

The Arran Bird Report 2016



Compiled by
Dr Jim Cassels for the Arran Natural History Society

Published by



The Arran Natural History Society

Arran Natural History Society

The Arran Natural History Society was formed in 1977 for the purpose of encouraging the study of local natural history, geology, meteorology, archaeology and cognate subjects. This is done through publications, talks, guided walks and workshops.

One of the publications of the society is the *Arran Bird Report*. This annual report was first published in 1978. These reports provide a unique record of the bird life of this special island over the last thirty plus years. Other publications include *Where can I see...?* a guide to wildlife on the island, *Arran Bird Atlas 2007-2012* and *Arran Flora*.

In 2013 the society won the Marsh Award for Local Ornithology for producing the *Arran Bird Atlas 2007-2012*. This is made to a bird club or group that publishes a book, completes a study or conducts any other exceptional activity that advances knowledge about birds. For more information visit the website:

http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/marsh_award_for_local_ornithology_2013.html

For more information on the Arran Natural History Society visit the website:

<http://www.arranwildlife.co.uk/index.html>

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In addition, permission to access the Arran records submitted to BirdTrack: www.bto.org/birdtrack and to BirdGuides www.birdguides.com was granted.

Records were also received from North Ayrshire RSPB group who have a presence on some of the weekend ferries during the summertime. All bird records given to the National Trust rangers at Brodick Country Park and to the Brodick Tourist Information Centre were forwarded to me.

Introduction

Welcome to the *Arran Bird Report* for 2016. This is the thirty-seventh consecutive annual bird report for the Isle of Arran and the eleventh one compiled by me.

This report would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of a number of individuals whose input I would like to acknowledge publicly: Terry Southall, local ringer, Andy Walker and Malcolm Whitmore for their local knowledge of raptors, Robert Logan for his work on Barn Owls and Bernie Zonfrillo, the bird recorder for the Clyde Islands. The input of the local “volunteers” involved in various surveys including the Wetland Bird Survey, the Breeding Bird Survey and the Garden BirdWatch has been a valuable source of information. It has also been helpful to be given permission to access the Arran records submitted to BirdTrack: www.bto.org/birdtrack and to BirdGuides: www.birdguides.com. At the writing stage, the advice of the committee and the editing and proof reading skills of Angela Cassels and Alan Hollick were invaluable. Having said that, I accept full responsibility for all omissions and errors. My thanks also to the following photographers for giving me permission to use their images to illustrate the report: Brian Couper, Charlotte Clough, Arthur Duncan, John Fitzpatrick, Nick Giles, Shona Redmayne, Kate Sampson, Ethan Sillars and Chris Southall. Finally, my thanks to the contributors; there would be no report without their input.

Over the year I have been encouraged by the number of people, locals and visitors, who have contacted me by email, letter and phone. All contacts have been welcome. I am not interested just in rare or unusual birds, but common birds, where there are significant numbers of common birds, which birds come to the garden at different times of the year, where breeding birds have been seen, when our summer or winter visitors have arrived or departed and what sightings have given individuals particular pleasure. I encourage everyone to share their bird sightings with me, so that the basis of our annual *Arran Bird Report* can be as comprehensive as possible.

In 2016, around three hundred contributors submitted over twelve thousand records on one hundred and fifty-six species, one of which had last been recorded in 1983, namely Red-necked Phalarope. All these records have been distilled and I have tried to provide a readable chronological summary and a systematic list that should provide a useful record of the bird life on Arran in 2016.

The chronological summary gives the highlights for each month. The systematic list is in the order of the British list as published by the British Ornithologists' Union (2006). This is in line with the Clyde Report. For each species, as well as the common name, the (new) official name and its scientific name have been given. There is information on the number of records received for each species and the number of sites in which the bird was recorded. This is followed by a brief statement giving the status of each bird on Arran, which can be markedly different from the status of the same bird on the adjacent mainland.

For 2017, please send any bird notes with “what, when, where” to me before Monday 08 January 2018, at Kilpatrick Kennels, Kilpatrick, Blackwaterfoot, KA27 8EY, or telephone 01770 860316, or email me at jim@arranbirding.co.uk.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Jim Cassels, the Bird Recorder for the Arran Natural History Society.

Chronological Summary

2016 was another fascinating birding year on Arran.

Reports of Little Auk in January reflected the stormy start to the year. While the weather seemed to delay the arrival of our summer visitors, they had a much better breeding season than last year. The records of Nuthatch in April and May suggested that this species may be following Great Spotted Woodpecker and colonising the island, but there was no confirmed breeding this year. Osprey also seemed to be prospecting on their way north. Our resident raptors had a mixed breeding season with some having a good season and others poor. The highlight of the summer was a juvenile Red-necked Phalarope in July; the first Arran record since 1983. The migration period in autumn was dry and settled and did not disappoint with a group of twenty-three Black-throated Diver being a particular highlight, while the winter saw Waxwings gracing our island in numbers for the first time for a few years.

The number of species recorded each month in Arran in 2016 is shown in the table below.

| Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| In Month | 95 | 90 | 105 | 101 | 116 | 94 | 102 | 89 | 98 | 100 | 92 | 91 |
| Year Total | 95 | 106 | 119 | 134 | 146 | 146 | 148 | 149 | 151 | 153 | 155 | 156 |

January

The unsettled weather of December 2015 continued into January 2016 with regular, sometimes storm force Atlantic fronts sweeping across the island. While it was a little milder than January 2015, it was wetter and windier.

The sightings of a juvenile Puffin close to Largymore on 7th, a Little Auk washed ashore at Laggan on 8th and another in Lamlash Bay also on 8th were almost certainly a result of this stormy weather. Other highlights included a Red Kite in High Kildonan on 12th and a Slavonian Grebe in Machrie Bay on 16th.

Wintering wildfowl numbers included: 12 Pink-footed Geese in the Shiskine Valley on 11th, fifty Teal on Sliderry shore on 14th, eight Whooper Swan at Silver Sands on 17th, fourteen Wigeon at Kilpatrick Point on 19th, three Goldeneye at Clauchlands Point on 20th, four hundred Greylag Geese in the Shiskine Valley on 27th and six White-fronted Geese also in the Shiskine Valley on 30th. Other winter visitors included nine Purple Sandpiper in Kildonan on 13th, a Greenshank at Clauchlands on 17th and forty-three Fieldfare with eighty-three Redwing by Loch Garbad on 20th. In addition, there were a number of reports of wintering Woodcock, Snipe and Jack Snipe, including groups feeding at night in appropriate fields in Sliderry on 8th.

Other noteworthy records included: seven Moorhen at Port na Lochan on 6th, eight Black-throated Diver at Clauchlands, six Great Northern Diver at Cosyden and a Merlin at Balliekinie all on 20th, eighty-eight Lapwing at Kilpatrick Point on 24th and two Little Grebe in Loch Ranza on 30th.

The consecutive cold winters of 2009-2011 had a detrimental impact on a number of birds including Stonechat. Therefore it was encouraging to receive sixteen sightings of this species in January including six birds at Clauchlands on 20th and four birds at Kilpatrick on 24th.

Interesting garden birds included: a male Blackcap in Alma Park on 2nd, a male Bullfinch in Lamlash on 7th, three Yellowhammer in Shiskine on 10th, ten Long-tailed Tit in Whiting Bay on 14th, two Goldcrest in Corrie on 30th and a pair of Great Spotted Woodpecker in Lochranza also on 30th. There were some signs of approaching spring with a pair of Mistle Thrush mating in Lamlash on 16th, twenty-six Eider courting off Cosyden on 20th, a Golden Eagle display flying over High Whitefarland on 22nd and a pair of Collared Dove nest building in Whiting Bay on 30th.

February

While February was drier than January with a few dry, cold settled spells, February was, nevertheless, fifty percent wetter than February 2015, making this winter one of the wettest winters on record.

Winter visitors were to the fore, including a juvenile Glaucous Gull at the mouth of the lorsa on 13th. This is the first Arran record of this Arctic breeding gull since March 2012. Other winter visitors included: two Purple Sandpipers at Silver Sands on 12th, a Merlin at High Whitefarland on 14th, a mixed group of around fifty Fieldfare and Redwing in Shiskine on 15th and throughout the month the long staying Greenshank at Clauchlands.

Wintering wildfowl were present in numbers including: fourteen White-fronted Geese in Shiskine on 6th, fourteen Whooper Swans flying over Brodick pier also 6th, forty-six Teal at Kilpatrick Point on 10th, thirty-seven Wigeon at Cosyden on 13th, seventeen Brent Geese in Lamlash Bay on 15th, four hundred and fifty Greylag Geese with thirty-five Pink-footed Geese in Shiskine also on 15th and a pair of Goldeneye on Port na Lochan on 17th.

Other flocks included: thirty Curlew at Clauchlands on 6th, one hundred and fifty Lapwing at Clachaig on 8th, eighty Common Gull at Kilpatrick Point on 10th, fifty Chaffinch at Auchencar on 13th, 500 Herring Gull in Whiting Bay on 23rd, twelve Skylark in Auchenhew Bay also on 23rd and nineteen Turnstone in Blackwaterfoot on 27th. Some of these flocks may have included birds beginning to migrate north.

The occasional calm days were ideal for sea watching. Reports included: a male Long-tailed Duck off Blackwaterfoot on 11th, (The first Arran record of this rare vagrant since March 2015.) twenty-two Great Northern Divers off Blackwaterfoot also on 11th, eight Black-throated Divers in Loch Ranza on 14th, two Red-throated Divers in Whiting Bay on 27th, two Common Scoter at Machriewaterfoot on 24th and a Slavonian Grebe off Cosyden on 24th. On the same date and in the same location there were some signs of approaching spring with sixty-five Eider and six Red-breasted Merganser in full courtship display.

With sources of food for some species of bird becoming scarce, gardens were havens for many species. Among the many garden highlights were eight Siskin in Lamlash on 16th, a male Bullfinch in Brodick on 22nd, a pair of Great Spotted Woodpecker in Lamlash on 24th, nine Long-tailed Tit in Whiting Bay also on 24th, six Goldfinch at Kilpatrick on 29th and four Yellowhammer in Shiskine also on 29th. Increasingly, numbers of Siskin on their annual journey north began to appear at garden feeders.

Other sightings included: two Dipper at Sliderywaterfoot on 2nd, a Short-eared Owl at the top of the String on 8th, two Moorhen at Port na Lochan on 14th, two Common Crossbill at High Kildonan on 18th and seven Little Grebe in Loch Ranza on 22nd.

As well as displaying Eider and Red-breasted Merganser on the coast, other signs of approaching spring included; a Grey Heron with nest building material in Lamlash on 15th, a pair of Collared Dove nest building in High Kildonan on 18th, thirteen Fulmars on the cliffs at Catacol on 20th, Black Guillemots in breeding plumage off Holy Isle on 25th and ten Lesser Black-backed Gull at Sandbraes on 27th. In addition in February, there were reports of returning Shelduck from sixteen locations around the island.

March

March was warmer and drier than February, while March this year was a little warmer and a little drier than March last year. It is an exciting time of year, awaiting the arrival of our summer visitors and seeing the last of our winter visitors leaving. The timing of the northerly spring migration is dependent on the weather, not just locally, but throughout the whole length of the migration route.

Some of the first migrants arrived later than last year and some arrived earlier. The first Wheatear was reported at Sannox on 28th, eleven days later than 2015. The first Chiffchaff was reported in Brodick Castle grounds on 29th, ten days later than 2015. The first Sandwich Tern was reported at Kilpatrick Point on 30th, eight days earlier than 2015. The first Sand Martin was reported in Sannox Bay on 31st, four days earlier than 2015. By the end of the month the bulk of our migrants was still anticipated.

However, our winter visitors were still to the fore including: five Whooper Swan in Lamlash on 3rd, eight Brent Geese in Kildonan on 4th, a Goldeneye at Cladach also on 4th, three Purple Sandpipers at Silver Sands on 5th, seventy Fieldfare at Clachaig on 6th, thirty-one Pink-footed Geese in Kilmory also on 6th, forty-nine Redwing in Sliderry also on 6th, forty-eight Wigeon at Cosyden on 13th, thirty Rook at Shannochie on 15th and one hundred and eighty Greylag Geese in the Shiskine Valley on 27th.

There were many signs of the ongoing migration including: one hundred and ten Lapwing on Cleats Shore on 1st, two Common Scoter off Cosyden on 13th, fifty-seven Curlew in Sliderry also on 13th, fifteen Barnacle Geese flying past the Lakin on 14th, two Snow Bunting at Clauchlands Point on 15th, three Black-throated Diver off Cosyden on 19th, five Great Northern Diver off Brown Head also on 19th, twenty-one Twite on Cleats Shore on 21st and twenty-one Redshank at Sandbraes on 23rd. Other signs of migration were widespread reports in gardens of Siskin, sometimes accompanied by Lesser Redpoll and four Yellowhammer in a Shiskine garden on 13th. In addition a Red-necked Grebe, an uncommon passage migrant for Arran, was photographed in Catacol Bay on 6th. This is the first record since 2009.

Other interesting records this month included: five Common Crossbill at High Kildonan on 17th, one Jack Snipe in Sliderry on 18th, one hundred and seventy Woodpigeon in Monamore also on 18th, three Goosander in Machrie Bay on 22nd, a Water Rail in Lakin Farm on 28th and two Moorhen in Port na Lochan on 31st. In addition, it was encouraging to get Short-eared Owl records from six different locations in March.

Spring is a great time to be birding, as most birds are getting on with the business of breeding. The business of breeding involves attracting a mate by song, courtship display and ritual, defining a territory, nest building and generally establishing relationships. In March the signs were there, including: Starling nest building in Lochranza on 1st, Raven nesting in Pirmill also on 1st, Golden Eagle display flying over Lochranza on 6th, Grey Herons carrying sticks to the heronry in Lagg on 10th, forty-two Eider in courtship display off Pladda on 20th, Stonechat nest building on Cleats Shore on 21st, seven Red-breasted Merganser displaying in Whiting Bay on 23rd, Song Thrush singing in Pirmill on 26th and twenty Fulmar on the breeding cliff at Drumadoon on 27th.

April

April is the month when spring migration gets underway, with arrivals and departures of birds, all seeking their best breeding territories. This April was an interesting, almost "four season" month with a wide range of temperatures and other weather conditions. While there were short, dry, settled spells, it was wetter than April 2015 and the end of the month saw northerly winds and snow on the hills. The impact on migrating birds heading north seemed to be to hold them up. For example, there were widespread reports of Wheatear including thirty-six in Sliderry on 23 April. Many of these were the larger Greenland Wheatear waiting for more southerly winds to help them head for Greenland and northern Canada.

While a number of the regular migrants did arrive in April, it seemed to be only the pioneers. Even by the end of the month the bulk of the migrants had still to arrive. Here are April "firsts" with the 2015 arrival date in brackets for comparison: Manx Shearwater off Largymore on 2nd (12 April), Swallow in Sliderry on 2nd (7 April), White Wagtail in Auchenheav Bay on 10th (6 April), Willow Warbler in Auchenheav Bay on 10th (4 April), House Martin in Bennecarrigan Farm on 11th (9 April), Whitethroat in Sliderry on 13th (21 April), Common Sandpiper in North Sannox on 14th (14 April), Cuckoo in High Kildonan on 18th (12 April) and Tree Pipit on Maol Donn on 20th (20 April).

In April some of our wintering birds were still around including: six Fieldfare in Sliderry on 3rd, one Rook in Sandbraes also on 3rd, one hundred and ten Barnacle Geese over Kildonan on 10th, forty-eight Pink-footed Geese and two Whooper Swan in Sliderry on 10th and a Redwing in Kilmory on 13th.

April is an ideal time for watching migration particularly around the coast. Examples included: a Greenshank at Merkland Point on 5th, three Great Northern Divers in Sannox Bay on 12th, six White Wagtail on Cleats Shore on 17th, twenty-one Whimbrel and a Dunlin in Blackwaterfoot on 30th and a Great Skua in Brodick Bay also on 30th. On Monday 25 April there was an unusual spectacle for four observers. There were courting Smew in the mouth of the river off Sannox picnic area. There was initially an adult male displaying to a red-headed female. These were later joined by two other red-heads. This is the first Arran record of this northern breeding saw-billed diving duck since November 2004.

Away from the coast other unusual arrivals were reported including: a Ring Ouzel on Goatfell on 10th and a Common Redstart in Monyquil on 18th and 22nd. This is the first Arran record since 2012. On Wednesday 6 April there was a report of a Nuthatch at feeders in Brodick Castle grounds. On the same day there was a report of a Nuthatch at the rear of the Corrie Hotel. This species is spreading its range north and these records may signal hope for future breeding records.

The signs of migration were also evident from the garden records in April. There were a number of Lesser Redpoll garden records including four in Cordon on 8th. In addition there were many widespread garden records of Goldfinch, with thirty in Shannochie on 26th being the largest group seen at one time. Siskin were similar, with fourteen in Lamlash on 30th being the largest group seen. There could be thousands of birds on the move through Arran at this time. The most unusual garden record was a Hawfinch reported in Pirnmill on 21st and Lochranza on 22nd. Heading north? There was one record in 2015.

With all this movement there were over one hundred species of birds recorded on Arran in April.

May

May was warmer and drier than May 2015 with the temperatures in the twenties on some days. The rainfall was some thirty percent less than 2015. Having said that, the winds were often from a cool north easterly direction not conducive to birds trying to migrate north. May, like April, was an interesting birding month, again with over one hundred species recorded.

Here are some highlights. Further to the April reports of Nuthatch on Arran, there were further reports from Brodick Castle grounds on 3rd and 5th. Unusually there were two reports of Osprey this month one in Whiting Bay on 20th and a week later a report from Shannochie shore on 27th. There is a breeding pair on Bute but perhaps these records may suggest an interest in breeding on Arran. Time will tell. Other highlights included: a male Tufted Duck in Strabane on 18th, a Hawfinch in a garden in Cordon on 21st and a Red Kite in Sliderry on 27th. This is the third record this year.

Our regular summer visitors continued to arrive. Here are May "firsts" with the 2015 arrival date in brackets for comparison: Grasshopper Warbler in Mayish on 1 May (20 April), Whinchat in Glen Rosa on 2nd (24 April), Sedge Warbler in Corrie cravie on 4th (21 April), Spotted Flycatcher in Sliderry on 8th (13 May), Swift also in Sliderry on 9th (8 May), Arctic Tern in Kildonan on 18th (23 May) and Garden Warbler in Strabane also on 18th (12 May). In addition, throughout the month, the numbers of familiar summer visitors like Swallow, House Martin, Willow Warbler and Cuckoo continued to build up; perhaps more slowly than in recent years because of that wind direction.

