

The *Eider* is the quarterly newsletter of the Argyll Bird Club (<http://www.argyllbirdclub.org>)

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The Eider



An unusual image of a Great Northern Diver, photographed on 30 November by John Speirs at Ganavan, Oban ©John Speirs

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Editorial

Sadly, this issue includes obituaries for two influential member of the club. Both will be sorely missed and our condolences go to their families.

We hope to see many of you at the ABC's Spring Meeting in Dunoon on 9 March. Nigel has put together a very interesting programme for the day (see next page).

The accounts of two club field trips are reported here where very different weather conditions were experienced. Nevertheless, both produced an interesting array of birds. Details of four new field trips for the spring period are given on pages 3-4. All will provide an opportunity to see and hear some of our returning migrant songbirds.

David Jardine has pulled together details of ringed birds that have been recovered in Argyll. There are some really interesting records here, and well worth browsing through. Some of the dead seabirds may well have been the victims of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), including the two dead Great Skuas. This species has been particularly badly affected, and a recent report suggest that the breeding population in Scotland has been reduced by around 76%. For more information see:

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/seabird-surveys-project-report>

So far our nationally important breeding populations of seabirds in Argyll have been little affected by HPAI, but the outbreak is far from over, and what the future holds is uncertain.

If you've not been to Tiree, then John Bowler's article (pages 17-19) should whet your appetite for a holiday there. John recorded a staggering 196 species of birds on the island in 2023, the second highest annual total.

My thanks go to all the folk who have contributed to this issue. The deadline for contributions to the June *Eider* is 20 May, so please consider sending something to me by then. Thank you.

Acknowledgements

Very many thanks to the following for their contributions to this issue—John Bowler, Malcolm Chattwood, Clive Craik, Jim Dickson, Lindsey Gibson, Dave Harris, Peter & Dorothy Hogbin (photocopying & dispatching the newsletter), David Jardine, Alistair McGregor, Linda Petty (proof reading), Nigel Scriven, John Speirs and the late Margaret Staley.



Club news

FIELD TRIPS 2024

Attendance on field trips is limited to a maximum of 15 members. Therefore, it is essential that you contact the leader of a trip beforehand to make sure a place is available, and to receive up-to-date rendezvous details.

If there is a chance that adverse weather might lead to the cancellation of a field trip, please check the club's website or contact the organiser the night before or prior to setting off. Please wear suitable footwear and bring waterproof clothing if rain is forecast.

There will be a risk assessment and safety briefing at the start of each field trip. Trip leaders will keep a record of folk attending each trip.

Saturday 30 March 2024. Carskey Bay and South End (Kintyre). Led by David Jardine (dcjardine@btinternet.com). An outing to a new venue for the club, to almost the most

southerly part of Argyll. It will involve a series of short (up to 2km) walks. Please contact David if you wish to attend.

Saturday 27 April 2024. Sound of Gigha. Led by Nigel Scriven (mobile phone 07901 636353, e-mail njscriven@gmail.com). Meet at Ronachan Point Car Park on the A83 (grid ref. NR741548) at 10.00hrs. We will catch the ferry to Gigha if the weather is suitable. Light lunches will be available at the hotel on the island. The trip will include several short walks (each 300m maximum) on level ground, but a longer walk to Achamore Gardens on Gigha is possible.

Saturday 25 May 2024. Taynish NNR, Ulva Lagoon & Loch na Cille. Led by Jim Dickson (e-mail Argyllbirder@outlook.com phone 01546 603967.). Meet Jim beyond Tayvallich at the Taynish Car Park (just south of Lochan Taynish at NR737852) at 10.00hrs. The car park has recently been extended. The trip around the reserve involves walking along uneven ground, involves steps and just over 4km, therefore perhaps unsuitable for folk with mobility problems. Please bring your own lunch

Programme for the ABC's Spring Meeting

Saturday 9 March at Mun's Church Hall, Dunoon

Time	Session
0930	Doors open, coffee and tea
1000-1010	Welcome and introduction
1010-1030	Winter sightings round-up
1030-1110	Tales from the marsh: Holy Loch Nature Reserve— <i>Neil Hammatt</i>
1110-1130	Coffee/tea
1130-1200	Breeding divers in Kintyre: Increasing our understanding of a species— <i>Rafe Dewar</i> , MacArthur Green
1200-1230	Taynish Estate rewilding in Argyll— <i>Katherine Hill</i> , Highland Rewilding
1230-1400	Lunch
1400-1430	Species on the edge in Argyll and the Inner Hebrides— <i>Lucy Atkinson</i> , RSPB Scotland
1430-1515	Developing watchpoints for iconic species— <i>John Simpson</i>
1515-1545	Tea/coffee
1545-1615	Some Shetland islands worth visiting— <i>David Palmar</i>
1615-1630	Raffle and closing remarks

Saturday 29 June 2024. Toward and south Loch Striven.

Led by Alistair McGregor (e-mail alistairmcgregor16@outlook.com mobile phone 07754524240). Please contact Alistair if you want to go on this trip, to make sure there are places available and to receive rendezvous details. There will be three short walks of about 1km each along a mix of shore and track, suitable foot-wear is advised. Please bring your own packed lunch.

INDOOR MEETINGS 2024

Spring Meeting 2024. Saturday 9 March. The meeting will be held at St Mun's Church Hall, Dunoon. The location of the hall and lunch details have recently been sent to ABC members by email. The programme is given on the previous page.

Autumn Meeting & AGM 2024. Saturday 2 November. We were planning to hold this meeting at the Cairnbaan Hotel, our usual venue for the autumn meeting. However, the hotel is now up for sale, so we are looking elsewhere. Further details will be provided in the June *Eider*.

Raffle Prizes. Donations of raffle prizes for indoor meetings are always welcome.

ARGYLL BIRD REPORT 35 (2023)

The latest Argyll Bird Report has recently been published as a PDF file. ABC members have been informed about how to download their copies. Congratulations to Jim Dickson, David Jardine and Malcolm Chattwood for producing such a superb report. It gets better and bigger every year!

ARGYLL BIRD RECORDER

We are still looking for someone to fill the above post. Further details of the post were given in the December *Eider* 2021 (pages 3-4). Please contact Jim Dickson if the post appeals to you.

FUNDING FOR BIRD CONSERVATION PROJECTS IN ARGYLL

The ABC is willing to fund or part-fund worthwhile bird conservation projects in Argyll. For example, help was given towards the costs of field work for the recent Seabird Monitoring Programme (seabird counts 2015-2019). The club has

Argyll Bird Report 2023



Front cover of the latest *Argyll Bird Report*. If you have not received an email informing you about how to obtain your PDF copy of the report, please contact the Membership Secretary.

also helped to fund the provision of nest boxes for Grey Wagtails and Dippers in Kintyre (see article in the June 2021 *Eider*, page 12).

The club has also bought ten Swift nest boxes, all of which have now been given a home. We can have more boxes made if anyone has a site in mind. If you know of a suitable building, please contact David Jardine (contact details on back page). More recently, the club has bought some owl nest boxes to be monitored by Rob Lightfoot. Applications for funding other projects should be submitted to the secretary (contact details on the back page).



Grey Wagtail
©Margaret Staley

ABC field trip to Loch Gilp and the Add Estuary on 25 November 2023



Telescopes at the ready! ©Jim Dickson

Looking back over previous ABC trip reports to Loch Gilp and the Add Estuary the weather for this outing was almost identical to November 2019. After clear overnight skies the temperature dropped to -4 degrees followed by a beautiful sunrise and crystal-clear viewing conditions. Still rather cold at 10.00hrs, a good turn out of club members saw 12 of us meet in the new look car park in Ardrishaig.

