Apr 15, and 2 Gigha, Apr 16. Arrival in other areas occurred about a week later. Kintyre: 1 Westport Marsh, Apr 24. Colonsay: 1 Loch Fada, Apr 25. Mid-Argyll: 1 Oban, Apr 22.

Breeding. No significant records.

Most birds had departed by mid-Aug, but 1 was seen Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Sep 23.

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres* Trilleachan beag

0561

W P Widespread and common on rocky shorelines and seaweed strandlines, mainly Aug - May.

1993

Highest counts during Jan - May came from Islay, with numbers greatest in Feb and Mar (Fig. 20). Only two other areas submitted counts of 20 or more birds. Mid-Argyll: 20 Oban, Jan - Apr. Tiree: 20 Balephetrish Bay, Apr 23; 31 Rubha Chraiginis, May 8. There were no spring records after mid-May.

The first autumn records were 3 Loch Indaal and 3 Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), Jul 24. In Kintyre, 187 flew >S (304 hr) Machrihanish SBO, Aug and Sep. As during the first winter period, highest single counts came from Islay, where numbers peaked in Nov (Fig. 20). The only other count exceeding 20 was 22 Oban (Mid-Argyll), Nov 30; 1 of these birds was taken by a Peregrine.

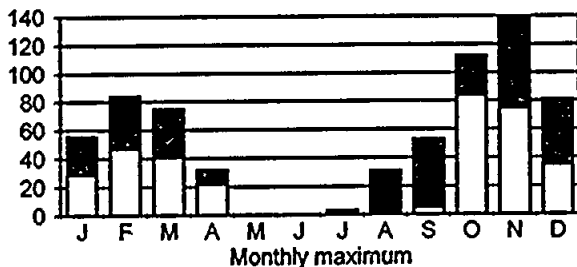


Fig. 20 Numbers of Turnstone at two sealochs on Islay in 1993
Black: Loch Indaal White: Loch Gruinart

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RED-NECKED PHALAROPE *Phalaropus lobatus* Deargan allt 0564
S P Rare breeder at 1 locality only. Very rare on migration elsewhere.
1993

The usual breeding area was monitored but no birds were recorded.

1992

Kintyre: single juvs Machrihanish SBO, Aug 13, Sep 12 and Sep 15. These are apparently the first records for Kintyre.

GREY PHALAROPE *Phalaropus fulicarius* Liathag allt 0565
P Irregular.

1992

Kintyre: 1 >N Machrihanish SBO, Sep 14, 2 >S on Sep 15.

POMARINE SKUA *Stercorarius pomarinus* Fasgadair donn 0566
P Scarce.

1993

The only spring record was 1 >N Portnahaven (Islay), May 25.

There were several autumn records, all except 1 (1 Tiree, Aug 13) from just 2 locations. **Kintyre:** 1 >S Machrihanish SBO, Aug 5, 9 >S and 1 >N during the period 11-21 Sep, 2 >N on Oct 2, 1 >S on Oct 4; 10 of the 14 birds were ads. **Islay:** single juvs >S Frenchman's Rocks, Aug 17 and Sep 20.

Two very late juvs flew >S past Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), Dec 2, and Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Dec 9.

1992

Spring. **Kintyre:** 8 >N and 1 >S Machrihanish SBO, May 1, 2 >N on May 2.

Autumn. **Kintyre:** a total of 6 >S and 1 >N Machrihanish SBO, Aug 3 - Sep 29.

ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus* Fasgadair 0567
S P The commonest skua in Argyll, regularly seen in small numbers nr large tern colonies. Small breeding colonies on Jura and Coll. Passage birds off all coasts Apr - Oct.

1993

First 1 >S Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Apr 6.

No records were received from breeding colonies, but singles and small groups were recorded widely, May - Jul, probably including breeders as well as wandering non-breeders. **Islay:** 24 (85 hr) past Frenchman's Rocks, May - Jul. **Colonsay:** up to 4, Jun and Jul. **Mull:** up to 4 Calgary Bay, Jun; 3 Treshnish Is, Jun 11; 10 Grass Pt, Jul 1. **Tiree:** 3 Gott Bay, Jun 2.

Most autumn records were from Kintyre and Islay. **Kintyre:** 47 (304 hr) past Machrihanish SBO, Aug and Sep, of which 89% were ads, divided approximately equally between light and dark morphs. **Islay:** 27 (82 hr) past Frenchman's Rocks, Aug - Oct. **Colonsay:** 3 Balnahard, Aug 28. There were 3 other Aug records of singles, from Islay (2) and Mid-Argyll (1). Last 1 >S Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), Oct 2.

A very striking partially albinistic juv (all dark with sharply demarcated white belly and pure white leading edges to innerwings) flew >S past Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), Aug 14.

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LONG-TAILED SKUA *Stercorarius longicaudus* Fasgadair stiuirich 0568
P Rare.

1992

Kintyre: 1 ad >S Machrihanish SBO during a NW gale, May 8.

GREAT SKUA *Stercorarius skua* Fasgadair mor 0569
S P Uncommon passage migrant and summer visitor. Bred unsuccessfully on Coll in 1989.

1993

First 1 Kennacraig - Islay crossing (Kintyre), Apr 8, then 1 Firth of Lorne (Mid-Argyll), Apr 15.

There were further spring or summer records from 4 areas, all islands. Islay: 1 attacked by male Hen Harrier, Loch Gruinart, Jun 1; 7 (85 hr) past Frenchman's Rocks, May - Jul. Colonsay: 1 Ardskenish, May 30. Mull: 1 Glas Eileanan, Sound of Mull, Jul 15. Coll: 1 Arinagour, Jul 25.

Most autumn records were from Kintyre and Islay. Kintyre: 7 >S (304 hr) Machrihanish SBO, Aug and Sep. Islay: 19 (82 hr) past Frenchman's Rocks, Aug - Oct; 5 at sea S of Islay, Sep 5. Mid-Argyll: 1 Oban - Coll/Tiree crossing, Aug 13. Last 2 Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), Oct 6.

LITTLE GULL *Larus minutus* Crann fhaoileag 0578
P Scarce.

1993#

A single first-summer Traigh nam Barc (Colonsay), Jun 12, was the only record. With none seen in 1992 but several records in previous years, this species seems abruptly to have become scarcer in Argyll.

SABINE'S GULL *Larus sabini* 0579
V Irregular.

1993#

The only record was of 1 juv at sea S of Islay, Sep 4 (photographed).

1992

Kintyre: 1 juv >S Machrihanish SBO, Sep 22. The record of 1 ad and 1 imm Kilbrannan Sound, Sep 9 (*Argyll Bird Report* 9: 35), was in fact on Sep 19. The immature was closer to Arran than to Kintyre and, as such, the record was published in the 1992 *Arran Bird Report*.

1991

Islay: 1 first-summer Kintra, Jul 27 (photographed).

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus* Faoileag a'chinn duibh 0582
B W P Common except outer islands. Breeding mostly coastal, usually on small islands. Breeding recorded in 16% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Highest spring counts were from Islay, with max 127 Loch Gruinart, Mar 31, and max 120 Loch Indaal, Apr 15.

Breeding. Kintyre/Mid-Argyll/N Argyll: in the SAMS study area, there were 6 known colonies (5 of these were covered in 1992). They varied in size from 10 to

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161 prs (active nests), held a total of 413 prs, and fledged 20-40 chicks (0.05-0.10 chicks/pr). Mink were preying on eggs and chicks at 5 of the 6 colonies, and no chicks fledged at 4 (probably all 5) of these colonies. A total of 20-30 chicks fledged at the only colony (39 prs) where mink predation was not noted.

A few breeding records were received from other locations. **Islay:** minimum 50 nests Loch Gruinart, low success. **Colonsay:** 10 prs Ardskenish, Jun 12. **Mid-Argyll:** 6 prs Linne Mhuirich failed, probably due to mink. **Tiree:** 22 nests Soa, May 9. Counts during the second half of the year were generally higher than in the spring. **Kintyre:** 168 >S Machrihanish SBO, Sep 11. **Islay:** max 123 Loch Indaal, Jul 24; max 210 Loch Gruinart, Aug 24. **Cowal:** 250 Lochhead, Loch Striven, Dec 5. **Mid-Argyll:** max 286 Loch Crinan, Sep 18.

COMMON GULL *Larus canus* Faoileag

0590

B W P Widespread and common breeding species. Colonies both coastal, where mostly on small islands, and by inland waters. Breeding recorded in 45% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

During Jan - Apr, only 2 areas produced counts exceeding 100. **Islay:** max 480 Loch Gruinart, Jan 30; max 336 Loch Indaal, Apr 15. **Mid-Argyll:** max 200 Loch Crinan, Mar 8.

Breeding. **Kintyre/Mid-Argyll/N Argyll:** in the SAMS study area, there were 22 known colonies with 1,001-1,018 prs (active nests). Eleven colonies (9-287 prs in size), with 739 prs, were monitored; 9 of these were covered in 1992. They fledged 85-146 chicks (0.08-0.15 chicks/pr). At least 5 and almost certainly 9 of the 11 colonies reared no chicks; mink were definitely preying on eggs and chicks at 8 (probably at all 9) of these colonies. Two mink, which had killed many chicks, were killed mid-season at the largest colony of 287 prs, which then fledged 70-100 chicks. Several other records of small colonies were received. **Colonsay:** 20 prs Port Mor with minimum 13 young, Jul; 7 prs Ardskenish, Jun 12. **Mid-Argyll:** 6 prs Linne Mhuirich failed, probably due to mink; 6 nests (12 eggs, 1 chick) Achnamara, Jun 7; 12 nests Easdale Is, Jul 1. **Tiree:** ca 30 prs Loch na Gile, Apr 23; 12 nests Rubha Chraiginis, May 8; 5 nests Soa, May 9.

Highest counts during the second half of the year came from **Kintyre** and **Islay**. **Kintyre:** 760 Machrihanish Bay, Sep 21; 560 >S Machrihanish SBO, Dec 3. **Islay:** max 210 Loch Indaal, Jul 24; max 200 Loch Gruinart, Sep 24; 400 Machir Bay, Oct 8.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus* Faoileag bheag

0591

S P Common breeding species, generally present Mar - Sep. Breeds coastally, almost always on small islands in association with Herring Gull. Breeding recorded in 20% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Occasional winter records.

1993

A single Loch Gruinart (**Islay**), Jan 15, and 1 Loch Creran (**N Argyll**), Jan 16, were the only Jan records. There were further records from Loch Gruinart (up to 4 birds) and also from Taynuilt (**Mid-Argyll**) (up to 2 birds) in Feb, but the main arrival was in mid-Mar. **Kintyre:** 3 Machrihanish SBO, Mar 10. **Colonsay:** 2 on Mar 17. **Cowal:** 1 Blairmore, Mar 23.

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Breeding. Tíree: colony 50 prs Loch na Gile, Apr 23; 2 large colonies Soa, May 9; ca 20 nests Soa, Jul 19. No other records.

