

Firth of Clyde

Eider News

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Introduction

Coverage in 2017 was again very good, thanks to another great effort by more than 35 observers.

Numbers recorded in 2017 continued the decline from 2016. Despite an increase in Loch Fyne (due to better coverage), there were fewer birds found in Loch Ryan, along most of the Ayrshire coast, around Arran, Bute, Cumbrae and in the Clyde estuary.

The 5500 birds counted in 2017 is only 28.5% of those counted in 1997 (representing a 71.5% decline). Similar declines have been widely reported across much of Europe, from Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and the White Sea in Russia. The causes of declines across these areas are currently under investigation.

2017 counters - a special thanks to everybody who took part.

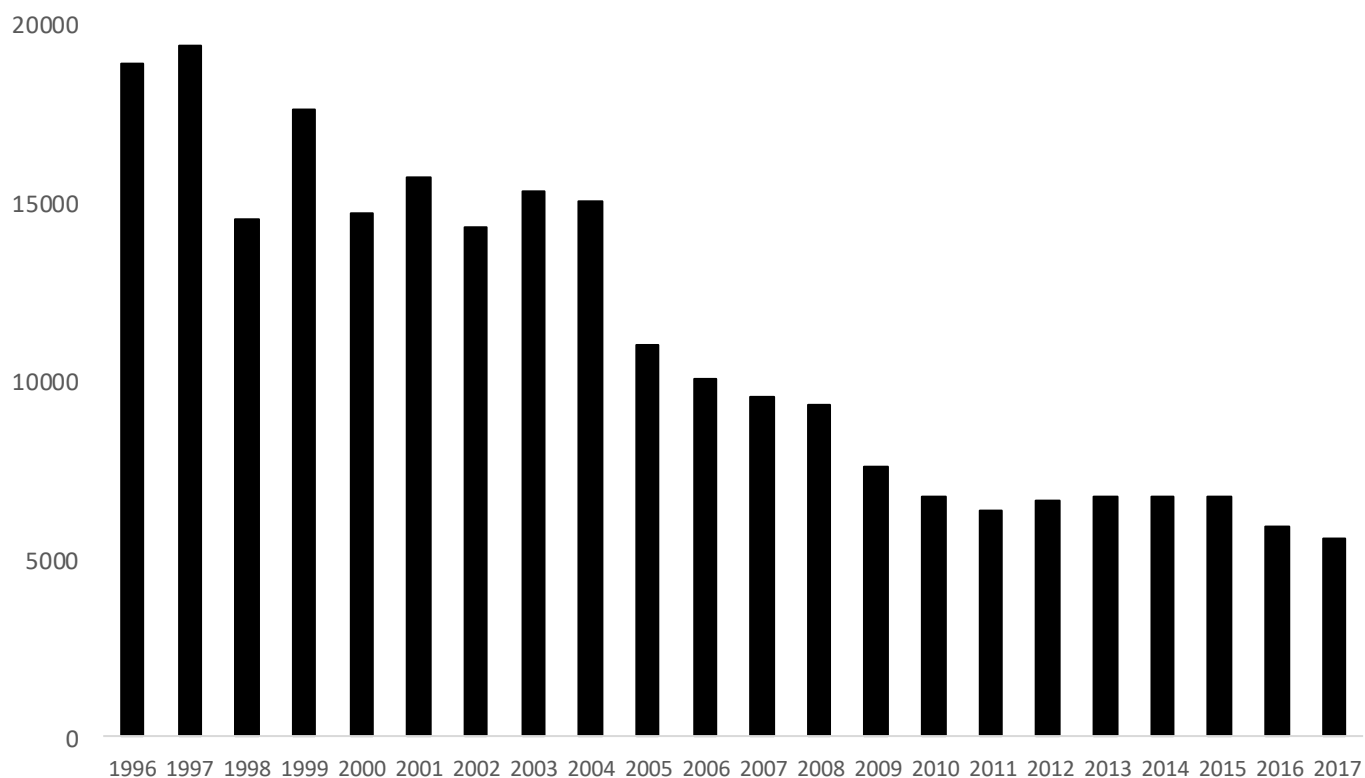
Tony Baboolal, Robin Barnden, Alan Belamy, Tom Callan, Jim Cassels, John Clark, Joe Connor, Rory Cowan, Brian Couper, Simon Davies, Dave Freeman, Iain Gibson, Nick Giles, Corinna Goeckeritz, Jenni & Steve Grover, Ian Hopkins, Alan Hollick, Fiona Laing, Simon Lawrence, Victor Lutz, Elanor McNamara, Tom McNeish, Doug Menzies, Rab Morton, Alec Nicol, David & Janet Palmar, Katy Penn, Kate Sampson, David Underwood, Chris Waltho, Ray Welland, Jean Wilkinson, John Williams, Alan Wood.