After various introductions and a bit of catching up our attention turned to scanning across Loch Gilp. Four telescopes helping us spot distant ducks and a high tide roost of waders along the rocky shoreline at Ardrishag. On the water we noted Red-throated Divers, Red-breasted Mergansers, Goldeneyes (as elsewhere, in lower than usual numbers), Eiders, and some Shags standing on boat-mooring buoys. On the far side of the loch various waders could be seen flying into

roost on the shore, including some Bar-tailed Godwits, Oystercatchers and Curlews. However, these were perhaps a bit too distant for some of the group to identify. Fortunately, the roosting waders on our near shore were a lot closer, and a mixture of Ringed Plovers, Dunlin and Turnstone were seen. From our viewing point we lingered for about 20 minutes and 'notched up' other species in the area including various gull species, Heron, Rooks, Jackdaws, Starlings, House Sparrows, Robins, Collared Doves, Pied Wagtail and two Grey Wagtails. Unfortunately most of the group missed the latter species as they flew behind a row of houses on their way up the Crinan Canal. Neil Hammatt spotted our first of several raptors of the day, a distant Buzzard over by Lochgilphead School.

The group then walked along towards our next viewing point via the Canal's Egg Shed Museum



High-tide roost of Oystercatchers, Wigeon and various gull species ©Dave Harris

allowing further scans across the mouth of Loch Gilp towards Duncuan Island and the Lingerton Landfill site. Several more Red-throated Divers were seen and at least one Black Guillemot. Lynsey Gibson spotted our first of two Great Northern Divers. An unusually large gathering of Shags were seen feeding further out into Loch Fyne, as were numerous gulls, possibly because fish waste was being discarded from a fishing trawler. Wren, Goldfinch, Raven, Hooded Crow and Blue Tit were then added to the list of species.

Next stop was at the Corran Car Park followed by a walk to the Front Green at Lochgilphead, where in addition to two Little Egrets, lots of Wigeon, some Teal, a roost of Oystercatchers and several offshore Mute Swans were seen. The highlight of the day for most, if not everyone, was a very obliging Kingfisher (photo opposite), which flew past the group and very kindly alighted on drift a wood stump not far from our parked cars. This bird almost seemed to be sunning itself as the bright sunshine reflected off the metallic blue feathers and showed its orange underparts for a few minutes. It then flew off and disappeared. It was time for us to move on, with the next stop for some woodland birding at the nearby Blarbuie Woodlands surrounding the old Argyll and Bute Hospital grounds.

A short circuit around the Blarbuie Woods saw us add Goldcrests, several Redwings and Fieldfares, a Mistle Thrush, a flock of Wood Pigeons, several Coal and Great Tits, a Sparrowhawk, and a calling Nuthatch to our trip list before we headed to the next stop at Moine Mhor and the Add Estuary.

En route to Crinan Ferry a few more species were noted from our cars while driving, including a large flock of Canada and Greylag Geese near Dunadd, Stonechat at Moine Mhor and three adult Whooper Swans on Loch Crinan. Unfortunately, as the group were divided across five cars, not everyone saw all these birds. At the Crinan Ferry Car Park, which also became our lunch stop, we scanned across the Add Estuary and more and more Little Egrets were spotted with thoughts of five birds in total, but eventually reassessed as 'only' four. Counting these was made more difficult by the fact that they kept moving around and disappearing into



Upper photo. An obliging Kingfisher

Lower photo. One of the Little Egrets seen during the visit

Both photos ©Lindsey Gibson

creeks then reappearing elsewhere!

Some of the group departed at this point leaving the rest of us to take a short walk to the pier at Crinan Ferry, so getting close views of Little Grebe, Redshank, Wigeon and Red-breasted Mergansers. Walking back to our cars we were treated to the sight of two distant adult White-tailed Eagles flying in the direction of Duntrune Castle followed shortly



A Buzzard perched precariously on the top of a spruce tree
©Jim Dickson

after by a very much closer Kestrel about 40m away. Song Thrush and Goosander were added to the list and at this stage another couple from the group headed for home and were thanked for coming along.

The final stage of the trip, before returning to collect cars at our starting point in Ardrishaig, involved a drive

around around the Barsloisnoch Farm area before we headed across the Moine Mhor in hope of finding one or more of the regular Black Grouse. A scan of the grazed fields was rewarded with a feeding flock of 15 Lapwings, with some Starlings mixed in. No grouse were seen on this occasion on the 'moss' although we did stop to photograph a Buzzard that seemed to defy the laws of physics standing atop a small spruce tree (photo opposite).

By around 2.30pm we could feel the temperature falling sharply again and it was time to conclude what was a very successful outing helped by the good sunlight and excellent company.

Species list. Mute Swan, Whooper Swan, Greylag Goose, Canada Goose, Teal, Wigeon, Mallard, Eider, Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser, Goosander, Red-throated Diver, Great Northern Diver, Shag, Cormorant, Little Egret, Grey Heron, Little Grebe, Sparrowhawk, Kestrel, Buzzard, White-tailed Eagle, Oystercatcher, Lapwing, Bar-tailed Godwit, Curlew, Redshank, Turnstone, Dunlin, Ringed Plover, Black-headed Gull, Common Gull, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Black Guillemot, Woodpigeon, Collared Dove, Kingfisher, Jackdaw, Rook, Hooded Crow, Raven, Goldcrest, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Coal Tit, Nuthatch, Starling, Blackbird, Redwing, Fieldfare, Song Thrush, Mistle Thrush, Robin, Stonechat, Dunnock, House Sparrow, Grey Wagtail, Pied Wagtail, Rock Pipit, Chaffinch, Goldfinch (total 62 species)

Jim Dickson



The group viewing birds from the Egg Shed Museum ©Jim Dickson

ABC field trip to Loch Laich (not Lismore) on 27 January 2024



The group heading for Loch Laich ©David Jardine

The weather forecast before this outing, which was not long after storms Isha and Jocelyn, was decidedly iffy, so the leader had warned that plans for the outing may need to be changed.

On arrival at Port Appin it was immediately obvious that the group would not be going to Lismore as the ferry was still on its mooring (photo below) and there was a 1-2m swell in the channel as the near gale force wind battled with the spring tide. After a safety assessment and a brief chat amongst the participants Plan B was implemented and everybody relocated to the car-park at the Jubilee Bridge for a walk around Loch Laich.

The tide had turned and was receding as the group arrived at the Jubilee Bridge and good comparative views of Greenshanks and Redshanks were gained through telescopes, alongside a Curlew and a few Oystercatchers. A male

Goldeneye was feeding in the burn, but, to Dot's disappointment, a female couldn't be found.

As we walked along to the bridge, Rob who had gone ahead with Frank, motioned to us all that there was a Kingfisher fishing at the edge of the burn. Everyone had great views in the telescope learning how to differentiate between a male, with a totally black bill and a female with a red base to the lower mandible. As we watched we were distracted as a Peregrine flew over—what a start to the walk! The Peregrine spooked everything including the Kingfisher which flew off round the corner—but wait what was this? Another Kingfisher? Yes, and this one had more red on its bill and was equally co-operative, perching on logs in the burn and affording great views.

Once over the bridge and onto the cycleway to Appin Station the Little Egret which had been



The Lismore Ferry—still on its moorings ©David Jardine



One of two Kingfishers seen during the visit ©David Jardine

hiding in the merse came out and fed on the shore as the tide dropped. In the trees and fields alongside the track were a few Redwings, and two Treecreepers were spotted amongst a small flock of tits. The Great Spotted Woodpecker didn't stay around and a Buzzard was equally shy, only giving views to some of the group.

A search through the birds in and around the feeders near Appin Station failed to find any Yellowhammers, but House Sparrows and Feral Pigeons were added to the list. A viewpoint overlooking Castle Stalker added more Little Grebes to the count and a

Shag was found in Loch Linne. A second Little Egret flew in from the north; changed days, with this species now being a regular on club outings! However, no Great Northern Divers were seen out at sea and to Rob's chagrin, no Slavonian Grebes either.