In autumn, 157 flew >S (395 hr) past Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Aug - Oct, of which 63% were juvs; last 6 >S, Oct 2. Two other areas reported last records in Oct: 2 Blairmore (Cowal), Oct 12; 1 Bowmore (Islay), Oct 29. There were no records during Nov and Dec. Two single birds showing characters of *L f intermedius/fuscus* were reported, 1 on the Oban - Craignure crossing (Mid-Argyll), May 7, and 1 at Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), Oct 14.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus* Faoileag an sgadain 0592

B W P Widespread and abundant breeding species. Breeds coastally, almost always on small islands. Breeding recorded in 33% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Some evidence for immigration into Argyll in winter; colour-ringing studies have shown that these birds are probably from the Clyde and NE England.

1993

Breeding. Tíree: ca 40 prs Loch na Gile, Apr 23; 2 colonies of 18 and 30 nests Ben Hough Pt, May 8; 2 large colonies Soa, May 9; 8 nests Loch Stanail, May 16; 12 nests nr Loch a'Chapuill, May 30.

In the second winter period, 650 were counted flying >S past Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Nov 9. No other count exceeded 500 birds.

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucoïdes* Faoileag liath 0598

W Scarce.

1993

About 20 were reported during Jan - Jun. Islay: probably at least 4 (and perhaps as many as 8) present, Jan 29 - Apr 5. Mid-Argyll: 3 Oban late Jan - early Feb; at least 7 separate birds Moleigh dump, nr Oban, Feb - May, max 5 together Feb 22, 1 second-year bird still present Jun 5. Mull: 1 dead Loch Buie, Feb 7. Coll: 1 ad and 1 first-winter on Feb 2.

The only record during the second half of the year was 1 first-winter Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Dec 3-5.

GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus* Faoileag mhor 0599

W Scarce but in general more frequently recorded than Iceland Gull.

1993

There were no Jan records, but an influx apparently occurred in Feb. Islay: about 6 reported, Feb 6 - Mar 20, mostly at Loch Indaal. Mid-Argyll: 1 second-winter Loch Melfort, Feb 5; 3 Oban area, Feb. Coll: 1 first-winter freshly dead Breachacha, Feb 1; 1 first-winter Cornaigbeg, Mar 7. The last spring record was 1 first-winter >S Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Apr 6.

The first returning bird was 1 ad >S Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), Oct 2. The only other records were from Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), with 1 ad >S, Nov 19, and 1 third-winter >S, Dec 1, and from Loch Gruinart (Islay), with 1 second-winter on Dec 30.

A Glaucous x Herring Gull hybrid was reported from Craignure (Mull), Jun 18.

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GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus* Farspag 0600
 B W Common and widespread. Breeds coastally, usually on small islands, often as single prs, usually associated with Herring Gull. Breeding recorded in 22% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Breeding. Tiree: ca 10 nests Loch na Gile, Apr 23.

No other significant records.

KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla* Ruideag 0602
 B P Strictly marine, breeding on cliffs. Main colonies are on Islay, Colonsay, Tiree and Treshnish Is (Mull).

1993

Breeding. Colonsay: 16 nests, av b/1.125 Port Ban, Jul 6. Tiree: 338 and 555 AON Ceann a'Mhara, Jun 12 and Jul 18.

Movement past Frenchman's Rocks (Islay) increased through the summer to a peak in Oct (first Table below); the proportion of juv/first-winter birds was highest in Sep (second Table below). In autumn, movement past Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre) peaked in late Aug, then consisting mainly of juvs (Tables).

A bird ringed as a chick at Port Mor (Colonsay), Jun 28 1990, was found shot dead 2,656 km away, in SW Greenland, on Sep 19 1993.

Average numbers of Kittiwakes moving >S per hour past Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre) and Frenchman's Rocks (Islay) in 1993

	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Machrihanish SBO	-	-	-	50	35	26	27	37
Frenchman's Rocks	63	56	96	96	116	295	-	109

Percentages of juv/first-winter birds in aged samples passing Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre) and Frenchman's Rocks (Islay) in 1993

	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Machrihanish SBO	96	34	15	11	12
Frenchman's Rocks	17	65	31	-	17

SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis* Stearnag mhor 0611
 B P Very rare and irregular breeding species. Uncommon passage migrant.
 1993

First 3 >S Machrihanish SBO(Kintyre), Apr 6, were early. Birds were reported in spring from Kintyre, Gigha, Islay, Cowal, Mid-Argyll, and Tiree. The highest count was 10 Tiree, Jun 4. Last spring record 3 Loch Gorm (Islay), Jun 9.

The first record for the second half of the year was 1 >S Port Mor (Colonsay), Jul 9, with passage then continuing to mid-Sep. Kintyre: 32 >S Machrihanish SBO, Jul - Sep. Islay: 2 Loch Indaal, Aug 24. Cowal: up to 6 Kames and up to 2 Blairmore,

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Aug. Last 4 >S Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Sep 15. There were no autumn records from any other areas.

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo* Steamag 0615
S P Locally common breeding species, considerably more numerous than Arctic Tern, at least on small islands close to the mainland. Breeding recorded in 14% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

First 1 Salum (Tiree), Apr 29. There were no records from other areas until mid-May, with 1 Scalasaig (Colonsay), May 12, then 1 >N Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), May 16.

Breeding. Kintyre/Mid-Argyll/N Argyll: in the SAMS study area, 13 colonies, 2 to 538 prs in size, held 928 prs. Twelve colonies with 921 prs were monitored (10 of these were covered in 1992), and fledged 393-524 chicks (0.43-0.57 chicks/pr). Most of these (350-450) fledged at the 538 pr colony, where 2 mink were killed in Jul after about a quarter of all chicks there had been killed by mink. No chicks fledged at 7 of the colonies; mink were definitely preying on terns at 6 of these.

A few other counts of nesting birds in small colonies were received. Kintyre: 20-25 prs Machrihanish Bay, Jun, 10 flying young on Aug 8. Islay: 5 prs Gartnatra, Jun 10. Mid-Argyll: 1-2 prs Linne Mhuirich, May 25, had failed Jun 22. Tiree: 4 prs at 1 colony. Other breeding season counts were not referable to numbers of nesting prs.

In Aug, 1,040 flew >S (159 hr) past Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Aug, mostly Aug 2-8, max 370 on Aug 8. Also, 30 were seen on the Oban - Coll crossing, Aug 13. Sep records came from Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), with 12 >S on Sep 1-8, and Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), with single juvs >S, Sep 4 and 17.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea* Steamal 0616
S P Locally numerous breeding species. Breeding recorded in 25% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Confusion with the last species has tended to lead to over-recording of Arctic Tern and under-recording of Common Tern (rather than vice versa) at colonies.

1993

There was a widespread arrival on May 7-9. Islay: 3 >N Frenchman's Rocks, May 8. Colonsay: 24 Oronsay, May 8. Mull: 4 >N Sound of Iona, May 9. Tiree: 7 An Fhaodhail, May 7.

Breeding. Kintyre/Mid-Argyll/N Argyll: in the SAMS study area, 13 colonies, 1 to 167 prs in size, held 295-299 prs. Eight colonies, with 287-291 prs, were monitored (6 of these were covered in 1992). They fledged a total of only 28-30 chicks (0.1 chicks/pr). No chicks fledged at 5 colonies, including the largest; mink were definitely preying on terns at all 5 colonies. Significant numbers fledged only at 2 colonies where mink were controlled; here, 26-28 chicks fledged from 38-40 prs. The 167 pr colony (Fladda, Sound of Luing, Mid Argyll) is the largest recorded in the study area since this study began in 1984.

Other breeding records were received from Kintyre, Islay, Colonsay and Tiree. Kintyre: 6 prs Machrihanish Bay, Jun, 3 flying young on Aug 8. Islay: ca 20 prs Loch Gruinart; 26 incubating Traigh an Luig, Jun 29. Colonsay: 35 prs Rubh' Aird

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Alanais, Jul; 15 prs Port Mor, Jul; 10 prs Balnahard, Jul. **Tiree:** ca 270-300 prs at 16 colonies [RSPB]. Several other breeding season counts were received, but are not referable to numbers of nesting prs.

In autumn, a total of 269 flew >S (159 hr) past Machrihanish SBO (**Kintyre**), Aug, mostly Aug 2-8, max 94 on Aug 3. Last 2 >S Machrihanish SBO (**Kintyre**) and 1 >S Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), Aug 28.

LITTLE TERN *Sterna albifrons* Stearnag bheag 0624
S P Scarce breeding species confined to Islay, Tiree and Coll. Scarce elsewhere on migration.

1993

First 1 Balephetrish Bay (Tiree), Apr 23, then 2 Ardnave (Islay), Apr 26.

Breeding. **Islay:** 11 prs nested at 3 colonies. **Tiree:** a minimum of 44-48 prs nested at 6 colonies [RSPB]. **Coll:** 19 prs nested at 2 colonies; 1 colony of 12 prs failed to fledge any young.

The only record of an autumn migrant was 1 >S Machrihanish SBO (**Kintyre**), Jul 26.

1992

Spring. **Kintyre:** 1 >S Machrihanish SBO, May 1, 2 >N on May 14.

Autumn. **Kintyre:** 10 >S Machrihanish SBO, July 27, 1 >N on Aug 1, 1 >S on Aug 22, 1 >S on Sep 8.

BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger* Stearnal dhubh 0627
P Scarce and irregular.

1992

Kintyre: 6 >S Machrihanish SBO, Sep 12. This is the first record for Kintyre and occurred on the same day as the first Arran record of this species, with other records in Ayrshire and elsewhere. This influx into Scotland took place a few days after record numbers were seen in southern England.

GUILLEMOT *Uria aalge* Eun dubh an sgadain 0634
B W Highly colonial, locally abundant breeding species. Adults with small young appear on sea far from colonies in late summer; regularly seen in sealochs in winter.

1993

Breeding. **Tiree:** 592 ashore Ceann a'Mhara, Jun 12 (724 in Jun 1992), 280 ashore on Jul 18.

Movements of auks (Guillemot/Razorbill) past Frenchman's Rocks (**Islay**) reached a summer peak in Jun (see Table below); of those identified during May - Jul, 54% were Guillemots. Hourly rates then declined to a minimum during the moult period in Aug, with a second peak in Oct (Table); of birds identified during Aug - Dec, 80% were Guillemots. Movement past Machrihanish SBO (**Kintyre**) showed a similar Oct peak, but with much lower hourly rates; at this site, only 42% of birds identified were Guillemots (Table).

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Average numbers of Guillemots and Razorbills (including birds not specifically identified) moving >S per hour past Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre) and Frenchman's Rocks (Islay) in 1993

	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Machrihanish SBO	-	-	-	<1	8	25	8	11
Frenchman's Rocks	349	610	335	30	274	415	-	283

RAZORBILL *Alca torda* Falc 0636

B W Locally common breeding species, although less numerous and with smaller colonies than Guillemot. Regularly seen in sealochs in winter.

1993

Breeding. Tíree: 237 ashore Ceann a'Mhara, Jun 12 (at least 340 Jun 1992), 204 ashore on Jul 18. See text and Tables under Guillemot (above) for movements May - Dec.