Species who breed further north continued to pass through including: seventeen Wheatear in Sliderry on 1st, six White Wagtail at Kilpatrick Point on 4th, a Black-tailed Godwit on Sliderry Shore on 5th, eight Turnstone at Drumadoon Point on 8th, eight Whimbrel at Kildonan also on 8th, a Wigeon on Sliderry shore on 14th, a Great Northern Diver at Drumadoon Point on 17th, twenty-four Dunlin at Kildonan on 18th and seven Sanderling at Drumadoon Point on 21st.

Occasionally this northward migration could be seen at the same time as local breeding. For example on 18th on the shore at Blackwaterfoot, groups of up to twenty Ringed Plover were heading north while "local" Ringed Plover were sitting on eggs.

In May, breeding was well underway for many species. Encouraging signs included reports of Ring Ouzel, Short-eared Owl and Hen Harrier all holding breeding territories. In addition, breeding Stonechat were reported from widespread areas including Auchenhew, Machrie, Kilpatrick, Glenscorrodale, Glen Rosa, Sliderry, Claulands and Newton. Perhaps these delightful birds are beginning to recover after the two consecutive very cold winters. Other breeding records included: recently fledged Starling in Blackwaterfoot on 19th, Shelduck with fourteen young also in Blackwaterfoot on 24th, a family group of eight Long-tailed Tit in Whiting Bay on 25th and Little Grebe with four young on Mossend Pond on 27th. Towards the end of the month, there were lots of reports of garden birds carrying food and feeding recently fledged young.

June

June 2016 was much drier and warmer than last June. With around half the rainfall and a mean temperature almost four degrees higher than last year, conditions were generally much better for our breeding birds. Towards the end of the month, there were many reports of fledged birds in gardens including unfamiliar looking young birds, like Goldfinch without the red face of the adult birds, Robin with spots and no red breast, as well as the more familiar Blackbirds, Starlings and House Sparrows. There were comments like "it was a bumper year for breeding"..." I have never seen so many young birds in the garden". As well as the more regular nesting garden birds there were reports of a family of Long-tailed Tit in Lamlash on 6th, a family of Bullfinch in Lochranza on 28th, young Great Spotted Woodpecker with their distinctive red cap in Dereneach on 29th and most unusual of all, Common Sandpiper. For three years in a row, a pair of Common Sandpiper successfully nested in a garden in Blackwaterfoot. This year a garden in Lamlash and one in Corrie both had similar success from these summer visiting shore birds.

Away from gardens there were many signs of breeding including: Yellowhammer singing in Penrioch on 4th, Hen Harriers executing food passes on Machrie Moor on 8th, Little Grebe with young in Mossend Pond on 13th, Dipper with young at Torr Dubh on 14th, Ring Ouzels carrying food on the northern hills on 18th and activity at the Grey Heron heronries in Stronach Wood, Brodick, and Whitehouse Wood, Lamlash, on 28th.

Breeding birds caused some disruption to human activity. A pair of Pied Wagtail successfully raised their brood on the back of a tractor on Shiskine Golf Course and Common Gulls nested on a building site in Blackwaterfoot. Well done to the humans for looking after their feathered neighbours.

Around the coast there were further signs of breeding including: Fulmars on nests at Brown Head on 5th, Ringed Plover trying to protect their young from dog walkers at Porta Buidhe on 15th, thirty Black Guillemot at the colony by the King's Cave on 21st, Oystercatcher young at Drumadoon Point also on 21st, Shelduck with eleven young at Blackwaterfoot on 22nd and thriving colonies of Sand Martin at Cosyden and Thunderguy on 26th. A study of breeding Black Guillemot, involving the licensed ringing of birds, came across a bird that had been ringed fourteen years previously at the same spot at Imachar.

Cuckoos, whose decreasing numbers are a cause for concern nationally, seem to be thriving on Arran. Throughout May and June there were many widespread reports. People need no prompting to report the first Cuckoo. However most adult Cuckoos, taking no part in rearing their young, leave around mid to late July. Juveniles leave breeding areas soon after they fledge, quickly becoming independent of their hosts and disperse widely before also migrating south, usually in late July and early August. These young Cuckoos have a white patch on the back of the head.

Other June reports included: four Black-throated Diver off Cosyden on 8th, thirty-six Manx Shearwater off Pladda, four Puffin in Brodick Bay and five Swift over Kildonan, all on 9th. None of these species breed on Arran.

Four Lapwing on the shore at Cosyden on 25th and two Rook in Slidderly on 26th, both species away from their breeding areas, may have been early signs of breeding being over for some birds this year.

July

While the mean temperature in July was a little lower than June and the rainfall in July was more than double the rainfall in June, the period May to June this year was warmer, mean temperature two degrees higher, and drier, thirty percent less rain, than the same period last year. This was more conducive than last year to the successful breeding of many species of birds.

For some of our summer visitors like the warblers and hirundines which rely on insects to raise their young, the weather conditions were better than last year. Whereas last year many of these species had given up and left, this year many seemed to be attempting to raise a second brood. Examples included: House Martin and Swallow starting a second brood in Kildonan on 8th, Sand Martins with young in Kilpatrick on 13th, Grasshopper Warbler setting up breeding territory again in Lakin on 15th, a family of Blackcaps, the young with brown caps, in Lamlash on 28th and at least twelve Willow Warbler including many young in a small patch of High Kildonan on 29th.

Other signs of a successful breeding season included: ten Blue Tit at Gortonallister on 8th, twenty Lesser Redpoll on Corriecravie Moor on 12th, one hundred and five House Sparrow in Slidderly on 15th, twenty-five Chaffinch in Marnaheglish 24th and, encouragingly, after the devastation caused by a trichomonas parasite, young Greenfinch in Cordon on 8th. It was not just small birds but some larger species also seemed to be doing well including: forty Black Guillemot by King's Caves on 3rd, Shelduck with ten young at Kilpatrick Point on 14th, thriving Herring and Lesser Black-backed Gull colonies on the Holy Isle on 20th, young Great Spotted Woodpecker in Lamlash on 24th and six Common Sandpiper on Slidderly Shore on 27th.

July marks the end of the breeding season for some birds. It can be an interesting time looking out for birds that are heading south from their breeding grounds further north. This year there was an exceptional sighting when on Sunday 31 July, a juvenile Red-necked Phalarope was photographed on a pond on a farm in Slidderly. The Red-necked Phalarope breeds in the Arctic regions of North America and Eurasia. It is migratory, wintering pelagically off central-western South America, in the Arabian Sea, and in central Indonesia. This species is a rare vagrant to Arran. It had stopped off on its long flight to refuel. The last Arran record was in August 1983. The bird was also present on 1 August but there was no sign of it on 2 August.

On the 27th, a number of these northern breeding species, many still in their breeding plumage, were reported including: a Whimbrel at Kildonan, a Greenshank at Cosyden and six Dunlin, two Sanderling and eight Turnstone at Machriewaterfoot.

These are some other July reports of birds which are already dispersing, flocking or migrating south after breeding: seventy-eight Curlew at Corriecravie on 15th, four Black-headed Gull at Sandbraes on 21st, fifteen Redshank in Lamlash on 24th, four Sandwich Tern at Sandbraes on 24th, twelve Golden Plover at Cosyden on 26th, twenty-six Red-breasted Merganser at Machriewaterfoot on 27th, one White Wagtail on Slidderly Shore also on 27th and three Wheatear on Silver Sands on 30th.

Over one hundred species were reported in July. Other highlights included: two Moorhen on the pond by Machrie Golf Course on 5th, a pair of Bullfinch in Dippin on 9th, two Black-throated Diver in Brodick Bay on 12th, two Water Rail in Corriecravie on 17th, six Swift over High Kildonan on 19th, one Common Crossbill in Slidderly on 26th and thirteen Canada Geese on Cleats Shore on 29th. Interestingly, whereas earlier in the year there were reports of up to eighty Gannets together, in July all reports were of single birds

August

August 2016 was warmer and drier than August 2015. This year August was similar in terms of rainfall and temperature to July. Towards the end of the month, with lower temperatures some nights, there was more than a hint of the approach of autumn.

Having said that, summer visitors were still to the fore including family groups of the following: Sedge Warbler in Corriecravie on 1st, Whitethroat in Auchenhew on 2nd, Willow Warbler in High Whitefarland also on 2nd, Sand Martin in Monyquill on 4th, Spotted Flycatcher in North Sannox on 5th, Tree Pipit in Sliderry on 18th and Common Sandpiper in Sliderrywaterfoot on 20th. In addition, there were ninety Swallow at Corriecravie on 1st and sixty at Kilpatrick Farm on 23rd. The largest group of House Martin was thirty at Sliderry on 20th. A white leucistic House Martin caused a bit of a stir in Whiting Bay/Kingscross between the 1st and the 5th. The last record of Swift was a single bird over Auchencairn on 5th. Swift do not breed on Arran.

Other signs of successful breeding this month included: twenty-four Black Guillemot off Whitefarland on 1st, young Great Spotted Woodpecker in Glenloig on 13th, Mute Swan with five young at Clauchlands on 14th, five Buzzard over High Cloined on 16th, juvenile Water Rail and juvenile Moorhen in Corriecravie on 17th, a second brood of Blackbird in Lamdash on 26th, eight Grey Heron in Lochranza also on 26th and a Collared Dove with an occupied nest in a TV satellite dish in Blackwaterfoot on 28th.

In August, breeding is coming to an end, and after breeding a number of species begin to flock together, some in preparation for migration. These included: twenty-five Pied Wagtail at Porta Buidhe on 5th, twenty Mistle Thrush in Corriegills on 8th, five hundred Manx Shearwater in Brodick Bay on 11th, seventy Goldfinch and seventy Curlew at Clauchlands on 13th, forty-eight Meadow Pipit in Sliderry on 20th, forty-two Red-breasted Merganser in Cosyden also on 20th, four hundred Starling in Sliderry on 21st, one hundred Ringed Plover and fourteen Redshank at Sandbraes on 23rd, fifty Linnet at Cleats Shore on 27th and one hundred House Sparrow in Feorline on 29th.

All around the coast were signs of birds on migration, including eight Sanderling at Drumadoon Point on 2nd, five Wheatear on Cleats Shore on 5th, four Greenshank at Sliderrywaterfoot on 14th, a Great Skua in Brodick Bay on 18th, two Whimbrel on Sliderry shore also on 18th, eleven White Wagtail at Sliderrywaterfoot on 20th, a Knot and thirty-one Turnstone at Machriewaterfoot on 22nd, four Sandwich Tern in Machrie Bay 27th and eight Dunlin at Machriewaterfoot on 28th.

Other birding highlights this month included: a juvenile Coot at Port na Lochan from 3rd to 14th (only the third Arran record since 1989), two Little Grebes at Mossend Pond on 8th, fourteen Red Grouse by Urie Loch on 18th and a group of eight Black-throated Diver off the King's Cave on 28th.

September

September was warmer than last September with the mean temperature almost two degrees higher but it was wetter with more than twice the amount of rain. September was a little drier than the previous two months but not by much. September is the start of the peak migration season, when many birds are on the move. There was a wide range of species recorded in September, over one hundred. It was certainly the time to expect the unexpected.

The highlight was the first record this year of Great Crested Grebe. Two were seen off-shore close to the Fallen Rocks car park on 23 September. It is an occasional passage migrant and winter visitor not recorded every year. Other unusual records included: an Osprey photographed over Glen Chalmadale on 10th with another sighting of perhaps the same bird at Sliderry on 11th and four Brent Geese at the mouth of the Rosa and Cloy Burns on 21st.

Other birds on migration included: twenty-two Black-throated Diver off Cosyden on 6th, seventy Turnstone at Machriewaterfoot also on 6th, fourteen Dunlin at Blackwaterfoot on 7th, twenty Redshank at Sandbraes also on 7th, one Sandwich Tern in Whiting Bay on 10th, eight Wheatear at Drumadoon Point on 16th, one Bar-tailed Godwit on Shannochie shore on 20th and a Greenshank at Cordon on 23rd.

At this time of year birds begin to flock together, often in preparation for migration. Reports included: two hundred Ringed Plover at Machriewaterfoot on 6th, eighty Kittiwake in Brodick Bay on 7th, one hundred Swallow at Balmichael on 15th, forty Goldfinch in Sliderry on 16th, one hundred Gannet in Whiting Bay on 17th, one hundred and fifty-two Golden Plover at Machriewaterfoot also on 17th, one hundred Skylark on Cleats Shore on 18th, three hundred Linnets on Cleats Shore on 21st, eight hundred Manx Shearwater off Cosyden on 23rd, sixty Pied Wagtail on Silver Sands on 25th and one hundred Starling in Cosyden on 30th. This gives an indication of the numbers of birds that are on the move at this time of year.

Some of our winter visitors began to be reported including: thirty-seven Rook in Sliderry on 20th and four Wigeon at Cosyden on 23rd. On 11 September there was a report of fifty-eight Greylag Geese in Shiskine. Whether these were part of the increasing population of naturalised geese that are on Arran all year or early migrants arriving from the north is not known.

Having said that, some summer visitors were still around including: Spotted Flycatcher at Auchenhew on 11th, Whitethroat in Sliderry on 16th, Chiffchaff in Lamlash on 17th, Sedge Warbler in Cordon on 18th, Willow Warbler in Sliderry on 20th and Lesser Black-backed Gull in Dougarie on 22nd. The following are the last September reports of the hirundines: six Sand Martin in Sliderry on 22nd, ten House Martin in Sliderry on 30th and five Swallow in Kilpatrick also on 30th. October should see the last of the House Martins and Swallows departing south.

Other sightings this month included: ten Common Scoter at Cosyden on 6th, twenty-five Black-headed Gull at Blackwaterfoot on 7th, one Common Crossbill in Sliderry on 14th, one Puffin south of Pladda on 15th, thirteen Lapwing on Sliderry Shore on 17th and a Little Grebe by the Fisherman's Walk on 22nd. In addition, the Arran Black Grouse Group released a further forty Black Grouse. To try to monitor these birds some have radio tags. Kate Sampson, Head Ranger, Brodick Country Park, would be delighted to have a note of any sightings of Black Grouse.

October

October was the driest month this year. It was the driest October that I have recorded here, with less than a quarter of the rainfall normally recorded in recent Octobers. It was also storm-free and mild providing a welcome settled spell of weather. During the month there were plenty of interesting birds to enjoy. Around one hundred species were recorded. October is arguably the busiest birding month, as summer breeders depart, migrants pass through, winter visitors arrive and there is always a strong chance of something unusual.

The build up of the number of winter thrushes, Fieldfare and Redwing, was a feature of the month. There were widespread reports of the birds feasting on the autumn berries, with flocks in the hundreds being reported in the north and in the south of the island including 1,300 Fieldfare and 300 Redwing in Sliderry on 29 October. Skeins of migratory geese and swans in their distinctive V flying formation were also a feature, including, again on 29 October, fourteen Whooper Swan over Kilpatrick and Shiskine, twenty-two Whooper Swan over High Kildonan, thirty Pink-footed Geese over Sliderry and thirty-two Greylag Geese over Kilmory, their honking and trumpeting calls filling the autumn skies.

Other sightings that indicated that migration was in full flow included: forty Turnstone on Silver Sands on 2nd, six Dunlin in Blackwaterfoot on 6th, a Bar-tailed Godwit in Auchenhew Bay on 10th, a Greenshank in Cordon also on 10th, one hundred and sixty-two Golden Plover at Machriewaterfoot on 15th, a Knot in Kildonan on 16th, three hundred Skylark over Sliderry also on 16th, twenty-five Twite in Kildonan on 19th, thirty Goldfinch in Auchenhew on 21st, and one hundred Teal and one hundred Starling in Cosyden on 28th. Familiar birds were being reported in numbers that would

suggest birds moving out of cold northern Europe to the milder climes of our island, including one hundred Chaffinch on Cleats Shore on 1st, eight Dunnock in Slidery on 19th, twelve Coal Tit in Balmichael on 21st, seventy Robin in Auchenhew also on 21st and ten Blackbird in Slidery on 25th.

There were some "last sightings" of summer visitors also moving south including: a Whinchat on Cleats Shore on 1st, a Sandwich Tern in Whiting Bay on 4th, one hundred Gannet off Pirmill on 5th, a Chiffchaff in Auchenhew on 21st, a Lesser Black-backed Gull in Lochranza on 23rd, a Wheatear in Kilmory on 24th and a Swallow in Slidery on 28th, the last report of the year.

Winter visitors arriving included: three Brambling in Slidery on 19th, one hundred and twenty-seven Rook in Kilmory on 28th, sixty Wigeon at Cosyden also on 28th, a male Blackcap in Lochranza on 31st and two Yellowhammer in Slidery also on 31st.

Other interesting records from a month with a plethora of birds included: all three divers - two Red-throated Diver in Whiting Bay on 2nd, twenty-three Black-throated Diver off Blackwaterfoot on 8th, three Great Northern Diver in Machrie Bay on 29th, three Red Grouse on Meall Mor on 2nd, a Jack Snipe in Mayish on 14th, four Bullfinch on Lamlash Hill on 21st, five Little Grebe in Loch Ranza also on 21st, twelve Long-tailed Tit in Lochranza on 30th and two Tufted Duck in Port na Lochan also on 30th.

November

In November winter arrived with the first substantial snow on the mountains. The mean temperature was five degrees lower than October and there was almost four times as much rain as in October. It was more settled than last November with no storms and about a third less rain but it was colder, almost three degrees colder. The rain was mainly in the middle of the month with a cold spell to end the month.

In these conditions it was no surprise that there were few records of lingering summer visitors. The only records were two reports of Gannet on 2 November, one off Drumadoon Point and one off Lochranza.

Winter visitors were to the fore, among the highlights being two Snow Bunting flying over the top of Sail Chalmadale on 6th and reports of stunning Waxwings starting with two in Margnaheglish on 6th. The biggest group was around one hundred on Corrie Golf Course on 22nd. These berry-loving, colourful birds from Northern Europe, sometimes venture into the UK during winter if there is a shortage of food in their Scandinavian breeding area. They are not reported every winter in the UK.