Retracing their steps, the group stopped for a tea/coffee break in the dry-stone shelter before returning over the bridge to lunch by the hide. Here, the first Herons of the day were seen flying towards the heronry at Ardtur and a Goldfinch flew over. After lunch everyone agreed that while the weather had prevented a trip to Lismore, we were all still dry and warm and it was best to conclude what had been an enjoyable outing in the circumstances while we were winning.

Species list. Canada Goose, Wigeon, Mallard, Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser, Little Grebe, Shag, Little Egret, Heron, Buzzard, Peregrine, Oystercatcher, Curlew, Redshank, Greenshank, Black-headed Gull, Common Gull, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Feral Pigeon, Kingfisher, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Rock Pipit, Wren, Dunnock, Robin, Blackbird, Song Thrush, Redwing, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Coal Tit, Rook, Hooded Crow, Raven, Starling, House Sparrow, Chaffinch, Goldfinch (total 39 species)

David Jardine

BONNIE SCOTLAND

With a bit of poetic licence (and apologies if anyone is offended)
by Clive Craik

The banks of Loch Lomond are bonnie;
The braes of Maxwelton are too;
And young Annie Laurie's a bonnie wee lass.
The songs say it all, and it's true.

The songs tell us Scotland is bonnie,
But nobody mentions the rain.
Nobody sings about midges
That bite you and drive you insane.

So Pierre from Paris - why come here?
What brings you to this sodden space?
From French food, and sun, and the beautiful
Alps,
Why on earth do you come to this place?

And Manuel, why have you come here?
In Spain the sun shines every day.
And Fritz, why d'you fly here from Deutsch-
land?
Maria from Malta, please say!

And Wilbur, when you were in Scotland
On furlough from sunny LA,
Did you feel you'd been duped, sold a lemon,
Not told it would rain every day?

Not told you'd be smitten by midges
Whose million bites drive you spare,
And force you to close doors and windows,
When you want to let in some fresh air?

It must be the kilts and the bagpipes,
It must be the grouse and the deer.
It must be the whisky and wildlife
That bring all those visitors here.

It must be the mountains and moorland,
It must be the hills and the heather.
It can't be those merciless midges,
And it certainly isn't the weather!

Obituary—Margaret Staley 1934-2021

Margaret was probably best known to club members for her artistic abilities. She very generously produced a large number of excellent black and white sketches and colour paintings for the *Birds of Argyll* (ap Rheinallt et al. 2007), including the superb illustrations for the front and back covers of the book. Even to this day her art work keeps appearing in issues of the Argyll Bird Club's newsletter, the *Eider*, including this issue (see pages 4, 10, 25).

Margaret was born in Inverness, but her family moved to Bishopton early in the Second World War, where she completed her education at Paisley Grammar School. She left at sixteen with the Art Prize and joined the design studio of the Stoddard Carpet Company where she became a leading designer.

She was very active playing tennis, skiing and mountain climbing. Most years she holidayed in the far north of Scotland and the isles on bird-watching holidays, and it was on one of these trips that we met. We married three years later and then we lived in Surrey for four years until the youngest of my family left home.

Moving to Blairmore (Cowal) we joined the newly formed Argyll Bird Club and helped monitor nest boxes in that area as part of a wider scheme for hole-nesting passerines run by the club (see *Argyll Bird Report* 6:72-77).

A member of the local art club, Margaret continued painting water colour scenes and developing talents in other media until a few weeks before her death.



Margaret Staley ©Peter Staley

Reference

ap Rheinallt T., Craik J.C.A., Daw P.C., Furness R.W., Petty S.J. & Wood D. 2007. *Birds of Argyll*, pp. 424. Argyll Bird Club, Lochgilphead.

Peter Staley



Mute Swan
©Margaret Staley

And then there were three!



Nestling Swifts ©Annette Anderton

In 2022 the first Swift arrived on the 11 May and entered our original home-made box (Box 1). This swift had started nest building by the 22 May even though no mate had joined her/him, but by 23 May there were two Swifts in this box.

Over the next couple of weeks the number of Swifts in this box overnight varied between 0 and 2, but nest building continued. The first egg appeared on the 10 June and the second on 12 June. But these eggs were thrown out on the 12 and 15 June.

Once again, this pair seemed to have made a mess of things, as I had previously observed in 2020 and 2021, when it appeared that the first Swift's original 'mate' was replaced by another that returned a few weeks later (Anderton 2021a). It would seem that the female was regularly having a liaison with another male prior to her legitimate mate arriving back!

Two new eggs were laid by the end of June, but I was concerned how late this was for Swifts bringing up young in Argyll. However, I am pleased to report that the eggs hatched by mid-July and the chicks fledged at the end of August.

I was delighted when our pair of non-breeders arrived separately on the 15 and 19 May (note that this is much earlier than in previous years) and immediately began nest building in the box supplied to us by the Argyll Bird Club (Anderton 2021b) (Box 2).

To my surprise three eggs were laid (normal clutch size is two) at the end of May (27, 29 and

31 May), so our non-breeders were now breeders! However, I was worried as to whether they were young and inexperienced and would not cope with raising three chicks (photo above). But the eggs hatched over 18-21 June and the chicks fledged on 28 July and 3 and 4 August.

So, my fears were unjustified and the fact that they were younger and probably fitter than the 'established' breeders may have been significant.

This is further emphasised by the other event that happened in 2022.

This interesting and initially distressing event occurred in early July when one of the parents of the three chicks was absent for at least three days and at the same time, to my horror and revulsion, I spotted that the remaining adult had louse flies, *Crataerina pallida* (photo on next page). It was looking absolutely exhausted trying to feed three chicks and only fed them a couple of times each day, spending the rest of the time lying panting and weary in the box.

At this time, we had to go away as my mother was seriously ill and her sister, my aunt, had had a heart attack. I left with a heavy heart, fearing not only for my mum and aunt, but also that I would be returning to find a box of dead swifts.

To my relief when we returned at the end of July there were two adults feeding the three chicks and they all seemed healthy in spite of the presence of at least three louse flies, that were moving from bird to bird.

Luckily the louse flies did not significantly increase in number. I can only assume that one of the adults had visited another nest site where louse flies were present as we have never had them before and the boxes are carefully cleaned each year. Lack (2018) speculates that Swifts visiting the nesting sites of other pairs seems to be the only way in which these flightless insects find their way into new sites.

Crataerina pallida is a parasite found only on Swifts, feeding on the blood of chicks and adults, sucking about 25mg of blood every five days. Bromhall (1980) says 'there is something obscene about louse flies—one cannot help putting oneself in the place of the Swift and imagining how it would feel to have 10cm long parasites, the size of shore crabs, scuttling in and out of your clothes, each taking about a quarter of a pint of blood every five days'.

In 2023 the first Swift arrived on the 18 May and occupied Box 1. A second Swift entered the box on 21 May, but the occupant seemed a bit wary. Between this date and the end of May there was often only one Swift in the box overnight and on many occasions when there were two Swifts in the box during the day there was a third Swift circling and screaming outside the box with the Swifts inside the box appearing to be guarding the entrance. Was this the 'intruder' male as in previous years?

The first egg was laid on the 31 May and the second on the 3 June, they hatched on 21 and 22 June and fledged on the 1 and 3 August.

The first Swift to enter Box 2 arrived on the 19 May and the second on the 21 May. There was no apparent aggression between this pair as compared with the birds in Box 1.

Three eggs were laid between the 28 May and the 1 June, they hatched on the 18 and 19 June and fledged between the 30 July and 1



Louse fly on an adult Swift ©Annette Anderton

August.