BLACK GUILLEMOT *Cephus grylle* Gearra-breac 0638

B W Common breeding species on rocky coasts. Breeding recorded in 38% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

The highest count during Jan - Apr was 40 Kintra (Islay), Mar 6.

Breeding. Kintyre/Mid-Argyll/N Argyll: a limited survey in the SAMS study area showed that several former breeding sites are now abandoned (Mid-Argyll: Eilean Inshaig, Loch Craignish; Belnahua, Sound of Luing. N Argyll: Creagan, Loch Creran) or reduced from several dozen prs to 1 or 2 (Mid-Argyll: Creag Is, Loch Linnhe). A possible explanation is provided by the observation that at Eilean Fada, Loch Caolisport (Mid-Argyll) in 1993, 8 ads were found killed and eaten in a mink den, May 30 - Jul 10, apparently while trying to breed sequentially in a traditional single nest hole. At least 1 chick is also known to have been eaten by mink, Glas Eileanan, Sound of Mull (Mull), mid-Jul.

Movement past Frenchman's Rocks (Islay) peaked in Jul, with 41 >N and 8 >S (2 hr), Jul 20; these were presumably local breeders. At Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), the highest day-count was 46 >N, Oct 4.

LITTLE AUK *Alle alle* Colcach bheag 0647

W Irregular, usually seen after severe gales.

1993

Most Jan and Feb reports concerned dead birds, found during and after a prolonged period of strong winds in Jan. Islay: 1 dead Loch Indaal, Jan 29, another on Feb 7. Colonsay: 1 found exhausted Lower Kilchattan, Jan 4; 1 dead Oronsay, Jan 25. Mid-Argyll: 3 Oban Bay, Jan 13; 1 dead Dunollie, Oban, Jan 16. Mull: 1 dead Lochbuie, Feb 7; 1 dead Calgary and 1 dead Gruline, Feb 27. Lismore: 1 dead, Jan 19.

There was a good series of records in Nov and Dec. Kintyre: 2 >S Machrihanish SBO Nov 30, 8 >S on Dec 1, 1 >S on Dec 9, 1 >S on Dec 21; 2 Kennacraig - Islay crossing, Dec 3. Islay: following 1 >S Frenchman's Rocks on Dec 2, a further 71

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(mostly flying >S) were seen to Dec 31, with an exceptionally high total of 41 on Dec 12. Tíree: 1 found exhausted Scarinish, Dec 9.

1992

Kintyre: 2 >N Machrihanish SBO Oct 20, 1 >S on Oct 23.

PUFFIN *Fratercula arctica* Buthaid 0654

B P Very localised breeding species with main colonies on Sanda and Treshnish Is. Small but persistent colony at Carraig an Daimh, Sound of Jura.

1993

There were 3 records during Jan - Mar. Colonsay: 1 dead Tobar Fuar, Jan 27. Islay: 2 Sound of Islay, Mar 5; 1 >S Frenchman's Rocks, Mar 7. Several records of singles and prs followed in Apr and May.

Breeding. Kintyre: 100 in raft off Sheep Is, Jul. Indications of possible breeding were provided by other records involving small numbers. Islay: 1 on sea Ton Mhor, Jun 12. Jura: 8 circling at Eilean Mor, summer. Tíree: 4 on sea Ceann a'Mhara, Jun 12 and Jul 18.

Other summer counts included: max 20 Oban - Coll/Tíree crossing, Jun 4; 4 Oban - Colonsay crossing, Jun 11; 10 Treshnish Pt (Mull), Jun 17. Movements during summer were recorded at Port Mor (Colonsay), reaching 8/hr in early Jul, and at Frenchman's Rocks (Islay), peaking in Jun (see Table below). Movement at the latter site continued to Sep; during the same period, a total of 5 flew >N past Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Aug 13 - Sep 4.

A late single was at Loch Indaal (Islay), Dec 15.

Average numbers of Puffins moving per hour past Frenchman's Rocks (Islay)
in 1993 (includes birds flying >N)

May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0.1	9.2	4.7	0.7	0.3	0	-	0

ROCK DOVE *Columba livia* Calman creige 0665

R Resident breeder except Cowal, most numerous in the islands. Breeding recorded in 33% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Large flocks often gather on arable fields outwith breeding season.

1993

The highest counts were 200 Tíree, Jun 4, and 100 Kiloran (Colonsay), Nov 22. No other significant records.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas* Calman gorm 0668

R First confirmed breeding for Mid-Argyll in 1993. Scarce and irregular, Kintyre and Cowal. Possibly under-recorded, and all records required.

1993#

Breeding. Following a report of at least 2 (and possibly 4) at Kilmartin (Mid-Argyll), Apr 16, a pr bred nearby in a nestbox nr Ford. This appears to be the first confirmed breeding record for Mid-Argyll.

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WOODPIGEON *Columba palumbus* Calman fiadhaich 0670

B W Common resident breeding species except on some islands, eg Mull, where more numerous in winter. Breeding recorded in 48% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

A single was present on Tiree, Jun 4, where the species is not known to breed. No other significant records.

• **COLLARED DOVE** *Streptopelia decaocto* Calman a chrios 0684

B P Sparse but widespread distribution throughout Argyll. Evidence of continued immigration involving small numbers of birds each spring. Breeding recorded in 23% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

A count of 20 Port Ellen (Islay), Mar 6, was the highest reported during the early part of the year. Migrants were noted on Tiree, with up to 4 birds present, Apr 29 - Jun 9, and at Portnahaven (Islay), with up to 4, May 6 - Jun 4, but absent subsequently. A count of 13 Iona (Mull), Jun 15, may also refer to migrants rather than breeders. Breeding. Mid-Argyll: reportedly a good year in Lochgilphead area. No other significant records.

The highest autumn count was 58 nr Drumlemble (Kintyre), Oct 21. All other counts were considerably lower. Islay: max 18 Loch Gruinart, Sep 24. Mid-Argyll: 20 Lochgilphead, Oct 1.

TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur* Calman tuchan 0687

P Scarce. Majority recorded May - Jun. All records required.

1993#

A single Port Wemyss (Islay), Apr 21, was unusually early. There were 2 further records: 1 Tobar Fuar (Colonsay), Jun 24; 1 Balephetrish Hill (Tiree), Sep 4.

CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus* Cuthag 0724

S P Common. Main host species is Meadow Pipit. Breeding recorded in 41% of 10km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

First 1 nr Lagg (Jura), Apr 16. Birds were more widespread from Apr 21-22, with 1 Kinlochspelve (Mull), Apr 21, then 1 Kilchattan (Colonsay) and 1 nr Loch Leathan (Mid-Argyll), Apr 22. Also in Apr, birds reached Islay (2 Ardilistry Bay, Apr 27) and Tiree (1 Hynish, Apr 27).

Breeding. A single juv at Balemartine (Tiree), Jun 11, suggests that breeding occurred on the island, where the species was not recorded during fieldwork for the BTO Atlas, 1988-91.

BARN OWL *Tyto alba* Comhachag 0735

B W Scarce breeding species, but probably under-recorded. Nests in both natural sites and buildings. Breeding recorded in 11% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Collision with vehicles appears to be a major cause of mortality. All records required.

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1993

Apart from information generated from nest box schemes, the majority of records were for Jan - Mar and Sep - Dec. Most came from **Mid-Argyll**, but birds were also reported from **N Argyll** and the areas below.

Breeding. Kintyre: nest box scheme in S Kintyre attracted 7 prs [Forest Enterprise]. **Islay:** a total of 9 prs bred, but 2 clutches and 1 brood failed; 18 young were reared to fledging [MA Ogilvie]. **Cowal:** approximately 15 nesting sites [S Petty, D Anderson]. **Mid-Argyll:** pr nested nr Ford.

TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco* Comhachag dhonn **0761**

R Widespread and common in suitable broadleaved or coniferous woodland. Absent from Coll and Tiree. Breeding recorded in 43% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Birds were heard at ca 14 locations in the Oban area (**Mid-Argyll**), Jan - Mar. During the year, this species was also reported from several locations in **Islay**, **Cowal**, **Mid-Argyll**, and **Mull**, but there was only 1 confirmed breeding record, at Calgary (**Mull**).

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus* Comhachag adharcaiche **0767**

R P W Very scarce, but almost certainly under-recorded. All records required.

1993#

The only record was of 1 nr Kilchrenan (**Mid-Argyll**), Oct 18.

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus* Comhachag chluassach **0768**

B W P Widespread in suitable habitat. Numbers fluctuate and distribution varies with abundance of small rodents, especially field voles, *Microtus agrestis*. Some emigration in autumn. Breeding recorded in 30% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Relatively few records were received. During Jan - Mar, birds were reported only from **Mid-Argyll** and **Mull**. **Mid-Argyll:** 1 Moine Mhor, Feb 26. **Mull:** singles Uluvailt, Glen Cannel and Scoor, Jan - Feb.

Breeding season records came from several sites in **Islay**, **Mid-Argyll** and **Mull**, but with only 1 confirmed instance of breeding (**Mull**).

Only 2 records were received for the second winter period. **Kintyre:** 1 Machrihanish airfield, Sep 9-12. **Islay:** 1 Portnahaven, Nov 17.

NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus europaeus* Sgraiacheag oidche **0778**

S P Very scarce. Confirmed records of calling birds only in Cowal and Kintyre in recent years.

1993

Breeding. Churring birds were reported from 2 areas of **Cowal**, with 2 birds heard at each site. This brings to 5 the number of known sites for Nightjars in Argyll in recent years.

SWIFT *Apus apus* Gobhlan mor **0795**

S P Localised breeding species, mainland only. Late spring visitor to most islands. Natural nest sites have been used in Kintyre. Breeding recorded in 4% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

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1993

First 1 Connel (Mid-Argyll), May 6.

Breeding was not reported, but a total of 29 records were received from all over the region, most (17) being in Jun. The majority of records concerned 1 or 2 individuals, highest counts being 27 Machrihanish (Kintyre), Jun 11, and 30 Connel (Mid-Argyll), Aug 11.

Last 1 >N Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Sep 12.

ALPINE SWIFT *Apus melba* Gobhlan monaidh

0798

V First or second occurrence.

1993#

A single was observed for 20 min at Largybaan (SW Kintyre), Apr 14 [M Campbell, D Garratt et al] (accepted BBRC). This appears to be the first record for the present-day Argyll recording area, a previous record (in July 1968) being from Ardnamurchan.

KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis* Biorra cruidein

0831

V Most records are in autumn and winter, and probably represent dispersing juveniles.

1993#

A total of 7 records were received. During the early part of the year, 1 was at Lochgilphead (Mid-Argyll), Jan 13, and 1 at the head of Loch Riddon (Cowal), Apr 22.

Most autumn records were from Mid-Argyll: 1 Loch Gilp, Sep 12; 1 Kilmartin for several weeks, Oct; 1 Connel, Oct 23. Elsewhere, singles were at Ardilistry (Islay), Sep 22, and Holy Loch (Cowal), Oct 17.

