

Arran Bird Report 2021



Birds of Arran

Compiled by
Dr Jim Cassels for the Arran Natural History Society

Published by



The Arran Natural History Society

Arran Bird Report 2021

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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.

One of the publications of the society is the *Arran Bird Report*. These reports provide a unique record of the bird life of this special island over the last forty years. In 2013 the society won the Marsh Award for Local Ornithology for producing the *Arran Bird Atlas 2007-2012*.

For more information on the Arran Natural History Society visit Facebook and Twitter.

Members receive a copy of the annual *Arran Bird Report*.

Annual Subscription is £15 for adults and £25 for couples.

Information on payment of subscription is available from arrannaturalhistorysociety@gmail.com

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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 has been granted.

Permission has also been granted to access Arran raptor data held by the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme <http://raptormonitoring.org/about-the-srms>

All bird records given to the National Trust Rangers at Brodick Country Park and to the Brodick Tourist Information Centre were forwarded to me. The North Ayrshire RSPB, who normally provide records from ferry crossings, were unable to do this in 2021 because of Covid-19 restrictions.

Introduction

Welcome to the *Arran Bird Report* for 2021. This is the forty-second consecutive annual bird report for the Isle of Arran and the sixteenth 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 and the team of local ringers, Andy Walker and Malcolm Whitmore for their local knowledge of raptors, Jackie Kemp for his work on Barn Owls, John Calladine, Senior Research Ecologist with the BTO, for his permission to use data on Short-eared 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 both BirdTrack and BirdGuides and the Arran data held in the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme. At the writing stage, 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: Ian Brown, Michael Burke, Charlotte Clough, Brian Couper, Colin Cowley, Jim Dickson, Rachel Dobson, Arthur Duncan, John Fitzpatrick, John Forbes, Val Gall, Bob Garrett, Nick Giles, Richard Godfrey, Martin Kaye, Helen Logan, Jim McKenzie, Dennis Morrison, James Morrison, Alex Penn, Dave Russell, Howard Sargeant, Chris Southall and Ewan Urquhart. The expertise of Sharon Smith and the staff of Ardrossan Printing Company is a key factor in achieving the published report.

Finally, my thanks to the contributors; there would be no report without their input. Some make a substantial contribution to the total number of records received. There is a core of regular contributors, locals, and visitors, submitting regular sightings who provide the bedrock on which this annual report is based. In addition, I have been encouraged by the number of people, locals and visitors, who have contacted me. 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 2021, over three hundred contributors submitted around fourteen thousand records on one hundred and sixty-one species. 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 2021.

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 (2018). 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 2022, please send any bird notes with "what, when, where" to me before Tuesday 03 January 2023, 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, Bird Recorder for the Arran Natural History Society.

Chronological Summary

The Covid-19 pandemic arrived in the UK in late January 2020 and had a profound impact on all our lives throughout the whole of 2020 and 2021. The restrictions to try to control the spread of the disease, to minimise the risk to health and to save lives were unprecedented.

What was the impact on bird recording on Arran? Here are some observations. Visitor numbers to the island were down. There was some interruption to the various regular bird surveys in line with government advice. Looking at the data received, the number of contributors dropped from 320 in 2019 to 250 in 2020 but rose in 2021 to 310. The number of species reported dropped from 160 in 2019 to 157 in 2020 but rose in 2021 to 161. The number of records received dropped from 24,000 in 2019 to 16,500 in 2020 to 14,000 in 2021. In this context, 2021 was still a fascinating birding year on Arran.

Arran's first ever Siberian Chiffchaff was reported in November. In addition, several species were recorded after an absence of a number of years, in April Rough-legged Buzzard after forty-seven years and Jay after nine years and in June Hobby after ten years, Quail after nine years and Nightjar after four years. As well as these highlights, Rose-coloured Starling turned up for the fifth year in a row and there were increasing reports of these colonising species; Little Egret, Nuthatch and White-tailed Eagle plus the largest ever numbers of Red Kite in October and Brambling in December.

The number of species recorded each month in Arran in 2021 is shown in the table below.

| <i>Month</i> | <i>Jan</i> | <i>Feb</i> | <i>Mar</i> | <i>Apr</i> | <i>May</i> | <i>Jun</i> | <i>Jul</i> | <i>Aug</i> | <i>Sep</i> | <i>Oct</i> | <i>Nov</i> | <i>Dec</i> |
|--------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <i>In Month</i> | 97 | 99 | 100 | 118 | 115 | 102 | 102 | 108 | 97 | 107 | 95 | 85 |
| <i>Year Total</i> | 97 | 107 | 111 | 134 | 144 | 148 | 149 | 155 | 156 | 160 | 160 | 161 |

January

In comparison to last January, January 2021 was colder and wetter. The mean temperature was 3.5 degrees lower. The rainfall was more than 50% higher. The weather was not conducive to being out of doors. Nevertheless, almost one hundred species were reported.

Some of the highlights were seen through the windows of people's homes (in line with continuing Covid19 restrictions) including; Little Egret in Lamblash on 20th, White-tailed Eagle in Machrie on 22nd, Little Egret in Brodick on 23rd and Nuthatch in Pirmill on 30th. In addition, there was a Long-tailed Duck off Porta Buidhe on 5th and a Slavonian Grebe off Cosyden on 20th.

Wintering wildfowl included: four Goldeneye on Mossend Pond on 1st, three hundred Greylag Geese in Feorline on 12th, twenty-eight Canada Geese in Clachaig on 13th, one Whooper Swan on Port-na-Lochan on 19th, ninety Pink-footed Geese in Sliderry on 30th, ninety Wigeon in Shiskine also on 30th, three Gosander in Whiting Bay on 31st and one hundred and twenty Teal at Kilpatrick Point also on 31st.

Other wintering species included: one Knot on Silver Sands on 2nd, three Jack Snipe on Sliderry Shore also on 2nd, four Redwing at Porta Buidhe on 5th, two Rook on Clachaig Farm on 18th, four Purple Sandpiper on Silver Sands on 20th, one Merlin at Porta Buidhe on 22nd, thirty Fieldfare at Ballymeanochglen on 27th and eleven Yellowhammer in Sliderry on 30th. There were no January reports of Brambling.

Wintering flocks included: one hundred and twenty Jackdaw on Clachaig Farm on 1st, fifty-one Golden Plover in Slidery on 3rd, five Little Grebe on Loch Ranza on 16th, twenty-six Turnstone on Silver Sands also on 16th, ten Black-throated Diver in Whiting Bay on 19th, fifty-five Lapwing on Clachaig Farm on 21st, nine Mistle Thrush on Kilpatrick Farm also on 21st, fifteen Bullfinch in Clauchan Glen on 23rd, five Great Northern Diver off Blackwaterfoot on 24th, thirty-two Curlew on Cleats Shore also on 24th, one hundred and ninety Starling on Clachaig Farm on 29th, seventy Ringed Plover at Dougarie on 30th and two hundred and fifty Common Gull at Kilpatrick Point on 31st.

Interesting garden birds in January included: twelve Long-tailed Tit in Shannochie on 10th, a Treecreeper in Lochranza on 11th, a Blackcap in Mayish on 12th and a Goldcrest in Cordon on 13th.

In January there was one report of returning Gannet, one in Whiting Bay on 16th, while there were a number of reports of returning Shelduck on coastal territories including Auchenhew, Carlo, Clauchlands, Cleats Shore, Kildonan, Merkland, Porta Buidhe, Sandbraes and Whiting Bay. Other signs of approaching spring included: a pair of Collared Dove nesting in Brodick on 15th, thirty-eight Eider courting in Whiting Bay on 19th, a Grey Heron carrying nest material in Whitehouse Wood on 23rd and a Great Spotted Woodpecker drumming in Kildonan also on 23rd.

February

February started with a very wet spell with most of the month's rain falling in the first few days. This was followed by a prolonged very cold spell lasting until the middle of the month. Thereafter it was mild with a pleasant few days to end the month. While at times the weather was not conducive to being out of doors nevertheless over one hundred species were reported, ten more than last year.



Knot - Nick Giles

The hard weather had an impact on bird behaviour as birds struggled to survive. Grey Herons frozen out of their normal haunts were reported hunting birds at garden feeders in Glenloig on 8th and in Sannox on 10th. Woodcock seeking soft ground to probe for food appeared in gardens in Kiscadale on 11th and Dippin on 13th. Species moving from the snow bound mainland and continent included Lapwing. Unusually there were over twenty widespread reports of Lapwing on Arran from Lochranza in the north to Kildonan in the south with thirty-eight reported in Kilpatrick on 8th and fifty in Corrieravie on 9th. Other movements were reflected in the report of colour ringed birds with two Common Gulls, colour ringed as chicks in 2012 in Aberdeenshire, reported in the Shiskine Valley and a Knot colour ringed on a Dutch Island in September 2017 was photographed in Kildonan on 17th. Knot is an Arctic breeding species that winters as far south as West Africa.

Other wintering visitors included: six Purple Sandpiper on Holy Isle on 2nd, fifty Fieldfare in Corrieravie on 8th, fourteen Redwing in Strathwillan on 15th, a Sanderling on Silver Sands also on 15th and a Rook on Clachaig Farm on 19th. In addition, there was a report of a Chiffchaff, more familiar as a summer visitor, in Glenkiln on 10th and a number of reports of Blackcap including two in Corrie on 21st.