Throughout the month there were widespread reports of foraging Fieldfare and Redwing, sometimes in mixed flocks. The largest group of Fieldfare reported was five hundred on Whiting Bay Golf Course on 1st and the largest group of Redwing was also on a golf course with three hundred on Lamlash Golf Course on 3rd. Other records of wintering birds included: a Brambling in Shiskine on 6th, two Purple Sandpiper at Porta Buidhe on 10th, fourteen Rook in Slidery on 25th and forty Turnstone at Silver Sands on 26th.

Groups of wintering wildfowl included: sixty Wigeon in Cosyden on 1st, one Tufted Duck in Port na Lochan on 2nd, seventy-two Pink-footed Geese in Slidery on 4th, four Common Scoter off Cosyden on 7th, a female Scaup by the mouth of the Rosa burn on 14th, four Goldeneye in Sannox Bay on 16th, seventeen Whooper Swan over Knockenkelly on 21st and the largest group of Greylag Geese reported was two hundred and seventy-five in Shiskine on 22nd.

Gardens are safe refuges during the winter months with many people providing regular food and water for their feathered friends. These are a small selection from the many reports from gardens round the island in November: four Blackbird in Lamlash on 4th, twelve House Sparrow in Kilpatrick on 6th, five Bullfinch in Kildonan also on 6th, four Goldfinch in Whiting Bay on 7th, a Great Spotted Woodpecker in Shiskine on 21st, a Yellowhammer also in Shiskine on 26th, eight Chaffinch in Kilpatrick on 28th, six Long-tailed Tit in Brodick on 29th, four Coal Tit on Margnaheglish on 30th and unusually for a garden, a Woodcock was photographed in a garden in Glen Cloy on 9th.

Other November highlights included: nine Great Northern Diver off Drumadoon Point on 2nd, a male Goosander off Pirmill on 6th, a male Black Grouse in High Whitefarland on 7th, eight Black-throated Diver off Cosyden also on 7th, twelve Goldcrest in Brodick Country Park on 20th, a Jack Snipe in Hazelburn on 24th, five Little Grebe in Loch Ranza on 25th, two Moorhen at Mossend Pond on 26th and a Merlin in Kilpatrick on 28th.

December

The weather in December was characterised by mild temperatures with no negative temperatures. Indeed the mean temperature was three degrees warmer than November. It was also twenty-five percent drier than last December but in the few days leading up to Christmas the island was swept by storm force Atlantic fronts.

Waxwings, first reported in November, continued to be reported throughout December including twenty photographed by the Goat Fell track on 2nd and thirteen in a garden in Corrie on 30th.

Other winter visitors included: eighty Rook on Clachaig Farm on 1st, three hundred Fieldfare and sixty Redwing at the entrance to Cnoc na Dail on 10th, twelve Purple Sandpiper on Hamilton Rock also on 10th, two Brambling in Slidery on 26th and six Yellowhammer in Hazelburn on 27th.

Wintering wildfowl were to the fore including: twenty-two Pink-footed Geese in Shiskine on 2nd, one hundred and fifty-six Teal at Kilpatrick Point on 3rd, a Tufted Duck on Mossend Pond on 7th, four hundred Greylag Geese in Shiskine on 9th, twenty Common Scoter and thirty-six Wigeon in Cosyden on 10th, two Whooper Swan in Shiskine also on 10th, a long staying female Scaup by the Fisherman's Walk also on 10th and three Goldeneye on Mossend Pond on 29th.

Groups of wintering birds included: four hundred Starling in Slidery on 4th, forty-two Lapwing in Kilpatrick on 6th, eight Black-throated Diver and five Great Northern Diver in Cosyden on 10th, one hundred and twelve Golden Plover at Machriewaterfoot on 11th, two hundred Chaffinch in Slidery on 12th, thirty-seven Turnstone in Kildonan on 13th and over four hundred Common and Herring Gulls on Silver Sands on 14th.

Gardens provided a safe refuge for some birds and among the more unusual records received, as well as the Waxwings mentioned earlier, were: a male Blackcap in Kilpatrick on 5th, nine Coal Tit also in Kilpatrick on 6th, five Long-tailed Tit in Alma Park on 23rd and a Great Spotted Woodpecker in Margaeglish on 25th.

Other interesting records this month included: a male Goosander at the mouth of the Iorsa on 4th, two Jack Snipe in Hazelburn also on 4th, a female Merlin hunting over Shiskine Golf Course also on 4th, two Little Grebe in Loch Ranza on 10th, five Fulmar on Drumadoon Cliffs on 11th, a Dipper at Glenashdalewaterfoot on 26th and a spectacular display by an immature White-tailed Eagle being mobbed by Buzzard in Clauchan Glen on 17th.

Other noteworthy records included these: After their autumn absence for their post-breeding moult, Shelduck returned to the island, first to Cleats Shore on 9th. In addition, there were reports of courting Red-breasted Merganser including five off Rubha Salach on 31st.

From the above summary it has again been an interesting birding year on Arran.

Later in this annual report there are notes on a number of projects on Arran which are contributing to increasing our understanding of birds on Arran.

The Weather 2016

The weather influences the timing of bird migration.

The variable spring weather this year had a stop-start effect on the arrival of the first waves of summer migrants with some arriving later than last year and some earlier. The dry settled spell in October may have encouraged summer visitors to linger.

The weather influences the timing of breeding.

The cool spring may have delayed the timing of the breeding of some of our summer visitors.

The weather influences the success of breeding.

When May and June are warm and dry, these are ideal conditions for raising young and this can result in a good breeding season for many species.

The weather influences survival.

The cold winters of 2009-10 and 2010-11 resulted in a decline in some species like Stonechat and Grey Wagtail. After some milder winters there was some signs of recovery.

It is because weather has such a marked impact on the lives of birds that data on weather is included in the annual bird report.

Here is a summary of weather data for 2016 from our weather station at Kilpatrick on the west of the island.

| | Temperature (degrees C) | | | Rainfall (mm) | Wind Speed (mph) and Direction | | |
|------------------|-------------------------|------|------|---------------|--------------------------------|------|-----------|
| | Mean | High | Low | | Average | High | Dom. Dir. |
| January | 5.4 | 11.8 | -2.4 | 165.1 | 9.3 | 50 | SSW |
| February | 4.5 | 11.4 | -3.2 | 96.8 | 8.4 | 47 | SSW |
| March | 6.4 | 17.6 | -2.3 | 78.7 | 6.8 | 48 | SSW |
| April | 7.2 | 19.1 | -1.9 | 90.2 | 8.2 | 43 | N |
| May | 11.4 | 20.4 | 1.3 | 68.4 | 5.4 | 32 | ENE |
| June | 15.1 | 26.6 | 6.0 | 38.4 | 4.4 | 30 | SSW |
| July | 14.3 | 31.1 | 5.1 | 90.7 | 4.4 | 30 | NW |
| August | 15.1 | 26.6 | 7.3 | 94.2 | 5.2 | 41 | SSW |
| September | 13.9 | 20.2 | 6.5 | 81.2 | 5.5 | 34 | SSE |
| October | 10.6 | 17.3 | 4.1 | 27.7 | 3.1 | 26 | ENE |
| November | 5.8 | 13.9 | -2.7 | 102.6 | 4.2 | 40 | SE |
| December | 8.1 | 13.1 | 1.6 | 90.6 | 6.9 | 58 | SSE |

Dom.Dir. – dominant direction

The topography of the island results in a variation in weather. For example here are the 2016 annual rainfall figures from various areas: Lamlash 1899mm, Pirmill 1615mm, Whiting Bay 1727mm and Kilpatrick 1024mm.

For the most comprehensive and up to date information on the weather on Arran refer to this excellent website run by Glen Sloss of Sannox <http://www.arranweather.com/>

Summer Migrant Arrival Dates

| | "Earliest" Recorded Date | Arrival Date 2016 |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Wheatear | 13-Mar-05 | 28 March |
| Chiffchaff | 17-Mar-05 | 29 March |
| Sand Martin | 18-Mar-09 | 31 March |
| Willow Warbler | 20-Mar-94 | 10 April |
| Swallow | 23-Mar-05 | 02 April |
| White Wagtail | 24-Mar-08 | 17 April |
| Manx Shearwater | 27-Mar-14 | 02 April |
| House Martin | 28-Mar-05 | 11 April |
| Common Sandpiper | 29-Mar-98 | 14 April |
| Sandwich Tern | 30-Mar-16 | 30 March |
| Whinchat | 01-Apr-88 | 02 May |
| Tree Pipit | 07-Apr-90 | 20 April |
| Redstart | 08-Apr-11 | 18 April |
| Cuckoo | 10-Apr-01 | 18 April |
| Grasshopper Warbler | 12-Apr-11 | 01 May |
| Garden Warbler | 12-Apr-95 | 18 May |
| Whitethroat | 13-Apr-16 | 13 April |
| Sedge Warbler | 14-Apr-11 | 04 May |
| Arctic Tern | 14-Apr-13 | 14 May |
| Corncrake | 20-Apr-90 | None recorded in 2016 |
| Common Tern | 21-Apr-93 | None recorded in 2016 |
| Spotted Flycatcher | 21-Apr-11 | 08 May |
| Wood Warbler | 25-Apr-09 | None recorded in 2016 |
| Lesser Whitethroat | 27-Apr-10 | 11 May |
| Pied Flycatcher | 28-Apr-98 | None recorded in 2016 |
| Swift | 01-May-09 | 09 May |
| Nightjar | 17-May-13 | None recorded in 2016 |

Regular Winter Migrant Arrival and Departure Dates

| | "earliest" Arrival date | "latest" Departure date | 2016 Arrival date | 2016 Departure date |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Whooper Swan | 18-Sep-11 | 21-May-14 | 01 October | 10 April |
| Pink-footed Goose | 09-Oct-16 | 20-Apr-14 | 09 October | 10 April |
| Greylag Goose | 11-Sep-16 | 04-May-16 | 11 September | 04 May |
| Wigeon | 11-Jul-11 | 14-May-16 | 23 September | 14 May |
| Goldeneye | 12-Oct-09 | 04-May-06 | 09 November | 15 April |
| Purple Sandpiper | 07-Nov-16 | 20-May-16 | 07 November | 20 May |
| Waxwing | 21-Oct-10 | 15-Apr-09 | 06 November | |
| Fieldfare | 02-Sep-13 | 21-Apr-16 | 04 October | 21 April |
| Redwing | 30-Sep-07 | 13-Apr-16 | 04 October | 13 April |
| Rook | 03-Jul-07 | 23-Apr-14 | 04 September | 03 April |
| Brambling | 09-Oct-07 | 25-Apr-08 | 19 October | |

The above table only includes regular winter visitors to Arran and does not include species like Bewick's Swan, White-fronted Goose, Barnacle Goose, Brent Goose and white-winged gulls which do appear on Arran in winter from time to time. In addition it does not include Turnstone which can be seen in most months of the year and Yellowhammer which has become a winter visitor.

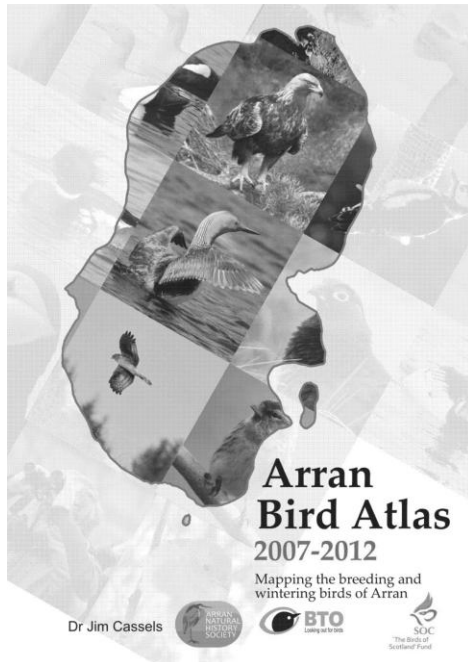
Note: there is also a naturalised population of Greylag Geese which is frequently seen in the summer in Clachlands.

Bird Surveys and Projects on Arran

Bird Atlas

For the first time, the partnership of the British Trust for Ornithology, BirdWatch Ireland and the Scottish Ornithologists Club have combined the results of breeding season and winter fieldwork into one national atlas. Winter fieldwork started in the winter of 2007/2008 and lasted for four winters. Breeding season fieldwork took place in the summers of 2008 to 2011. The work was published in November 2013. Balmer, D.E., Gillings, S., Caffrey, B.J., Swann, R.L., Downie, I.S. & Fuller, R.J. (2013). *Bird Atlas 2007–11: the breeding and wintering birds of Britain and Ireland*. BTO Books, Thetford.

On Arran, alongside the fieldwork for the national atlas, the Arran Natural History Society undertook to do a local atlas of the distribution and abundance of birds on Arran. The published book, *Arran Bird Atlas 2007-2012* describes the mapping of the birds of Arran for the first time. Over 36,000 records on 177 species were collected over five breeding seasons and five winters. Almost 700 people contributed to this work which was published in July 2014.



The book has 168 pages, more than 400 maps and more than 200 photographs. It is a “must” for anyone interested in the birds of Arran. For more information, including how to get a copy, visit this website. http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/arran_bird_atlas.html

Breeding Bird Survey

This survey was launched in 1994 by the BTO/JNCC/RSPB, and involves thousands of volunteer birdwatchers carrying out standardised annual bird counts on randomly-located 1-km sites. Comparing these annual counts enables the population changes of over 100 bird species to be monitored. There are four areas on Arran covered by four volunteers. For more information visit this website <http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/bbs/about>

Garden BirdWatch

In the last weekend in January 2016 thirty households on Arran took part in the RSPB Big Garden Bird Watch and shared their results with me. A report on the Arran results is available here http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/top_ten_garden_birds.html

Garden BirdWatch is a national survey run by the BTO that monitors the changing fortunes of birds and other garden wildlife through its network of volunteers. There were nine volunteers on Arran in 2016. Observations collected by BTO Garden BirdWatchers from each week during the year are analysed by BTO researchers.

Arran seems to be different from the national picture. For example while nationally there has been a decline in House Sparrows, here on Arran it is still the second most numerous bird visiting gardens.

To find out how to take part in this worthwhile and enjoyable survey, visit the website <http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/gbw>

Heronries Census

On Arran four heronries are currently monitored as part of this BTO census. These are at Lochranza, Brodick, Lamlash and Lagg. Find out more at http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/arran_heronries.html

House Martin Survey

We know surprisingly little about House Martins despite the fact that they breed alongside us, using our houses on which to build a nest made of hundreds of beakfuls of mud. This BTO survey is an attempt to find out why they are declining and provide scientific evidence to help inform policy decisions that could reverse the declines. The House Martin survey collected information on population size, breeding ecology and habitat preferences, so the BTO can begin to tackle some key questions about this eagerly awaited summer visitor.

In 2015 the nationwide random square survey involved volunteers visiting 2,000 – 3,000 'random' (i.e. pre-selected) 1-km squares throughout the UK. Find out more at <http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/house-martin-survey/house-martin-survey-2015>

In 2016 the Nest Monitoring Study involved volunteers making regular observations at individual nests to collect information about nesting activity. This study was ideal for observers who have nests on their home or place of work including those who contributed to the 2009-13 survey. Find out more at <http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/house-martin-survey/house-martin-nest-study-2016>

Wetland Bird Survey - Arran Summary for 2016

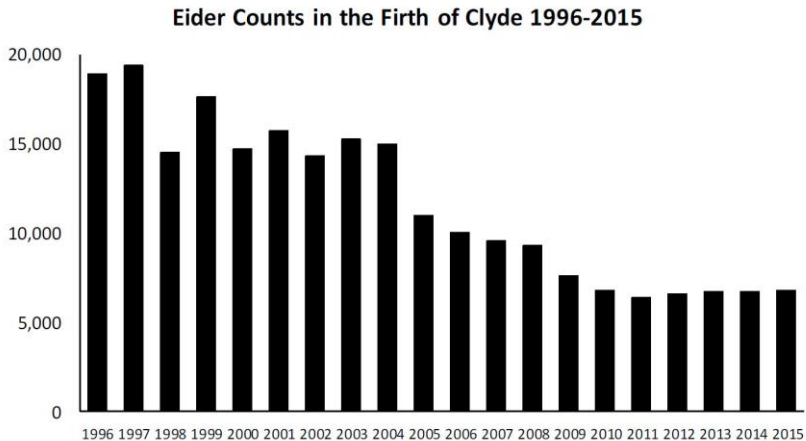
This is a joint scheme involving the British Trust for Ornithology, the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee which monitors non-breeding waterbirds in the UK. The survey is dependent on volunteers. Eight of the survey sites are on Arran, the coastlines at Brodick, Lamlash, Whiting Bay, Kildonan, Blackwaterfoot, Machrie, Pirmill and Lochranza. These are counted one Sunday each month with total results on Arran as below. The national survey provides information on the size of waterbird populations, the trends in numbers and the importance of individual sites. For example, Arran is a site of national importance for Red-breasted Merganser.

| Species | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Mute Swan | 42 | 35 | 32 | 37 | 30 | 51 | 52 | 50 | 43 | 34 | 42 | 43 |
| Pink-footed Goose | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Greylag Goose | 131 | 40 | 141 | | | 32 | 8 | 38 | | | 20 | 124 |
| Shelduck | 7 | 21 | 13 | 12 | 13 | 12 | 12 | | | | | |
| Wigeon | 15 | 43 | 28 | | | | | | 4 | 47 | 44 | 54 |
| Teal | 132 | 62 | 80 | | 1 | | | 14 | 15 | 72 | 103 | 133 |
| Mallard | 123 | 72 | 91 | 42 | 58 | 73 | 47 | 117 | 128 | 101 | 171 | 182 |
| Scaup | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| Eider | 40 | 121 | 107 | 74 | 41 | 40 | 23 | 20 | 59 | 39 | 74 | 64 |
| Common Scoter | | 2 | | | | | | | | | 4 | 20 |
| Goldeneye | 3 | 4 | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| Red-breasted Merganser | 40 | 31 | 36 | 25 | 26 | 24 | 50 | 51 | 42 | 41 | 26 | 40 |
| Goosander | | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | 1 | |
| Red-throated Diver | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | | |
| Black-throated Diver | 5 | 8 | 5 | 1 | | | | | 1 | 1 | 10 | 10 |
| Great Northern Diver | 7 | 9 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 1 | | | | 1 | 7 | 6 |
| Little Grebe | | 8 | 6 | | | | | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| Slavonian Grebe | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cormorant | 5 | 5 | 2 | | 4 | | 9 | 26 | 10 | 8 | 20 | 18 |
| Shag | 99 | 72 | 56 | 30 | 15 | 20 | 97 | 45 | 71 | 76 | 33 | 52 |
| Grey Heron | 11 | 13 | 9 | 5 | 10 | 10 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 20 | 13 | 10 |
| Oystercatcher | 199 | 242 | 285 | 183 | 145 | 150 | 225 | 206 | 198 | 172 | 211 | 257 |
| Ringed Plover | 61 | 85 | 43 | 30 | 64 | 31 | 71 | 220 | 174 | 137 | 75 | 134 |
| Golden Plover | 37 | 40 | 40 | 180 | | | 12 | 54 | 120 | 162 | 112 | 112 |
| Lapwing | | 76 | 47 | | | | | | | | 1 | 28 |
| Knot | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | |
| Sanderling | | | | | 1 | | 2 | | | | | |
| Purple Sandpiper | | 3 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Dunlin | | | | 2 | 37 | | 6 | 6 | 10 | 5 | | |
| Snipe | | | | | | | | | | 2 | | |
| Bar-tailed Godwit | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| Whimbrel | | | | 7 | 7 | | 1 | | | | | |
| Curlew | 98 | 119 | 149 | 35 | 16 | 7 | 75 | 157 | 67 | 40 | 60 | 78 |
| Redshank | 28 | 27 | 39 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 24 | 68 | 38 | 32 | 43 | 30 |
| Greenshank | 1 | 1 | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | | |
| Common Sandpiper | | | | 6 | 9 | 9 | 16 | 4 | | | | |
| Turnstone | 8 | 45 | 17 | | 9 | | 8 | 66 | 55 | 60 | 28 | 22 |

If you would like to find out more the Wetland Bird Survey visit <http://www.bto.org/survey/webs>

Eider Survey

Eiders are familiar birds around the Arran coast but their numbers are declining not only around Arran but in the Firth of Clyde as a whole.