ROLLER *Coracias garrulus* Cuairsgean

0841

V

1992

Tiree: 1 Gott Bay, May 20 [J E R Allen, D Lewis] (accepted BBRC). This is the fifth Argyll record; the last was 1 on Islay in Sep and Oct 1983. The Tiree bird was apparently present for an extended period but no definite sightings other than the above have been reported.

HOOPOE *Upupa epops* Calman cathaidh

0846

V Rare migrant, mostly in spring.

1993#

A single at Glenfyne Lodge (Mid-Argyll), May 28, was the only confirmed record.

GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis* Snagardach

0856

? Status uncertain, but appears to occur only irregularly. All records required.

1993#

A single at Glendaruel (Cowal), Oct 17, was 15 km or so from the previous year's bird at Glenbranter.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major* Snagan daraich

0876

B W Widespread in suitable deciduous and coniferous woodland. Breeding recorded in 31% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

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1993

In accordance with the known distribution, records were received from Cowal (1), Mid-Argyll (20), Mull (3), and N Argyll (1).

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis* Uiseag

0976

B W P Widespread and common breeding species. Emigration of many birds in winter, with remaining birds mainly distributed in coastal and low-lying localities. Breeding recorded in 79% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

The only count received was 50 Rubha na Faing (Islay), Oct 16. No other significant records.

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia* Gobhlan gainmhiche

0981

S P Uncommon and localised breeding species. All breeding records required. Breeding recorded in 24% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

First 1 Loch Skerrols (Islay), Mar 16, is the earliest record for at least 10 years. Elsewhere, birds were not recorded until Apr or May. Mid-Argyll: 3 Ford, Apr 17. Mull: 6 Loch ra Cuilce, May 4. Three at Kiloran Bay (Colonsay), May 20, were migrants.

Breeding. At colonies monitored in both 1992 and 1993, the total number of occupied holes appeared to be similar. A decrease in Mid-Argyll was offset by an apparent increase on Islay, although the colony at the mouth of the Laggan River (Islay) is scattered and the 11 occ holes recorded in 1992 may not have represented a complete count. Islay: 40 occ holes Laggan mouth; 8 occ holes Laggan Bridge; 2 prs Kilchiaran, Apr 26. Cowal: 17 occ holes Stronchullin Farm. Mid-Argyll: 4 occ holes Ardoran, Loch Feochan; 35 occ holes Kilmartin quarry; 2 occ holes Kilmartin school; 24 occ holes Kilmichael Glen. Breeding season records, without colony counts, were received from Mull: max 12 River Forsa, May 8; 20 Glen Aros, Jun 14. Last 3 Rubha na Faing (Islay), Aug 19.

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica* Gobhlan gaoithe

0992

S P Widespread and common. Breeding recorded in 76% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

First 1 Sound of Gigha (Kintyre), Apr 4, then 4 Loch Loskin (Cowal), Apr 5. Birds had arrived in most areas by mid-Apr. Gigha: 4 on Apr 9. Islay: 1 Loch Gruinart, Apr 12. Colonsay: 2 Loch Fada, Apr 11. Mid-Argyll: 1 Kilbride, Apr 12. Tiree: 1 Loch an Eilean, Apr 13.

The highest count received was 50 Bellanoch (Mid-Argyll), Aug 14. A few were still present in Islay and Mid-Argyll, Oct, with the last 1 Coultorsay (Islay), Nov 5.

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbica* Gobhlan taighe

1001

S P Common breeding species on mainland where suitable sites exist; less numerous on the islands and no recent breeding records from Colonsay, Coll and Tiree. Breeding recorded in 48% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

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1993

First 1 Loch Gruinart (Islay), Apr 14, then 2 Oban (Mid-Argyll), Apr 21.
Two at Hynish (Tiree), Jun 9, were outside the known breeding range in recent years (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). No other significant records.

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis* Riabhag 1009

S P Common breeding species in open deciduous woodland and conifer restock sites. Very scarce Islay. Breeding recorded in 54% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Few records were received. First 1 Ardnadrochit (Mull), Apr 21, then 1 Taynish NNR (Mid-Argyll), Apr 23, and 1 Ardilistry Bay (Islay), Apr 27.
Breeding. Mid-Argyll: 9 singing MM Taynish NNR, May 12.
Last 1 >S Lochgilphead (Mid-Argyll), Sep 4.

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis* Snathag 1011

B W P Abundant breeding species. Breeding recorded in 94% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Emigration of many birds in winter, with remaining birds mainly distributed in coastal and low-lying localities.

1993

The highest count was 300 Tiree, Aug 13. No other significant records.

ROCK PIPIT *Anthus spinoletta* Gabhagan 1014/2

R P W Common resident breeding species around coast. Breeding recorded in 67% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Scarce passage and winter visitor elsewhere.

1993

The highest count was 70 Proaig (Islay), Nov 3. No other significant records.

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava* Breacan buidhe 1017

P Rare.

1993#

There were 2 Aug records, both from Islay: 2 Ardnave Loch, Aug 10; 1 F Bruichladdich, Aug 24-25.

1992

Kintyre: singles >S Machrihanish SBO, Sep 1 and 16.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea* Breacan bain tighearna 1019

B W P Widespread breeding species. Breeding recorded in 61% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Some emigration in winter.

1993

Breeding. Islay: at least 3 prs bred, Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve. Colonsay: pr Colonsay House gardens reared 2 broods. Mull: M already feeding young, Torosay Castle, May 10. No other significant records.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba yarrellii* Breach an t-sil 1020

B W P Widespread and common breeder. Breeding recorded in 87% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Emigration from most areas in winter. Returning birds generally arrive late Feb - early Mar; departure Aug - Oct.

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1993

The highest spring count was 37 Bridgend (Islay), Mar 5.

Breeding. No significant records.

In autumn, 70 were on Tiree, Aug 13. No other high counts were received.

WHITE WAGTAIL *M a alba*

P Usually spring passage.

1993

First 1 Ardtun (Mull), Apr 20. Spring records were received from Islay and Mull only. Islay: 34 between Apr 24 and May 18, max 14 Rubha na Faing, May 3. Mull: 5 between Apr 20 and May 9, max 3 Iona, Apr 30.

In autumn, small nos. were seen almost daily at Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre) during Aug and Sep, with a max of 8 on Sep 2. Elsewhere, the only record was 1 Knockrome (Jura), Aug 30.

WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus* Canarach dearg

1048

W Irruptive visitor in varying numbers.

1993#

1 North Connel (N Argyll), early Dec, was the only record.

DIPPER *Cinclus cinclus* Gobha uisge

1050

B W Widespread, although scarce on Islay and Colonsay; absent Coll and Tiree. Breeding recorded in 34% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

No significant records.

WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes* Dreathann donn

1066

B W Very common, although numbers fluctuate. Breeding recorded in 84% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

No significant records.

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis* Gealbhonn nam preas

1084

B W P Widespread and common, except some islands. Breeding recorded in 55% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

No significant records.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula* Bru dhearg

1099

B P Common. Breeding recorded in 79% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Large autumn passage in some years.

1993

No significant records.

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochrurus* Ceann dubhan

1121

W P Rare and irregular.

1993#

A single at Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Nov 11, was the only record and the first in Argyll since May 1991.

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REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* Ceann dearg 1122
S P Common breeding species in relatively open woodland, except Islay where scarce. In Argyll occurs more frequently in oak than in birch, but also recorded in conifers. Breeding recorded in 37% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993#

Few records were received. First 1 Loch Gruinart (Islay) and 1 Tainish NNR (Mid-Argyll), Apr 24, then 1 Lochdon (Mull), Apr 28, and 3 Loch Nell (Mid-Argyll), Apr 29. All other records were during May and Jun, but there were no reports of definite breeding. Jura: 1 Ardlussa, May 6. Cowal: 1 Loch Eck, May 2. Mid-Argyll: 7 Tainish NNR, May 14. Mull: pr Ardnadrochit, Jun 26.

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra* Gocan 1137
S P Widespread and common breeding species. Breeding recorded in 74% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

First 2 Cologin, Oban (Mid-Argyll), Apr 24, then 1 Loch Gruinart (Islay) and 1 Loch Spelve (Mull), Apr 25. The only other area with an Apr record was Colonsay: 1 Milbuie, Apr 28.

Breeding. No significant records.

Last 1 Loch Gruinart (Islay), Sep 26.

STONECHAT *Saxicola torquata* Clacharan 1139
R P W Widespread, but resident population can decline dramatically as a consequence of severe winter conditions. Breeding recorded in 70% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Some emigration may take place in winter.

1993

No significant records.

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe* Bru gheal 1146
S P Common breeding species in open grassland areas. Breeding recorded in 83% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

First 1 Ardnave Pt (Islay), Mar 14. Birds were present in several areas by late Mar. Colonsay: 1 Oronsay, Mar 24. Cowal: 2 Kilbride Bay, Mar 26. Mid-Argyll: 1 Gallanach, Oban, Mar 25. Mull: 1 Gribun, Mar 23.

Breeding. No significant records.

Last records in most areas were from mid- to late Sep. Kintyre: 1 Campbeltown, Sep 15. Mull: 1 Kilfinichen Bay, Sep 12. Tiree: 1 Kenovay, Sep 27. A late single was at Loch Gruinart (Islay), Oct 20.

BLUE ROCK THRUSH *Monticola solitarius* 1166
V First occurrence in 1985.

1985

Argyll: 1 first-summer M Skerryvore Lighthouse (ca 15 km SW of Tiree), Jun 4-7, found dead Jun 8 [A McConnell]; specimen now at BTO, Tring.

Following a review by the BOU Records Committee, this species has been added to Category A of the British list. The above record, previously published as referring to

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a possible escape (*British Birds* 79: 585), now becomes the first British record. Earlier records have been retained in Category D1 due to the possibility of escape at a time when the species was commoner in captivity. Blue Rock Thrush is a partial migrant, occurring in southern Europe, N Africa and the Middle East as well as further afield. The race of the Skerryvore bird has not been determined, although it 'seemed closest to specimens from the Middle East' (*Ibis* 135: 221).

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus* Dubh chreige 1186

S P Very localised upland breeding species. Breeding recorded in 7% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). All records required.

1993#

Few records were received. First 1 Ben More (Mull), Apr 28. A migrant was reported at Beinn Hough (Tiree), May 8. The only other breeding season records were 1 Loch Airdeglaise (Mull), May 25, and 1 Beinn a'Ghraig (Mull), Jun 13. An autumn migrant was at Rubh' Aird Alanais (Colonsay), Nov 3.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula* Lon dubh 1187

B W P Widespread and very common breeding species. Breeding recorded in 77% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Arrival of autumn migrants was reported from Islay, with 25 Portnahaven, Oct 24, and 50 Laggan Bridge, Nov 2. No other significant records.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris* Liath thruig 1198

W P Abundant autumn passage bird, but relatively few winter.