No throwing out of eggs and no louse flies in 2023. Happy Days !!

We are hoping for the safe return of our Swifts and similar successful breeding in 2024.

References

Anderton, A. (2021a) Swifts at home. *Eider* **135**: 14-17

Anderton, A. (2021b) Swift nest boxes in Mid-Argyll -2021. *Eider* **137**: 9-10

Bromhall, D. (1980) *Devil Birds: The Life of the Swift*. Hutchinson, London, UK

Lack, D. (2018) *Swifts in a Tower*. Unicorn, London, UK

Annette Anderton

Obituary—Tom Callan

Tom Callan, who died recently, was a stalwart of the Argyll Bird Club. He served on the club's committee for around a decade (2003-2013) and his input to ensuring that birds were well recorded in Argyll is considerable as he edited the *Argyll Bird Report* for a similar period (2002-2011) and continued to help as a species compiler under the new editor in 2012.

However, his most enduring contribution to bird recording in Argyll was the creation of a gazetteer of all the 9,000+ 1km grid squares in our recording area for the ABC recording spreadsheet. This huge effort has proved invaluable in allowing ready and effective collation and geographical interrogation of the database which now holds over half a million records.

Tom, often accompanied by his late wife, Shirley, was a frequent and always welcome

companion on ABC field trips, when he readily shared his knowledge with everyone. He was out and about on his Cowal patch around Otter Ferry and Kilfinan on most days and between 2004 and 2017 he submitted a round 18,000 records to the club's database. By his own admission there would not have been many Goldcrest records amongst them in later years, which reflected the deterioration in his hearing which proved an increasing handicap to his activities. However, that didn't dim his enthusiasm for getting out and about and relying on his sight and knowledge of his patch to record birds in Cowal.

His garden in Otter Ferry turned up some interesting birds and he used to joke that the first sparrow he found there was a Tree Sparrow as House Sparrow is scarce in this part of Cowal. However, on 19 June 2014, he also found the first White-throated Sparrow (a north American species) in Argyll in the

same garden. Jim Dickson still remembers the early morning phone-call from Tom, when Jim was not quite sure whether he was being subjected to Tom's sense of fun; a couple hours later Jim was photographing and enjoying this beautiful bird in the garden.

Tom wasn't precious about sightings and would be happy to engage in discussion where doubt existed about identification. Malcolm Chattwood recalled a trip to North Argyll led by Mike Harrison. A distant bird in Ardmucknish Bay was always a Red-throated Diver in Malcolm's note-

book whilst Tom swore black and blue it was a Great Crested Grebe. It was a very forthright but amicable discussion and when canvassed, Mike wisely decided to keep his head down. Malcolm doesn't recall whether a visit report was produced and if so, which species was included—perhaps both were entered as "possibles"!

The sympathies of the Club are extended to Tom's family and friends.

David Jardine (with help from Malcolm Chattwood and Jim Dickson)

BTO update

2023 BTO/GWCT Woodcock Survey Results

This was the biggest and most comprehensive survey (map of all survey squares below) compared to the surveys in 2003 and 2013

Estimating population size—Argyll

Only random squares are used to estimate population size to avoid bias towards more favourable areas (that people might choose in the expectation of finding birds) (table below). The 'maximum' count is taken as the highest count from 3 visits.

A calibration rule is then applied, which is roughly

3-5 registrations = 2 males

6-8 registrations = 3 males

9-12 registrations = 4 males

13-16 registrations = 5 males

17-21 registrations = 6 males Etc

The full report with population estimates for the UK is due in spring of 2024. Many thanks to all participants who contributed their data for 2023.

BTO Region	Total Sq covered*	Total Random Sq	Random Sq covered	Random Sq covered (%)	Occupied (%)	Max count	Mean count
Argyll (Mainland, Bute & Gigha)	15	29	14	48	29	6	3.8
Argyll (Mull, Coll, Tiree & Morvern)	3	3	3	100	33	2	2
Islay	8	2	2	100	50	11	11
Totals	26	34	19	56		19	

**includes random & self-selected squares*



GWCT Annual Roding Counts

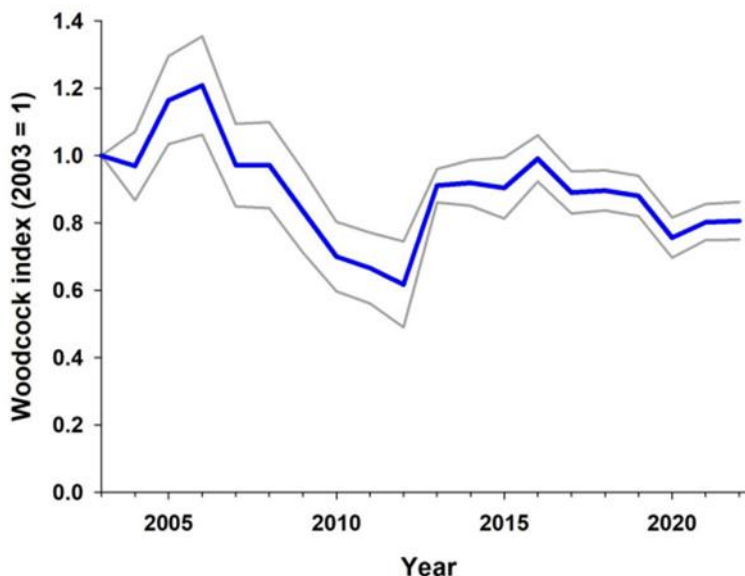
Thanks to a growing group of dedicated volunteers, the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust now have good data on the number of roding Woodcock for up to 150 sites across 24 counties yearly since 2003 (figure below).

It is plausible that variation in weather influences fluctuations in numbers, especially at the time of peak chick hatching in late April/early May, with rain and low temperatures increasing chick mortality.

However, wet weather in June and July may increase earthworm availability for full-grown chicks.

The low counts in 2009-11 coincided with hard winters, suggesting increased winter mortality reduced the breeding population, followed by a recovery.

These annual counts are to continue and are now organised by the BTO (www.bto.org/woodcock). Volunteers can contribute by finding an available square to survey on the vacant sites map. The more sites that are surveyed the better the data for Argyll will be.



Winter Gull Survey (WinGS Survey) Jan 2024

From the data submitted to the BTO so far, there are now 19 sites surveyed over the period around 21 Jan (Table on next page). Some observers valiantly covered several sites on different days, during a period of especially poor weather. Many thanks to the following for their efforts: David Jardine, Jim Dickson, Robin Harvey, Anthony Wetherhill, Alasdair Paterson

It would be fair to say that the coverage is far from comprehensive, but nevertheless, interesting and worthwhile. Inevitably things have changed over the period since the previous survey.

Key sites were selected because they had previously had roosts of over 1000 birds. Carradale no longer appears to meet that criterion and this may be explained by three changes: a much reduced fishing fleet in Carradale, so less food from discards, a change in the anti-predator netting on fish farm cages locally and the impact of dog-walking on the beach, causing regular disturbance. The Add Estuary now ap-

pears to meet the criterion, but it wasn't counted the same day as Loch Gilp, so there might be a question over the possibility of double counting if birds might have moved between the sites. Loch Feochan, which in 2003 reached the 1000 bird threshold, no longer appears to have any roost at all.