Wintering wildfowl continued to be present including: thirty-eight Teal at Carlo on 2nd, three Goldeneye on Mossend Pond on 3rd, one hundred and twelve Pink-footed Geese in Sliderry on 9th, six White-fronted Geese among three hundred and fifty-eight Greylag Geese in the Shiskine Valley on 16th and sixteen Wigeon at Machrie on 26th. In addition, there were reports throughout the month of two single Whooper Swans one in Lamlash Bay and one in Feorline.

Other wintering flocks included: one hundred Jackdaw at Machriewaterfoot on 16th, fifteen Mistle Thrush in Catacol also on 16th, ninety Skylark by Lagg Distillery on 18th, six Dunlin on Holy Isle also on 18th, eight Long-tailed Tit in Corrie on 21st, seventy Curlew on Sliderry Shore on 22nd, ten Greenfinch in Pirrmill also on 22nd, eighteen Bullfinch on Holy Isle on 24th, three hundred and forty Starling and nine Yellowhammer in Sliderry on 25th, forty-five Golden Plover and fifty Turnstone in Machrie on 26th, two hundred and fifty Herring Gull on Pladda also on 26th and fifty Woodpigeon by Mossend Pond also on 26th.



White-fronted Goose-Alex Penn

Other interesting sightings included: two Moorhen at Port na Lochan on 7th, two Little Grebe by Fisherman's Walk on 14th, two Goosander in Cordon on 15th, a Magpie in Clauchlands also on 15th, three Black-throated Diver in Whiting Bay on 26th, thirteen Great Northern Diver in Machrie Bay on 27th and three Dipper in Glenashdale also on 27th. In addition, there was a Mediterranean Gull along with around one hundred Common Gull by Lagg Distillery on 18th. The last record of Mediterranean Gull on Arran was in November 2018.

Throughout February, reports of the long staying colonising species Little Egret, Nuthatch and White-tailed Eagle continued. Little Egret was first reported on 20 October 2020, the Nuthatch was first reported on 1 October 2020 and the pair of White-tailed Eagle was first reported on 22 November 2020. In February reports of the Little Egret were mainly from Brodick Bay and Lamlash Bay, the Nuthatch reports were from Pirrmill and the pair of White-tailed Eagles mainly from the west coast of the island.

Gannet seemed slow to return this year with only one February record, one Whiting Bay on 28th. There were six records of returning Lesser Black-backed Gull. The first of these was two by Lagg Distillery on 18th. Other signs of approaching spring included: Grey Heron nest building in Stronach Wood on 9th, pair of Fulmar exploring nest sites in Catacol on 12th, Great Spotted Woodpecker drumming in Brodick Castle Gardens on 17th, twenty-five Eider displaying in Brodick Bay on 24th and Song Thrush singing in Blackwaterfoot on 28th. By the end of the month there were signs that spring was on its way.

March

Spring 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. On Arran, March was warmer and drier than February. March mean temperature was two degrees higher and the rainfall in March was half that of February's. Overall, this March was similar to last March with some settled spells. It was during these more settled spells that a few pioneer summer migrants did arrive.

On the 17th the first Chiffchaff were reported singing, one in Auchenhew Bay and one on Holy Isle. By the end of the month Chiffchaff were widespread. Also on 17th the first White Wagtail was with Pied Wagtail on Silver Sands. The first Wheatear report was two from Shannochie on 25th and on 31st thirty Sand Martin were reported from Catacol and three from Clauchlands. These were all the migrant species reported in March.

In March, our winter visitors were still to the fore including: nine Yellowhammer in Slidderly on 6th, sixteen Wigeon at Cosyden on 7th, a male Goldeneye on Mossend Pond also on 7th, one hundred Pink-footed Geese on Clachaig Farm on 18th, three Rook at Slidderly also on 18th, twenty Teal in South Carlo on 19th, three hundred and fifty Greylag Geese in the Shiskine Valley on 19th, seventeen Fieldfare in Strathwillan on 22nd, ten Redwing in Slidderly also on 22nd, five White-fronted Geese in Shiskine Valley on 24th and a female Merlin in Cordon on 29th. Also on 29th, there was the first report this winter of an Arctic breeding white winged gull, when a first winter Iceland Gull was photographed at the mouth of the Rosa Burn.

In March there were many signs of migration. Flocks of up to one hundred Whooper Swan were reported flying north over the island on 21st and 22nd. Other signs included a flock of six hundred Starling at Slidderly on 6th, seven Great Northern Diver off Pladda on 7th, nine Black-throated Diver in Whiting Bay on 8th, twenty Turnstone in Lamash Bay on 15th, forty-two Golden Plover in Catacol Bay on 13th and a Bar-tailed Godwit in Auchenhew Bay on 21st. Gannet sightings began to slowly increase during the month with six off Pirmill on 28th the largest group reported. In addition, there was an increase in numbers of Goldfinch and Siskin at garden feeders, from several areas as these species began to move north.



Little Egret-Nick Giles

In a month when over one hundred species were reported, here is a small selection of other interesting March records: two Goosander in Whiting Bay on 1st, four Little Grebe in Loch Ranza on 13th, a Tree Creeper on Holy Isle on 19th, two Dipper in Strathwillan on 25th and six Common Crossbill in High Kildonan on 26th.

Throughout March, reports of the long staying colonising species Little Egret, Nuthatch and White-tailed Eagle continued.

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: a Grey Heron carrying nest

material in Lagg on 1st, Great Spotted Woodpecker drumming in Merkland Wood on 13th, fifty Eider courting off Cosyden on 19th, eight Black Guillemot in breeding plumage on Pladda on 24th, Blackbird carrying food in Kildonan on 29th and many species singing including a Blackcap in Auchenhew Bay on 31st.

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 very dry with no measurable rain on more than twenty days. With a predominance of northerly winds April was colder than March and the mean temperature was more than two degrees lower than last April. The impact on migrating birds of the weather here and throughout their route is difficult to know, but even by the end of the month the bulk of the migrants had still to arrive.

By the end of March, the first Chiffchaff, White Wagtail, Wheatear and Sand Martin had been reported. Here are April "firsts" with the 2020 arrival date in brackets for comparison: Willow Warbler 2nd (5th), Manx Shearwater 2nd (28th March), Sandwich Tern 2nd (6th), Common Sandpiper 2nd (10th), Swallow 2nd (5th), House Martin 5th (4th), Cuckoo 14th (14th), Grasshopper Warbler 19th (19th), Whinchat 21st (22nd), Whitethroat 22nd (16th), Sedge Warbler 23rd (18th) and Tree Pipit 27th (18th).

In April some of our wintering birds were still around, including seven Teal at Kilpatrick Point on 2nd, one hundred and thirty-five Greylag Geese in the Shiskine Valley on 3rd, four Wigeon at Cosyden also on 3rd, twenty-five Fieldfare at Sliddery also on 3rd, one Merlin at Machrie Golf course on 15th, three Rook at Sliddery on 23rd and one Whooper Swan on Sliddery Shore on 27th. The last report of Pink-footed Geese was one hundred and twenty flying north over Cleats Shore on migration on 15th.

April is an ideal time for watching migration. These are a few examples: twenty Skylark on Cleats Shore on 2nd, fourteen Twite also on Cleats Shore on 2nd, five Great Northern Diver off Pladda on 3rd, one Bar-tailed Godwit on Sliddery Shore also on 3rd, forty-five Golden Plover at Machriewaterfoot on 15th, twenty Turnstone also at Machriewaterfoot on 15th, fifty Linnets at Sliddery on 23rd, a Dunlin on Silver Sands on 24th and thirty-one Whimbrel at Porta Buidhe on 27th. One of these Whimbrel had been ringed on a southern Arran shore in 2017. It was reported yet again almost on the same shore, for the fourth year in a row, having again spent the winter in Africa! In addition, the Little Egret first reported in October and the Nuthatch also first reported in October, both seem to have left the island after over-wintering. The last Little Egret report was from Clauchlands on 16th and the Nuthatch seems to have left Pirnmill on 1st and spent a few days in Dippin before leaving there on 6th.



Nuthatch-Michael Burke

Migration was also in evidence from the widespread reports received of Goldfinch and Siskin moving through people's gardens throughout the month. Larger garden numbers reported included forty Goldfinch at Shannochie on 4th and eleven Siskin at Strathwillan on 11th. In addition, there were widespread reports of Lesser Redpoll at garden feeders including four at Lagg on 27th. Tens of thousands of birds seem to be moving through the island at this time of year.

In April there were over one hundred and ten species recorded on Arran. Here is a further small selection from this list: ten Shelduck at Port na Feannaiche on 3rd, an Osprey in the Shiskine Valley on 15th, three Puffin in Brodick Bay on 23rd, a Jay at Port na Lochan on 24th (last Arran record 2012), a Water Rail at Feorline on 26th and twelve Gannet in Machrie Bay on 27th. The highlight in April was the Rough-legged Buzzard seen by the Ross Road near Glenree on 25th, the first Arran record since 1974. (See page 26)

May

After the very dry April, May was much wetter and in comparison, to last May, it was not only wetter, with double the amount of rain, but colder. The mean temperature was 1.5 degrees lower. At the end of the month with the winds moving away from a northerly direction the temperature began to noticeable rise. There was a feeling that while spring was arriving, it was late. Conditions were generally good for birds trying to get on with breeding, but Swallow and House Martin seemed to be delaying nesting, perhaps because of the lack of flying insects.