1993

Flocks of up to 80 were reported during Jan - Mar. Islay: 60 Kilchoman, Jan 1; up to 80 Loch Gruinart, Feb. Cowal: 30 Kilbride Bay, Mar 26. Last records for most areas were in mid-Apr. Islay: 1 Loch Gruinart, Apr 19. Mid-Argyll: 1 Loch Nell, Apr 20. Tiree: 1 Scarinish, Apr 15. A late bird was at East Loch Fada (Colonsay), May 10. The first returning birds were 300 >E Connel (Mid-Argyll), Oct 1, then 1 Pennygown (Mull), Oct 2, and 1 Wester Ellister (Islay), Oct 3. The highest count received was 400 >SW Port Wemyss (Islay), Oct 23.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos* Smeorach 1200

B W P Widespread and common. Breeding recorded in 72% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Arrival of autumn migrants was reported from Islay, with 30 Kilchiaran, Oct 26. No other significant records.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus* Sgiath dhearg 1201

W P Abundant autumn passage bird, but relatively few winter. Occasional individuals recorded in late spring. Bred on Mull in 1991.

1993

Flocks of up to 50 birds were reported during Jan - Apr. Islay: 40 Claggain Bay, Jan 2; 50 Loch Gruinart, Mar 6. Mid-Argyll: 30 Loch Feochan, Mar 1. Mull: 50

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Kilfinichen, Mar 29. A few lingered into May, with last records during the first half of the month. Islay: 1 Portnahaven, May 3. Colonsay: 1 Scalasaig, May 5. Mull: 1 Loch Spelve, May 15.

The first autumn record was 2 Scalasaig (Colonsay), Aug 27, but there were no more reports until late Sep - early Oct. Islay: 6 Portnahaven, Oct 2. Mid-Argyll: 10 Glen Shira, Sep 26. Mull: 1 Grass Pt, Sep 27. The highest count received was 300 Port Wemyss (Islay), Oct 20. On Islay, more than usual stayed into Nov and Dec, but no counts are available for these months.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus* Smeorach mhor 1202

B W P Widespread but thinly distributed breeding species. Breeding recorded in 43% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Many birds emigrate in autumn; parties of returning birds move through in Feb.

1993

The highest count was 25 Colonsay House gardens (Colonsay), Feb 6. No other significant records.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia* Ceileiriche leumnach 1236

S P Localised breeding species in all areas. Good breeding densities occur in many young conifer plantations. Breeding recorded in 26% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

The first birds were recorded on Apr 24 in 3 areas: 1 Ardentinny (Cowal); 2 Cologin, Oban (Mid-Argyll); 1 Tainish NNR (Mid-Argyll). Arrival during Apr was also reported from Islay: 1 Portnahaven, Apr 29. As with several other warbler species, arrival in 1993 was considerably earlier than in 1992.

Breeding. Records of single singing MM were received from most areas. Islay: pr feeding young Gleann na Rainich, Portnahaven, Jun 14. Colonsay: 3 singing MM. Mid-Argyll: 5 singing MM Tainish NNR; 3 singing MM Luig, Jun 18-22.

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* Glas eun 1243

S P Locally common. Breeding recorded in 41% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

An early bird was at Loch Leathan (Mid-Argyll), Apr 18, but the main arrival was about 10 days later, with 1 Kilfinichen Bay (Mull), Apr 27, then 1 Loch Gruinart (Islay) and 1 Milbuie (Colonsay), Apr 28.

Breeding. Colonsay: adult still carrying food Machrins, Aug 15. Mid-Argyll: 9 singing MM Tainish NNR.

Last 1 Loch Gruinart (Islay), Sep 26.

ICTERINE WARBLER *Hippolais icterina* 1259

V

1993#

A single juv was at Wester Ellister (Islay), Sep 4-5 (accepted SBRC). This is the fourth Argyll record, the previous records being in Jun (2) and late Aug.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis* Gealan coille 1275

S P Widespread but thinly distributed breeding species in scrub and woodland edge habitats. Marked improvement in numbers during the 1980s, with good breeding densities in many young conifer plantations. Breeding recorded in 59% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

First 1 Gleann Sheileach, Oban (Mid-Argyll), Apr 26, then 1 Loch Gruinart (Islay), Apr 28, and 1 Urugaig (Colonsay), Apr 29.

Breeding. No significant records.

Last 1 Portnahaven (Islay), Sep 4.

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin* Ceileiriche garaidh 1276

S P Scarce breeding species. Breeding recorded in 14% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993#

Only 4 records were received. First 1 Taynish NNR (Mid-Argyll), May 12, then 2 Kilmore, Oban (Mid-Argyll), May 14, and 1 Woollen Mill (Islay), May 24.

A probable autumn migrant was at Loch Gruinart (Islay), Aug 16.

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla* Ceann dubh 1277

S W P Scarce breeding species. Established in policy woodland of many estates, where rhododendron and other scrub often provides good understorey. Breeding recorded in 23% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). A few winter and are regular visitors to bird tables in hard weather.

1993

There were 2 Jan records. Mid-Argyll: 1 M Minard, Jan 17. Mull: 2 Pennyghael, early Jan.

Very few breeding season records were received. Islay: 3 Bridgend Woods, May 4 - Jul 28. Colonsay: 1 migrant Colonsay House gardens, May 12. Mid-Argyll: 2 singing MM Taynish NNR.

In autumn, there was a substantial arrival from mid-Oct on Islay, with at least 14 birds reported, including 5 in the Portnahaven area on Oct 24. Birds were recorded in 6 other areas, Oct - Dec. Kintyre: 1 Campbeltown, Dec. Gigha: 2 found dead, Nov 18. Jura: 1 Inverlussa, Nov 11. Colonsay: 2 in late Nov. Mid-Argyll: 4 MM and 2 FF, late Oct - Dec. N Argyll: 1 M Benderloch, Nov 30 - Dec 5.

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* Ceileiriche cille 1308

S P Common breeding species in oakwoods with sparse ground cover. Breeding recorded in 49% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

There was a widespread arrival on Apr 27: 1 Ardilistry Bay (Islay); 1 Dunollie, Oban (Mid-Argyll); 3 Inveraray (Mid-Argyll); 1 Kilfinichen Bay (Mull).

No other significant records.

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita* Cailean 1311

S P Uncommon breeding species, scarce in islands. Breeding recorded in 25% of 10km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). A few winter.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

1993

First 1 Loch Nell (Mid-Argyll), Mar 25. There were no other Mar records, but 1 was at Loch Gruinart (Islay), Apr 4, and 1 at Glenbranter (Cowal), Apr 11. Spring migrants in non-breeding areas were reported from Mull (1 Iona, Apr 28) and Islay (Portnahaven, several in Apr and May).

Breeding. No significant records.

A late single was at Bridgend (Islay), Nov 7.

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus* Crionag ghiuthais 1312

S P Widespread and very common breeding species. Breeding recorded in 81% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

First 1 Colonsay House gardens (Colonsay) and 2 Glen Cruitten, Oban (Mid-Argyll), Apr 11, then 1 Loch Gruinart (Islay), Apr 12. A presumed migrant was present Mannaal (Tiree), Apr 27.

Breeding. No significant records.

The last singles of the autumn were at Portnahaven (Islay), Sep 15, and Kenovay (Tiree), Sep 25.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus* Crionag bhuidhe 1314

R W P Common breeding species and passage migrant. Breeding recorded in 53% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Spring migrants were reported from Tiree, mid-April. No other significant records.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata* Breacan glas sgiobalta 1335

S P Widespread but thinly distributed breeding species. Breeding recorded in 53% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

First 1 Benmore Botanic Garden (Cowal), May 9, 5 days earlier than in 1992. Over the following 10 days, birds were reported from several areas. Islay: 1 Gleann na Rainich, May 12. Mid-Argyll: 1 Tainish NNR, May 14. Mull: 1 Tioran, May 18. Tiree: 1 Kennovay, May 19.

No other significant records.

PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca* Breacan glas 1349

S P Rare. Very localised breeder in oakwoods. Increase in breeding population in recent years is attributable to the Argyll Bird Club nest box scheme. Breeding recorded in 6% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Breeding. A total of 13 prs were reported, all using nest boxes. Cowal: 1 pr Blairmore; 2 prs Glenbranter; 2 prs Lochgoilhead. Mid-Argyll: 1 pr Ellary, Loch Caolisport; 1 pr Knapdale; 1 pr Glen Nant. N Argyll: 4 prs Loch Etive; 1 pr Glen Creran.

No other records.

LONG-TAILED TIT *Aegithalos caudatus* Ciochan 1437

B W P Widespread and common on mainland, local on some islands and rare on

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

Colonsay, Coll and Tiree. Breeding recorded in 48% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Parties of wandering birds widespread in autumn.

1993

No significant records.

COAL TIT *Parus ater* Smutag 1461

B W P Widespread and common except Coll and Tiree. Breeding recorded in 62% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Some emigration from Argyll in autumn.

1993

The only record of note was 50, Colonsay House gardens (Colonsay), Feb 28.

BLUE TIT *Parus caeruleus* Cailleachag ceann ghorm 1462

R P Widespread and very common breeder in broad-leaved and mixed woodland, but rare on Coll and Tiree. Breeding recorded in 65% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Breeding. Mid-Argyll: 16 prs Ellary, Loch Caolisport, nest box scheme.

GREAT TIT *Parus major* Currac bhain tighearna 1464

R P Widespread and very common breeder in broad-leaved and mixed woodland and occasionally in coniferous woodland. Breeding recorded in 61% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Breeding. Mid-Argyll: 5 prs Ellary, Loch Caolisport, nest box scheme.

TREECREEPER *Certhia familiaris* Snaigear 1486

B W Widespread and common except Coll and Tiree. Breeding recorded in 37% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

No significant records.

GOLDEN ORIOLE *Oriolus oriolus* Buidheag corpach 1508

V Rare migrant, usually in spring.

1993#

Remarkably, a M appeared at Taynish NNR (Mid-Argyll) for the second year in succession, this year on May 14 (May 26 in 1992).

GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor* Feoladair glas 1520

W P Rare and irregular.

1993#

The only record was of a single at Duart Bay (Mull), Apr 25.

JAY *Garrulus glandarius* Sgraicheag 1539

B W Locally distributed, mainland only. Breeding recorded in 6% of 10 km sq, mostly in Cowal (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). All records required.

1993

In accordance with the known distribution, records were received only from Cowal (2 locations) and Mid-Argyll (8 locations). No evidence of breeding was supplied;

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

only 1 record was from the period mid-May to mid-Aug.

MAGPIE *Pica pica* Cadhag 1549

R Local in Cowal, rare elsewhere. Breeding recorded in 2% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Kintyre: 1 Ronachan House all year had been resident since 1991. Cowal: singles reported throughout the year, Blairmore.

CHOUGH *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax* Cathag dhearg chasach 1559

R W Islay is the Scottish stronghold, with smaller numbers on Colonsay and Jura and a recent toehold on Mull. All records away from Islay required.

1993

Spring flock counts on Islay included 48 Machrie Hotel, Apr 2, and 30 Machir Bay, May 31.