Gull counts by site in January/February 2024

Date	BH	CM	GB	HG	KI	LB	Unid Small	Unid Large	Totals
20-Jan L Gilp*	97	48	84	1289	15				1533
12-Jan L Craignish		14	22	51					87
24-Jan L Laich		1		9					10
20-Jan L Creran		32		1					33
25-Jan Danna		4	9	46					59
19-Jan Add Estuary		17	151	1371		2	10		1551
08-Feb Rhunahoarine Fish Farm									0
29-Jan Port Ann				445					445
06-Feb Dunderave Pt, L Fyne									0
25-Jan S of Ballimore Otter Ferry		62						558	620
29-Jan S of Ballimore Otter Ferry				20					20
20-Jan Carradale Bay W*		2	1	28					31
03-Feb Kennacraig North	1		6	76					83
20-Jan Inverneill shore	3			8					11
20-Jan Stronachullin Burn, Inverneill			41	53	350				444
20-Jan Creag Hamilton			12	205					217
07-Feb L Feochan Head									
27-Jan Ceann L Caolisport	24		6	15					45
20-Jan Inverneill tetrad	11	72							83
Totals	136	252	552	4817	365	2	10		6134

*Yellow highlights = Key sites counts >1000 gulls. BH = Black-headed Gull, CM = Common Gull, GB = Great Black-backed Gull, HG = Herring Gull, KI = Kittiwake, LB = Lesser Black-backed Gull

Just for another perspective, below is the table of BTO WeBS counts for January, which was the weekend before the gull count, and only Loch Creran and Loch Gilp are in both tables. It

should be noted these are not dusk roost counts, but does further emphasise the difficulties in making sense of the numbers.

	BH	CM	GB	HG	KI	LB	Unid Small	Totals
L Crinan	3	45	26	56				130
Loch Gilp	1	20	15	650		2		688
L Craignish								0
Dunstaffnage Bay	1	4		14				19
Dunoon to Ardyne		1	6	224				231
Holy Loch	18	19	8	270				315
L Creran			5	24				29
Ardentinny		9	2	68				79
Port na Carraig, Gigha			1	2				
Rhunahaorine	1	245	2	340				
Sound of Gigha	2	6	6	145				
Totals	26	349	71	1793	0	2	0	2241

We know that there is large roost of gulls in the fields next to the Holy Loch that are not necessarily included in WeBS counts, and it can number over 1000, so that may need better scrutiny, as it could qualify as a key site. These field roosts seem to be a feature not recognised by the survey methodology, so maybe

some tweaks may be required. It has also been noticed that gulls can go to roost on islands that are not easily accessible (Sanda and Sheep Island, for example), so these will also lead to gaps in the data.

Having said all that, the survey has another year

to run, so there are still opportunities to fill some of the gaps. There are some obvious gaps geographically, eg. south Kintyre, so if you think you can help with WinGS or WeBS, then look at the BTO website and/or contact your local organiser. Even if you make observations outwith the survey, please put them on to Birdtrack. With more data, we might be able to make more sense of what is going on.

A big thank you to all the WeBS counters as well.

<https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/winter-gull-survey>

<http://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/wetland-bird-survey>

Nigel Scriven

Treshnish Isles Auk Ringing Group

Report 2023



24th June – 30th June 2023

Chris Heward, Lila Buckingham,
Molly Brown, Andrew Carter, Tim Dixon,
Tim Frayling, Luke Nelson & Robin Ward

This is an excellent report and well worth looking at. It can be downloaded as a PDF file at:

http://www.tiarg.org/annual_reports/2023.pdf

2023—a bumper year on Tiree



In 2023, a total of 196 bird species was recorded on the Isle of Tiree, the second highest number ever recorded on the island, after the record-breaking year of 2014 when 200 species were seen. Over the last two decades and with help from visiting birders, between 170 and 190 species have been recorded per year on the island, so the 2023 total is well above the norm.

January began the year inauspiciously, as there were no lingering rarities from the previous year to pick up. I recorded 62 typical wintering species in the first week including Woodcock (1st) and Black-throated Diver (2nd), which are not always easy to find here. A Kumlien's Gull at Sorobaidh Bay (13th—photo opposite) was the only rarity for the month and January finished on 85 species. February, as it often is, was very slow with just four new species added, although these included both Barn Owl (4th) and Long-eared Owl (18th), neither of which can be guaranteed on Tiree in any given year. Things started to pick up in March, as spring migration kicked in, and in amongst more typical visitors were a Red-necked Grebe at Balephetrish Bay (10th—my first on the island!), a Todd's Canada Goose at Balephetrish (10th), a Velvet Scoter at Sorobaidh Bay (23rd—found by Keith Gillon) and a Stock Dove (31st—just the fifth for the island—photo opposite) at Balinoe. The last day of the month saw a small fall of migrants at Balephuill which brought the first Common and Lesser Redpolls of the year, plus a very early Willow Warbler bringing the island total to 105 species.

April is always a busy month with lots of new arrivals. In amongst the return of expected summer migrants such as Corncrake and Little Tern, there are always a few surprises and in 2023 these included a Mediterranean Gull at Loch an Eilein (11th), a very early Golden Ori-

ole near Heylipol Church (17th), a Yellowhammer at Kilmoluaig (20th—just my second record here) and a Tree Sparrow at Balephuill (26th—now more or less annual on the island—photo on next page). With the island total standing at a healthy 133



Upper photo. Juvenile Kumlien's Gull at Sorobaidh Bay on 13 January

Lower photo. Stock Dove at Balinoe on 31 March

Both images ©John Bowler



Upper photo. Tree Sparrow at Balephuill on 26 April

Lower photo. Female Redstart at Balephuill on 2 June

Both images ©John Bowler

species by the end of April, the month of May was going to be critical, and it got off to a flying start with a SE breeze bringing a Hobby and a Redstart (photo above) on the first day, quickly followed by Marsh Harrier (4th—annual on the island in recent years) and Hoopoe (6th—finally, my first here—photo on page 19). However, westerly winds mid-month were less helpful (as was a week in southern Spain!) and it was down to the last days of the month to produce Spotted Flycatcher, Black Redstart,

Rook and Swift bringing the total up to 147. The first week of June however made up for a less than classic May, with Little Stint, Curlew Sandpiper and a drake American Wigeon at Loch a' Phuill (4th), plus a singing Lesser Whitethroat and Garden Warbler at Balephuill. June 16th was a red-letter day bringing both Marsh Warbler (Tiree's 7th record—photo on next page) and Icterine Warbler (Tiree's 5th record) simultaneously to our garden at Balephuill and together with a clutch of typical June arrivals, such as Storm Petrel and Quail, ended the month on a solid 158 species.

The mid-summer doldrums of July added just one species (Arctic Skua), but August brought some good sea-watching fare including the now expected Balearic Shearwater, as well as Sooty Shearwater, Grey Phalarope and Pomarine Skua during a SE gale from Hynish (13th), plus a most unexpected Great-crested Grebe at Loch a' Phuill (8th) and a Black Tern for Arfon Williams off Urvaig (20th) bringing the island total to 167 species.

September is often a key month for picking up new scarce migrants on Tiree. It started well with Red Kite (2nd), Whinchat (3rd) and a Buff-breasted Sandpiper at Loch a' Phuill (6th), but a lack of strong westerly winds early in the month meant that Nearctic waders were in short supply. My two-week trip to West Papua to see birds of paradise in the last half of the month was never going to be well-timed from a Tiree year-list perspective, but the unprecedented arrival of Nearctic passerines that occurred up and down the western seaboard of the UK in that period was unexpected to say the least! I managed to see a (European) Wood Warbler in our garden at Balephuill on the morning of my departure (14th) but whatever species graced the garden in my absence and indeed elsewhere around the island until Jim Dickson and his birding team arrived on 24th will never be known. Fortunately, the Yellow Warbler and Red-eyed Vireo that were found by Jim's team, both remained for my return, as well as lingering Pectoral Sandpipers, American Golden Plovers, and a Baird's Sandpiper at Vaul. Easterly winds then dominated the rest of the autumn, which meant a great run of scarcer birds in October that can be hard to see on Tiree. Top bird must be the Chough (16th—only the second here in over 20 years) but there were also Waxwings (14th), Ring Ouzels (from 20th), a



Upper photo. Marsh Warbler at Balephuill on 18 June

Middle-photo. Hoopoe at Scarinish on 6 May

Lower photo. Snow Goose at Caoles on 13 December

All images ©John Bowler

Hawfinch (20th), a Pochard at Loch a' Phuill (20th—increasingly hard to find here), a Treecreeper showing features of the Northern race (21st), a Firecrest (24th—Tiree's 4th record) and a nice influx of Long-tailed Tits (from 17th—less than annual here). All of which brought the Tiree year-list neatly to 188 by the end of October.