Chris Waltho, a past president of the Scottish Ornithologists Club, has organised September surveys in the Clyde for about twenty years. Chris's data above shows that the post breeding population of Eiders in the Firth of Clyde is in decline. While there appears to be some stabilisation in overall numbers since 2010, numbers have declined by more than 67% since 1997.

In the Victorian era, there was a major expansion of Eiders in western Scotland and this led to the colonisation of the Firth of Clyde, which began at the beginning of the twentieth century. With an annual population growth of around ten percent by the late 1990s, the Firth of Clyde held around 25-30% of the Scottish population.

The reason for the marked decline in recent years is not clear. The Clyde Ringing Group and Glasgow University have ringed approximately 1500 females over the last decade. These results suggest some decline in annual survival rate, but there is little evidence of mass mortality events or of any major displacement within or without of the Clyde. Mussels, crabs, starfish and other seabed creatures are the main food sources and with many different pressures and influences operating in different parts of the Firth, there is no single cause for the decline. This decline is likely to be the cumulative effect of multiple causes that have an overall chronic impact on the population. It is important to continue to monitor the situation.

One of the ways that this is done is through Chris's annual survey. While the trend on Arran reflects the overall figures, there has been considerable variation in the Arran figures from over six hundred in 1999 to six in 2008. In the last four years the numbers from the census in September appear to be more stable. In 2013 the total was one hundred and forty-four, in 2014 it was one hundred and sixteen, in 2015 it was one hundred and seventeen and in 2016 it was one hundred and sixteen.

As mentioned above, the Clyde Ringing Group has been colour ringing females for several years. All Clyde colour ringed birds have a white ring on the right leg. On the left leg is a bigger colour ring, which indicates its nesting colony. If you see any of these ringed Eiders around Arran, please take a note of the colours plus where and when you saw the bird and forward the details to me. All the information will be forwarded to Chris Waltho.

Barn Owl Nest Box Project; Forestry Commission Report

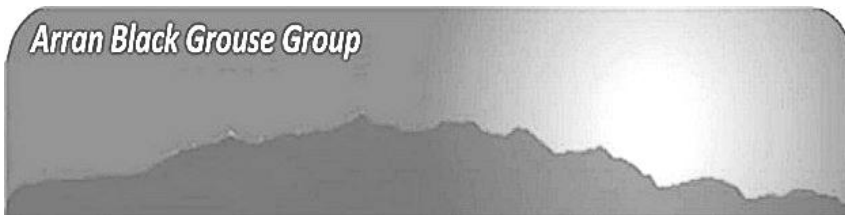
For twenty-seven years, Barn Owl nest boxes have been put up and monitored on Arran by Rab Logan, Wildlife Ranger of the Forestry Commission (Scotland). This is his report from the twenty-eight nest boxes checked on Forestry Commission (Scotland) land on Arran,



After the very poor success rate in 2015 there was a slightly better breeding rate in 2016. This is a direct result of the field vole population just beginning to recover from the previous year's crash in numbers. The general trend was that what breeding took place was at least 2-3 weeks later than normal while some sites had been abandoned probably due to adult losses through the difficult winter. There were twenty-five chicks reared in the boxes but the high winds and rain around fledging time could well have had an impact on their survival. On the other hand, the great weather of autumn and early winter will hopefully have the birds in good condition for next year.

Young in the nest have been ringed by Terry Southall and in recent years Barn Owls ringed on Arran have turned up in Skye, the Black Isle and Campbeltown. This dispersal reflects the ongoing success of the project in helping to maintain a high density of this Schedule 1 Species on Arran.

Black Grouse Project; Arran Black Grouse Group Report



Over the past few years the Arran Black Grouse Group has been releasing captive bred birds onto the moors of Arran. Some of these birds have radio collars which enables the group to track the birds. However, most of the birds have no tracking device. If you see a black grouse on Arran it would be very helpful if you could report your sighting to me at jim@arranbirding.co.uk. These will be forwarded to the Black Grouse group. Any sightings will help the group assess the success of the project. If possible, take a photograph to help confirm the sighting.

For more information visit the website <http://www.arranblackgrouse.com/>

Bird Ringing

Bird ringing in Britain and Ireland is organised and co-ordinated by the British Trust for Ornithology. A network of over 2,400 trained and licensed volunteers currently ring over 800,000 birds every year. On average only one in every 50 birds ringed are subsequently found and reported, so **every report of a ringed bird is of value.**

Why ring birds? The main focus of the ringing scheme today is monitoring bird populations. Ringing allows us to study how many young birds leave the nest and survive to become adults, as well as how many adults survive the stresses of breeding, migration and severe weather. Changes in survival rates and other aspects of birds' biology help us to understand the causes of population declines. Each bird ring also has an address, so that anyone finding a ringed bird can help by reporting where and when it was found and what happened to it. Some ringing projects also use colour rings to allow individual birds to be identified without being caught. Please report all sightings of ringed birds to <http://www.bto.org/ringing>

Does ringing affect the birds? The simple answer is no. Ringing is carried out by skilled ringers with the utmost consideration for the birds' welfare.

How are birds caught for ringing? Birds are caught for ringing in a variety of ways including in the nest and using a mist net.

Learning to ring The skills necessary to become a ringer can only be learnt by practice under the close supervision of experienced ringers; effectively an apprenticeship. For more information on how to become a ringer use this link. <http://www.bto.org/ringing/ringinfo/become-a-ringer.htm>

Codes for Age and Sex This table gives the codes used in the following bird ringing report.

| Code | Explanation |
|---------|--|
| M, F, J | Male, female and juvenile |
| 1 | Pulli - young bird in nest |
| 3J | Bird in juvenile plumage hatched in current calendar year |
| 3 | Bird in full-grown plumage hatched in current calendar year. |
| 4 | Hatched before current calendar year. |
| 5 | Hatched in previous calendar year. |
| 6 | Hatched before last calendar year - exact year unknown. |
| 8 | Hatched 3 or more years ago – exact year unknown. |
| 10 | Hatched 4 or more years ago – exact year unknown. |
| 12 | Hatched 5 or more years ago – exact year unknown. |

Some interesting facts discovered from ringing data....

Oldest bird – Manx shearwater, 50 yrs 11 months

Furthest travelled – Arctic Tern from Wales to Australia 18,000 km

Strangest recovery – Osprey ring found in stomach of a crocodile in The Gambia!

Bird ringing on Arran in 2016

Report by Terry Southall

The year saw a much reduced number of bird species ringed because of the specific targeting of certain birds species for study purposes and also due to the inclement weather when mist-netting trips were planned.

Continuing projects are the colour ringing of Cormorants and Herring, Lesser Black-back, Greater Black-back and Common Gulls. Again Rock Pipits were caught in good numbers to study the moult strategies used by this species and to compare it with the much more migratory Scandinavia race of Rock Pipits.

A good number of the much larger Greenland Wheatear were caught due to an unusual large influx of birds in late spring. Most of these birds are heading for breeding grounds in Iceland, Greenland and Canada.

Curlew and Oystercatcher numbers increased with more time and effort being put into catching more waders. From this came an unusual catch in the form of a Red-necked Phalarope, breeding in northern Scotland, Iceland and Scandinavia this bird crosses the North Atlantic Ocean and winters off Peru in the South Pacific Ocean.

The table on the following page gives the ringing totals for the year.

Ringling Totals for 2016

| Species | FG | Pulli | Retraps | Total | Species | FG | Pulli | Retraps | Total |
|--------------------------|----|-------|---------|-------|-----------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Red-throated Diver | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | Whinchat | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Cormorant | 0 | 12 | 0 | 12 | Stonechat | 15 | 0 | 0 | 15 |
| Shag | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | Wheatear | 29 | 0 | 0 | 29 |
| Eurasian Teal | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | Blackbird | 30 | 5 | 1 | 36 |
| Eider | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | Song Thrush | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Oystercatcher | 47 | 2 | 2 | 49 | Redwing | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Ringed Plover | 0 | 5 | 0 | 5 | Sedge Warbler | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Lapwing | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | Whitethroat | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Jack Snipe | 3 | 0 | 1 | 4 | Chiffchaff | 8 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| Snipe | 11 | 0 | 1 | 12 | Willow Warbler | 43 | 0 | 0 | 43 |
| Woodcock | 17 | 0 | 1 | 18 | Goldcrest | 44 | 0 | 0 | 44 |
| Curlew | 35 | 0 | 0 | 35 | Long-tailed Tit | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Redshank | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | Coal Tit | 7 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| Red-necked Phalarope | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | Blue Tit | 6 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Common Gull | 2 | 23 | 0 | 25 | Great Tit | 5 | 0 | 1 | 6 |
| Lesser Black-backed Gull | 2 | 70 | 0 | 72 | Treecreeper | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Herring Gull | 0 | 42 | 0 | 42 | Hooded Crow | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| Great Black-backed Gull | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | Raven | 0 | 8 | 0 | 8 |
| Black Guillemot | 0 | 9 | 0 | 9 | Starling | 0 | 10 | 0 | 10 |
| Barn Owl | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | House Sparrow | 1 | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| Short-eared Owl | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | Chaffinch | 36 | 0 | 0 | 36 |
| Skylark | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Brambling | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Swallow | 1 | 15 | 0 | 16 | Goldfinch | 75 | 0 | 21 | 96 |
| House Martin | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | Siskin | 79 | 0 | 15 | 94 |
| Meadow Pipit | 24 | 0 | 0 | 24 | Linnet | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Rock Pipit | 51 | 0 | 0 | 51 | Lesser Redpoll | 6 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Wren | 12 | 0 | 0 | 12 | Bullfinch | 8 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| Dunnock | 4 | 0 | 2 | 6 | Reed Bunting | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Robin | 28 | 0 | 0 | 28 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | Total | 662 | 216 | 48 | 924 |

FG – Full grown, Pulli - young birds in nest.

Selected list of recoveries

| Species | Age & Sex | Date ringed | Date recovered | Lapsed days | Where recovered | Distance moved |
|----------------|-----------|-------------|----------------|-------------|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Cormorant | 1 | 19/06/2015 | 04/11/2015 | 138 | Belfast Lough NI | 160km |
| Willow Warbler | 3 | 07/08/2015 | 06/09/2015 | 30 | Isla de Ons, Pentrevedra, Spain | 1476km |
| Robin | 3J | 15/07/2014 | 10/08/2014 | 26 | Kendal, Cumbria | 195km |
| LBB Gull | 1 | 30/06/2014 | 06/03/2015 | 249 | Agadir, Morocco | 3885km |
| GBB Gull | 1 | 13/06/2014 | 20/05/2015 | 341 | Grogport, Kintyre | 34km |

Codes for age and sex are given on page 23.

Notes

Our second ever Cormorant recovery was from Northern Ireland where it was photographed. This was a first from Northern Ireland.

The Willow Warbler was trapped by Spanish bird ringers on a small island off the coast of northern Spain.

Some Scottish Robins are known to move south into England for the winter, this bird was killed by a cat.

The Lesser Black-backed Gull was photographed by a British bird-watcher on holiday in Morocco. There have been fifteen other sightings of Lesser Black-back Gulls from the colour ringing project on Arran in the past year. These are as follows: eight in Portugal, three others in Morocco, two in Spain, one in France and one in England. The bird sighted in England was on a Leicestershire land-fill site in early January and seems to be wintering there!

The Great Black-backed Gull is one of three birds now sighted away from Arran. It seems that youngsters do not move far in their first year.

Birds ringed elsewhere and recovered on Arran

| Species | Age& Sex | Date ringed | Date recovered | Lapsed days | Where ringed | Distance moved |
|---------------|----------|-------------|----------------|-------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Sedge Warbler | 3 J | 17/08/16 | 28/08/16 | 11 | Messingham N Lincs | 370km |
| Siskin | 3 J | 07/06/15 | 30/03/16 | 297 | Thuringen Germany | 1214km |
| Siskin | 6 M | 22/04/16 | 20/11/16 | 212 | Chilworth Surrey | 212km |

Codes for age and sex are given on page 23.

Notes

The Sedge Warbler was a juvenile migrating south and shows how quickly these birds move. It was killed hitting glass eleven days later.

A Siskin recovered in Germany is without precedence, why this bird was so far to the east in late March is not clear. It may have joined birds in the wintering grounds that breed in Germany and Scandinavia. The Siskin from their wintering grounds in southern England is much more typical.

There were numerous sightings of colour ringed gulls ringed as chicks on Pladda, from Morocco, Spain, Portugal, France and England.

Finally

If you come across any birds with rings, please pass on the information.

In particular, groups of gulls are worth an extra look to see if you can spot and read a colour ringed bird. All sightings of colour ringed gulls are welcome even of birds that seem to be resident in an area.

Terry Southall.

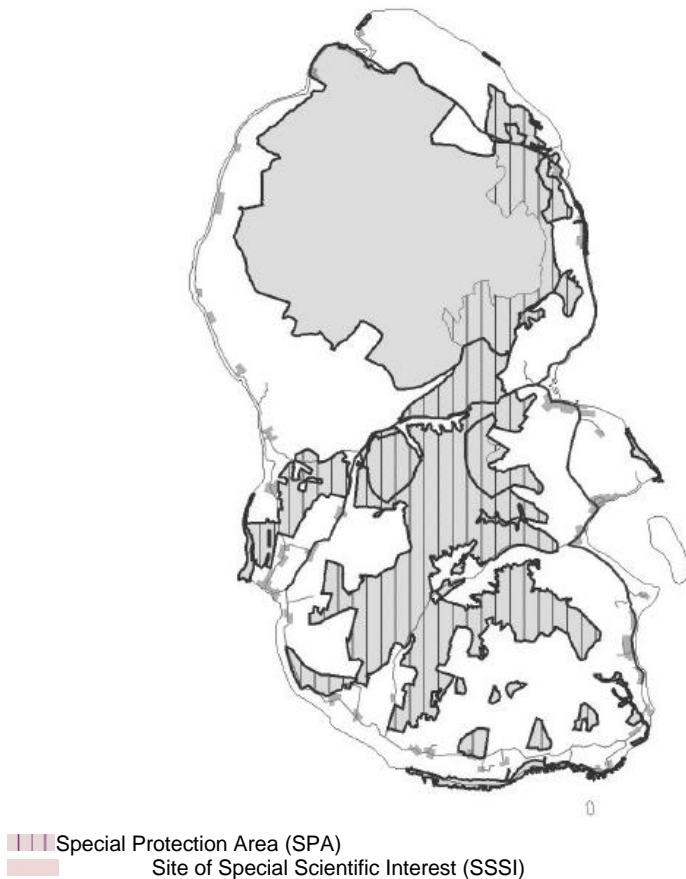
Email address terrysouthall789@btinternet.com

The Arran Moors Special Protection Area

The Arran Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) and the Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), as shown in the map below, cover an extensive area of Arran.

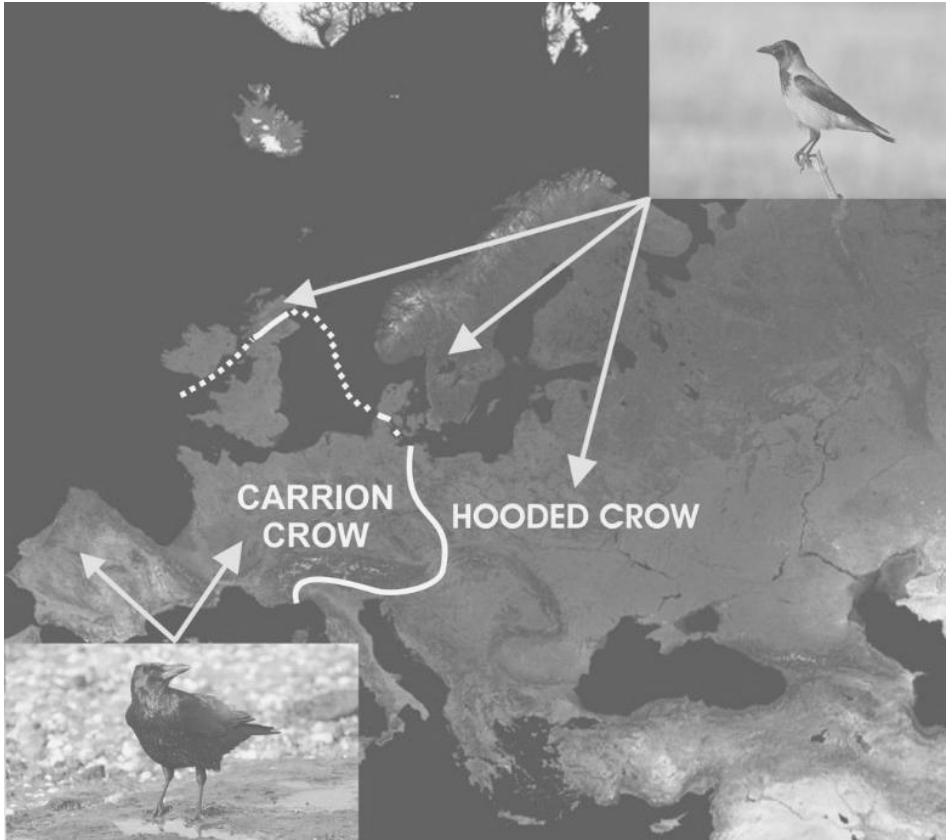
This area is of outstanding interest for the variety of upland habitats and breeding birds. There are large tracts of blanket bog, wet and dry heath and upland grassland. With small areas of broad-leaved woodland and several small lochs, this diversity of habitats supports a rich variety of moorland breeding birds.