Breeding. Islay: of 41 nest sites visited, 9 were unoccupied. Of the remaining 32 active sites, 8 lost all eggs or young, and 1 was deserted. The outcome at 2 sites was not known but the remaining 21 sites each fledged at least 1 young. The 54 young fledged from these 21 nest sites represents 1.7 young per nesting attempt or 2.5 young per successful nest, which is close to the long-term average for Islay. After fledging, survival of the 1993 cohort is thought to have been poor with only 29 being sighted in June, falling further to 18 by December.

Four breeding prs were studied in detail. In 1992 and 1993 they produced 16 young (11 in 1992, 5 in 1993), and lost 4 adults over the same period. Of the 16 young, only 6 are known to have survived to December 1993. If a comparable survival rate continues until recruitment, then current recruitment is unlikely to match adult mortality [Scottish Chough Study Group, Earthwatch].

Colonsay: 12 prs, including 2 imm prs, located; 10 young fledged but some predation by Peregrines. Mull: 1 pr present, again nested unsuccessfully; remains of an additional bird found.

The largest autumn flocks reported from Islay were 42 Kilchoman, Jul 26, and 40 Ardnave, Oct 25. No records were received from Jura during the year.

JACKDAW *Corvus monedula* Cathag 1560

B W Common throughout much of Argyll, but scarce Mull and does not breed Coll and Tiree. Breeding recorded in 40% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Immigration into some areas in winter, eg Tiree.

1993

No significant records.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus* Rocas 1563

B W Common throughout much of Argyll, but scarce Mull and does not breed Coll and Tiree. Breeding recorded in 25% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Post-breeding influx of juvs to some islands, eg Mull and Tiree.

1993

Breeding. Islay: 70 nests Loch Gruinart RSPB reserve. Mid-Argyll: 14 nests Connel. Mull: 35 nests Iona. N Argyll: 22 nests North Connel.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

The highest count was 400 Loch Gruinart (Islay), Sep 26.

HOODED CROW *Corvus corone cornix* Feannag 1567

B W Widespread and common. Breeding recorded in 87% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

By far the highest count received was 140 Kintra (Islay), Mar 7. No other significant records.

CARRION CROW *C c corone*

Birds are spreading gradually through Cowal into Kintyre and Mid-Argyll. Breeding recorded in 13% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Scarce on islands.

1993

Outside the main breeding areas, birds were reported during the first winter period from Islay and Colonsay. Islay: 6 Foreland House, Jan 28; 3 Loch Gruinart, Feb 16 to Jun 9; 1 Kintra, Mar 6. Colonsay: max 4 Kiloran, Feb 1.

Breeding. No significant records.

During Oct - Dec, reports were again received from Islay and Colonsay. Islay: 1 Eresaid, Oct 24; 9 Ardnave Pt, Nov 21. Colonsay: 21 >S Kiloran, Dec 3.

HOODED X CARRION CROW hybrid

Breeding recorded in 11% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Records were received only from the Oban area (Mid-Argyll), with a max of 4 on Feb 22.

RAVEN *Corvus corax* Fitheach 1572

B W Common. Breeding recorded in 75% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

The highest spring count was 60 Coile na Dalach (Islay), Mar 5. Other counts included 31 Oban (Mid-Argyll), Apr 2, and 27 Tiree rubbish tip, Apr 25.

Breeding. Colonsay: ca 9 prs bred rearing ca 20 young. Tiree: at least 6 prs bred rearing at least 9 young.

No count during the second winter period exceeded 20 birds.

STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris* Druid 1582

B W P Common except Mull, where localised post-breeding influx of juvs occurs.

Breeding recorded in 65% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

By far the highest count was 2,000 Ardnave (Islay), Mar 6; no other count exceeded 300 birds. No other significant records.

ROSE-COLOURED STARLING *Sturnus roseus* Druid dhearg 1584

V

1992

Coll: 1 ad Garden House, Jul 15 - Aug 20, when found dead [P Graham et al]. This record, published in the 1992 systematic list, has been accepted by BBRC.

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HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus* Gealbhonn 1591
 R Commonly associated with human habitation and distribution therefore rather localised in remote areas. Breeding recorded in 57% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).
 1993

No significant records.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus* Gealbhonn nan craobh 1598
 P? Current status uncertain, but appears to have declined during last decade. Although clearly a scarce bird, it is probably under-recorded. All records of positively identified birds required.
 1993#

Four records were received, 3 of these from Islay, where singles were at Easter Ellister, Mar 25, Loch Gruinart, May 12, and Mull of Oa, Aug 26. A single was at Gruline (Mull), Dec 1. Interestingly, the two 1991 records were from Loch Gruinart and from Knock (adjacent to Gruline).

RED-EYED VIREO *Vireo olivaceus* 1633
 V First occurrence in 1992.
 1992

Coll: 1 Arinagour, Oct 3 [I D Bullock] (accepted BBRC). The Coll bird is only the fifth Scottish record of this species, which is the most frequently recorded North American passerine in Britain. There has been 1 previous record in western Scotland: a single was at Newton, North Uist, Oct 1-7 1988.

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs* Breacan beithe 1636
 B W P Abundant except Coll and Tiree. Breeding recorded in 80% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Birds commonly forage in cut hay and silage fields outwith breeding season.
 1993

Only 2 large flocks were noted. Islay: max 600 Corrary, nr Bowmore, Jan 17, Kintyre: 700 The Laggan, Nov 9. No other significant records.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla* Bricein caorainn 1638
 W P Varying numbers occur Sep - Apr.
 1993

There were a total of 10 records during Jan - Apr. These included an unusually large flock at Kildalloig (Kintyre), present since Dec 1992 and totalling 300 on Jan 18, with 50 still present on Mar 2. Most other records were from Mid-Argyll. Islay: max 2 Corrary, nr Bowmore, Mar 7. Colonsay: 1 Kilchattan, Apr 9. Mid-Argyll: 2 Minard, Jan 17; max 20 Oban, Jan 24; 7 Torinturk, Apr 4. Last 4 Slockavulin (Mid-Argyll), Apr 16.

There were many more autumn records, with the first single at Portnahaven (Islay), Oct 11, then 2 Milbuie (Colonsay), Oct 12. Singles and groups of 2 or 3 continued to be seen widely on Islay during Oct, with highest counts of 20 nr Ballygrant, Oct 26, and 14 Kiells, Oct 30. Numbers on Islay declined during Nov and Dec, but there were a few Nov records from other areas. Kintyre: 30 The Laggan, Nov 9. Colonsay: 2 Machrins, Nov 10. Mid-Argyll: 2 Connel, Nov 8.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

GREENFINCH *Carduelis chloris* Glaisean daraich 1649
R W Locally common. Breeding recorded in 31% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Few winter counts were received. Islay: max 40 Loch Gruinart, Feb 4. Colonsay: the wintering population was estimated as 80-100 birds, an increase through bird-table feeding from a population of 10 in the early 1980s.

Breeding. Breeding season reports were received from several areas where the species is scarce or was unrecorded during fieldwork for the BTO Atlas, 1988-1991. Colonsay: pr + b/2 East Loch Fada, Jun 13. Mid-Argyll: 1 Moine Mhor NNR, May 4, was only the second reserve record. Mull: 1 Torloisk, Jun 24; 2 Lochdon, Jul 1. Tiree: 1-4 in the Cornaig and Kennovay areas, Apr 17 - Aug 15.

On Colonsay, 20 were at Kiloran Bay, Jul 11, with up to 35 at a bird table, Milbuie, Nov - Dec.

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis* Lasair choille 1653
B W P Localised distribution. Absent as a breeding species from Colonsay, Coll and Tiree. Breeding recorded in 32% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Some emigration in autumn.

1993

During the first winter period, no count exceeded 10 birds.

Breeding. No significant records.

Flocks were reported during late Sep - Dec. Islay: max 18 Loch Gruinart, Sep 24; 18 Portnahaven, Oct 26; 25 Machir Bay, Dec 31. Cowal: 20 nr Ardlamont Pt, Nov 13. Mid-Argyll: 50 Moine Mhor, Oct 26. N Argyll: 16 Benderloch saltmarsh, Nov 18.

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus* Gealag bhuidhe 1654
B W P Numbers fluctuate from year to year, but the breeding population has clearly increased as a consequence of coniferous afforestation. Absent as a breeding species from Coll and Tiree. Breeding recorded in 54% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Breeding. No significant records.

Flocks were reported during late Sep - Dec. Islay: 35 Portnahaven, Oct 3, 65 on Oct 5, not present earlier in the autumn. Jura: 40 Ardlussa, Nov 11. Cowal: 50 nr Ardlamont Pt, Dec 22. Mid-Argyll: 40 Daill, Crinan Canal, Sep 25; 50 Taynish NNR, Nov; 200 Connel, Nov 8.

LINNET *Carduelis cannabina* Gealan lin 1660
B W P Localised distribution. Breeding recorded in 37% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Flocking in autumn and winter.

1993

Relatively few records were received. The largest spring count was 70 Loch Gruinart (Islay), Mar 6.

Breeding. No significant records.

In autumn, up to 40 were at Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre) during Aug, with 75 at Loch Gruinart (Islay), Sep 25.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

TWITE *Carduelis flavirostris* Gealan beinne 1662

B W P Localised breeding species on hill ground and coastal moorland, especially on the islands. Breeding recorded in 36% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Flocking in low-lying arable and coastal areas, Aug onwards. Some evidence to suggest emigration from Argyll in autumn, although there may also be an influx of wintering birds to some areas.

1993

The highest counts during Jan - Mar came from Islay: 100 Ardnave, Feb 15; 140 Kintra, Mar 7.

Breeding. No significant records.

Autumn flocks were recorded during Aug - Dec. Kintyre: 90 Machrihanish airfield, Sep 10; up to 100 Machrihanish SBO, Nov. Islay: 410 Kilchoman, Oct 29, 365 on Dec 25. Colonsay: 150 Balnahard, Aug 16. N Argyll: 50 Ledaig Pt, Oct 10.

REDPOLL *Carduelis flammea* Dearcan seilich 1663

B W P Localised distribution, mainly associated with birchwoods and young conifer plantations. Numbers fluctuate from year to year, but breeding population has probably increased as a consequence of coniferous afforestation. Breeding recorded in 41% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Flocking occurs in autumn and winter.

1993

Spring records included 1 Loch a'Phuill (Tiree), Apr 26, and 3 Iona (Mull), Apr 30, both outside known breeding areas.

Breeding. On Islay, breeding was recorded in young forest plantations at several locations on the Rhinns, representing a range extension since the BTO Atlas, 1988-91.

A few small flocks were recorded in autumn. Islay: 25 Bunnahabhainn, Sep 16. Mid-Argyll: 25 Taynish NNR, Sep 16. Mull: 25 Lochdon, Oct 3.