The tail-end of the year can be a hard time to add new species to the list, but early November brought two Mistle Thrushes, a Green-winged Teal at Loch a' Phuill and Slavonian Grebes at Loch Bhasapol and Gott Bay. The Slavonian Grebe at Loch Bhasapol was replaced by a Coot (21st—now sadly less than annual on Tiree), a NW gale (23rd) produced a Little Auk off Aird and a Carrion Crow was new at Balemartine (29th) bringing the total to 194 species. December can often bring nothing new, but a Little Egret at Kirkapol (11th-13th) and a Snow Goose at Caoles (13th-31st—photo oppoait) brought the total up to 196, although sadly a reported possible Glossy Ibis in eastern Tiree could not be relocated.

2023 was therefore an exceptional year on Tiree, but is a total of more than 200 species possible? Some of the species seen on Tiree in 2023 were either new for the island (Yellow Warbler) or extremely rare here (Red-necked Grebe, Red-eyed Vireo, Chough) so cannot be counted upon annually. Equally, some formerly regular species such as Coot, Pochard and even Pheasant are now very hard to find on Tiree and may not be recorded in future years. On the other hand, 2023 was the first year since 2006 in which Yellow-browed Warbler was not recorded and other normally regular species that were missed included Ring-necked Duck, Red-breasted Flycatcher, Reed Warbler and Sabine's Gull. Indeed, the total for 2014 included a further 18 species that were not seen in 2023. The Tiree total now stands at a respectable 317 species with new birds being found almost every year. Given a bit of luck and complete year-round coverage, breaking the 2014 record of 200 species on Tiree in a year would seem a realistic goal. Only time will tell!

John Bowler

Recent recoveries of birds ringed/recovered in Argyll—2022



Colour-ringed Hooded Crows on Colonsay ©David Jardine

This note provides some details of the more interesting recoveries of birds ringed in Argyll or found here in 2022. These have been extracted from the BTO's online ringing report (Robinson *et al.* 2023), which covers the whole of Britain. In this it is possible to filter for different years, species and specifically for Argyll.

As a result of a precautionary restriction in seabird ringing in Scotland in response to the outbreak of HPAI (Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza) there was a significant decline in the number of birds ringed in Argyll in 2022 to 3,838 (-33%).

The 2022 recoveries listed below provide an insight to the movements and lifespans of some Argyll birds. Ages are expressed in years (y) months (m) and days (d).

Barnacle Goose

290966. Adult female ringed at Gruinart Farm, Islay, on 28 October 2013, found freshly dead in Eastern Greenland on 4 May 2022 (1,934km, NW, 8y 6m 6d).

White-fronted Goose

1497000. Adult male ringed near Gaerwen, Anglesey on 26 January 2021, resighted at East Loch Fada, Colonsay on 18 October 2022 (342km, NNW, 1y 8m 18d).

Mute Swan (a long lived individual)

Z84846. Second-year male ringed at Melfort, Kilmelford on 25 Jan 1997, found freshly dead at Kilmelford on 16 Jan 2022 (2km, 24y 11m 22d). The British longevity record is 29y 1m 11d.

Storm Petrel

2777237. Adult ringed on Lunga, Treshnish Isles on 2 July 2021, caught on Bardsey

Island, Gwynedd on 28 July 2022 (426 km, SSE, 1y 26d).

Manx Shearwater

FB55281. Adult ringed on Bardsey Island, Gwynedd, on 12 July 2019, found dead (possibly diseased) at Southend on 29 Jun 2022 (287 km, N, 2y 11m 17d).

Grey Heron

1292213. Ring (only) of nestling ringed at Skeabost Bridge, Skye on 13 May 1999, found at Sorisdale Bay, Isle of Coll on 10 August 2022 [87 km, S, (23y 2m 28d)].

Gannet

1462041. Nestling ringed at the Scares, Luce Bay, Dumfries & Galloway on 14 July 2016 found dead at Caliach, Mull on 5 December 2022 (237 km, NNW, 6y 4m 21d)



Greenland White-fronted Goose with a neck collar
©David Jardine

Adult Shag—many are ringed annually in Argyll ©Steve Petty



Shag

1417094. Nestling ringed on Sanda Island, Kintyre on 6 July 2021 found freshly dead at Aberarth, Ceredigion on 23 February 2022 (349 km, SSE, 7m 17d).

Cormorant

5248912. Nestling ringed on Corr Eilean, Sound of

Jura on 5 June 2012, found freshly dead at Tralee, Benderloch on 1 May 2022 (67 km, NNE, 9y 10m 26d).

Osprey

1469425. Nestling colour ringed at Muir of Ord, Highland on 26 June 2014, resighted at Loch Feochan on 30 July 2022 (141 km, SSW, 8y 1m 5d).

Golden Eagle

ZZ1085. Nestling ringed at a confidential site on 28 June 2006; ring number read at another confidential site on 11 February 2022 (42 km, NNE, 15y 7m 14d).

Hen Harrier

ET58909. Male nestling ringed on Colonsay on 16 June 2022, photographed at Wexford Slobs, Wexford on 26 December 2022 (412 km, S, 6m 10d).

White-tailed Eagle

XY0154. Nestling ringed at confidential site on 13 June 2019 found freshly dead (hit by train) in Angus (225 km, E, 2y 7m 28d).

ZY3786. Nestling colour ringed at confidential site on 7 June 2016, resighted at confidential site in Highland on 3 July 2018 (73 km, N) and resighted again at a confidential site in Highland on 1 March 2022 (103 km, N, 5y 8m 22d).

Buzzard

GN20197. Nestling ringed at Machrins, Colonsay on 11 June 2021, found long dead on Jura on 19 May 2022 (18 km, E, 11m 8d).

Oystercatcher (a wide range of recoveries showing the diverse composition of Argyll's Oystercatchers)

FA72043. Second-year male ringed at Ogwen Estuary, Gwynedd on 7 October 1995, found freshly dead (bird of prey) Machrie, Islay on 12 April 2022 (304 km, N, 26y 6m 5d).

FJ28548. Adult ringed at Dawlish Warren, Exe Estuary, Devon on 29 October 2018, resseen several times at Loch Beag, Craignish until 12 April 2022 (633 km, NNW, 3y 5m 14d)

FA71966. Adult ringed at Dawlish Warren, Exe Estuary, Devon on 14 February 2018, resseen several times at Port Charlotte, Islay until 26 June 2022 (603 km, NNW, 4y 4m 22d)

FH73548. Adult ringed at Whiteford Sands, Gower, Swansea on 16 October 2015, found freshly dead at Kirkapol, Gott Bay, Tiree on 31 July 2022 (568 km, NNW, 6y 9m 15d).

FJ56420. Adult ringed at Dundrum, Down on 12 December 2020, found freshly dead at Muasdale on 22 May 2022 (147 km, N, 1y 5m 10d).

4120779. Nestling colour ringed at Asgardur, Midnes, Gullbringusysla, Iceland on 2 July 2021, resighted at the bay at the Back of the Ocean, Iona on 1 March 2022 (1,238 km, SE, 7m 27d).