Throughout the month the numbers of familiar summer visitors like Swallow, House Martin, Sand Martin, Willow Warbler, Whitethroat, Sedge Warbler and Cuckoo continued to build up. Cuckoo seemed to be particularly widespread and noticeable this year with small groups being reported from some areas. (See page 24) In addition to the "firsts" reported in the April notes, here are some further "firsts" with the 2020 arrival dates in brackets for comparison: a Swift over Clachaig Farm on 4th (30th), a Garden Warbler in Clauchlands on 7th (15th April), a Wood Warbler by Corrie Golf Course on 11th (9th), six Arctic Tern on Pladda on 12th (15th) and a Spotted Flycatcher in Leac Gharbh on 13th (8th). In addition, there were reports of three scarce summer visitors, a Common Redstart by Fairhaven on 9th, a Lesser Whitethroat by Cleats Shore track on 18th and a Yellow Wagtail on Silver Sands on 27th.

Species who breed further north continued to pass through including; fifteen Dunlin on Silver Sands on 1st, a Merlin at Clachaig Farm on 4th, seventeen Whimbrel at Porta Buidhe on 5th, twelve White Wagtail on Cleats Shore on 7th, forty-six Pink-footed Geese flying north over Clachaig on 10th, six Great Northern Diver and two Sandwich Tern in Machrie Bay on 12th, a male Scaup on Fisherman's Walk on 14th, three Common Scoter in Catacol Bay on 21st, three Turnstone at Blackwaterfoot on 25th and four Black-throated Diver in Machrie Bay on 26th. In addition, there are now two single Whooper Swan not heading north but over summering on Arran, an adult in Lamlash Bay and a sub-adult on Sliddey Shore.



Herring Gull Leucistic-John Forbes

In May, breeding was well underway for many species. Encouraging signs included reports of Golden Eagle, Golden Plover, Hen Harrier, Red-throated Diver and Short-eared Owl all holding breeding territories. Activity was reported from all the monitored heronries on the island and four areas held small numbers of breeding Lapwing. A number of coastal cliffs held single figure numbers of nesting Fulmar which seem to be in serious decline on Arran. I would be interested to receive any reports of young birds. None were reported in 2018, 2019, 2020 or 2021 from any colony. By contrast the Black Guillemot colonies seem to be thriving. Other breeding records included: two Skylark singing in hills above Lochranza on 1st, Shelduck with two young Porta Buidhe on 15th, two Woodcock roding over Machrie Moor on 19th, pair of Mute Swan with seven young in Lamlash Bay on 24th, over sixty pair of nesting Herring Gull on Holy Isle on 28th and a Mallard with four young at Imachar on 29th. In addition, towards the end of the month, there were many of reports of garden birds carrying food and feeding recently fledged young, but few reports of Blue and Great Tit feeding young which seem to have had a poor breeding season.

In May over one hundred and ten species were recorded. Here are some other highlights: a White-tailed Eagle over Cleiteadh Buidhe on 6th, an adult Mediterranean Gull on Cleats Shore on 7th, two Puffin in Brodick Bay on 8th, a leucistic Herring Gull in Shiskine on 11th (This "white" Herring Gull was ringed on Arran in June 2018.), pair of Goosander in Catacol Bay on 12th, a Kingfisher at Merkland Point on 13th, a Dipper in Glen Cloy also on 13th and around four hundred and fifty Manx Shearwater in Whiting Bay on 20th.

With the long daylight hours, it is a great time of year to be birding. Most birds are getting on with the business of breeding. Please take a moment to report any signs of breeding birds to me, but please also remember that under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is being built or used. Do not hesitate to report any criminal activity to the local police. Particularly take care on our shores and please keep dogs on their leads at this time of year.

June

June was noticeably warmer than May. The mean temperature was four degrees higher, and the rainfall was more than forty percent less. The light winds of May continued into June giving a prolonged settled spell.

One effect of this was the much-reported phytoplankton, algae or algal bloom that gave the sea an unusual green/blue colour. Concern has been raised of the impact of this on species that hunt by sight in the sea for example, Gannet. In June I received far fewer Gannet sightings than usual. In June 2020 I received 39 Gannet records. While the vast majority last year were of one or two birds, I did receive a report of 13 birds together and 15 birds together. This year in June, I received 6 records, all of one or two birds. Not a scientific sample and there could be a number of factors affecting these birds that are capable of flying long distances to feed their young. Latest reports from Ailsa Craig the nearest Gannet colony, suggest normal breeding going on.

The settled weather was generally conducive to birds raising young during the long daylight hours in June. Some observers reported gardens full of young birds. There were many reports of fledged birds in gardens including unfamiliar looking young birds, like Goldfinch without the red face of the adult birds, and Robin with spots and no red breast. Among the familiar garden birds Blackbird, Song Thrush, Chaffinch and Dunnock seemed to be doing well while others felt that Blue Tit, Great Tit and Coal Tit had a poorer season. Most prolific of all seemed to be House Sparrow, with fifty in Alma Park on 25th being one of the larger numbers. Also, there were many reports of numbers of Siskin and Goldfinch with young around, including twenty-two Siskin in Strathwillan on 20th and twenty Goldfinch in Shannochie on 29th. Like last year, it was encouraging to get reports of young Greenfinch and young Great Spotted Woodpecker from widespread locations.



Great Spotted Woodpecker - Dave Russell

Away from gardens there were many signs of breeding including: nesting Little Grebe on Mossend Pond on 5th, roding Woodcock in Glen Rosa on 10th, a flock of two hundred Starling with many young in Sliderry on 19th, Skylark singing in Kilmory on 29th and activity at the Grey Heron heronries in Stronach Wood, Brodick, Lagg and Whitehouse Wood, Lamblash by the end of the month.

The Sand Martin colony in Glen Catacol had seventy-four nest holes and was a hive of activity on 29th with adults feeding many waiting youngsters. To date the largest group of House Martin is twenty at Glean Easan Biorach on 7th while the largest group reported of Swallow with young is fourteen at Kilpatrick on 19th. A particular breeding highlight was a report of Quail calling near Sliderry between 8 June and 16 June. The last Arran record of this occasional summer visitor was nine years ago.

The breeding success of some raptors is linked to the vole cycle. Bumper years of voles tend to be followed by a crash followed by a gradual build up followed by a bumper year in a roughly four-year cycle. Last year was a bumper year for voles to the benefit of Barn Owls and Short-eared Owls who both had excellent breeding seasons. This year (2021) the vole population has crashed. Monitored Barn Owl nest boxes have had no young. The collapse of the vole population also had an effect on Short-eared Owls. Females who were satellite tagged at nests on Arran last year are breeding in Norway and Russia this year. But it is all natural and the vole population will recover over the next couple of years.



Nightjar-Rachel Dobson

Around the coast there were further signs of breeding including: a crèche of six Eider at Blackwaterfoot on 3rd, eight Black Guillemot carrying food near Thunderguy on 5th, four Fulmar nesting on Drumadoon Cliffs on 14th, a pair of Mute Swan with seven young in Lamlash Bay on 18th and a pair of Shelduck also with seven young at Kilpatrick Point on 26th. Breeding shore birds like Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover and Common Sandpiper seemed to suffer increased disturbance as a result of increasing numbers of dog walkers ignoring the advice to keep dogs on their lead where ground nesting birds are nesting.

The highlight of the month was the confirmed breeding of Nightjar (See page 28). Another outstanding feature was the number of records of Rose-coloured Starling. (See page 27).

Other highlights in a month with almost one hundred species reported included the following: a Wood Warbler singing in Brodick Country Park on 6th, two Grasshopper Warbler reeling on Corrie cravie Moor on 8th, a male Common Redstart in Corriegills also on 8th, six Dunlin at Drumadoon Point on 12th, two Red-throated Diver close in-shore in Brodick Bay on 14th, three Twite on Machrie Golf Course on 25th, nineteen Swift over High Kildonan on 29th and a Great Northern Diver in full breeding plumage in Whiting Bay also on 29th.

Finally, to round off an exceptional month a Hobby was sighted over Brown Head/ Cnocan Donn 30 June. The necessary report submitted to the Clyde Rarities Panel was accepted as the first Arran record in ten years. The last record was one by the Ross Road on 22 June 2011.

July

In comparison to June, July was much drier and warmer. The mean temperature was three degrees higher. In comparison to July last year, July this year was also drier and warmer. There was only three days when there was more than 2mm of rain. The light winds of May and June this year continued into July giving a prolonged settled spell.

This had a positive impact on the breeding success of most of our visiting summer birds, particularly those that relied on airborne insects to feed young. Looking at the proportion of adult to young birds from information gathered by licensed bird ringers, Willow Warbler, Chiffchaff, Whitethroat, Sedge Warbler and Blackcap, all had a good season. Similarly, Sand Martin, House Martin and Swallow had a good season although this was not uniform across the island. As reported in the June notes, garden birds seemed generally to thrive and seed eating birds like Lesser Redpoll, Siskin and Goldfinch all had successful breeding seasons.

Other signs of a successful breeding season included: Grey Wagtail family on Eas Mhor on 5th, three large Shelduck young by Cosyden on 6th, female Mallard with nine young at Cordon also on 6th, young Great Spotted Woodpecker in Lochranza on 8th, Red Grouse family Carn Mhor on 9th, Golden Plover family Beinn Tarsuinn on 10th, four young Eider on Sliderry Shore on 17th, five fledged Common Gull young on Brodick Castle on 19th, three young Oystercatcher at Corrie on 22nd, Spotted Flycatcher family at Fairy Dell also on 22nd, Common Sandpiper family at Porta Buidhe on 24th and female Red-breasted Merganser with nine young at Cladach on 28th.