COMMON CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra* Cam ghob 1666

B W Numbers and distribution vary depending on abundance of conifer cone crops. Highly irruptive species with large flocks sometimes moving to locate a new seed area, usually in summer. Breeding recorded in 16% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

Singles and small groups were recorded from several areas, Jan - Jun, but there were no breeding records. Islay: 2 Laggan Bridge, Mar 3. Mid-Argyll: up to 6 Glen Cruitten, Jan - Jun; 6 Lochgilphead, Mar 12; 1 Dunardry Locks, Crinan Canal, June 21. Mull: 12 Gruline, May 1; 6 Glengorm, Jun 12.

Only 3 autumn records were received. Islay: 1 Bridgend, Sep 3. Colonsay: 1 Colonsay House gardens, Oct 28. Mull: 3 nr Dervaig, Aug 16.

BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* Corean-coille 1710

B W Locally common. Absent from Coll and Tiree and irregular on Gigha and Colonsay. Breeding recorded in 35% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91).

1993

The highest counts during both winter periods came from Mid-Argyll: 9 Ariogan, Oban, Jan 29; 20 Cologin, Oban, Feb 6; 16 nr Loch Leathan, Dec 5. Elsewhere, no

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

count exceeded 6 birds.

Breeding. No significant records.

LAPLAND BUNTING *Calcarius lapponicus* 1847

P Scarce autumn migrant and even scarcer in spring.

1993#

Three flying >S over Portnahaven (Islay), Oct 3, and 1 >S on Oct 13, constitute the first Argyll records since 1990. In a winter which was exceptionally good for this species on a national scale, it is perhaps surprising that more were not recorded.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis* Gealag an t-sneachda 1850

B? W P Has bred N Argyll in recent years. Varying numbers on passage and in winter.

1993

Singles and small groups were reported during Jan - Apr. Islay: max 9 Ardnave, Jan 4. Colonsay: 1 Oronsay, Jan 1. Cowal: 13 Glendaruel, Jan 6; 12 Strath nan Lub, Jan 12. Mull: 1 Ardalanish Bay, Feb 28. Last 1 Oronsay (Colonsay), Apr 23.

There were no summer reports from potential breeding areas.

In autumn, the first singles were at the Mull of Oa (Islay), Oct 5, and Machrihanish SBO (Kintyre), Oct 7. Later records were also confined to these 2 areas. Kintyre: 8 >N Machrihanish SBO, Oct 22; 12 The Laggan, Nov 25. Islay: max 5 Ardnave, Dec 26.

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella* Buidheag bhealaidh 1857

B W Localised breeding species found in dry open ground, arable areas and moorland edges. Breeding recorded in 46% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Birds forage in cut hay and silage fields outwith breeding season. Population may be in decline and all records are welcome.

1993

The only counts higher than 5 birds during Jan - Apr came from Mid-Argyll: 7 Achnamara, Feb 21; 9 nearby at Kilmichael of Inverlussa, Mar 20.

Breeding. Very few records were received. On Colonsay, where this species is now rare, there were only 2 reports of singles May - Jul, and no evidence of breeding.

Highest counts for the second winter period did not exceed 10 birds. Islay: 8 Sunderland, Oct 29; max 6 Loch Gruinart, Nov 13. Mid-Argyll: 8 Achnamara, Nov 14.

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus* Gealag loin 1877

B W Locally common in farmland, scrub and young conifer plantations. Breeding recorded in 56% of 10 km sq (BTO Atlas, 1988-91). Small flocks sometimes gather outwith the breeding season.

1993

The highest counts during both winter periods came from Islay: 19 Kintra, Jan 3; max 80 Loch Gruinart, Jan 25; 20 Portnahaven, Oct 24.

Breeding. No significant records.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

CORN BUNTING *Miliaria calandra* Gealag bhuathair 1882
R Declining resident species which is facing extinction within Argyll. Recent breeding on Tiree only.

1993#

On Tiree in spring, 1 was reported from Loch a'Phuill, Apr 26, and another from Balephetrish Hill, Apr 29. The only other record was of a singing M nr Portnahaven (Islay), May 23; despite subsequent searches, this bird was not relocated. The only autumn record was of a single at Loch Bhasapol (Tiree), Aug 7.

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD *Molothrus ater* 1899

V First occurrence in 1988.

1988

Islay: 1 M, probably first-year, Ardnave, Apr 24 [C R Mackay]. The species has been added to Category A of the British list on the basis of this sight record. Brown-headed Cowbird is a partial migrant, occurring widely in North America. There is only 1 previous European record, from Norway in 1987. The race of the Islay bird has not been determined (*Ibis* 135: 496).

CATEGORY D SPECIES AND ESCAPES

FLAMINGO *Phoenicopterus sp*

Presumed escape (although Greater Flamingo is in Category D1 of the British list).

1993#

Two flamingoes of unknown species flew >N past Machrihanish (Kintyre), Jul 28.

RED-HEADED BUNTING *Emberiza bruniceps* Gealag dhearg cheannach 1880

Category D1. A common cage bird.

1993#

A male on Iona (Mull), Jun 10, is the first report for many years. There were 6 Argyll records in the 1970s which may have involved as few as 2 individual birds.

LIST OF PENDING RECORDS, REJECTED RECORDS, AND RECORDS FOR WHICH DETAILS ARE STILL AWAITED

The following records have been rejected since the publication of the Ninth *Argyll Bird Report*:

White-billed Diver	Islay	06/04/92	(BBRC)
Great White Egret	Mull	08/06/92	(BBRC)
American Wigeon (F)	Tiree	19/05/92 - 21/05/92	(BBRC)
Honey Buzzard	Mull	28/06/90	(SBRC)
American Golden Plover	Coll	13/11/91 - 16/11/91	(BBRC)

BBRC has also failed to reach a decision on the following record, thought possibly to

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

refer to Buff-bellied Pipit, but not submitted by the observer as a definite claim of any species:

Pipit sp	Tiree	08/10/89 - 12/10/89	(BBRC)
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The following records have been submitted to the relevant rarities committee, but no decision has yet been reached:

Cory's Shearwater	Islay	24/08/89	(SBRC)
Mediterranean Shearwater	Islay	19/12/93	(SBRC)
Little Shearwater	Islay	22/08/89	(BBRC)
Little Shearwater (3)	Islay	25/08/89	(BBRC)
Wilson's Petrel	Islay	21/08/89	(BBRC)
Wilson's Petrel	Islay	26/08/89	(BBRC)
'Black Brant'	Islay	20/10/89 - 17/05/90	(BBRC)
Ring-necked Duck	Mull	30/05/93 - 02/06/93	(BBRC)
King Eider	Tiree	26/04/93 - 07/06/93	(BBRC)
Crane	Tiree	29/04/93 - 12/05/93	(SBRC)
Cream-coloured Courser	Colonsay	17/10/93	(BBRC)
Gull-billed Tern	Islay	06/08/93	(BBRC)
Roseate Tern	Colonsay	23/08/89	(SBRC)
Roseate Tern (2)	Islay	26/08/89	(SBRC)
Roseate Tern	Gigha	26/08/89	(SBRC)
Bee-eater	Mull	01/07/93 - 02/07/93	(SBRC)
Black-headed Bunting	Islay	07/06/93 - 04/07/93	(BBRC)

In the Ninth *Argyll Bird Report*, the record of a Little Shearwater on Islay, 22/08/89, was mistakenly stated to have been rejected. Attempts are currently being made to clarify the status of one further record, that of a Firecrest in Kintyre, 23/07/89.

Full details of the following sightings, reported during the year, have not been received:

Cory's Shearwater (3)	Kintyre	28/08/92
Great Shearwater (2)	Kintyre	21/09/93
Mediterranean Shearwater	Kintyre	20/08/92
Mediterranean Shearwater	Kintyre	29/08/92
Mediterranean Shearwater	Kintyre	11/09/92
White Stork	Islay	??/04/93
King Eider	Kintyre	03/11/93
Ring-billed Gull	Kintyre	19/04/92
Ring-billed Gull	Kintyre	15/05/92 - 06/07/92
Ring-billed Gull	Islay	26/02/93
Ring-billed Gull	Kintyre	30/07/93
Hoopoe	Islay	??/04/93

Anyone who has seen 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 BBRC or SBRC.

SYSTEMATIC LIST 1993

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American Golden Plover on Colonsay - A New Species in Argyll

David C Jardine and Janet A Jardine

61 Eastwood Grange Rd, Hexham, Northumberland NE46 1UE

INTRODUCTION

Twenty species of North American wader have been recorded in Britain and fifteen of these have occurred on more than 25 occasions (Dymond et al, 1989). The fact that only seven of these species have hitherto been recorded in Argyll may be more a reflection of the number of observers than the scarcity of these birds in the county.

The American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica* is a North American species which occurs relatively infrequently in this country but in recent years has been recorded annually. There had been 157 records in Britain by the end of 1991 (Rogers, 1992), and of these some 25 were in Scotland. In this note we report the first record of the species in Argyll.

The species is similar in appearance to the familiar Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*. The main points of distinction are the grey underwing and axillaries (as opposed to white) and the smaller size of the American species. This second feature was the basis of the former name of Lesser Golden Plover; taxonomists, however, have recently split the Lesser Golden Plover into two species on the basis of structural and plumage differences. The relative length of wing and tail feathers can be used in all plumages to distinguish an American Golden Plover from a Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva* (Marchant et al, 1986).

NARRATIVE

The second of October 1991 was a foul day in Argyll; it poured with rain all day and there was a strong SW wind which changed to NW in the evening. There was still a light NW wind early on 3 October, but the weather was beautifully clear and fresh in the morning when DCJ and JAJ set out to explore the southern end of Colonsay. The birding was good with many birds on the move. A pair of Shoveler *Anas clypeata* were at Ardskenish pond and an immature Sabine's Gull *Larus sabini* flew past Ardskenish Point during a lunchtime sea-watch. It was not until later in the afternoon, however, that the highlight of a remarkable day occurred.

At about 1600hrs, DCJ was counting a flock of Golden Plovers on the machair to the east of the sandy beach at Traigh nam Barc, when a very dark, summer-plumaged *Pluvialis* plover was found in the winter-plumaged flock. The bird was partly obscured by dips in the rig-and-furrows and was initially watched from higher ground at a distance of c100m with a x30 telescope. During this time the bird was seen briefly in flight and the grey underwings and axillaries were noted. Conditions had become overcast with a light (F2-3) easterly wind. Realising the need to get details of the primary and tertial structure, DCJ stalked the bird after c30 minutes and it was watched

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for a further 15 minutes at ranges down to 30m using the telescope and x10 binoculars. The flock eventually flew 100m to roost on the sand on Traigh nam Barc.

On 5 October 1993, DCJ and JAJ revisited the area to join John and Pamela Clarke who were looking for the bird, now identified as an American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica*. All were watching the flock of Golden Plovers on the sand but had been unable to find the bird. Then a wader was heard to give a flight call of "chewick". DCJ's first impression of this call was that of a Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*. It proved to be the American Golden Plover, which joined the waders on the beach. It was watched in excellent sunlight for about an hour at ranges down to 70m. During this time it was on the beach resting and feeding. Later it was seen feeding on the machair. No other calls were heard.

During both sightings, notes were taken which were used to compile the following description.