4116823. Nestling colour ringed at Svarf-holsvollur Gold Course, Selfossbaer, Arnessysla Iceland on 25 May 2021, resighted on Oronsay,

Icelandic Oystercatcher on Iona ©David Jardine



Colonsay on 28 August 2022 (1,196 km, SE, 1y 3m 2d).

Curlew

CT150714. First-year colour ringed at Paltamo, Kainuu, Finland on 3 July 2011, resighted at Loch Don, Mull on 31 October 2022 (2,003 km, W, 11y 3m 28d).

Dunlin (a trio of colour-ringed birds from Ceredigion)

BY06505. Adult colour ringed at Ynyslas, Borth, Ceredigion on 21 August 2020, resighted at Gott Bay, Tiree on 10 August 2022 (477 km, NNW, 1y 11m 20d).

BT94252. Adult colour ringed at Ynyslas, Borth, Ceredigion on 31 August 2019, resighted on Iona on 12 August 2022 (449 km, NNW, 2y 11m 12d).

BT88724. Adult colour ringed at Ynyslas, Borth, Ceredigion on 28 August 2018, resighted at Gruinart Flats, Islay on 6 September 2022 (395 km, NNW, 4y 9d).

Woodcock (possibly a cold weather movement)

EY19189. Fully grown individual ringed in the Pentland Hills, Lothian on 3 January 2020, shot at Port Appin on 26 December 2022 (148 km, NW, 2y 11m 23d).

Redshank

DT34648. First year ringed at Bangor Harbour, Gwynedd on 8 December 2018, found long-dead at Tralee, Benderloch on 27 April 2022 (372 km, NNW, 3y 4m 19d).

Kittiwake (a rare at sea recovery)

ET71601. Adult ringed at Pigs Paradise, Colonsay on 27 Jun 2011, recaptured at sea south of the Faroe Islands on 12 Feb 2022 (547 km, N, 10y 7m 16d).

Mediterranean Gull (another resighting of a Polish bird)

FS17606. Nestling colour ringed on 4 June 2021 at Wirownia Skoki Due, Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Poland on 4 June 2021, resighted East Bay, Dunoon on 16 September 2022 (1,613 km, WNW, 1y 3m 12d).

Common Gull

EA43569. Nestling colour ringed at the Ringing Stone, Tiree on 23 June 2021, resighted at Carnlough Bay, Antrim on 27 March 2022 (181 km, SSE, 9m 4d).

Great Black-backed Gull

MA00347. Nestling ringed on Sanda Island, Kintyre on 4 July 2019, found dead (predated) at Ardnave Point, Islay on 23 October 2022 (82 km, NNW, 3y 3m 19d).

MA213345. Nestling ringed on Horse Island, Ardrossan, Ayrshire on 11 July



Many Black Guillemots (above) and Puffins (below) are ringed annually at breeding colonies in Argyll
©Steve Petty

2021, found dead (disease) at Balure, Kintyre on 12 August 2022 (51 km, W, 1y 1m 1d).

Herring Gull

GN24872. Nestling ringed on the Kilmaraonag Islands, Loch Etive on 23 June 2007, ring read in Oban on 4 July 2022 (9 km, SW, 15y 11d).

GN91238. Nestling ringed on Sanda Island, Kintyre, on 28 Jun 2004, found long dead (presumed disease) at Kinloss, Moray on 5 December 2022 (289 km, NNE, 18y 5m 7d).

GY31468. Nestling ringed on Sanda Island, Kintyre, on 8 July 2021, found freshly dead at Threepneuk,

Shawhead, Dumfries & Galloway on 5 December 2022 (117 km, E, 11m 22d).

Common Tern (a very long distance recovery)

SR33898. Nestling ringed at South Shian, Benderloch on 20 July 2020, caught at La Langue de Barbarie, Senegal on 3 April 2022 (4,611 km, SSW, 11y 8m 14d).

Arctic Tern

SV58605. Nestling ringed on Treshnish Isles, Mull on 1 Jul 2016, caught by ringer at Gott Bay, Tiree on 8 May 2022 (21 km, W, 5y 10m 7 d).

Great Skua (two victims of bird flu)

MA04339. Nestling ringed on Mingulay, Western Isles on 10 July 2012 found long dead (disease) at Balure, Kintyre on 12 August 2022 (174 km, SE 10y 1m 2d).

MA35185. Nestling ringed at confidential site in Donegal on 5 Jul 2019, found freshly dead (disease) at Kentraw, Islay on 20 Jun 2022 (NE, 2y 11m 15d).

Guillemot (a long-lived individual and a wide range of recoveries including a Sanda chick moving to Bardsey)

T43899. Adult ringed on Colonsay on 20 June 1989, resighted there on 20 June 2022 (0 km, 33 y).

R69011. Adult ringed on Colonsay on 10 June 2019, found dead at Mariakerke, Oostende, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium on 22 February 2022 (807km, SE, 2y 8m 12d)

Y95215. Nestling ringed on Sanda Island, Kintyre on 26 June 2019, found freshly dead at Wadham Rocks, Newton Ferrers, Devon on 11 April 2022 (564 km, SSE, 2y 9m 16d).

N08844. Nestling ringed on Skomer, Pembrokeshire on 27 June 2022 found freshly dead at Ardchyline Farm, Loch Fyne on 25 September 2022 (499km, N, 2m 29d).

R010006. Adult ringed on Sanda Island, Kintyre on 24 June 1999, found freshly dead (storm) at Westward Ho, Devon on 18 November 2022 (479 km, S, 23y 4m 25d)

K00089. Nestling ringed on Sanda Island, Kintyre on 30 June 2009, recaptured by ringer on Bardsey Island, Gwynedd on 6 June 2022 (284 km, S, 12y 11m 7d).

Razorbill (a range of recoveries including a Sanda chick moving to Bardsey to breed)

M88249. Adult ringed on Lunga, Treshnish Isles on 22 June 2004, found freshly dead Conwy Morfa, Conwy on 17 April 2022 (392km, SSE, 17y 9m 26d).

K21286. Nestling ringed on Pentland Skerries, Orkney on 7 July 2021, found dead at Kiloran Bay, Colonsay on 14 January 2022 (347 km, SW, 6m 7d).

K00295. Nestling ringed on Sanda Island, Kintyre on 3 July 2007, ring read in field on



Two adult Long-eared owls caught during an evening ringing session ©David Jardine

Bardsey Island, Gwynedd on 1 July 2022 (284km, S, 11y 11m 28d), also seen/caught there in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

Black Guillemot

EW39974. Nestling ringed at South Shian, Benderloch on 8 July 2013, found long dead at Rubha Dearg, Loch Creran on 15 June 2022 (5 km, 8y 11m 7d).

Puffin

EW18070. Adult ringed on Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Mull on 23 June 2007, recaptured there on 29 June 2022 (15y 6d).

EL52993. Adult ringed on Lunga, Treshnish Isles, Mull on 24 June 2007, recaptured there on 29 June 2022 (15y 5d).

Barn Owl

GC09923. Male nestling ringed at Tayinloan on 22 June 2010, recaptured by ringer in West Kintyre on 21 May 2022 (10 km, NNE, 11y 10m 29d).

GR43223. Nestling ringed at Scavach, Kintyre on 8 September 2011, found freshly dead at Kilellan, Kintyre on 27 March 2022 (4 km, 10y 6m 19d).

Tawny Owl

GV10385. Adult female ringed at High Park Estate, Kintyre on 1 2016, recaptured there on 1 May 2022 (2 km, 6y)

Long-eared Owl (a rare recovery for this elusive species)

GY28929. Adult male ringed at Corrie Cravie Moor, Isle of Arran on 15 October 2021, recaptured at Calliburn Croft, Kintyre on 15 November 2022

(21 km, W, 1y 1m).