Apologies for anyone inadvertently missed.

**Please note that the 2018 count will take place during period
8th-30th September**

	September Count stretch	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	5 yr mean
1	Clyde Estuary (Gourock-Craigendoran)	131	459	538	730	373	446
2	Craigendoran-Kilcreggan (Gare Loch)	1526	1187	1741	1540	1638	1526
3	Kilcreggan-Strone Point (L Long/Goil)	848	1076	988	583	612	821
4	Holy Loch to Toward Pt	324	219	223	93	198	211
5	Gourock-Largs	442	237	423	365	357	365
6	Bute & Kyles (+ L Ridden & L Striven)	145	137	135	271	167	171
7	Great Cumbrae	134	236	306	264	184	225
8	Loch Fyne	1057	1096	795	265	966	836
9	E Kintyre (Skipness-Southend)	155	144	152	222	118	158
10	Arran	144	116	117	116	36	106
11	Largs-Seamill	100	104	130	46	60	88
12	Seamill-Saltcoats	100	41	3	35	30	42
13	Irvine & Ayr Bays	150	585	308	741	360	429
14	Dunure-Girvan	134	340	115	153	26	154
15	Girvan-Ballantrae			5			5
16	Loch Ryan	1310	729	753	423	410	725
	Total Firth of Clyde	6700	6706	6732	5847	5535	6308

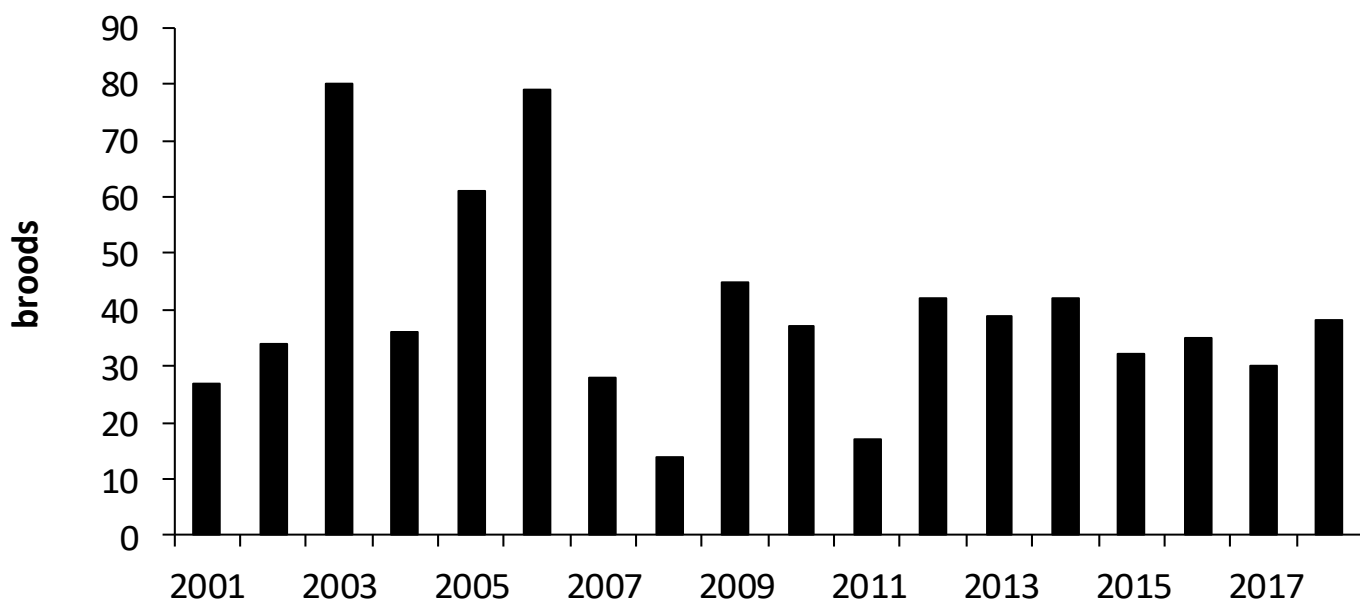
Eider counts in the Firth of Clyde 1996-2017