DESCRIPTION

Structure

Slightly smaller than Golden Plover; in flight, wings appeared shorter and bird noticeably smaller. On the ground it appeared plumper in the body but most noticeable was its hunched posture which contrasted with the longer necks of the Golden Plovers. Head appeared slightly broader than Golden Plovers but this may have been an illusion caused by the darker plumage. The primaries extended some 10-20 mm beyond the tail and the tertials did not cover the primaries completely being roughly equal in length to the tail. The bill was held open most of the time. There was no discernible difference in bill length from nearby Golden Plovers but the upper mandible was finer and more pointed. Legs similar in length to Golden Plover.

Plumage

Chin, lores, ear coverts, breast and belly entirely black. Undertail coverts mainly black but a few white feathers present, undertail light fawn. The black on the face and breast were fringed by a broad white supercilium which curved down the side of the ear coverts and widened at the sides of the breast. There was no white edge to the belly. While the bird was at rest the broader white on the breast sides was just above the carpal joint and appeared as striking "epaulettes". The supercilium narrowed slightly towards the bill and met above it giving the lower forehead a cream colour. The upper forehead and crown were dark brown/black with a few small fawn flecks. The centre of the nape was similar in colour to the crown and merged into the colouration of the mantle. On either side of the nape, continuations of the white eyestripe were visible when the bird was facing away from the observer. The mantle and scapulars were dark brown/black with fairly heavy fawn markings. In poor light, the upper parts appeared almost as dark as the black underside. Greater and other upper wing-coverts were mottled dark brown and fawn. The upper surfaces of the primaries were dark brown/black. In flight there was a faint pale wing-bar which was not nearly as striking as that of the Golden Plovers. The underwing feathers and axillaries were mid-grey. There was no white between the grey of the underwing and the black of the belly. Rump and uppertail were dark brown/black with fawny brown

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markings. Bill entirely black, eye dark brown or black, legs and feet black (contrasting with the ochre-green of the winter-plumaged Golden Plovers).

DISCUSSION

It is perhaps surprising that this species had not previously been recorded in the county as Argyll is ideally situated for the arrival of North American waders. The lack of previous records from Argyll probably reflects not only the scarcity of observers but also the close similarity of this rarity to a common resident species. Indeed, it is likely that this bird could easily have been overlooked had it not been in summer-plumage.

Dymond *et al* (1989) report records of this species in the British Isles from April to November, with 91% of records in the autumn, mostly in September and October. The Colonsay record, therefore, was typical.

The addition of this species to the list of North American waders which have been recorded in Argyll brings the total to eight. The other seven are Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus*, Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii*, Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*, Buff-breasted Sandpiper *Tyrngites subruficollis*, Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*, Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca* and Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia*.

The record has been accepted by the British Birds Rarities Committee.

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Current Bird Research in Argyll

Compiled by Mike Madders,
Carnduncan, Gruinart, Bridgend, Islay, Argyll, PA44 7PS.

INTRODUCTION

A summary of some research projects in progress in Argyll is given below. Each account gives brief details of the background and objectives of the project. Accounts are in chronological order of starting date. Details of other bird research projects in Argyll are requested for inclusion in future *Argyll Bird Reports*.

The breeding success of some seabirds in Argyll

J C A Craik, *Scottish Association for Marine Science, Dunstaffnage Marine Laboratory, Oban, Argyll PA34 4AD*

The target species are Common Tern, Arctic Tern, Common Gull and Black-headed Gull. Less extensive breeding data are collected from some other seabird species.

Survey work in 1985-1990 found that Argyll held unexpectedly large numbers of terns, many in hitherto undocumented colonies. Common Terns outnumbered Arctic Terns by four or five to one. It was found that predation of eggs and chicks at these tern colonies was extraordinarily severe. The predators included otter, feral North American mink, Peregrine and Short-eared Owl. Between 1987 and 1993, predation by mink became much more severe and most tern colonies and Common Gull colonies in the study area are now affected every year. This has dictated much of the present purpose and direction of the work.

The objectives are to investigate the numbers and reproductive success of seabirds breeding on small islands and skerries off the west coast of mainland Argyll and adjacent Highland Region. The effects of mink and some other factors on productivity are being investigated. Experimental protective measures are being evaluated at the largest tern and common gull colonies.

Barnacle Goose grazing and vegetation dynamics

Julia Welstead, *Department of Biological Sciences, University of Durham.*

Numbers of Greenland Barnacle Geese wintering in Islay have increased spectacularly from around 5,000 in the late nineteen-fifties to a current level of some 22,000. The geese feed primarily on improved grassland and this has led to conflict between agriculture and conservation of the geese. Recent studies have shown that geese cause a large reduction in grass yield on Islay's farms, although other factors, such as temperature, are important. Several methods have been employed in attempts to lessen

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the impact of geese on agriculture in Islay, including shooting, scaring geese onto refuge areas and (currently) financial incentives to manage land for the benefit of geese.

The aims of this project are to determine the most cost effective management methods for maximising the attractiveness to geese of refuge areas and to investigate the consequences of certain management regimes on agricultural returns. Use made by geese of improved grasslands that have been cattle-grazed or fertilised to different extents is being studied, and the response of the sward to goose grazing is being measured.

The principal study area is the RSPB reserve at Loch Gruinart, Islay. The project is funded by the Agriculture and Food Research Council.

Golden Eagle home range use

Mike McGrady and Justin Grant, *Royal Society for the Protection of Birds*.

Since 1991 the RSPB, in co-operation with the Forest Authority, have been studying Golden Eagles in Argyll. The main technique used in this study has been to fit breeding Golden Eagles with radio telemeters and to follow their movements. Ranging information is then plotted on maps. When sufficient data have been collected, ranging behaviour will be examined in relation to habitat. Six adult and three juvenile eagles have been fitted with radio tags, and signals are still (October 1993) being detected from five adults.

Long-term reproductive data are being examined and related to habitat changes. Prey abundance is being assessed and data are being collected on the prey taken by breeding eagles.

Information on eagles and the study area is being entered into a Geographical Information System (GIS) on a computer. This is being developed as a pilot method for analysing and displaying larger data sets from eagles and other species in the future.

Argyll was chosen as the study area because of the large area of forestry, the relative lack of eagle persecution, and the extensive data on eagle productivity that are available.

The effects of forestry on Hen Harriers

Mike Madders, *Applied Ornithology Unit, Zoology Department, Glasgow University*.

A survey of Hen Harriers in Scotland in 1988-89 showed that increases or range extensions had occurred in some areas with recent afforestation. Hen Harriers occupying young first-rotation plantations probably benefit from the increased cover and prey populations that result from fencing and lack of burning. Harriers have been known to breed in plantations for twenty or more years after afforestation, but populations have declined in many areas as forests have matured. The clear-felling

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and restocking of afforested areas at the end of the first rotation may provide habitat suitable for Hen Harriers for a further period. However, only sporadic breeding attempts have been reported from second-generation forests. The extent to which Hen Harriers use first- and second-generation plantations for hunting has not been previously quantified and is being studied.

Time budget information is being collected from watches of breeding Hen Harriers that have access to moorland, first-rotation forestry and second-rotation forestry. Foraging habitat preferences will then be related to estimates of prey abundance and to measures of vegetation cover and structure. The effect of variation in land cover around the nest on nest occupancy and breeding success will be investigated.

Four principal study areas are being used, all in Argyll. They were selected because they contain a wide range of foraging habitats for breeding harriers. In total, these areas cover almost 48,000 hectares and have held around 30 pairs of breeding Hen Harriers in recent years.

The study is funded by the RSPB.

The Birds of Iona and Mull: Over A Hundred Years Ago

Dr A.R. Jennings,

1 Ferryfield Drive, Connel, Oban, Argyll PA37 1SP

While browsing in the Public Library recently, I came across the book The Birds of Iona and Mull by H.D. Graham. This was published in 1890 and partly edited by Robert Gray (to whom the letters were sent) and, on the latter's death, by J.A. Harvie-Brown. The book gives an interesting account of the ornithology of the region. There is much information on mainland Argyll as well as the islands.

H.D. Graham was born in 1812. After school he joined the British Navy as a "volunteer first class". To qualify for entry, he had to write from dictation "I have joined H.M.S. Zebra" and to know the "rule of three": "If one bushel costs ten shillings, what will ten bushels?" (*sic*).

Graham had various adventures in the Mediterranean, including taking part in several naval actions. He had a talent for drawing and made many sketches of places and incidents noted during his service. His book contains some of these sketches as well as many illustrating aspects of natural history in Argyll.

In 1848 he visited the Rev. Dr. M'Vean, a minister on Iona, in his words, "after two days' journey across Mull in a severe snowstorm". This visit was a seminal one. He remained for some years on the island and his interest in the natural history of the area led him to become a Corresponding Member of the Natural History Society of Glasgow. Graham wrote many letters to the society and it is these letters that form the basis of the book. In 1854 he went to Canada for a time but returned to live on the Argyll coast, from where many letters were sent to the N.H. Society in Glasgow.

Like many Victorian naturalists, Graham believed in the maxim "What's missed is mystery, what's hit is history". His letters relate how he collected specimens. He shot a number of Choughs or "Red-legged Crows", and then expressed surprise that the species did not increase on Iona! He shot two because he felt sympathy for them after he had shot their mates.

He remarks that Common and Arctic Terns breed in profusion on the islands and that their eggs are used as an article of food; for example, on 15 June 1850 he collected nine dozen eggs. He found the Long-tailed Duck "a very difficult bird to shoot". His sketches illustrate some of these shooting incidents, for example, a Cormorant *battue* at Staffa, and a "Peregrine Falcon exultingly clutching a Chough whilst he himself is being shot from below".

The book contains a Systematic List detailing some 120 species and includes comments on status, behaviour, dates of arrival of migrants, as well as methods of shooting

OVER A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

some species and their palatability! Comcrakes arrive about 12 May and "many are shot on arrival, since they are very good eating". He reports that Golden Eagles are much less common than a generation ago, and that the Kestrel is the most abundant of the hawk tribe, the Merlin being nearly as numerous, whereas the Common Buzzard "seems to be extremely rare". Graham complains that Choughs are so reduced in numbers that a pair are hardly shot in the same number of years. Redshanks are abundant but are troublesome birds. In the goose section, the Barnacle is said to be the most plentiful, and Greylag, Brent, Whitefront, Pinkfoot and Bean Goose are all commented upon.

Several letters deal at length with individual species. For example, Storm Petrels and their breeding habits on Soay, Staffa and the Treshnish Isles receive attention. He describes the nesting burrows of Storm Petrels on some islands and compares them with the way birds on other islands nest between and beneath boulders. Graham collected specimens for himself and friends, and he proudly records how he succeeded in rearing a young Storm Petrel. Cormorants, Shags, Rock Doves, Long-tailed Ducks and Choughs all attract his interest and form subjects of his letters.

Apart from the bloodthirsty nature of some of his exploits, the book can be recommended as a fascinating insight into the life of a local Victorian naturalist over a hundred years ago.

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