Hooded Crow

FH65792. Nestling colour-ringed at Garvard, Colonsay on 20 May 2017, resighted at Machrins, Colonsay on 26 August 2022 (3 km, 5y 3m 6d).

Blue Tit

Y824761. Nestling ringed at Ardentinn, Loch Long on 9 June 2016 found freshly dead Blairmore, Loch Long on 4 June 2022 (4 km, 5y 11m 26d).

Great Tit

L877709. Juvenile male caught at Kilmartin on 18 August 2013, recaptured there on 16 January 2022 (8y 4m 29d).

Swallow

ABZ6654. First-year bird ringed on Calliburn, Kintyre on 8 August 2022, recaptured at Chelmarsh Reservoir, near Bridgenorth, Shropshire on 14 September 2022 (394 km, SE, 1m 5d)

Sedge Warbler

AXL6309. Adult ringed at Poole Harbour, Dorset on 1 August 2021, recaptured Aros Moss, Campbeltown on 22 July 2022 (576 km, NNW, 11m 21d).

Blackcap

AXK8278. First-year male ringed at Stanford Reservoir, Northamptonshire on 11 September 2021, found freshly dead (hit glass) at Crarae, Furnace on 22 April 2022 (491 km, NNW, 7m 11d)

Treecreeper (a remarkable resighting)

BXY375. First-year bird ringed at Aros Moss, Campbeltown on 12 August 2022, ring read (from photos) on Ailsa Craig, Ayrshire on 27 August 2022 (41 km, E, 15d).

Starling (two westward movements from the east coast of Scotland.

LK50235. Juvenile female colour ringed at Montrose, Angus on 6 June 2022, resighted at Fishnish, Mull on 6 November 2022 (206 km, W, 5m).

LL82931. First-year female colour ringed at Montrose, Angus on 22 July 2019, resighted at Oban on 13 and 15 Aug 2022 (187 km, W, 3y 24d).

Blackbird

XV51250. Nestling ringed in Bruichladdich, Islay on 17 May 2021 found long dead there (in building) on 1 August 2022 (1y 2m 15d).

Robin

D967839. First-year bird ringed in Kilmartin on 30 December 2016, recaptured there on 22 January 2022 (5y



Large numbers of Goldfinch (upper photo ©David Jardine) and Siskin (lower photo ©Steve Petty) are caught in ringers' gardens in Argyll, which produce numerous recoveries annually (see text)

23d).

Tree Pipit (an exceedingly rare recovery for this species)

APT2517. First-year bird ringed at Nanjizal, Land's End, Cornwall on 26 August 2021, recaptured at Glen Euchar on 12 June 2022 (698 km, N, 9m 17d).

Chaffinch

Z329527. First-year male ringed at Lussa Forest on 23 September 2014, recaptured at Calliburn, Kintyre on 14 April 2022 (1 km, 7y 6m 22d).

AKJ4016. Adult female ringed at Glen Euchar on 12 January 2020, found freshly dead at Achonry, Tobercurry, Sligo on 15 May 2022 (324 km, SW, 2y 4m 3d).

AAN1561. Adult male ringed on Bardsey Island, Gwynedd on 18 October 2022, recaptured at Calliburn, Kintyre on

24 March 2022 (307 km, N, 1y 5m 6d).

AYN2406. First-year male ringed at Myroe, Limavaddy, Londonderry on 30 October 2020, recaght at Glen Euchar on 26 February 2022 (169 km, NE, 1y 3m 27d).

Bullfinch

ACN4439. Juvenile male ringed at Glen Euchar on 21 August 2021, found freshly dead at Ashfield on 22 May 2022 (37 km, SSW, 9m 1d).

Lesser Redpoll

ANP1788. Adult female ringed in Brandon, Norfolk on 20 April 2021, found freshly dead at Dunbeg, Oban on 27 April 2022 (593 km, NW, 1y 7d).

AEP0189. Adult female ringed in Brandon, Norfolk on 14 April 2021, ring read from photographs at Cairnbaan on 15 March 2022 (563 km, NW, 11m 1d).

AFR9845. Adult ringed at Edwinstowe, Nottinghamshire on 30 April 2021, recaght in Kilmartin on 6 April 2022 (433 km, NW, 11m 7 d).

ALK3505. First year bird ringed in Cheshire on 7 November 2020, recaght in Kilmartin on 6 April 2022 (377 km, NNW, 1y 4m 30d).

AKH0575. Adult male ringed at Calliburn, Kintyre on 5 May 2019, recaght at Salsburgh, North Lanarkshire on 31 March 2022 (117 km, ENE, 2y 10m 26d), then recaght at Calliburn, Kintyre on 28 April 2022 (2y 11m 23d).

Goldfinch

AAP2310. Juvenile ringed at Tobha Aisgeirnis, Western Isle on 11 June 2021, recaght at Fanmore, Mull on 27 March 2022 (104

km, SE, 9m 16d).

Siskin

AEX9502. Adult female ringed at Tiptoe, Hampshire on 21 March 2022, found freshly dead St Catherine's, Cairndow on 16 May 2022 (645 km, NNW, 1m 25d).

S021872. Second-year male ringed Thetford, Norfolk on 1 August 2020, found freshly dead (storm) at Arduaine on 21 February 2022 (588 km, NW, 1y 6m 20d).

ACP1687. Adult female ringed at Kilnsea, Yorkshire on 2 January 2022 recaght at Kilmartin on 12 April 2022 (456 km, NW, 3m 10d).

ALT9771. Full-grown male ringed at Edwinstowe, Nottinghamshire on 7 March 2022, killed by cat at Port Charlotte, Islay on 25 May 2022 (445 km, NW, 2m 18d).

S593764. Adult male ringed at Broomhill Grove, Nottinghamshire on 7 March 2022, recaght in Kilmartin on 1 April 2022 (432 km, NW, 25d).

BL05005. First-year female ringed at Lyste Buorren, Summarreheide, Friesland, The Netherlands on 6 October 2019, found freshly dead at Kilmichael Glen on 23 May 2022 (804 km, WNW, 2y 7m 17d).

Reference

Robinson, R.A., Leech, D.I. and Clark, J.A. (2023) The Online Demography Report: Bird ringing and nest recording in Britain & Ireland in 2022. BTO, Thetford. (<http://www.bto.org/ringing-report>)

David Jardine

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Contributions for the June *Eider* should be sent to the editor before the 20 May 2024

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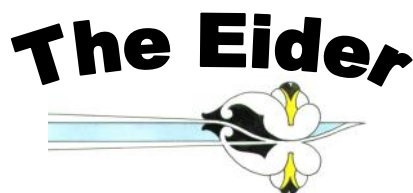
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The *Eider* is the quarterly newsletter of the **Argyll Bird Club**. The editor welcomes articles about birds, wildlife conservation and ecology in Argyll, including articles of a wider natural history interest, notices of forthcoming events, book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

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

The *Eider* is published during the first week of March, June, September and December. Articles for each issue must be with the editor **before** the 20th day of the month prior to publication. However, it greatly helps if material can be submitted well before these deadline dates. Contributions are accepted in the order they are received, which may result in some late submissions being held over until the next issue. Ideally, contributions should be less than 1500 words

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

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

More about the Argyll Bird Club

The club was established in 1985 and currently has 313 members. Its main role is to encourage an interest in wild birds and their habitats in Argyll; an area of outstanding natural beauty and biological diversity.

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

Ordinary	£10
Age 25 and under	free
Family	£15
Corporate	£25

A surcharge of £5 will be added to the above rates, if printed copies of the *Eider* are requested. Subscriptions are due on 1st January and can be paid by cheque, standing order or direct debit. New members joining after 1st October are covered until the end of the following year. Further information can be obtained from the Membership Secretary (see the box opposite).