The area is internationally important for its breeding Hen Harriers. Around five percent of the UK breeding population of Hen Harriers are found in Arran. In addition the area is nationally important for Red-throated Diver, Golden Eagle, Peregrine and Short-eared Owl.



The knowledge of the Hen Harrier population on the island is due to the many years of effort put in by the resident member of the South Strathclyde Raptor Study Group, John Rhead. The SPA status was eventually granted in 2003.

Crows on Arran



The crow family is cosmopolitan. They are considered to be the most intelligent of the birds. Their total brain-to-body mass ratio is equal to that of great apes. Crows are medium to large birds; many species are black or black and grey; some are pied; while others are more colourful. Eight species breed in the UK. While all have been recorded on Arran, only four breed here Raven, Jackdaw, Carrion Crow and Hooded Crow. Magpie and Rook breed on the adjacent mainland but do not breed on Arran. The focus of this article is the familiar Arran crows, the Carrion and Hooded Crows.

The Hooded Crow with its black hood, throat and wings but grey body and the Carrion Crow, by contrast solid black in colour, are closely related. Until recently, they were regarded as the same species. The map shows their distribution across Europe. To the west, the skies generally belong to the Carrion Crow. To the east, the Hooded Crow rules the roost. In areas where the two species overlap there may be some interbreeding with hybrids showing a mixed grey and black body plumage.

How is it felt that this distribution came about?

During the last Ice Age, ending about 10,000 years ago, the European Crow population was forced to retreat to two ice free areas, one in the Balkans and one the Iberian Peninsula. These isolated groups developed striking plumage differences, the grey-and-black Hoodie in the east, and the all-black Carrion in the west. Voice and general behaviour changed but little, so that when the ice retreated and the separate groups expanded to meet in middle Europe, they were still able to interbreed and produce fertile hybrids, but seemingly only over a narrow zone of overlap and not elsewhere.

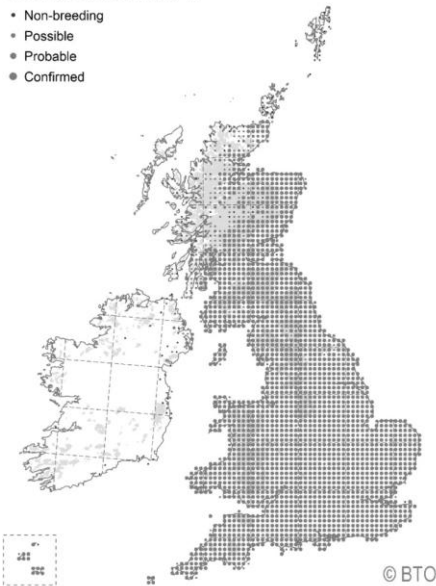
Arran is one of those overlap areas. From the BTO publication *Bird Atlas 2007-11: the Breeding and Wintering Birds of Britain and Ireland* by Dawn Balmer, Simon Gillings, Brian Caffrey, Bob Swann, Iain Downie & Rob Fuller, the breeding distribution maps for Carrion and Hooded Crow show areas like Arran where both breed and interbreed. On Arran there are Hooded Crows, Carrion Crows and viable hybrids of the two that show varying amounts of black and grey plumage. The next time you see a crow on Arran check it out. Is it a Hooded Crow, a Carrion Crow or a mixture of both?

The status of Carrion Crows and Hooded Crows has been debated ever since Carl Linnaeus, the founding father of taxonomy, declared them to be separate species in 1758. A century later, Darwin called any such classification impossible until the term 'species' was defined. The crows are known to cross-breed and produce viable offspring, so lack the reproductive barriers that some biologists consider essential to the distinction of a species. For the crows themselves this human discussion does not matter.

Carrion Crow

Breeding Distribution 2008-11

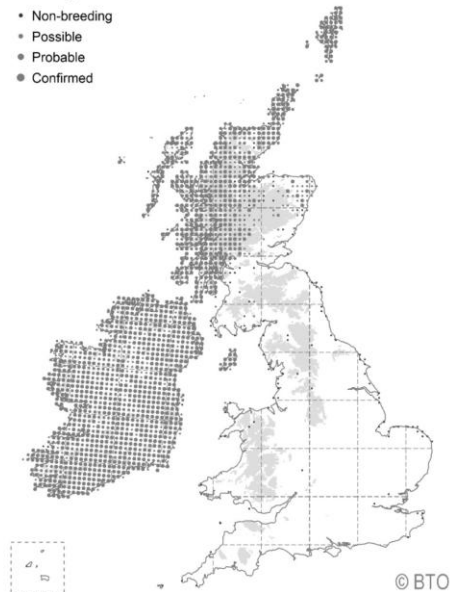
- Non-breeding
- Possible
- Probable
- Confirmed



Hooded Crow

Breeding Distribution 2008-11

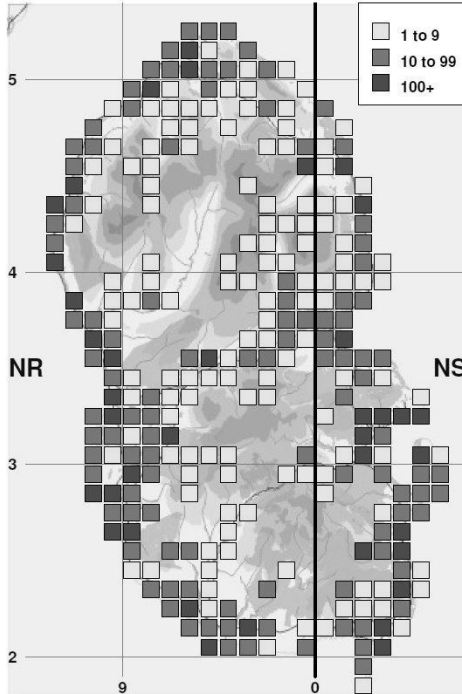
- Non-breeding
- Possible
- Probable
- Confirmed



A Challenge

Let's make Arran a well watched island.

The first annual report that I wrote was for 2006 and it was based on around 2,000 records. This total has increased each year. For this report I have received over 12,000 records. So the island is certainly being better recorded but.....there are large parts of the island that are under-watched and under-reported. (See map below.) The dark squares are one kilometre squares where over one hundred bird sightings were recorded. The palest squares are one kilometre squares where only one to nine bird sightings were recorded. The "gaps" are where no birds were recorded all year. For 2017 let's see if we can have more dark squares and fewer "gaps".



How the Map was made

In recent years all the Arran data that I have received has been loaded onto Bird Track. This is an excellent system for storing and sharing bird records. If you are not already familiar with Bird Track, I would encourage you to have a look at their website. About BirdTrack | BTO - British Trust for Ornithology <http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/birdtrack/about> In Bird Track each Arran record has been allocated to the the one kilometre square in which it was seen.

All this data has been processed using DMAP Distribution Mapping Software developed by Alan Morton. The base map was produced by Ian Andrews member of the Scottish Ornithogists' Club. The skill and experience of Phil Davis from Gloucestershire in using the software with the base map has produced this map showing the distribution of the 2016 records at the one kilometre square level.

Systematic List 2016

The systematic list is in the order of the British list as published by the British Ornithologists' Union (2006). This is in line with the Clyde Report. For each species, as well as the common name, the (new) official name and its scientific name have been given. In addition, for each species reported in 2016 there are two numbers, both taken from the annual data. The first is the number of records received for that species and the second is the number of sites in which the bird was recorded. A site is a one kilometre square. There are over four hundred on Arran. This is followed by a brief statement giving the status of each bird on Arran, which can be markedly different from the status of the same bird on the adjacent mainland.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor* 238,88

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Breeding included pair with 7 young Clauchlands on 27 May, pair with 3 young Port na Lochan on 21 June, pair with three young Dougarie on 8 July and a pair with 3 young Whiting Bay on 26 August. Winter groups included 12 Whiting Bay on 8 January, 32 Sandbraes on 21 April, 16 Port na Lochan on 15 October and 14 Sandbraes on 7 December.

Bewick's Swan (Tundra Swan) *Cygnus columbianus*

Rare winter visitor.

No records for 2016. Last record was one at Lagg 6 January 1991.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* 31,18

Regular winter visitor and passage migrant.

Groups included 14 Brodick on 8 February, 72 off King's Cave on 13 March, 12 Sandbraes on 4 May, 34 Sliderry on 28 October, 22 High Kildonan on 29 October, 14 Kilpatrick on 31 October and 2 Shiskine on 10 December.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus* 23,7

Regular winter visitor and passage migrant.

Groups included 35 at Feorline on 15 February, 31 Shiskine on 12 March, 48 Sliderry on 10 April, 72 Sliderry on 4 November, 22 Shiskine on 2 December and 26 Sliderry on 10 December.

White-fronted Goose (Greater White-fronted Goose) *Anser albifrons* 6,2

Occasional winter visitor.

All records in the Shiskine Valley from 27 January to 15 February with the largest group being 14 on 6 February.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser* 101,25

Regular winter visitor; small naturalised population mainly around Lamlash Bay.

Up to 450 in Shiskine Valley between 1 January and 27 March and up to 300 in Shiskine Valley between 10 September and end of year. Other groups included 110 Kildonan on 10 April, 90 Cleats Shore on 10 October and 170 Sliderry on 13 November. There is a naturalised population which is found mainly at Clauchlands. Largest count at Clauchlands of 141 on 13 March may have included some of the wintering birds.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis* 15,12

Localised breeding and occasional visitor.

This is the sixth year that this species has bred with breeding reports from Corriecravie area and Pladda. Reports included 12 Feorline on 15 February, 27 Sliderry on 12 August, 14 Cleats Shore on 13 October and 34 Sliderrywaterfoot on 24 October.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis* 2,2

Occasional winter visitor.

Fifteen at the Lakin on 14 March and 110 over Kildonan on 10 April are all the records for 2016.

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla* 3,3

Occasional winter visitor.

Eleven Lamlash on 15 February, 8 Kildonan on 4 March and 4 Fisherman's Walk on 21 September are all the records for 2016.

Shelduck (Common Shelduck) *Tadorna tadorna* 117,47

Breeding. Common round coast from January to August and November to December.

Breeding included 8 young Cleats Shore on 15 May, 14 young Blackwaterfoot on 26 May, 5 young Torrylinnwaterfoot on 25 June, 10 young Kildonan on 9 July and 11 young Kilpatrick on 19 July. Groups included 8 Auchenhew Bay on 26 February, 10 Cleats Shore on 28 February, 12 Kilpatrick on 13 March and 6 Carlo on 23 March.

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Irregular visitor. Introduced species. Nearest breeding group is in Cowal, Argyll.

No records for 2016. Last record Rosa and Cloy Burns in Brodick on 27 March 2009.

Wigeon *Anas penelope* 58,24

Regular winter visitor and passage migrant with records from January to March and September to December.

Groups included 21 Porta Buidhe on 21 February, 18 Auchenhew Bay on 26 February, 6 Clauchlands on 28 February, 48 Cosyden on 13 March, 48 Cleats Shore on 10 October, 60 Cosyden on 1 November and 36 Sliderry on 27 December.

Teal (Common Teal) *Anas crecca* 60,20

Breeding and regular winter visitor. Common round coast from January to April and August to December.

No confirmed breeding. Groups included 50 Sliderry on 14 January, 36 Cosyden on 15 January, 54 Rubha Garbhard on 19 January, 41 Cleats Shore on 1 March, 100 Cosyden on 28 October, 156 Kilpatrick Point on 3 December and 40 Cleats Shore on 5 December.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* 203,75

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Breeding included 5 young Loch Ranza on 10 May, 30 young Kildonan on 5 June and 9 Mossend Pond on 13 June. Groups included 34 Kilpatrick Point on 19 January, 52 Rubha Garbhard on 21 August and 24 Cleats Shore on 5 December.

Pintail (Northern Pintail) *Anas acuta*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record one male Machriewaterfoot on 19 May 2014.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Rare summer visitor.

No records for 2016. A pair on the pond at Torr Righ on 9 May 2012 is the only Arran record of this species.

Shoveler (Northern Shoveler) *Anas clypeata*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record one male by the Fisherman's Walk on 24 May 2015.

Pochard (Common Pochard) *Aythya ferina*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was a male at Port na Lochan from 15 to 18 September 2011.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* 7,2

Occasional visitor.

Records included a male Mossend Pond on 18 May, at least one Port na Lochan from 25 October to 2 November with a pair on 30 October and a female Mossend Pond on 7 December.

Scaup (Greater Scaup) *Aythya marila* 6,1

Occasional winter visitor.

One long staying female by mouth of Rosa Burn from 14 November to 10 December.

Eider (Common Eider) *Somateria mollissima* 150,64

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Breeding included 25 young Silver Sands on 6 June, 13 young Cleats Shore on 25 June, 24 young Kildonan on 9 July and 3 young Blackwaterfoot on 14 July. Groups included 65 Cosyden on 24 February, 31 Pirnmill on 7 March, 42 Pladda on 20 March, 40 Cordon on 23 September and 78 Lamlash Bay on 31 October.

King Eider *Somateria spectabilis*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was a long staying drake in Lochranza in April 1980.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis* 1,1

Rare vagrant.

Only one record for 2016 a male off Blackwaterfoot on 11 February. (JC)

Common Scoter (Black Scoter) *Melanitta nigra* 7,2

Occasional visitor.

Groups included 2 Machriewaterfoot on 24 February, 10 Cosyden on 6 September and also at Cosyden a group of around twenty from 2 December to 10 December.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record 2 off Catacol on 5 April 1998.

Goldeneye (Common Goldeneye) *Bucephala clangula* 29,13

Winter visitor with records from January to March and October to December.

Groups included 3 Clauchlands Point on 20 January, 2 Port na Lochan on 17 February, 4 Sannox Bay on 16 November and 3 Mossend Pond on 29 December.

Smew *Mergellus albellus* 1,1

Occasional winter visitor.

Only one record for 2016 a male with four redheads off the Fallen Rocks car park on 25 April. (JWh)

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator* 209,91

Breeding. Common round coast all year. Arran is a site of national importance.

Breeding included 3 young Loch Ranza on 24 June, 3 young Fisherman's Walk on 26 June, 8 young Machrie on 3 July and 2 young Cordon on 6 July. Groups included 23 Machrie Bay on 13 June, 42 Cosyden on 20 August, 15 Catacol on 15 September and 16 Cordon on 23 September.

Goosander *Mergus merganser* 16,11

Breeding. Localised.

No confirmed breeding in 2016. Sightings included 3 Dougarie on 12 January, 2 Kildonan on 12 March, 3 Machrie Bay on 22 March, one Pirnmill on 6 November, one at mouth of Iorsa on 4 December and 3 Machriewaterfoot on 12 December.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Introduced species which first bred in Ayrshire in 2001.

No records for 2016. Male on Port na Lochan on 21 April 2007 is the only Arran record of this species.

Red Grouse (Willow Ptarmigan) *Lagopus scoticus* 7,7

Resident. Breeding. Underreported.

Sightings included 2 Scrivan on 14 March, 5 Uisge Soluis Mhoir on 18 June, 14 Urie Loch on 18 August and 3 Meall Mor on 2 October.

Ptarmigan *Lagopus mutus*

Very localised.

No records for 2016. Last record 6 Coire a' Bhradain on 21 January 2015.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix* 2,2

Previously bred.

Reintroduction breeding programme.

All records from Arran Black Grouse Group reintroduction programme. See page 22.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa* 3,3

Local introduced resident. Around 700 released in 2016.

One Blackwaterfoot on 7 January, one Lamlash Golf Course on 25 April and 2 Glen Rosa are all the records for 2016.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Previously bred.

No records for 2016. Last record, excluding released birds in the 1990s, was 4 at Clauchlands on 15 November 1989.

Quail (Common Quail) *Coturnix coturnix*

Occasional summer visitor. Previously bred.

No records for 2016. Last record 2 calling birds in Glenscorrodale on 6 June 2012.

Pheasant (Common Pheasant) *Phasianus colchicus* 83,49

Common introduced resident. Around 3,000 released in 2016.

Reports from all areas including a leucistic bird in Shiskine valley.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata* 56,37

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

A good breeding season. Groups on sea included 3 Corrie on 27 March, 4 Kildonan on 3 May, 5 Cosyden on 27 July, 4 Silver Sands on 27 August, 3 Machrie Bay on 26 September and 2 Pirmill on 28 October.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica* 60,31

Regular passage migrant with records in every month of the year in 2016. Arran is a site of national importance for birds in autumn.

Groups included 8 Claulands Point on 29 January, 8 Loch Ranza on 14 February, 16 King's Cave on 27 August, 22 Cosyden on 6 September, 8 Machrie Bay on 8 October and 22 Blackwaterfoot also on 8 October.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer* 107,41

Regular passage migrant with records in every month of the year in 2016 except June, July and August.

Groups included 3 Torrylinnwaterfoot on 17 January, 6 King's Cave on 20 January, 22 Blackwaterfoot on 11 February, 6 Cosyden on 24 February, 9 Drumadoon Point on 2 November and 5 Machriewaterfoot on 10 December.

Fulmar (Northern Fulmar) *Fulmarus glacialis* 38,16

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Largest groups at nest areas 7 Catacol on 20 February, 10 Drumadoon Point on 27 March, 7 Cleiteadh Buidhe on 1 May, 2 Brown Head on 5 June and 4 Imachar on 24 July. No young were reported from any nesting areas in 2016.

Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was one off Largymore on 22 July 2012.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was 7 in Machrie Bay on 6 September 2009.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus* 13,12

Regular passage migrant with records from 2 April to 23 September.