On the downside, with the removal of some Covid restrictions, there was increased human activity on shores, with many ignoring notices of breeding birds and allowing their dogs off leads to cause disturbance to breeding shore birds. In addition, there was concern expressed that increased human activity on the hills near lochans was adversely affecting breeding Red-throated Divers (see page 25) and diminishing records of breeding Curlew and Fulmar is a continuing cause for concern.

July marks the end of the breeding season for some birds. It can be an interesting time looking for breeding species dispersing from their breeding grounds, many still in their breeding plumage. Reports included; two Black-headed Gulls with two young by Fisherman's Walk on 21st, four Turnstone at Blackwaterfoot on 27th, one Dunlin at Blackwaterfoot on 31st, an adult Sandwich Tern feeding young in Lamash Bay also on 31st and as well as reports of our Red-throated Diver round the coast, there were also reports of two more northerly breeding divers, two Great Northern Diver off Cosyden on 6th and two Black-throated Diver in Brodick Bay on 21st.

In addition, after breeding many species begin to flock together. Reports included; fourteen Black Guillemot in Catacol Bay on 6th, sixty House Sparrow in Kildonan on 13th, one hundred Shag off Pladda on 19th, sixteen Curlew on Brodick shore on 21st, one hundred and forty Jackdaw in Lochranza on 23rd, two hundred Starling in Sliderry on 27th and twenty Ringed Plover with seven Redshank in Blackwaterfoot on 31st.

Over a hundred species were reported in July. Other highlights included; four Manx Shearwater in Brodick Bay on 2nd, three Common Scoter off Fisherman's Walk from 3rd to 8th, a Swift over Larybeg on 11th, a female Goosander in Catacol Bay on 15th, an Osprey off Clauclands on 18th, eleven Gannet in Whiting Bay also on 18th, three Common Crossbill in Newton on 22nd and continuing reports of two over-summering Whooper Swan one in Lamash Bay and the other near Torrylinnwater Foot.



Common Scoter - Colin Cowley

Finally, there was a record of a Yellowhammer on Holy Isle on 3 July. Summer records of this once widespread breeding species are now most unusual on Arran. (See page 29)

August

August was a little cooler and much wetter than the very dry July. The mean temperature was one degree lower, and the rainfall was five times as much, all at the beginning of the month. In comparison to last August while temperature and rainfall were similar, the winds were lighter. Last August there were two "named" storms. This August the light winds of May, June and July continued. Towards the end of the month there was just a hint of the approach of autumn.



Cuckoo - Arthur Duncan

Having said that, this summer visitors were still to the fore including: a Chiffchaff in Lochranza on 3rd, forty Willow Warbler in Corrie cravie on 5th, three Common Sandpiper on Sliderry Shore on 9th, six Whitethroat on Cleats Shore on 14th, fifteen Sedge Warbler, a Whinchat and six Tree Pipit by Corrie cravie Ponds on 15th, eleven Lesser Black-backed Gull in Sannox on 19th, five Spotted Flycatcher in Glen Rosa on 23rd and a late Swift over Sliderry on 26th. The largest group of each hirundine reported was thirty Sand Martin in Glen Catacol on 2nd, seventy-five Swallow in Shannochie on 22nd and one hundred House Martin in Sliderry on 26th. A young Cuckoo was photographed in West Bannan on 2nd.

Some other signs of successful breeding this month included: young Black Guillemot in Catacol Bay on 2nd, five young Shelduck at Kilpatrick Point on 5th, a single young Fulmar at Catacol on 12th, a family of five Kestrel at Glenscorrodale on 16th, a family of four Little Grebe on Mossend Pond on 19th, a pair of Mute Swan with seven large

young in Lamlash Bay on 24th and a family of Great Spotted Woodpecker in Lagg on 28th. As well as this, there were widespread reports of young birds at garden feeders. Of these the species that seems to have had the most successful breeding season has been House Sparrow, with widespread reports of many groups with more than fifty birds. House Sparrow may be in decline in the UK but not on Arran.

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: sixty Curlew in Corrie cravie on 5th, seventy Goldfinch in Sliderry on 7th, twenty-five Red-breasted Merganser in Machrie Bay on 19th, twenty Chaffinch in Shannochie on 22nd, seventy-eight Linnet in Kilpatrick also on 22nd, thirty Redshank in Lochranza on 26th, fifty Kittiwake in Machrie Bay on 28th and one hundred Golden Plover with one hundred and fifty Ringed Plover at Machriewaterfoot also on 28th.

All around the island, but particularly on the coast, there were signs of birds on migration, including: six Sandwich Tern including two young on Silver Sands on 8th, three Whimbrel on Sliderry Shore on 9th, a Knot by Fisherman's Walk on 14th, thirty-four Turnstone in Machrie Bay on 19th, six Dunlin in Blackwaterfoot on 24th, a Black-tailed Godwit in Blackwaterfoot on 26th, a Wigeon on Sliderry Shore on 30th, five Sanderling at Blackwaterfoot also on 30th and five Wheatear at Porta Buidhe on 31st. In addition, there was a passage of skuas, uncommon passage migrants. A Great Skua at Drumadon Point on 23rd was followed by reports of Arctic Skua off Blackwaterfoot on 24th and 25th, off Sannox on 26th and two in Whiting Bay on 27th. The last Arran report of Great Skua was 2018 and the last report of Arctic Skua was 2019.

Among the one hundred plus species reported in August there were a number of other noteworthy ones including: a Dipper in Lochranza on 5th, a Water Rail in Corriecravie on 15th, a Moorhen and a Coot on Mossend Pond on 19th, three Red-throated Diver over Shiskine Golf Course on 19th, three Great Northern Diver in Machrie Bay also on 19th, a male Merlin on Burrican Hill on 20th, eight Black-throated Diver off Cosyden on 28th and two White-tailed Eagle over Kildonan on 30th.

September

The weather in September was almost identical to August in terms of mean temperature and rainfall. In comparison to last September, it was warmer and drier. September is the start of the peak migration season when many birds are on the move. The weather was conducive for watching this migration.

Birds on migration included: twenty-one White Wagtail on Sliderry Shore on 2nd, four Common Scoter off Pirmill on 6th, twelve Dunlin at Drumadoon Point on 8th, two Sandwich Tern in Brodick Bay on 10th, one Knot on Cleats Shore on 12th, one Whimbrel and seven Wheatear on Cleats Shore on 18th, one Sanderling at Drumadoon Point on 23rd and two reports of Arctic Skua in Brodick Bay one on 7th and one on 23rd.

In preparation for migration many species were flocking together. Reports included: one hundred Goldfinch by Torrylinn shore on 8th, one hundred and twenty Kittiwake at Blackwaterfoot on 10th, seventy Starling on Silver Sands on 11th, 100 Shag by Pladda on 12th, one hundred and forty-four Golden Plover and ninety Ringed Plover at Machriewaterfoot on 12th, three hundred Linnet and two hundred Greylag Geese on Cleats Shore also on 12th, one hundred and fifty Common Gull at Blackwaterfoot on 20th, thirty-one Oystercatcher at Whitefarland on 24th and twelve Turnstone on Sliderry Shore also on 24th. This gives an indication of the numbers of birds that are on the move at this time of year.

In September there were reports of returning winter visitors including: one Wigeon on Sliderry Shore on 2nd, forty-one Pink-footed Geese flying over Kildonan on 5th, eight Rook on Cleats Shore on 12th, thirty Whooper Swan over Drumadoon on 25th and six Brent Geese at Thunderguy on 29th. (See page 30). A number of summer visitors were still around in September including: two Lesser Black-backed Gull at Kilpatrick Point on 1st, one Willow Warbler at Auchencar on 7th, one Whitethroat on Cleats Shore on 12th and two Chiffchaff in Glen Rosa on 20th. For House Martin, the largest September record was fifty at the Auchrannie on 7th and the latest one was ten in Corrie on 22nd. For Swallow the largest group was two hundred in Blackwaterfoot on 9th and the latest one was four in Sliderry on 30th.

Around hundred species were recorded on Arran in September. Other interesting sightings this month included: three Common Crossbill in Brodick on 6th, one Twite on Cleats Shore on 12th, two Goosander at Machriewaterfoot also on 12th, a Little Grebe on Cleats Shore on 18th, two Treecreeper in Glen Rosa on 20th, twelve Long-tailed Tit at Silver Sands on 29th and ten Gannet off Porta Buidhe also on 29th. Gannet will soon be heading south for the winter. To conclude this section, on 17th people travelling on the school bus had a close encounter with an adult White-tailed Eagle being mobbed by gulls close to Thunderguy.



White-tailed Eagle - Helen Logan

October

October was much wetter than September with seventy percent more rain. It was milder and wetter than last October. This October was the wettest month of the year so far. 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. This October did not disappoint.

A particular highlight was a report of six Red Kites in the Shiskine valley on 5th in the afternoon. There had been a report of one in Lochranza that morning. In the afternoon a helicopter had been in the Shiskine valley, which caused some disturbance. These birds may have been feeding on carrion. The experienced observers had recorded some of the spectacle on their mobile phone. This is the largest group recorded on Arran. In 2001 birds were released in Dumfries and Galloway for the first time and, that year, one was reported on Arran, the first record since the mid-1800s. In the following years there have been small numbers of records of single birds. In 2018 there were twelve records and one of these was of two birds together.