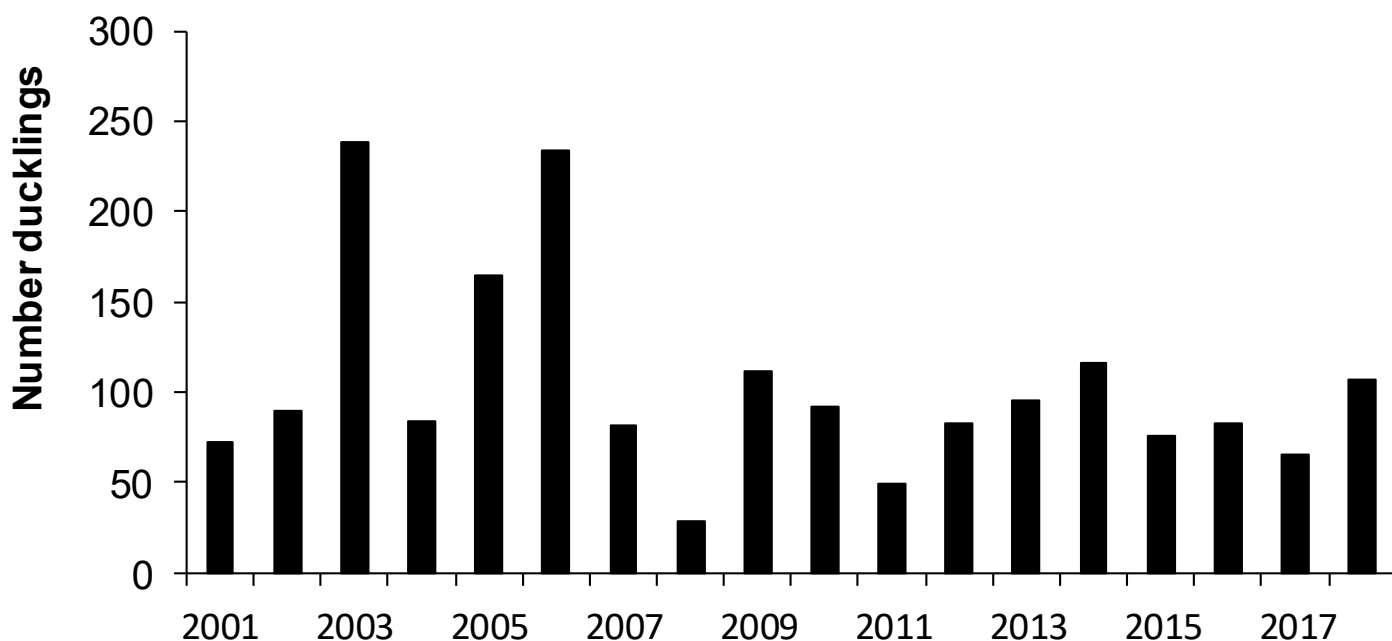
Breeding productivity in Gare Loch/Rosneath Peninsula in 2018

Counts in mid-July 2018 found 38 broods/crèches with total of 107 ducklings. This compares with 30 broods with 66 ducklings in 2017, 35 broods with 83 ducklings in 2016, 32 broods with 76 ducklings in 2015 and 42 broods with 116 ducklings in 2014. There has been little variation in these numbers over the last ten years compared to the previous eight years.

Broods Rhu-Coulport



Ducklings Rhu-Coulport



Ringed Eider

Readers are asked to regularly check shorelines for corpses and to inspect birds for rings.

To date, around 20000 birds have been ringed in the Firth of Clyde, all but 5 being adult females.

Any rings found should be reported to the **Ringling Office, British Trust for Ornithology, The Nunnery, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 2PU.**



Colour ringed birds.

The Clyde Ringing Group has been undertaking a colour-ringing programme of females for several years.

Each bird has a metal BTO ring on the right leg. Above this, on the same leg, is a white darvic ring – this is used as the scheme marker (all Clyde colour-ringed birds will show white on the right leg).

On the left leg is a bigger colour ring, that indicates its nesting colony.

Could all sightings of colour ringed birds be reported to Chris Waltho.

Photo by

David Palmar Photography

www.photoscot.co.uk

Eider ringing in the Firth of Clyde is supported by the BTO (RAS), Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (to the Clyde Ringing Group) and by Glasgow University (Prof Bob Furness).

Please note that the September 2018 count will take place from the 8th to 30th.