Large groups included 100 off Pladda on 12 May, 500 in Brodick Bay on 11 August, 400 Kilbrannon Sound on 6 September and 800 off Cosyden on 23 September.

Mediterranean Shearwater (Balearic Shearwater) *Puffinus mauretanicus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was one off Corriecravie 14 October 1990.

Leach's Petrel (Leach's Storm Petrel) *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was one off Pirnmill 24 September 1991.

Storm Petrel (European Storm Petrel) *Hydrobates pelagicus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record two Brodick Bay on 12 July 2013.

Gannet (Northern Gannet) *Morus bassanus* 148,78

Nearest breeding colony Ailsa Craig. Round coast all year, but much more common in summer than winter. Records each month except December in 2016.

Groups included 80 Machrie Bay on 6 May, 20 Brodick Bay on 17 May, 15 Lamblash Bay on 13 August, 100 Whiting Bay on 17 September, 100 Cosyden on 23 September and 30 Imachar on 13 October.

Cormorant (Great Cormorant) *Phalacrocorax carbo* 108,59

Common round coast all year but less common than Shag. Breeding Pladda.

Eight nests on Pladda. Groups included 4 Clauchlands on 9 March, 3 Cladach on 4 April, 7 Porta Buidhe on 14 May, 7 Cleats Shore on 17 September and 6 Torrylinnwaterfoot on 4 December.

Shag (European Shag) *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* 166,68

Common round coast all year. Breeding Pladda.

Ten nests on Pladda. Groups included 43 Clauchlands on 17 January, 21 Pladda on 10 April, 80 Auchenew Bay on 22 July, 40 Clauchlands on 13 August, 40 Silver Sands on 17 September and 24 Blackwaterfoot on 20 October.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was a dead one found in Shiskine on 10 March 1996.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*

One record of this American species.

It was recorded over the winter of 2001-02 mainly in the Cloy/Rosa Burn area. Last record was on 28 March 2002 at Carlo/Corrie.

Little Egret *Egretta gargetta*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. One on Sliderry Shore on 1 July 2013 is the first Arran record of this species. More records are anticipated.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* 249,103

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Reports of activity at all known heronries namely Stronach Wood, Lagg, Whitehouse Woods and Lochranza. Groups included 4 Holy Isle on 19 January, 4 Clauchlands Point on 19 January, 8 Cordon on 2 February, 9 Lagg on 10 March and 8 Lochranza on 26 August.

Spoonbill (Eurasian Spoonbill) *Platalea leucorodia*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was one at Corrie on 13 October 1978.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* 49,14

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor. One breeding record in 2016.

Pair with young at Mossend Pond from 27 May to 13 June. Other sightings included 7 Loch Ranza on 22 February, 2 Fisherman's Walk on 25 October, 2 Lamlash Bay on 7 November, 5 Loch Ranza on 25 November and 2 Kingscross Point on 17 December.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* 1,1

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

One record for 2016, 2 off Fallen Rocks car park on 23 September. (TL)

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena* 1,1

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

One record for 2016, one Catacol Bay on 6 March. (DJK&NM)

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus* 2,2

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

One Cleiteadh Buidhe on 16 January and one Cosyden on 24 February are all the records for 2016.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

No records for 2016. Last record one Whiting Bay on 14 February 2014.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus* 3,3

Occasional visitor from British reintroduction projects.

One Glenloig on 11 January, one High Kildonan on 12 January and one Sliderry on 27 May are all the records for 2016.

Marsh Harrier (*Eurasian Marsh Harrier*) *Circus aeruginosus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was a juvenile in Lamlash 19 August 2004.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* 119,84

Resident. Breeding widespread. Arran is an internationally important area with five percent of UK breeding population.

A poor breeding season. Vole numbers were recovering from the low of last year and the weather at crucial times was poor. A very small number of reports of fledged young. In recent years the number of young fledged has varied from around twenty to over forty depending on factors like food availability and weather. There were over seventy fledged in 2014. Numerous widespread sightings mainly within the Special Protection Area. See page 27.

Goshawk (Northern Goshawk) *Accipiter gentilis*

Irregular sightings. No confirmed breeding.

No records for 2016. In 2015 there were four records all from the south end of the island.

Sparrowhawk (Eurasian Sparrowhawk) *Accipiter nisus* 87,51

Resident. Breeding widespread.

From eleven sample nest sites that were checked, occupied nests were found in five of them. A minimum of 8 young were fledged from these nests. This is similar to 2015. Numerous sightings throughout the year.

Buzzard (Common Buzzard) *Buteo buteo* 275,148

Resident. Breeding widespread.

From the seven nest sites that were checked one was unsuccessful. Seven chicks fledged. This is better than 2015. Numerous widespread sightings throughout the year including 6 Clachaig on 6 March, 3 Sliderry on 29 March, 3 Loch Garbad on 28 March, 4 Glenashdale on 25 August, 3 Boguille on 7 September and 6 Glen Chalmadale on 10 September.

Rough-legged buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was one at Cleats Shore on 10 November 1974.

White-tailed eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla* 1,1

Rare vagrant.

One immature bird in Clauchan Glen on 17 December.(AnW)

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* 97,55

Resident. Breeding. Arran is a nationally important area with one percent of UK breeding population.

All territories occupied and some strong evidence that other territories are being established. There is a healthy breeding population. Poor breeding season. Numerous sightings throughout the year mainly to the north of the String.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* 4,4

Occasional passage migrant.

One Whiting Bay on 20 May, one Shannochie on 27 May, one Glen Chalmadale on 10 September and one Sliderry on 11 September are all the records for 2016.

Kestrel (Common Kestrel) *Falco tinnunculus* 91,72

Resident. Breeding widespread.

Poorer breeding season than 2015. Numerous widespread sightings throughout the year but fewer reports of fledged young. These included fledged young at Dougarie on 17 July, Cleiteadh Buidhe on 18 July, Kilpatrick Point on 5 August and Clauchlands Point on 7 August.

Merlin *Falco columbarius* 8,8

No confirmed breeding. Possibly underreported. Regular passage migrant more widely distributed in winter.

Fewer reports than 2015. Singles recorded including female Balliekine on 20 January, juvenile High Whitefarland on 14 February, male Sliderry on 6 November and one Kilpatrick on 28 November.

Hobby (Eurasian Hobby) *Falco subbuteo*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was an adult bird by the Ross Road on 22 June 2011.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus* 29,23

Resident. Breeding widespread at inland and coastal sites.

Pairs present at five sites checked. A minimum of four young fledged from the sites checked but brood sizes down on previous year - possibly explained by poor weather during the critical breeding period. Numerous sightings throughout the year.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus* 5,3

Localised breeding resident and passage migrant.

One Lakin Farm on 28 March, one young Sliderry on 12 June and 6 including adults feeding young Corriecravie on 17 August.

Spotted Crake *Porzana Porzana*

One historical record.

One found dead by Pladda lighthouse on 24 October 1895.

Corncrake *Crex crex*

Rare summer visitor. Previously bred.

No records for 2016. Last record one calling at Port na Lochan from 7 to 9 May 2008.

Moorhen (Common Moorhen) *Gallinula chloropus* 13,6

Scarce localised breeding resident.

Sightings included 7 Port na Lochan on 6 January, 2 Machrie Pond on 5 July, young in Corriecravie on 17 August and 2 on Mossend Pond on 26 November.

Coot (Common Coot) *Fulica atra* 4,1

Occasional visitor.

One Port na Lochan from 3 August to 14 August. (GB)

Crane (*Grus grus*)

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record two over Dougarie on Wednesday 22 April 2015.

Oystercatcher (Eurasian Oystercatcher) *Haematopus ostralegus* 484,158

Resident. Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Nests recorded included Clauchlands, Cleats Shore, Dougarie, Machrie, Kildonan, Kilpatrick, Sandbraes, Shannochie and Thunderguy. Groups included 60 Clauchlands on 2 January, 74 Lamlash on 3 March, 80 Machriewaterfoot on 5 August, 34 Cleats Shore on 27 August, 40 silver Sands on 26 October, 28 Blackwaterfoot on 12 December and 24 Kilpatrick Point on 13 December.

Golden Plover (European Golden Plover) *Pluvialis apricaria* 54,16

Breeding and winter visitor. Common Machrie shore from January to April and August to December.

Around twenty successful territories in north western moorland. Groups included 12 Shiskine on 22 January, 152 Machriewaterfoot on 17 September, 112 Sliderry on 25 October, 300 Machriewaterfoot on 30 October and 31 Shannochie on 5 December.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records 2016. Last record was one on Torrylinn Shore on 5 April 2012.

Lapwing (Northern Lapwing) *Vanellus vanellus* 54,21

Increasingly localised breeding and regular winter visitor.

One area of confirmed breeding in Kilmory and one other possible breeding area in the Shiskine Valley. Groups included 83 Shiskine on 22 January, 70 Kilpatrick on 24 January, 150 Clachaig on 8 February, 110 Cleats Shore on 1 March, 88 Sliderry on 28 November and 50 Torrylinwaterfoot on 4 December.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* 191,58

Resident. Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Nests recorded Clauchlands, Cleats Shore, Dougarie, Kildonan, Kilmory, Kilpatrick, Machrie and Sandbraes. Groups included 40 Sandbraes on 8 January, 56 Machriewaterfoot on 16 January, 36 Blackwaterfoot on 27 February, 106 Machriewaterfoot on 20 August, 100 Sandbraes on 23 August, 54 Blackwaterfoot on 8 October, 34 Silver Sands on 15 October and 40 Dougarie on 2 December.

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records 2016. Last record was one calling summit of Beinn Tarsuinn 4 June 2012.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* 28,15

Regular passage migrant and occasional winter visitor.

Groups included 8 Sliderry on 1 May, 8 Auchenhew Bay on 5 May, 10 Porta Buidhe on 8 May, one Kilpatrick Point on 19 July and 2 Sliderrywaterfoot on 18 August.

Curlew (Eurasian Curlew) *Numenius arquata* 263,91

Resident but underreported breeder.

Signs of breeding were reported from Balnacole, Kilbride Hill, Machrie Moor, Penrioch and Torr Beag. Groups included 30 Strathwillan on 28 January, 61 Lamlash on 29 January, 57 Sliderry on 13 March, 78 Corriecravie on 15 July, 70 Clauchlands on 13 August and 34 Cordon on 3 November.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* 4,2

Uncommon passage migrant.

One Sliderry shore on 5 May and one Auchenhew Bay from 7 May to 9 May are all the records for 2016.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* 6,5

Uncommon passage migrant.

Sightings included one Sliderry shore on 17 September, one Shannochie shore on 20 September, one Kilpatrick on 29 September and one Auchenhew Bay on 10 October.

Turnstone (Ruddy Turnstone) *Arenaria interpres* 96,30

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor with records from most months.

Groups included 20 Blackwaterfoot on 6 January, 21 Clauchlands on 6 February, 15 Sandbraes on 23 August, 70 Machriewaterfoot on 6 September, 40 Silver Sands on 2 October and 40 Kilpatrick Point on 3 December.

Knot (Red Knot) *Calidris canutus* 3,2

Regular passage migrant.

One Machriewaterfoot from 18 August to 22 August and one Silver Sands on 16 October are all the records for 2016.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was 2 at Kildonan on 26 August 1987.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was one on Kildonan shore on 27 August 2006.

Sanderling *Calidris alba* 9,4

Regular passage migrant.

Sightings included 7 Drumadoon Point on 21 May, 2 Slidderlywaterfoot on 29 May, 2 Machriewaterfoot on 27 July and 8 Drumadoon Point on 2 August.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina* 65,22

Regular passage migrant with records from most months. No breeding records.

Groups included 6 Blackwaterfoot on 6 May, 8 Drumadoon Point on 17 May, 24 Kildonan on 18 May, 8 Machriewaterfoot on 28 August and 14 Blackwaterfoot on 6 September.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima* 10,4

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

Most records were from Kildonan between the start of the year and 5 March and between 1 November and end of the year including 9 on 13 January and 5 on 12 December. Records from outwith this area included one Drumadoon Point on 20 May and 12 Clauchlands Point on 10 December

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was 3 at Machriewaterfoot on 8 September 2002.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* 3,1

Rare vagrant.

One juvenile Slidderly from 31 July to 1 August was the first record since 1983. (JF)

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was one Silver Sands on 6 December 2015.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* 126,67

Regular summer visitor with records from 15 April to 13 September. Breeding.

Pairs each with young included Clauchlands on 18 June, Corrie on 20 June, Fisherman's Walk on 20 June, King's Cave on 21 June plus three successful nests in gardens adjacent to shores in Lamlash, Corrie and Blackwaterfoot.

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*

No records for 2016. One Clauchlands from 19 May to 21 May 2015 is the only Arran record of this North American species.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was at High Thunderguy on 1 August 2008.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erthropus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was one at South Feorline shore on 5 August 2010.

Greenshank (Common Greenshank) *Tringa nebularia* 12,5

Uncommon passage migrant and occasional winter visitor.

One wintering bird at Clauchlands from start of year to 9 March returning 6 July to end of year. Other sightings away from Clauchlands included one Cladach on 6 April, 2 Corriecravie on 28 July, 4 Cleats Shore on 21 August and one Cordon on 23 September.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Rare passage migrant.

No records 2016. One at Drumadoon Point on 22 May 2011 is the only Arran record of this species.

Redshank (Common Redshank) *Tringa totanus* 157,49

Passage migrant with records from every month of the year. Previously bred.

Groups included 21 Sandbraes on 23 March, 25 Whiting Bay on 28 March, 15 Lamlash on 24 July, 8 Torrylinnwaterfoot on 26 October, 6 Kilpatrick Point on 8 December and 14 Silver Sands on 14 December.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus* 10,4

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

Sightings included 3 Sliddery on 4 January, one Mayish on 14 October and 2 Hazelburn and one Sliddery on 4 December.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

One record of this American species.

No records for 2016. One juvenile Slidderywaterfoot from 15 to 17 September 1990 is the only Arran record of this North American species.

Woodcock (Eurasian Woodcock) *Scolopax rusticola* 26,18

Resident but underreported breeder. Numbers increase in winter.

Pairs flying at dusk over Machrie Farm on 17 March, Glaister on 17 March and Brodick Country Park on 7 April. Other sightings included 10 Sliddery on 8 January, 2 Kingscross on 29 April, 2 Gortonallister on 8 July and 7 Hazelburn on 21 November.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* 27,12

Passage migrant with records from most months of the year. Previously bred.

No confirmed breeding records. One drumming Lakin Farm on 17 May and one drumming top of String on 21 May. Groups included 18 Sliddery on 2 January, 18 Hazelburn on 6 March, 7 Machriewaterfoot on 17 September, 2 Shiskine on 1 November and one Silver Sands on 27 November.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Uncommon passage migrant. Underreported.

No records for 2016. Last record was 2 off Kildonan on 16 May 2009.

Two photographed from the Arran ferry on 18 May as it sailed from Ardrossan. This was shared with the Ayrshire bird recorder.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Uncommon passage migrant. Underreported.

No records for 2016. Last record was 2 off Newton Point on 6 July 2015.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Uncommon passage migrant. Underreported.

No records 2016. Two off Kildonan on 19 May 2011 is the only Arran record of this species.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua* 2,1

Uncommon passage migrant. Underreported.

One Brodick Bay on 30 April and one Brodick Bay on 18 August are all the records for 2016.

Puffin (Atlantic Puffin) *Fratercula arctica* 5,4

Breeding colony Ailsa Craig. Round coast all year. Most sightings in summer.

Sightings included one Largymore on 7 January, 4 Brodick Bay on 9 June, 4 Pladda on 9 June and one Drumadoon Point on 11 June.

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle* 98,53

Breeding. Round coast all year.

Breeding included Brodick Pier, Catacol, Corrie, Imachar, Kilpatrick, King's Cave, Thunderguy and Pladda. Numbers and sightings are increasing. Groups included 15 Brodick Pier on 20 April, 17 Imachar on 21 June, 40 King's Cave on 3 July and 24 Whitefarland on 1 August.

Razorbill *Alca torda* 11,10

Breeding colony Ailsa Craig. Round coast all year. Most sightings in summer.

Groups included 2 Rubha Glas on 14 January, 6 Cosyden on 27 July, 4 Brodick Bay on 16 September and 4 Lamlash Bay on 19 December.

Little Auk *Alle alle* 2,2

Scarce and irregular winter visitor, usually seen after severe gales.

One Laggan on 8 January and one Holy Isle also on 8 January are all the records in 2016.

Guillemot (Common Guillemot) *Uria aalge* 25,21

Breeding colony Ailsa Craig. Round coast all year. Most sightings in summer.

Groups included 100 Whiting Bay on 8 January, 10 Blackwaterfoot on 11 February, 22 Brodick Bay on 20 April, 15 Leac Gharbh on 20 July and 200 Cosyden on 23 September.

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

Uncommon summer visitor.

No records for 2016. Last record one in Brodick Bay on 11 August in 2007.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2016. Last record one at Pirnmill on 12 September 1992.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicencis* 33,11

Summer visitor. Non breeding. Records from 30 March to 4 October.

Groups included 4 Brodick Bay on 20 April, 4 Machrie Bay on 28 April, 4 Blackwaterfoot on 30 April, 4 Sandbraes on 24 July, 2 Drumadoon Point on 28 August and 2 Whiting Bay on 10 September.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Uncommon summer visitor.

No records for 2016. Last record was one Machriewaterfoot on 19 April 2013.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Rare summer visitor.

No records for 2016. Last record 2 at Dougarie on 5 May 1984.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea* 3,2

Regular summer visitor. Breeding colony Pladda.

Six Pladda on 14 May, 2 Kildonan on 18 May and 7 Pladda on 22 May are all the records for 2016.

Ivory Gull *Pagophila eburnea*

One historical record.

One shot in Lamlash Bay in 1895.

Sabine's Gull *Larus sabini*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2016. Last record one adult Brodick Bay on 3 September 2009.

Kittiwake (Black-legged Kittiwake) *Rissa tridactyla* 17,13

Nearest breeding colony Ailsa Craig. Round coast all year.

Numbers considerably less than recent years with few young reported. Groups included 50 Silver Sands on 7 January, 33 Machriewaterfoot on 22 August, 80 Fisherman's Walk on 7 September, 50 Whiting Bay 12 September and 5 Drumadoon on 11 December.

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* 50,26

Non breeding. Present round coast from January to March and June to December.

Groups included 3 Brodick Bay on 23 January, 3 Auchenhew Bay on 26 February, 4 Sandbraes on 21 July, 25 Blackwaterfoot on 7 September, 24 Sandbraes on 8 September and 21 Silver Sands on 17 October.