Other highlights included: a first winter Mediterranean Gull by Fisherman's Walk on 4th and 6th, the second record this year (October 2018 was the last record); a flight of twenty-six Barnacle Geese passing Kingscross on 15th, again first record since October 2018; and for the fifth year in a row Little Egret, a colonising species, was reported, with one at Cordon on 29th.

Winter visitors included: two Brent Geese (See page 30) and forty-one Rook on Cleats Shore on 5th, three hundred Greylag Geese also on Cleats Shore on 6th, fourteen Teal at Carlo on 7th, one Brambling and one

Yellowhammer in Sliddery on 15th, fifty Whooper Swan flying over Lamash Bay on 17th, forty Wigeon at Kilpatrick Point on 24th, one Snow Bunting in Glenkiln on 21st and two Snow Bunting on Goatfell summit on 30th. While Redwing numbers built up during the month with over eight hundred in Sliddery on 30th, Fieldfare, in contrast, had only one report, eight on Machrie Moor on 21st.

Migration was in full flow in October as birds were moving out of colder northern Europe to milder climes. These included: a Sanderling in Blackwaterfoot on 1st, three hundred and eighty Kittiwake in Loch Ranza on 3rd, two Wheatear on Sliddery Shore also on 3rd, fifty Linnet on Cleats Shore on 5th, fifty Goldfinch on Lakin Farm also on 5th, three hundred Skylark on Cleats Shore on 6th, seventy Golden Plover in Machrie Bay on 10th, twenty Turnstone at Dougarie also on 10th, sixty Lesser Redpoll at Catacol on 15th, sixty Ringed Plover by Fisherman's Walk on 23rd, a Merlin at Blackwaterfoot on 24th, eleven Redshank at Sandbraes on 29th and three hundred and fifty Starling at Sliddery also on 29th.

There were some "last sightings" of summer visitors also moving south including: a Chiffchaff in Sliddery on 2nd, nine Lesser Black-backed Gull by Fisherman's Walk on 4th, seven House Martin in Kildonan on 13th, sixteen Gannet off Silver Sands on 23rd and a Swallow in Sliddery on 25th.

Other interesting records from a month with over one hundred species reported included: a Moorhen at Port na Lochan on 3rd, a White-tailed Eagle at Imachar on 11th, two Little Grebe in Loch Ranza on 18th, two Dipper at Slidderywaterfoot on 23rd, ten Long-tailed Tit in Margnaeglish on 27th, seven Black-throated Diver and ten Great Northern Diver off Drumadoon Point on 28th, three Goosander at Imachar on 29th and over one hundred Eider in Lamash Bay on 31st. This was more than the island total during the Eider survey in September!

November

In comparison to October, November had less than half the rainfall. Both months were mild, but November had the first named storm of the winter. In comparison to last November while temperatures were similar, this November had almost half the amount of rain as last November.

The November highlight was the first confirmed record of Siberian Chiffchaff on Arran. This bird was trapped, ringed, photographed, identified, and released by licensed bird ringers on Saturday 13 November in a garden in Sliddery. (See page 31)

Not surprisingly in November, winter visitors were to the fore. These included two Brambling in Sliddery on 1st, twenty-two Twite at Machriewaterfoot on 4th, a Snow Bunting on Beinn a' Chliabhain on 7th, five Yellowhammer in Sliddery on 13th, a number of flocks of Redwing including sixty in Shannochie on 15th and after a dearth of Fieldfare records in October, a number of flocks including three hundred in Lochranza on 21st.

Other records of wintering birds included: a juvenile Merlin at Drumadoon Point on 2nd, one hundred and twenty Golden Plover at Machriewaterfoot on 4th, five Rook in Auchenheew also on 4th, twelve Turnstone at Sandbraes on 7th, twenty-one Snipe and nine Woodcock in Sliddery on 10th, one hundred and five Curlew on Corrie cravie shore on 20th, twelve Lapwing at Port na Feannaiche on 28th and one Jack Snipe in Sliddery also on 28th.



Golden Plover - Val Gall

Reports of wintering wildfowl included: two Wigeon at Clauchlands on 9th, two Goldeneye at Kingscross Point also on 9th, seventy Pink-footed Geese flying over Sliddery on 13th, one Whooper Swan on Mossend Pond on 14th, two hundred and twenty Greylag Geese in the Shiskine Valley on 15th, thirty-five Teal on Corrie cravie shore on 20th and one Brent Goose on Silver Sands on 21st.

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: a male Blackcap in Whiting Bay on 8th, four Long-tailed Tit in Lamlash on 17th, a Goldcrest in Pirnmill on 20th, four Great Tit in Shannochie on 21st, a Treecreeper in Whiting Bay also on 21st, eight Coal Tit in Margnaeghlish on 29th and eight Coal Tit and two Great Spotted Woodpecker in Lagg also on 29th.

There were two November records of birds usually associated with warmer months of the year, a Wheatear at Drumadoon Point on 2nd and a Swallow at Sliddery on 5th.

Finally, here is a further selection of highlights from what has been another exceptional month for bird-watching on Arran; a Little Egret by Fisherman's Walk on 3rd, twelve Black-headed Gull at Sandbraes also on 3rd, a White-tailed Eagle over the entrance to Glen Catacol on 7th, three Bullfinch in Corrie cravie quarry on 15th, a Kingfisher flying under the footbridge by the museum on 19th, three Golden Eagle including one sub-adult over the distillery in Lochranza also on 19th, five Great Northern Diver off Drumadoon Point on 21st, around two hundred Jackdaw coming in to roost in trees in Machrie off Drumadoon Point on 22nd, five returning Shelduck in Pirnmill also on 22nd and four calling Water Rail in Corrie cravie on 23rd.

Last but by no means least was the appearance of three Red Kite flying west from the “Heights” between Lamlash and Whiting Bay. The previous month there had been a report of six Red Kite together in the Shiskine Valley. Both are remarkable records. Red Kite records on Arran are usually of single birds.

December

The mild weather of November continued into December with no negative temperatures. December was wetter with about fifty percent more rain than November.



Winter visitors in December included: five Purple Sandpiper on Silver Sands on 5th and a first winter Glaucous Gull by Fisherman’s Walk on 13th. The last Arran record of this gull was in February 2020. While the numbers of Fieldfare and Redwing, regular winter visitors, were down on recent years, the number of Brambling, an irruptive winter visitor, were the largest ever recorded on Arran with forty at Cnoc na Dail on 12th and fifty at the same location on 18th.

Wintering wildfowl were to the fore including: five hundred and fifty Greylag Geese in the Shiskine Valley on 5th, fifty Pink-footed Geese also in the Shiskine Valley on 5th, four Wigeon in Kildonan on 6th, twenty-nine Canada Geese in Clachaig on 24th, twenty-three Teal on Cleats Shore on 28th and eight Whooper Swan flying and calling over Machrie on 9th.

Groups of wintering birds included: twenty Turnstone and twenty-one Black-headed Gull on Silver Sands on 4th, forty-four Ringed Plover in Blackwaterfoot on 8th, seventy Curlew and eighteen Snipe in Port na Feannaiche also on 8th, one hundred and forty Common Gull on Cleats Shore on 13th, two hundred Jackdaw in Machrie on 19th, twenty Lapwing on Cleats Shore on 28th, twenty-three Woodcock in East Bennan also on 28th, two hundred Starling in Cloined on 31st and thirty Greenfinch at Drumadoon Point also on 31st was the largest group for a number of years.

In December the seventeen records of Little Egret from twelve locations featured in a recent “Banner” Bird Note. Other interesting records this month included: two returning Shelduck in Kildonan on 5th, a Jack Snipe at Port na Feannaiche on 8th, five Yellowhammer in Sliderry on 10th, ten Rook in Clachaig also on 10th, a Dipper in Machrie on 19th and a Kingfisher in the Rosa Burn, Brodick on 21st. In addition, all three divers were around the coast including six Great Northern Diver at Port na Feannaiche on 8th, two Red-throated Diver off King’s Cave on 26th and two Black-throated Diver in Whiting Bay on 30th.

Although still in the depth of winter there were some signs of approaching spring with Great Spotted Woodpecker reported drumming in Brodick Country Park on 27th, Red-breasted Mergansers displaying in Lamlash Bay on 28th and a Song Thrush singing in Pirnmill on 29th.

Gardens provide a safe refuge for some birds in winter. Among the more unusual records received were: three Brambling in Sliderry on 19th, a Treecreeper in Sannox on 23rd, two Great Spotted Woodpecker in Lagg on 26th and sixteen Long-tailed Tit in Corrie on 26th.

A major influence on the chronological summary is the weather, which on Arran can be very localised. 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/>

From the above summary it has been another outstanding year on Arran.

Summer Migrant Arrival Dates

| | "Earliest" Recorded Date | Arrival Date 2021 |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Chiffchaff | 11-Mar-17 | 17 March |
| Wheatear | 13-Mar-05 | 25 March |
| Sand Martin | 18-Mar-09 | 31 March |
| Willow Warbler | 14-Mar-19 | 02 April |
| Swallow | 18-Mar-19 | 02 April |
| White Wagtail | 17-Mar-21 | 17 March |
| Manx Shearwater | 26-Mar-18 | 02 April |
| House Martin | 12-Mar-17 | 05 April |
| Common Sandpiper | 22-Mar-19 | 02 April |
| Sandwich Tern | 23-Mar-19 | 02 April |
| Whinchat | 01-Apr-88 | 21 April |
| Tree Pipit | 07-Apr-90 | 27 April |
| Redstart | 08-Apr-11 | 09 May |
| Cuckoo | 08-Apr-17 | 14 April |
| Grasshopper Warbler | 12-Apr-11 | 19 April |
| Garden Warbler | 12-Apr-95 | 07 May |
| Whitethroat | 13-Apr-16 | 22 April |
| Sedge Warbler | 14-Apr-11 | 23 April |
| Arctic Tern | 14-Apr-13 | 12 May |
| Corncrake | 20-Apr-90 | None recorded in 2021 |
| Common Tern | 21-Apr-93 | None recorded in 2021 |
| Spotted Flycatcher | 21-Apr-11 | 13 May |
| Wood Warbler | 25-Apr-09 | 11 May |
| Lesser Whitethroat | 27-Apr-10 | 29 April |
| Pied Flycatcher | 28-Apr-98 | 30 July only record |
| Swift | 01-May-09 | 04 May |
| Nightjar | 17-May-13 | 24 June |

Regular Winter Migrant Arrival and Departure Dates

| | "earliest" Arrival date | "latest" Departure date | 2021 Arrival date | 2021 Departure date |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Whooper Swan | 18-Sep-11 | 21-May-14 | 25 September | 04 April |
| Pink-footed Goose | 16-Sep-20 | 30-Apr-18 | 05 September | 10 May |
| Greylag Goose | 31-Aug-18 | 12-May-18 | 12 September | 02 April |
| Wigeon | 11-Jul-11 | 16-May-17 | 30 August | 10 April |
| Goldeneye | 12-Oct-09 | 04-May-06 | 09 September | 16 March |
| Purple Sandpiper | 07-Nov-16 | 20-May-16 | 05 December | 28 February |
| Waxwing | 21-Oct-10 | 15-Apr-09 | None recorded | None recorded |
| Fieldfare | 02-Sep-13 | 24-Apr-18 | 15 November | 19 April |
| Redwing | 18-Sep-20 | 13-Apr-16 | 09 October | 25 March |
| Rook | 03-Jul-07 | 28-Apr-19 | 12 September | 23 April |
| Brambling | 09-Oct-07 | 25-Apr-08 | 14 October | None Recorded |

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. Plus, two single over-summering Whooper Swan.

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/ringinfor/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 | Pullie - 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!

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

Bird ringing on Arran in 2021

Report by Terry Southall

In 2020 with the Coronavirus outbreak causing lockdown and travel restrictions, a reduced number of birds ringed would have been expected but that was not the case. In fact, it was the complete opposite! A total of just over three and a half thousand was our best ever total.

In 2021 the Coronavirus restrictions did impact on our ringing activities. While the number of birds ringed was less than 2020, it was still a substantial total. (See page 23)

Another influence that had an impact on the number of birds caught was the great reduction of voles in the year. So much so that no Barn Owl chicks were ringed at all. The nest boxes were empty. With such a reduction in their main food source, the owls did not attempt to breed. Going from 2020 to 2021, was a case of going from feast to famine for many of the birds of prey.

This year saw the start of a British Trust for Ornithology project to fit geo-locators to several species of trans-Saharan migrants. These tiny devices measure day length, temperature and humidity, thus giving vital information on the timing and conditions of the birds migration route and wintering areas. The species selected on Arran are Whinchat, Willow Warbler, Spotted Flycatcher and Tree Pipit, it is hoped to catch the returning birds and remove the devices in 2022 so that the data can be analysed.

The summer of 2021 was warm and dry allowing lots of the insect eating birds to have a good breeding season, something that is reflected in the number of warblers that were caught, especially Willow Warblers. However it was not all good news, Whinchats returned in far fewer numbers than in previous years and Blackcaps produced fewer young than was expected compared to other breeding warblers. In contrast, House Martins relished the warm and dry conditions many producing two broods making up for the poor breeding season in 2020.

Another Rose-coloured Starling reflects on the now annual summer westward dispersal of these birds from their main breeding grounds far to the east. The Great Spotted Woodpeckers are our first. Both birds were caught at a feeding station on the south of the island, showing the continuing colonisation of Arran from their start point around Brodick.

Selected list of recoveries of birds ringed on Arran

| Species | Age & Sex | Date ringed | Date recovered | Lapsed days | Where recovered | Distance moved |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------|----------------|-------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Woodcock | 3 - | 19/12/19 | 11/12/21 | 723 | Kilmory, Isle of Arran | 3km |
| Snipe | 3 - | 31/12/13 | 06/03/21 | 1893 | Sliderry, Isle of Arran | 0km |
| Great BB Gull | 1 - | 28/06/21 | 13/12/21 | 169 | Corsetown, Co Louth Ireland | 352km |
| Great BB Gull | 1 - | 28/06/21 | 05/10/21 | 100 | Clogherhead, Co Louth Ireland | 365km |
| Herring Gull | 9 - | 28/07/18 | 24/10/21 | 1184 | Wigtown, Dumfries & Galloway | 84km |
| Sparrowhawk | 1 - | 07/07/21 | 11/10/21 | 96 | Nr Newton Stewart D & G | 86km |
| Short-eared Owl | 1 - | 25/06/19 | 02/03/21 | 616 | Calliburn Croft, Argyle | 19km |
| Willow Warbler | 3J | 04/07/20 | 15/08/21 | 407 | Calf of Man, Isle of Man. | 156km |
| Sedge Warbler | 3J | 01/08/21 | 02/09/21 | 32 | Skokholm, Pembs Wales | 417km |
| Linnet | 3 - M | 23/09/20 | 17/12/21 | 450 | West Wycombe, Bucks | 509km |
| Lesser Redpoll | 4 - F | 12/07/20 | 22/02/21 | 225 | Nr Macclesfield, Cheshire. | 317km |
| Siskin | 5 - M | 04/04/17 | 22/02/21 | 1425 | Llanfyllin, Powys. Wales | 319km |

Codes for age and sex are given on page 20.

From the table on the previous page, the Woodcock recovery is our first. It had been shot.

The Snipe is included because at being over 7 years old at the time of being re-caught, is our oldest ringed Snipe.

Having two Great Blacked-backed Gulls moving to Ireland within their first year is a first and our furthest movements of these large gulls from their breeding grounds on Pladda. Both birds were fitted with colour rings which were read in the field and show how easily these birds would have been overlooked if only fitted with a metal ring.

Adult Herring Gulls in the Clyde do not normally wander far and most movements are in the winter months as with this bird moving down to Dumfries and Galloway.

The Sparrowhawk was a nestling born on Arran but found an untimely death having been found dead in a farm building. It is our first Sparrowhawk to be found on the mainland but birds ringed on the mainland have been found here!

Both the Willow and Sedge Warblers show the direct south movement that some of our trans-Saharan birds take. We have had two Sedge Warblers movements in the past to Cornwall in the autumn and a Willow Warbler caught in spring in Dorset.

The Linnet is without doubt our best recovery of the year and our first ever recovery of this species. The majority of Arran Linnets head south in the autumn being augmented by birds from further north into sometimes large flocks in the fields on the south of the island. It is not known where Arran Linnets winter but this bird caught by ringers just north west of London hopefully will start to give us an insight into this mystery.

Most of Arran Siskins winter in southern England and the low-countries. We have very few recoveries of birds visiting Wales.

Selected list of birds recovered on Arran but ringed elsewhere

| Species | Age & Sex | Date ringed | Where ringed | Date recovered | Lapse days | Distance moved |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|---|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Gannet | 1 - | 26/06/88 | Ailsa Craig, Ayrshire | 05/10/21 | 12154 | 31km |
| Kittiwake | 5 - | 30/06/19 | Newcastle, Co Down N I | 13/04/21 | 653 | 145km |
| Sedge Warbler | 3 - | 21/08/20 | Soulaire-et-Bourg, Main-et- Loire. France | 15/05/21 | 267 | 932km |
| Sedge Warbler | 3 - | 01/09/20 | Donges, Loire Atlantque. France | 01/08/21 | 334 | 931km |

A Gannet found dead on an Arran beach had been ringed as a chick some 32 years earlier on Ailsa Craig. These birds winter off the west coast of Africa and this bird had completed the round trip at least 19 times.

The Kittiwake was also found washed up dead on an Arran beach and had come from a colony in Northern Ireland.

Two French ringed Sedge Warblers had both been ringed in the Loire region of France as they moved south in the autumn to their wintering grounds in Africa. One bird was caught in the spring on Arran as it returned to its breeding grounds the other in late summer as it returned south to winter.