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

Uncommon irregular visitor.

No records for 2016. Last record 2 Whiting Bay on 2 September 2013.

Ross's Gull *Rhodostethia rosea*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record one at Kildonan on 21 November 1995.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last records one first summer bird Blackwaterfoot on 28 June and perhaps the same first summer bird at Auchenhew Bay on 29 July 2015.

Common Gull (*Mew Gull*) *Larus canus* 285,116

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Poor breeding season with few reports of fledged young from coastal nesting areas including Machriewaterfoot, Dougarie, Holy Isle, Pladda, Sannox and Thunderguy. Groups included 200 Clauchlands on 17 January, 28 Pirmill on 18 June, 90 Blackwaterfoot on 6 September, 200 Cleats Shore on 1 October, 200 Kilpatrick on 7 December and 400 Silver Sands on 14 December.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* 79,58

Breeding. Common round coast from February to October.

Colony on Holy Isle had 20 birds in May and the colony on Pladda had 150 birds in June. No reports from colony by Cnoc na Croise. Other groups included 10 Sandbraes on 27 February, 30 High Kildonan on 26 March, 30 Sliddey on 5 April and 14 Cordon on 6 May.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* 246,119

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Colony on Holy Isle had 100 birds in May and the colony on Pladda had 250 birds in June. No reports from colony by Cnoc na Croise. Other groups included 180 Kilpatrick Point on 10 February, 500 Whiting Bay on 23 February, 40 Sannox Bay on 27 May, 40 Lochranza on 3 July, 50 Shiskine on 12 September and 40 Torrylinnwaterfoot on 26 October.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

Uncommon winter visitor.

No records for 2016. Last record one Brodick Bay on 5 March 2014.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus* 1,1

Uncommon winter visitor.

One first winter gull at the mouth of the lorsa on 13 February. (A&JC)

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus* 129,73

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Groups included 14 Machriewaterfoot on 9 February, 24 Kilpatrick Point on 10 February, 18 Silver Sands on 14 February, 12 Sannox Bay on 17 May and 13 Torrylinnwaterfoot on 26 October.

Pallas's Sandgrouse *Syrhapttes paradoxus*

One historical record.

One mention in one source of being present in Arran during the irruption from Asia to Western Europe in 1888. No further details.

Rock Dove *Columba livia* 40,27

Resident. Breeding. Localised round the coast.

Groups included 42 Rubha Garbhard on 19 January, 24 Corriecravie on 15 July, 28 Cosyden on 23 July, 80 Cleats Shore on 1 October and 56 Kilpatrick on 5 December.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Very scarce.

No records for 2016. Last record one on footpath to Fallen Rocks on 14 June 1989.

Woodpigeon (Common Woodpigeon) *Columba palumbus* 171,79

Resident. Breeding. Common.

Groups included 12 Moss Farm on 23 January, 11 Margnaeglish on 30 January, 170 Monamore Glen on 16 March, 24 Cleats Shore on 27 April and 150 Slidery on 11 December.

Collared Dove (Eurasian Collared Dove) *Streptopelia decaocto* 100,40

Resident. Breeding. Common. First bred in Britain in 1955.

Present around all villages. Groups included 5 Shannochie on 30 January, 6 Margnaeglish on 8 February, 14 Whiting Bay on 2 October, 22 Slidery on 31 October and 4 Alma Park on 21 December.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Occasional passage migrant.

No records in 2016. Last record one Clachaig Farm on 30 September 2015. There were also two records in 2014.

Cuckoo(Common Cuckoo) *Cuculus canorus* 85,61

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread.

First one reported calling in High Kildonan on 18 April. Later widespread reports from around the island. Population seems to be healthy. The last one reported was of a juvenile in Monyquil being fed by Meadow Pipit on 17 July.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba* 32,27

Resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Better breeding season than 2015. Sightings from Auchagallon, Auchencar, Balmichael, Carlo, Corrie, Brodick, Cladach, Dippen, Dougarie, Glenkiln, Kildonan, Kilmory, Kilpatrick, Lamlash, Lochranza, Monyquil, Pirnmill, Ross Road, Shiskine, String and Whiting Bay.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Only recent records are from one long lived introduced bird in Brodick Country Park.

No records for 2016.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Resident . Underreported. Breeding.

No records in 2016. Last records two Machrie Forest on 15 June and one at the top of the String on 21 July in 2015.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus* 15,10

Resident. Underreported. Breeding.

Better breeding season than 2015 with more reports. Sightings included one top of the String on 8 January, one Slidery on 13 March, one Machrie Moor on 24 April, one Boguille on 12 May and one Glenshant Hill on 8 October.

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Summer visitor. Previously bred.

No records for 2016. Last record was one by the Narachan on 20 May 2015. Previous record was one at Merkland churring from 17 June to 26 June 2013 which was the first record since one at Maol Donn on 24 May 1998.

Swift (Common Swift) *Apus apus* 12,7

Summer visitor and passage migrant. No breeding records. Reports from 9 May to 5 August.

Groups included 5 Silver Sands on 6 June, 5 Kildonan on 9 June, 2 Sliderry on 12 June, 3 Machrie on 13 June and 6 High Kildonan on 19 July.

Kingfisher (Common Kingfisher) *Alcedo atthis*

Resident. No confirmed breeding. Most records dispersing birds in winter.

No records for 2016. By contrast in 2015 there were eight records from three sites. Last record one Fisherman's Walk on 1 August 2015.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was one in Thunderguy on 25 June 2006.

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was one in Sannox on 25 September 1997.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Rare vagrant

No records for 2016. One in a garden in Lamlash on 28 December 2014 is the first Arran record of this species.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major* 67,26

Resident. Breeding. Localised but spreading.

Regularly heard drumming in Brodick Country Park and Merkland Wood from January to April. As well as breeding records from this area, fledged young were reported from Margnaheglish on 19 June, Lamlash on 28 June, Dereneneach on 29 June, Gortonallister on 8 July, Cordon on 8 July, Brodick on 10 July, Machrie on 14 July and Lochranza on 31 August.

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record a female in Lochranza on 7 June 1979.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record a male at Kildonan on 27 September 1997.

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubiter*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was one in Fairy Glen, Lochranza on 24 October 2007.

Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

Rare vagrant. Previously bred.

No records for 2016. Last record one by Narachan track from 5 to 29 September 2011.

Magpie (*Black-billed Magpie*) *Pica pica*

Vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record one Mayish on 23 April 2015. There was one bird in 2014 from 19 March to 6 May, no records in 2013 and one record in 2012.

Jay (*Eurasian Jay*) *Garrulus glandarius*

Rare vagrant. Before 2011 the last record was 1985.

No records for 2016. Last record one on road to Glen Rosa on 9 April 2012.

Jackdaw (*Eurasian Jackdaw*) *Corvus monedula* 107,49

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Groups included 80 Machriewaterfoot on 16 January, 60 Lochranza on 27 June, 200 Slidery on 15 July, 50 Kilpatrick Point on 11 September, 36 Blackwaterfoot on 20 October and 100 Machriewaterfoot on 10 December.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus* 27,8

Regular winter visitor.

Most records from Slidery between 5 March and 29 June and between 4 September and end of year, including 127 on 28 October. Other sightings included 30 Shannochie on 13 March, 1 Cordon on 4 November and 80 Clachaig on 5 December.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone* **Hooded Crow** *Corvus cornix* 154,85 177,87

Both species including intermediates are common residents. Breeding. Widespread.

Groups included 65 Clauchlands on 17 January, 12 Blackwaterfoot on 11 February, 10 Cleats Shore on 24 March, 20 Slidery on 29 March, 60 Kilpatrick on 11 May, 50 Torbeg on 13 September and 20 Glen Chalmadale on 12 October.

Raven (*Common Raven*) *Corvus corax* 118,74

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Breeding pairs included Beinn a Chliabhain, Bennan Head, Brown Head, Catacol and Imachar. Groups included 8 Clachaig on 6 March, 8 Lamlash on 17 March, 4 Brown Head on 14 May, 4 Silver Sands on 4 June, 12 Cleats Shore on 10 October and 18 Slidery on 6 December.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus* 74,40

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Regular passage migrant.

Records included 6 Merkland on 12 January, 4 Clachaig on 6 March, 12 Machrie Moor on 19 May, 20 Torr Righ Beag on 13 September, 4 Cleats Shore on 10 October and 12 Brodick Country Park on 20 November.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

Very rare and irregular passage migrant.

One Whiting Bay 17 November 2007 is the only accepted record.

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus* 209,78

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Regular passage migrant.

Reports from all villages of birds visiting garden feeders. Confirmed breeding included reports from Cordon on 11 June, Margnaheglis on 20 June, Whiting Bay on 22 June, Lochranza on 25 June, Kilpatrick on 28 June, Gortonallister on 8 July and Lamlash on 11 July. Largest group was 11 Kildonan on 9 November.

Great Tit *Parus major* 195,75

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Regular passage migrant.

Reports from all villages of birds visiting garden feeders. Confirmed breeding included reports Strathwillan on 18 May, Whiting Bay on 22 May, Margnaheglis on 19 June, Lamlash on 23 June, Cordon on 26 June, Lochranza on 27 June and Kilpatrick on 28 June. Largest group was 8 Corriegills on 22 February.

Coal Tit *Parus ater* 188,64

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Regular passage migrant.

Reports from all villages of birds visiting garden feeders. Confirmed breeding included reports from Margnaheglis on 19 June, Whiting Bay on 22 June, Lochranza on 25 June, Gortonallister on 8 July and Alma Park on 31 July. Largest group was 15 in Machrie on 13 July.

Willow Tit *Parus montanus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was one in Lamlash from 16 to 18 May 2009.

Skylark (Sky Lark) *Alauda arvensis* 56,26

Breeding resident, Regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding territories occupied in Ard Bheinn, Corriecravie Moor, Drumadoon, Drumaghinier, Glen Cloy, Kilbride Hill, Kilpatrick, Leac a'Ghille, Machrie Moor, Penrioch and Sannox. Groups included 10 Leac a Ghille on 31 May, 100 Cleats Shore on 17 September, 300 Slidery on 16 October and 20 Lochranza on 25 October.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia* 52,33

Summer visitor. Breeding. Localised.

First report Sannox on 31 March. Breeding colonies occupied in Auchencar, Clauchlands, Cosyden, Glen Rosa, Kilpatrick, Sannox, Shiskine Golf Course, Strabane and Whitefarland. Groups included 12 Clauchlands on 27 April, 36 Sannox on 3 June, 15 Corrie on 7 June, 10 Cosyden on 25 June, 50 Sannox on 26 June and 12 Thunderguy on 26 June.

Swallow (Barn Swallow) *Hirundo rustica* 200,95

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread.

First report Slidery on 2 April. Widespread breeding with some failures and some double broods raised. Better breeding season than 2015. Groups included 100 Monyquill on 28 July, 60 Kilpatrick on 23 August, 40 Whiting Bay on 8 September and 100 Balmichael on 15 September. Last record was one Slidery on 28 October.

House Martin *Delichon urbica* 146,74

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread.

First report was from Bennecarrigan on 11 April. Widespread breeding with some failures and some double broods. Groups included 20 Lamlash on 30 June, 25 Corriecravie on 1 August, 20 Clauchlands on 13 August, 30 Slidery on 22 August, 60 Port na Lochan on 5 September and 60 Stronach Wood on 11 September. Last record was 10 Slidery on 30 September. A leucistic House Martin was reported from Auchencairn, Knockenkelly and Kingscross areas during the first week in August.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus* 54,35

Resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Groups included 10 Glenashdale on 14 January, 10 Lochranza on 23 January, 10 Corriegills on 31 January, 10 Clauchlands on 6 October, 10 Corrie on 17 October, 17 Sliddey on 28 October, 20 Machrie on 20 November and 12 Sannox on 27 December.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Very rare and irregular passage migrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was one in Whiting Bay from 4 to 6 December 2007.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Summer visitor. Breeding. Localised Records from May to June.

No records in 2016. Last records were from Glen Rosa, Gortonallister and the Torr in 2015.

Chiffchaff (Common Chiffchaff) *Phylloscopus collybita* 48,34

Summer visitor. Breeding. Localised. Records from March to October.

First report was from Brodick Country Park on 29 March. Records included males singing Whiting Bay on 31 March, Lamlash on 9 April, Auchenhew on 5 May, Corrie on 6 May, Dyemill on 9 May and Whiting Bay on 11 September. Good breeding season. Last record was one Auchenhew on 21 October.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* 97,63

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread. Records from April to August.

First report was on 10 April. Records included males singing Glenrickard on 14 April, Shannochie on 20 April, Drumadoon on 8 May, Monyquil on 6 June, Kildonan on 7 June and Glen Rosa on 14 June . Good breeding season. Last record was one Sliddey on 20 September.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* 46,27

Summer and winter visitor. Breeding widespread. Summer population mainly April to September. Smaller wintering population mainly from November to February.

Records included singing males Brodick Country Park on 16 April, Sliddey on 14 May, Lagg on 15 May, Lochranza on 19 May and Lamlash on 20 May. Winter records included three males Auchenhew on 14 October, a male Lochranza on 31 October and a male Kilpatrick on 6 December.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin* 1,1

Scarce summer visitor. Breeding. Possibly underreported. Records from May to July.

A male singing at Mossend Pond on 18 May (PGM)

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca* 2,1

Scarce summer visitor. Breeding.

Male singing Auchenhew Bay 11 May and 12 May.

Whitethroat (Common Whitethroat) *Sylvia communis* 45,31

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread. Records from April to September.

First report was from Slidderly on 13 April. Records included singing males Auchenhew on 5 May, Clauchlands on 12 May, Newton on 15 May, Tormore on 16 May, Glen Rosa on 18 May and Shiskine on 21 May. Last record was one Slidderly on 16 September.

Grasshopper Warbler (Common Grasshopper Warbler) *Locustella naevia* 2,2

Summer visitor. Breeding. Localised. Records from April to September.

Reports of reeling birds at Mayish on 1 May and Lakin on 13 July are all the records for 2016.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* 31,18

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread. Records from May to September.

First report was from Corriecravie on 4 May. Records included singing males Slidderly on 6 May, Drumadoon on 8 May, Shiskine on 12 May, Kildonan on 26 May and Clauchlands on 7 June. Last record was one at Cordon on 18 September.

Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*

Rare vagrant

No records in 2016. Male Dereneneach 19 June to 5 July 2014 is the first Arran record.

Waxwing (Bohemian Waxwing) *Bombycilla garrulus* 8,6

Irruptive late autumn and winter visitor.

Groups included 6 Margnaheglish on 8 November, 100 Corrie Golf Course on 22 November, 20 Goat Fell track on 2 December, 2 Whiting Bay on 3 December and 13 Corrie on 30 December.

Nuthatch (Wood Nuthatch) *Sitta europea* 7,3

Rare vagrant but records increasing. Species has spread north across the UK

One Corrie on 6 April and on 7 April, one Brodick Country Park also on 6 April and one Ranger Centre, Brodick Castle on 3 May and on 5 May.

Treecreeper (Eurasian Treecreeper) *Certhia familiaris* 21,18

Resident. Breeding. Widespread but underreported.

Sightings included 2 Brodick on 14 January, 2 Gortonallister on 19 January, one Lamlash on 30 April, 5 Machrie on 22 May, 2 Shiskine on 25 July, one Clauchlands on 6 October and one Corrie on 28 December.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* 175,92

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Records from varied habitats throughout the island from high tops to shore. Groups included 5 Kilpatrick on 30 March, 3 Newton on 8 May, 8 Imachar on 17 June, 4 Kildonan on 29 June, 3 Auchenhew Bay on 29 June, 4 Fairy Dell on 30 July, 4 Cleats Shore on 1 October, 4 Blackwaterfoot on 20 October and 7 Slidderly on 21 October.

Starling (Common Starling) *Sturnus vulgaris* 158,69

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included reports Lamlash on 24 April, Cleats Shore on 14 May, Lakin on 16 May, Torbeg on 18 May, Feorline on 18 May, Clauchlands on 7 June, Lochranza on 18 June and Cosyden on 8 August. Larger groups included 150 Kilpatrick on 27 August, 100 Cosyden on 28 October, 100 Hazelburn on 5 November, 400 Slidery on 4 December and 100 Tormore on 9 December.

Rose-coloured Starling *Sturnus roseus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2016. Last record one adult in Brodick on 28 June 2002.

Dipper (White-throated Dipper) *Cinclus cinclus* 42,30

Resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Pairs recorded included Benlister, Bennecarrigan, Blackwater, Cladach, Corrie, Dyemill, Fisherman's Walk, Gleann Easan Biorach, Glenashdale, Glen Chalmadale, Lochranza, Merkland, Sliderywater, Strabane and Torrylinnwater. Birds move towards coast in winter.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus* 9,7

Scarce summer visitor, possibly underreported.

Sightings included one Goat Fell on 10 April, one Cir Mhor on 13 May, 2 Caisteal Abhail on 16 May, one Beinn Nuis on 28 May and one Fionn Choire on 18 October.

Blackbird (Common Blackbird) *Turdus merula* 333,124

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Pairs reported from all villages. Good breeding season with reports of double and triple broods. Groups included 8 Margnaheglish on 10 January, 7 Kildonan on 8 January, 6 Glenashdale on 3 March, 10 Clauchlands on 9 March, 7 Lamlash on 18 May, 10 Porta Buidhe on 22 June, 11 Corriecravie on 15 July, 29 Balmichael on 20 October and 50 Cnoc na Dail on 10 December.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris* 55,30

Regular winter visitor. Records from January to April and October to December.

Groups, sometimes with Redwings, included 50 High Kildonan on 19 January, 200 Sannox on 23 October, 300 Lochranza on 23 October, 1,300 Slidery on 29 October, 500 Whiting Bay on 1 November, 300 Lamlash on 3 November, 250 Corrie on 27 November and 300 Cnoc na Dail on 10 December.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos* 184,90

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Pairs reported from all villages. Groups included 5 Auchencar on 13 February, 9 Auchenhew Bay on 23 February, 7 Clauchlands on 5 March, 6 Clachaig on 6 March, 6 Slidery on 29 March and 6 Balmichael on 20 October.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus* 57,23

Regular winter visitor. Records from January to April and October to December.