Ringling Totals for 2021

This table gives the ringling totals for the year.

| Species | FG | Pulli | Retraps | Total | Species | FG | Pulli | Retraps | Total |
|--------------------------|-----|-------|---------|-------|---------------------|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Greylag Goose | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | Starling | 29 | 28 | 1 | 58 |
| Whooper Swan | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | Song Thrush | 17 | 0 | 0 | 17 |
| Teal | 9 | 0 | 1 | 10 | Redwing | 67 | 0 | 0 | 67 |
| Nightjar | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | Blackbird | 53 | 0 | 2 | 55 |
| Cuckoo | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | Fieldfare | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Rock Dove | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | Robin | 52 | 0 | 6 | 58 |
| Collard Dove | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | Whinchat | 9 | 6 | 0 | 15 |
| Oystercatcher | 3 | 13 | 0 | 16 | Stonechat | 12 | 0 | 0 | 12 |
| Golden Plover | 8 | 0 | 0 | 8 | Wheatear | 10 | 0 | 0 | 10 |
| Ringed Plover | 8 | 0 | 0 | 8 | Dipper | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Whimbrel | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | House Sparrow | 19 | 3 | 1 | 23 |
| Curlew | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | Dunnock | 32 | 0 | 2 | 34 |
| Woodcock | 47 | 0 | 3 | 50 | Grey Wagtail | 3 | 0 | 3 | 6 |
| Jack Snipe | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 | Pied /White Wagtail | 8 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| Snipe | 23 | 0 | 0 | 23 | Meadow Pipit | 87 | 4 | 2 | 93 |
| Common Sandpiper | 0 | 4 | 0 | 4 | Tree Pipit | 8 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| Common Gull | 3 | 10 | 0 | 13 | Rock Pipit | 25 | 4 | 1 | 30 |
| Great Black-backed Gull | 0 | 13 | 0 | 13 | Chaffinch | 280 | 0 | 14 | 294 |
| Herring Gull | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | Brambling | 19 | 0 | 1 | 20 |
| Lesser Black-backed Gull | 2 | 9 | 0 | 11 | Bullfinch | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Black Guillemot | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | Greenfinch | 17 | 0 | 0 | 17 |
| Cormorant | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | Linnet | 205 | 0 | 2 | 207 |
| Shag | 0 | 10 | 0 | 10 | Lesser Redpoll | 63 | 5 | 4 | 72 |
| Sparrowhawk | 5 | 3 | 0 | 8 | Goldfinch | 252 | 0 | 28 | 280 |
| Barn Owl | 2 | 0 | 1 | 3 | Siskin | 256 | 0 | 7 | 263 |
| Long-eared Owl | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | Yellowhammer | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Short-eared Owl | 1 | 6 | 0 | 7 | Reed bunting | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Great Spotted Woodpecker | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | | | | | |
| Jackdaw | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | | | | | |
| Hooded Crow | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | | | | | |
| Long-tailed Tit | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 | | | | | |
| Coal Tit | 56 | 0 | 0 | 56 | | | | | |
| Blue Tit | 63 | 0 | 6 | 69 | | | | | |
| Great Tit | 20 | 0 | 3 | 23 | | | | | |
| Skylark | 16 | 0 | 0 | 16 | | | | | |
| Swallow | 3 | 2 | 0 | 5 | | | | | |
| House Martin | 3 | 21 | 0 | 24 | | | | | |
| Willow Warbler | 391 | 0 | 12 | 403 | | | | | |
| Chiffchaff | 9 | 0 | 1 | 10 | | | | | |
| Sedge Warbler | 103 | 0 | 9 | 112 | | | | | |
| Grasshopper Warbler | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | | | | | |
| Blackcap | 16 | 0 | 0 | 16 | | | | | |
| Whitethroat | 39 | 0 | 1 | 40 | | | | | |
| Goldcrest | 40 | 0 | 2 | 42 | | | | | |
| Wren | 35 | 0 | 5 | 40 | | | | | |
| Treecreeper | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 | | | | | |
| Rose-coloured Starling | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | | | | | |
| | | | | | Total | 2483 | 147 | 119 | 2749 |

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

Terry Southall. Email address terrysouthall789@btinternet.com

Species Notes

Cuckoo update

Summer 2021 has been a remarkable summer for Cuckoo. There seem to have been endless widespread records, not just of birds calling, but in some instances groups of three and four birds displaying and courting. While numbers of Cuckoo in the UK are in decline that is certainly not the case on Arran.



Cuckoo - Dennis Morrison

The first Cuckoos are usually heard in mid-April. This year on Arran it was the 14 April. The earliest record on the island was 8 April in 2017. Peak migration takes place in late April/early May. Few people are unfamiliar with the song of the Cuckoo, and I am delighted when people take the time to contact me when they first hear the call but beware Collared Doves can sound similar!

Hearing a Cuckoo is one thing, getting a good view is another. At first glance, a Cuckoo in flight might be mistaken for a bird of prey; they are long-tailed and long-winged and have a fast flight. If you are lucky

enough to get a view of one perched you will see a grey bird about the size of a Collared Dove with a blue grey head, chest, and upper parts; the under parts are white with dark bars; and it has characteristic long, drooping, wings. The photograph by Dennis Morrison captures the bird well. The females have a slight brown tinge across the breast. More rarely, females occur in a rufous phase. The young are brown barred like these females but with a white spot on the nape.

The well-known feature of Cuckoos is that they lay their eggs in the nests of other species. In Arran, they usually target Meadow Pipits and Dunnocks but over 50 species of host have been recorded in Britain. The young Cuckoo is brought up entirely by foster parents. The Cuckoo parents take no part. It is an astonishing piece of evolutionary behaviour, but perhaps even more mind boggling is to consider that, once raised, the young Cuckoos make their own way to their ancestral wintering grounds in the tropics. No adult guides them. The adults have left weeks before. Not only that, but the following spring these young from the previous summer return to northern Europe and are able to recognise and seek out a mate among their own kind. Reflect on that as you listen to the unmistakable sound of the Cuckoo.

Later in the summer, look out for young Cuckoo with their “adopted” parents. The begging response is so strong that often any birds close by will feed it! Please let me know when you last see Cuckoo in the summer.

Our knowledge and understanding of Cuckoo migration have been enhanced in the last ten years by the excellent project run by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO). Since 2011 the BTO has been satellite tracking Cuckoos. The different routes to and from their wintering grounds in Africa as well as the movement within Africa between the Congo rain forest and West Africa are being revealed. It has also begun to shed light on the decline of the Cuckoo population in the UK which has reduced by half in the last twenty years. There is much more information on this outstanding project on the [BTO website](#).

Red-throated Diver on Arran

The Red-throated Diver is the smallest of the UK's divers. Its grey-brown plumage and up-tilted bill readily distinguish it from the other species. In summer it has a distinctive red throat. Like other divers, it has been known to stay underwater for up to a minute and a half. With webbed feet at the end of powerful legs, it is a skilled underwater hunter, but with legs set well back on its body, it is very ungainly on land, only coming ashore to breed. A circumpolar breeder from the high Arctic south to the northern temperate zone, Scotland is at the extreme southern edge of its breeding range. Shetland is the Scottish stronghold with almost half the Scottish breeding population there.

Arran is the most southern breeding area in Scotland for this special bird. But for how much longer? Red-throated Divers breed on remote moorland lochans and are increasingly being disturbed on Arran by humans, probably inadvertently. Appropriately licensed observers checking remote lochans this year on Arran found no evidence of successful breeding. They did find evidence of camping and mountain bikes as well as dogs. At a less remote lochan the Arran Access Trust supported by the Arran Natural History Society put up notices informing people of the presence of divers, asking for care to be taken, but to no avail. There was again no evidence of successful breeding.



Red-throated Diver - Bob Garrett

If you do come across Red-throated Diver on a lochan please give the lochan a wide berth. Do not hang around. Keep dogs on a lead. Even a short time off the nest means the eggs are vulnerable to predators like crows and gulls. The best breeding season for Red-throated Diver in recent years was 2012 when the miserable wet summer reduced the number of humans around these lochans.

Although Red-throated Divers breed on the hill lochans, they feed on the sea and in winter are almost completely maritime. Round the coast of Arran, they have been recorded in every month of the year. Back in their breeding areas by late March, clutches of almost invariably two eggs are laid from early May through to June, with birds fledging in early August. The young are first fed on the lochan by the adults and after the young fledge, the adults continue to feed them on the sea. The late summer and autumn are good times to look out for family groups in our sheltered bays.

An old name for this bird is Rain Goose. For example, in Shetland this bird is considered one of the best weather indicators, short cries or flying inland indicated fine weather, long, plaintive ones or flying out to sea wet weather. Whether there is any truth in this or not, their distinctive plaintive call as they fly to and from their feeding grounds in the sea is a feature of Arran...but for how much longer?

Organisations and individuals on Arran are trying to manage human disturbance for the benefit of our wildlife. The Red-throated Diver is but one example. Information on websites, in leaflets and on notices in line with the legislation in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code are available from Visit Arran, Arran Access Trust and others. There is a genuine attempt to try to protect our wildlife while giving appropriate access for humans. Hopefully those who love Arran will support this and help to ensure that Arran retains its wildlife, because without its wildlife, Arran will be a much poorer place.

Rough-legged Buzzard: April 2021

The highly variable plumage of the familiar Common Buzzard on Arran makes the identification of Rough-legged Buzzard a challenge. Pale Common Buzzards occur on Arran and can perform incredible Rough-legged Buzzard look-alike acts. That said, a classic juvenile Rough-legged Buzzard is a striking bird. Features include a bright white tail contrasting with the black terminal band, white head and breast contrasting with the very dark belly and the solid black carpal patches on the underwing. All features were well captured by Rachel Dobson in these amazing photographs taken on Sunday 25 April by the Ross Road near Glenree. The Clyde Rarities Committee had no hesitation in confirming that this was a juvenile Rough-legged Buzzard.



With a complete circumpolar distribution, Rough-legged Buzzard breeds across the tundra and taiga of North America and Eurasia, migrating south for the winter. Generally speaking, Rough-legged Buzzard is a rare winter visitor and passage migrant to Britain with records mainly occurring in the east of the country. The last Arran record was in the winter of 1974. That year there was a very large influx of birds to the UK with up to 250 reports. That was exceptional. In contrast, between 2012 and 2017 there was less than thirty UK records. When there is a good lemming and vole year in Fennoscandia, this triggers a

bumper breeding season, resulting in large numbers of dispersing juveniles.