Groups, sometimes with Fieldfares, included 50 High Kildonan on 19 January, 83 Loch Garbad on 20 January, 70 Whiting Bay Golf Course on 4 October, 380 Slidery on 31 October, 300 Lamlash on 3 November and 60 Cnoc na Dail on 10 December.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus* 52,37

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included fledged young Monyquill on 13 June, Machrie on 27 June, Strathwillan on 8 July and Sliderry on 9 July. Groups included 4 Clachaig on 6 March, 4 Machrie on 24 July, 20 Corriegills on 8 August, 5 Glenloig on 13 August, 35 Machrie Moor on 16 September, 12 Sliderry on 19 October and 7 Cnoc na Dail on 10 December.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* 21,18

Summer visitor. Breeding. Localised. Records from May to August.

Confirmed breeding included Glen Rosa on 14 June, Imachar on 18 June, Shiskine 20 June, Bridgend on 21 June, Corriecravie Moor on 12 July, Merkland on 25 July and North Sannox on 5 August.

Robin (European Robin) *Erithacus rubecula* 345,133

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Fledged young included reports from Glenashdale on 25 May, Kilpatrick on 14 June, Strathwillan on 25 June, Merkland on 26 June, Dereneeach on 29 June, Newton on 3 July and Silver Sands on 17 July plus all villages. Other groups included 6 Clachaig on 6 March, 5 Glenashdale on 16 May, 5 Machrie on 13 July, 7 Leac Ghabh 20 July, 8 Clauchlands on 13 August, 10 Cleats Shore on 1 October, 12 Sliderry on 9 October, 11 Balmichael on 20 October and 14 Kildonan on 29 October.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Irregular summer visitor.

No records for 2016. Last record was one on Newton Shore on 28 April 1998.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Scarce passage migrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was one female Lamlash on 26 April 2015.

Redstart (Common Redstart) *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* 2,1

Scarce summer visitor. Possibly underreported. Previously bred.

One female Monyquill from 18 April to 20 April.(ShR)

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* 29,22

Summer visitor. Breeding. Localised. Passage migrant.

Breeding territories included Boguille, Garbh Allt, Glen Catacol, Glen Chalmadale, Glen Iorsa, Glen Rosa, Machrie Moor, North Sannox and Ross Road. The breeding Whinchat study continued (see page 20, *Arran Bird Report 2011*) with birds now being colour ringed so that they can be more easily identified in the future. Please report all colour ringed birds to me.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata* 128,74 (In 2015 it was 79,47)

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Continuing signs of recovery after the two cold winters 2009-2011 with more records and more sites reported than in 2015 (figures above). Fledged young reports included Sliderry on 15 May, Sannox on 18 May, Coire Fhraoich on 24 May, Clauchlands on 7 June, Torr Dubh on 14 June, Auchagallon on 24 June, Holy Isle on 20 July, Monyquill on 22 July and Kilpatrick on 29 July.

Wheatear (Northern Wheatear) *Oenanthe oenanthe* 90,43

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

First report was from Fallen Rocks car park on 28 March. Confirmed breeding included Kilpatrick on 1 July, Clauchlands Point on 5 July, Auchenhew on 10 July, King's Cave on 28 July and Laggan on 30 July. Groups included 36 Sliderry on 24 April, 5 Clauchlands Point on 27 April, 6 Hazelburn on 6 May, 9 Blackwaterfoot on 15 September and 8 Drumadoon Point on 25 September. Last record was one Sliderry on 24 October.

Dunnock (Hedge Accentor) *Prunella modularis* 207,78

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Fledged young included reports Cordon on 8 May, Strathwillan on 18 May, Lamlash on 20 May, Margnaheglish on 20 June, Kilpatrick on 20 June and Sannox on 28 June. Other groups included 3 Silver Sands on 14 January, 3 Brodick on 30 January, 4 Corriegills on 22 February, 8 Sliderry on 9 October, 5 Kildonan on 13 October and 6 Blackwaterfoot on 20 October.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* 220,83

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Pairs reported from all villages. Reports of double and triple broods. Larger groups included 60 Kildonan on 28 June, 36 Silver Sands on 15 August, 24 Cordon on 21 September, 300 Sliderry on 21 October and 100 South Feorline on 29 October. A leucistic House Sparrow was reported from Blackwaterfoot on 6 November.

Tree Sparrow (Eurasian Tree Sparrow) *Passer montanus*

Rare vagrant. Previously bred.

No records for 2016. Last record was 2 in Brodick on 17 June 1997.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Scarce passage migrant.

No records for 2016. Last record was a first winter bird on the shore at Kildonan from 13 December to 15 December 2013.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* 90,54

Resident. Breeding. Localised.

Breeding records included adults with fledged young Glenashdale 18 June, Porta Buidhe on 20 June, Machriewaterfoot on 23 June, Fisherman's Walk on 25 July, Kilpatrick on 25 July and Clauchlands on 13 August.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii* 247,115

Breeding resident. Widespread. Passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding records included adults with fledged young at Kilpatrick on 14 June, Porta Buidhe on 16 June, Lamlash on 23 June, Blackwaterfoot on 24 June, Clauchlands on 25 June and Shannochie on 5 July. Other groups included 25 Porta Buidhe on 5 August, 45 Sliderry Shore on 21 August, 60 Silver Sands on 25 September and 20 Blackwaterfoot on 15 December.

White Wagtail *Montacilla alba* 25,16

Regular passage migrant.

First report was from Auchenhew Bay on 10 April. Other sightings included 28 Sliderry Shore on 20 April, six Kilpatrick Point on 4 May and 11 Blackwaterfoot on 20 August. Last report was from Silver Sands on 2 October.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis* 11,9

Scarce summer visitor. Possibly underreported.

Birds holding territories included Maol Donn on 20 April, Brodick Castle Grounds on 21 April, Coire Fhraoich on 20 June and Merkland Wood on 27 June.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis* 166,99

Breeding resident. Widespread. Passage migrant and winter visitor.

Numerous breeding records. Groups included 35 Sliderry on 8 January, 48 Hazelburn on 1 May, 56 Shiskine Golf Course on 12 July, 15 Glen Sannox on 19 July, 40 Silver Sands on 10 September and 60 Cleats Shore on 13 September.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus* 151,71

Breeding resident, Widespread on the coast, Passage migrant and winter visitor.

Numerous breeding records including pairs carrying food at Cosyden on 8 June, Dougarie on 8 June, Imachar on 24 June, Clauchlands on 5 July, Silver Sands on 6 July and Blackwaterfoot on 18 July. Groups included 20 Blackwaterfoot on 9 January, 30 Kildonan on 22 January, 40 Clauchlands on 13 August and 50 Silver Sands on 16 December.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* 317,129

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Glenashdale on 22 May, Balmichael on 4 June, Gortonallister on 7 June, Kilpatrick on 16 June, Lamllash on 23 June, Pirmill on 24 June, Lochranza on 25 June and Corriecravie Moor on 17 July. Larger groups included 50 Auchencar on 15 February, 40 Narachan on 16 October, 110 Hazelburn on 13 November, 50 Corrie on 30 November, 80 Clachaig on 5 December and 200 Sliderry on 12 December.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla* 10,5

Irruptive winter visitor in varying numbers. Not seen every year.

Sightings included 3 Sliderry on 19 October, one Lamllash on 3 November, one Shiskine on 6 November, 2 Cnoc na Dail on 10 December and 2 Sliderry on 26 December.

Greenfinch (European Greenfinch) *Carduelis chloris* 94,38

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Glenashdale on 24 May, Kilpatrick on 19 June, Margnaeglish on 20 June, Brodick on 22 June, Gortonallister on 8 July and Lamllash on 20 July. Largest group was 40 Blackwaterfoot on 9 January.

Goldfinch (European Goldfinch) *Carduelis carduelis* 191,78

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Gortonallister on 7 June, Margnaeglish on 19 June, Lochranza on 26 June, Kilpatrick on 27 June, Clauchlands on 5 July, Whiting Bay on 11 August and Shiskine on 23 August. Larger groups included 70 Mayish on 12 August, 40 High Kildonan on 5 September and 50 Cordon on 4 November.

Siskin (Eurasian Siskin) *Carduelis spinus* 102,38

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Most records between January and June.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Pirmill on 17 June, Margnaheglis on 19 June, Kilpatrick on 24 June, Lochranza on 26 June, Silver Sands on 28 June, Gortonallister on 8 July and Whiting Bay on 2 August. Larger groups included 20 Lamlash on 28 June, 25 Newton on 3 July, 30 Machrie on 17 July and 60 Lochranza on 10 November.

Linnet (Common Linnet) *Carduelis cannabina* 70,38

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Most records between April and November.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Clauchlands on 5 July, Corriecravie Moor on 12 July and Kilpatrick on 14 July. Larger groups included 150 Sliderry on 20 September, 300 Cleats Shore on 21 September, 50 Kilpatrick on 26 September and 25 Kildonan on 19 October.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris* 13,10

Resident. Breeding. Localised. Passage migrant.

No confirmed breeding. Groups included 21 Sliderry on 18 March, 21 Cleats Shore on 21 March, 2 Pladda on 22 May, 30 Feorline Shore on 14 December and 25 Kildonan on 19 October.

Redpoll (Lesser Redpoll) *Carduelis cabaret* 51,27

Resident. Breeding. Localised. Passage migrant. Most records in spring.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Kilpatrick on 25 May, Dyemill on 29 May, Lochranza on 10 June and Corriecravie on 12 July. Larger groups included 20 Corriecravie Moor on 15 July, 20 Moss Farm on 20 July and 5 Sliderry on 20 September.

Crossbill (Common Crossbill) *Loxia curvirostra* 6,2

Resident. Breeding. Localised. Possibly underreported.

Fewer records from fewer sites than recent years. Largest group from each site was 4 Sliderry on 25 June and 11 High Kildonan on 15 October.

Scarlet Rosefinch (Common Rosefinch) *Carpodacus erythrinus*

Rare vagrant.

No records in 2016. The last record was a juvenile caught and ringed at High Kildonan on 24 October 2011.

Bullfinch (Common Bullfinch) *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* 68,46

Resident. Breeding. Localised.

Confirmed breeding included reports Whiting Bay on 1 May, Auchenhew on 6 July, Gortonallister on 8 July and Dippin on 9 July. Groups included 5 Invercloy on 8 April, 7 Balmichael on 21 October, 5 High Kildonan on 6 November and 12 Cnoc na Dail on 10 December.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* 2,2

Rare vagrant.

Two records, one Pirmill on 21 April and one Lochranza on 22 April, possibly the same bird, are all the records for 2016.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis* 4,2

Varying numbers on passage and in winter.

Two Clauchlands Point on 15 March and two on the top of Sail Chalmadale are all the records for 2016.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella* 38,7

Once common resident, currently in decline. Most records in winter.

Only one record between April and October, one Penrioch on 4 June. Most records from Slidderly and from Shiskine areas. Larger groups from these areas included 3 Shiskine on 7 January, 4 Shiskine on 29 February, 4 Slidderly on 13 March, 6 Slidderly on 21 November and 6 Slidderly on 27 December.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus* 41,22

Resident. Breeding. Localised. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included Clauchlands on 7 June, Monyquill on 30 June and Machrie on 3 July. Groups included 4 Machrie Moor on 25 May, 4 Slidderly on 4 July, 6 Imachar on 28 July and 4 Blackwaterfoot on 20 October.

Corn bunting *Miliaria calandra*

Rare vagrant. Previously bred.

No records for 2016. Last record 2 in Brodick area on 7 October 1984.

Decision by British Birds Rarities Committee

Dark-eyed Junco: Sannox on October 2015

Not proven.

Gazetteer of Arran Place Names

To help people making use of this annual report, a gazetteer of Arran place names, linking names to the Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 361 "Isle of Arran", has been produced and is available as a PDF download. <http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/files/gazetteerarran.pdf>

Website Arran Birding <http://www.arranbirding.co.uk>



The Arran Birding Website has been developed as a resource for local and visiting birders. It is intended to be comprehensive, up to date and easy to use.

Previous Annual Reports

There is a facility to download previous annual reports.

Bird Notes

These regular articles which have been published in the "*Arran Banner*" are accessible.

Photo Gallery

There is an extensive photo gallery with a section for each of the major habitats on Arran.

If you would like to send your bird photographs for consideration for inclusion, please send these to info@arranbirding.co.uk.

Finding Birds

There is information on where to find birds with some suggested walks.

Bird Sightings

In this section there is access to regularly updated information including: Monthly Sightings, a selection of highlights from each month and Recent Sightings, some recent bird sightings on Arran.

In addition there is accommodation information and links to local and national websites.

Rarities. Species to be submitted to Scottish and Local Record Committees

The British Birds Rarities Committee is the official adjudicator of rare bird records in Britain. It publishes its annual report in the monthly journal *British Birds*. <http://www.bbrc.org.uk/>

In addition, at a local level, records of the following species will only be accepted if a satisfactory description is submitted. Descriptions of species listed in bold type will be referred to the Scottish Birds Records Committee. Others will be considered by the Clyde Bird Records Panel. Under certain circumstances a description may be required for a species not on the list.

Black-throated Diver
White-billed Diver
Black-necked Grebe
Cory's Shearwater
Great Shearwater
Sooty Shearwater
Balearic Shearwater
Wilson's Petrel
Storm Petrel
Leach's Petrel
Night Heron
Cattle Egret
Little Egret
Great White Egret
Purple Heron
White Stork
Spoonbill
Bean Goose
American Wigeon
Green-winged Teal
Ring-necked Duck
Ferruginous Duck
Surf Scoter
Honey Buzzard
Black Kite
Red Kite
Montagu's Harrier
Rough-legged Buzzard
Goshawk
Red-footed Falcon
Hobby
Crane
Stone Curlew
Little Ringed Plover
Kentish Plover
American Golden Plover

Temminck's Stint
White-rumped Sandpiper
Pectoral Sandpiper
Buff-breasted Sandpiper
Red-necked Phalarope
Grey Phalarope
Pomarine Skua (immature)
Long-tailed Skua
Mediterranean Gull (except adult)
Sabine's Gull
Ring-billed Gull
Yellow-legged Gull
Caspian Gull
Iceland Gull - form *L. g. kumlieni*
known as 'Kumlien's Gull'
White-winged Black Tern
Roseate Tern
Little Owl
Nightjar
Alpine Swift
Bee-eater
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker
Short-toed Lark
Woodlark
Red-rumped Swallow
Richard's Pipit
Tawny Pipit
Red-throated Pipit
Rock Pipit (Scandinavian race)
Water Pipit
Yellow Wagtail (continental races)
Nightingale
Bluethroat
Cetti's Warbler
Aquatic Warbler
Marsh Warbler

Melodious Warbler
Reed Warbler
Icterine Warbler
Barred Warbler
Dartford Warbler
Subalpine Warbler
Greenish Warbler
Pallas's Warbler
Yellow-browed Warbler
Radde's Warbler
Dusky Warbler
Firecrest
Red-breasted Flycatcher
Bearded Tit
Willow Tit
Marsh Tit
Nuthatch
Golden Oriole
Woodchat Shrike
Chough
Rose-coloured Starling
Serin
Common (Mealy) Redpoll
Arctic Redpoll
Scarlet Rosefinch
Bullfinch (Northern)
Hawfinch
Parrot Crossbill
Girl Bunting
Ortolan Bunting
Rustic Bunting
Little Bunting
Corn Bunting

Note: Black-throated Diver records refer to breeding records.

Descriptions of the above species (or races/forms) and descriptions of national rarities for consideration by the British Birds Rarities Committee should be sent preferably by email to the Assistant Local Clyde Recorder, Val Wilson val.wilson38@btinternet.com or by post to Flat 2/1, 12 Rawcliffe Gardens, Glasgow G41 3DA as soon as possible after the date of observation.

For advice on how to complete the form, please visit the website:
http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/reporting_rarities.html

How to be a good birdwatcher

Some points to bear in mind.

- 1. Welfare of birds must come first.** Whether your particular interest is photography, ringing, sound recording, scientific study or just birdwatching, remember that the welfare of the bird must always come first.
- 2. Habitat protection.** Its habitat is vital to a bird and therefore we must ensure that our activities do not cause damage.
- 3. Keep disturbance to a minimum.** Birds' tolerance of disturbance varies between species and seasons. Therefore, it is safer to keep all disturbance to a minimum, particularly in the breeding season. No birds should be disturbed from the nest in case opportunities for predators to take eggs or young are increased. In very cold weather disturbance to birds may cause them to use vital energy at a time when food is difficult to find.
- 4. Rare breeding birds.** If you discover a rare bird breeding and feel that protection is necessary, inform the local wildlife crime officer, Constable Phil Adams, telephone 01770 302574 . Otherwise it is best in almost all circumstances to keep the record strictly secret in order to avoid disturbance by other birdwatchers and attacks by egg-collectors. Never visit known sites of rare breeding birds unless they are adequately protected. Even your presence may give away the site to others and cause so many other visitors that the birds may fail to breed successfully. In terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 disturbance at or near the nests of birds is a criminal offence.
- 5. Rare migrants.** Rare migrants or vagrants must not be harassed. If you discover one, consider the circumstances carefully before telling anyone. Will an influx of birdwatchers disturb the bird or others in the area? Will the habitat be damaged? Will problems be caused with the landowner?
- 6. The Law.** The bird protection laws, as embodied in Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, are the result of hard campaigning by previous generations of birdwatchers. As birdwatchers, we must abide by them at all times and not allow them to fall into disrepute.
- 7. Respect the rights of landowners.** The wishes of landowners and occupiers of land must be respected. Always follow the Scottish Access Code.
- 8. Respect the rights of other people.** Have proper consideration for other birdwatchers. Try not to disrupt their activities or scare the birds they are watching. There are many other people who also use the countryside. Do not interfere with their activities and, if it seems that what they are doing is causing unnecessary disturbance to birds, do try to take a balanced view. While flushing gulls when walking a dog on a beach in winter may do little harm, in the breeding season, the same dog would be a serious disturbance to nesting shore birds or a nesting gull colony. When pointing this out to a non-birdwatcher, be courteous, but firm. The non-birdwatchers' goodwill towards birds must not be destroyed by the attitudes of birdwatchers.
- 9. Keeping records.** Much of today's knowledge about birds is the result of meticulous record keeping by our predecessors. Make sure you help to add to tomorrow's knowledge by sending records to your local recorder. The Arran recorder is Jim Cassels at Kilpatrick Kennels, Kilpatrick, Blackwaterfoot, KA27 8EY, or telephone 01770 860316, or email jim@arranbirding.co.uk

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