That Sunday afternoon in April, Rachel Dobson and Chris Southall, bird ringers, noticed a buzzard being mobbed by two Raven. Chris commented on the unusual white tail. Meanwhile Rachel is trying to get her camera out of her bag. The bird is moving away. Almost incredibly Rachel managed to photograph the bird.

Rachel's own words give a measure of the excitement "Trying to snap photos of the bird before it flew away, I have never been more stressed trying to focus my camera than I was today! Examining these photos in closer detail on the back of the camera, the distinctive plumage screamed out to us that this was indeed a very special sighting, and a first for both of us. After checking the Arran Bird Report, we were excited to learn that this was the first one recorded on Arran for almost 47 years!

What an incredible record. Me and Chris were so lucky to be in the right place at the right time. I am glad that he was there to identify it as something special to photograph."

It was a never to be forgotten day.

Rosy Starling: June 2021



Between Monday 14 and Friday 18 June I received nine records of Rosy Starling, also known as Rose-coloured Starling. For example, on Wednesday 16 June I received records from Brodick, Lamlash, Sliderry and Strathwillan. In the latter area two birds were reported. Often the birds were coming into gardens with Common Starling. Rosy Starling are well named beautiful birds. It is a rare vagrant on Arran. In recent years there have been reports of a single bird in 2002, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020. This year with three possibly four birds on the island at the same time has been unprecedented.

Where had they come from? The breeding range of Rosy Starling is from easternmost Europe across temperate southern Asia. It is a strong migrant, and winters in India and tropical Asia. It is a bird of steppe and open agricultural land. In years when grasshoppers and other insects are abundant, it will erupt well beyond its core range, with occasionally significant numbers reaching western Europe and the UK.

In their natural habitat they are highly gregarious birds, and often form large, noisy flocks, which can on occasion be a pest for growers of cereal crops or orchards. On the other hand, they are also greatly beneficial to farmers as they prey on pests such as locusts and grasshoppers, thereby limiting their numbers. For example, in Xinjiang province in China farmers build artificial nests to attract the birds and the birds help control locusts reducing the use of costly polluting insecticide.

The birds breed in tight colonies in a very short breeding season timed to take advantage of peak abundance of grasshoppers during May to June. It is during dispersal after breeding that some birds stray into north-west Europe. This has been such a year with numerous records across north-west Europe.

Males in the breeding season have elongated head feathers which form a wispy crest that is fluffed and more prominent when the bird gets excited. In winter, the crest is shorter, and the edges of black feathers within the plumage become paler as the edges of these feathers erode. Winter plumage in males is comparatively dull. Females in contrast have a short crest and lack the sharp separation between pink and black. The juvenile birds can be distinguished from Common Starling by its obviously paler plumage and short yellow bill. Young birds moult into a subdued version of the adult plumage in autumn. They lack the crest. They do not acquire their adult plumage until they are nearly one year old in females, and it is nearly two years in males before they get the crest. From the photographs received both male and female birds had been on Arran in June.



Nightjar: June 2021

Hearing a Nightjar used to be a not uncommon experience in Arran, but in the latter part of the twentieth century there was a decline. In 1980, nine churring Nightjar were reported from Merkland. In 1984, eight pairs were reported but the rest of the 1980s show a decline with four or five pairs in 1985 and three or four pairs in 1987 and one calling male in 1988. Single birds continued to be reported mainly in the Merkland area until 1995. In 1996 there no reports from Merkland but two from elsewhere. The last report in the 1990s was one in 1998 at Maol Donn. There was then a gap with no records until 2013 when one was calling at Merkland from 17 June to 26 June 2013. In 2017 there was one report. In June 2021 there was more encouraging news. In a clear-felled area in the south of the island between 24 and 26 June Nightjars were heard churring, contact calls were heard, breeding was confirmed, and one male was caught under license photographed and ringed.



Nightjar - Rachel Dobson

With the extensive clear-felling being done in Scotland by Forestry and Land Scotland it is hoped that the increase in more suitable open heath type habitat adjacent to woodland may result in resurgence of this species. The increase of these areas in Arran may encourage the re-establishment of the Nightjar. These new areas provide good nesting cover, plenty of perches and an abundant food supply. It is hoped that 2021 may mark the beginning of this re-establishment.

Nightjars are birds of legend including the widely held belief that Nightjars sucked the milk of grazing animals. Thus, its other name "Goatsucker". In reality, Nightjars feed on insects, mainly larger moths. Nightjars migrate to Britain from Africa and return there after rearing their chicks. They arrive in Scotland in late May and early June when the moth population explodes. They are most active at the same times of day as moths, at dawn and at dusk. With their large eyes, huge gape surrounded by "whiskers" they are well adapted for catching their prey.

Nightjars are rarely seen during daylight. Normally during the day, they remain motionless on the ground, relying on their amazing camouflage - feather patterns that look like dead leaves and old tree bark - to avoid detection. But at night when they are 'churring', they often perch on the branch of a prominent tree and can be picked out against the night sky.

Males perform this prolonged churring call ('Nightjar' means night-churr) that may go on for several minutes, varying in pitch and volume. When the birds stop churring, they are often in flight and two other sounds are frequently heard. The first is a rather soft 'coohwick' given as a single note and thought to be a contact call. The second is a slapping or hand-clapping sound caused as the birds clap their wings in flight. When flying, Nightjar swoop and flap around their territories, often coming very close to any observers. Males have prominent white markings on the wings and tail, and females have brown markings that are much less prominent. The white markings stand out even at night, so it is often possible to identify the bird's sex.

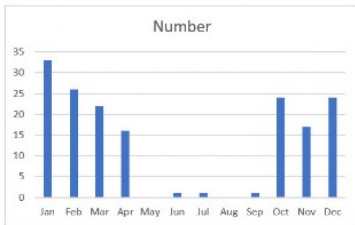
Encountering Nightjar in the gloaming is a magic birding moment if you can thole the inevitable midges.

Yellowhammer: July 2021

Yellowhammers used to be familiar birds on Arran throughout the year. During the breeding season the distinctive song of the stunning male, sounding like "a little bit of bread and no cheeese", was a feature of many hedgerows throughout the island and in the winter, flocks fed in stubble fields.

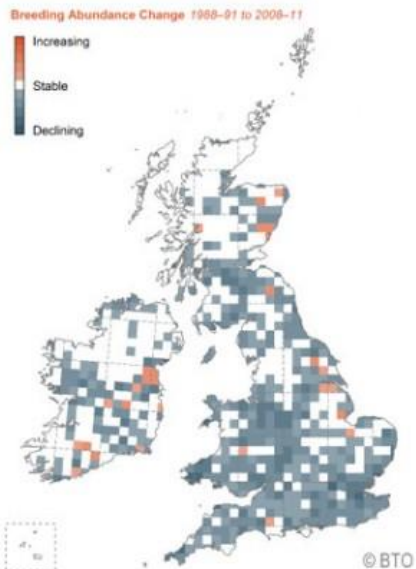
Examination of the annual bird reports produced by the Arran Natural History Society shows the decline in the breeding records. Throughout the 1980s between ten and fifteen pairs were reported each year. In the 1990s numbers declined with eight pairs in 1990, four pairs in 1992 and in 1994 there were no breeding records. From 1997 to 1999, each year there was a breeding record from Shiskine Golf Course. That was the last confirmed breeding. This century there have been no confirmed breeding records. In 2012, 2014, 2017 and 2019 there was one record of one bird singing for a short period of time in April. This year there was a report of a male singing on the Boguille on 21 April and one singing in the Shiskine Valley on 30 April. Neither bird lingered. Then on 3 July a Yellowhammer was seen on the Holy Isle. This is the first Arran July record this century.

While no longer a breeding species Yellowhammer remains a passage migrant and winter visitor but for how long? In the last five years there have been a total of 164 reports of Yellowhammer. As shown in the chart almost all these records are between October and April.



Looking at the records for the last five years there is no obvious trend. The number of records each year has varied from 64 to 11. The number of locations that Yellowhammer has been recorded each year has varied between 7 and 3. The size of groups recorded each year has never been large and ranged between 6 and 21. It looks as if the species on Arran is just hanging on.

Data from the British Trust for Ornithology indicates that this is not just a local issue. The map below from the BTO Bird Atlas Mapstore comparing the abundance in 1988-91 with the abundance twenty years later in 2008-11 clearly shows this decline. Yellowhammer abundance began to decline on farmland in the mid-1980s. Reductions in winter seed food availability as a result of agricultural intensification (for example, the loss of winter stubbles and a reduction in weed densities are widely believed to have contributed to the population decline. Research has identified better population performance in areas with extensive winter stubble, presumably because overwinter survival is relatively high. Research also suggests that the local availability of winter set-aside is a good predictor of sites chosen for breeding territories the next year. In the meantime I would be delighted if you would continue to send me any sightings of Yellowhammer on Arran.



Pale-breasted Brent Goose: September 2021

Considered by some to be the most attractive of our wintering geese, the Brent Goose is small, not much bigger than the familiar Mallard. There are three recognised sub-species of this goose and all breed in the high Arctic and are circumpolar. Brent Geese nest on the boggy Arctic tundra, where the severe climate allows them only about two months of good weather in which to raise a family. By September, they are leaving their breeding grounds, and heading for their wintering areas where they spend the winter feeding on eelgrass in estuaries and on crops in adjoining fields.

Two of these sub-species winter in considerable numbers on the British Isles. The Dark-breasted Brent Geese breed in northern Russia and spend the winter in southern and eastern England while the Pale-breasted Brent Geese breed mostly in Canada and Greenland and spend the winter mostly in Ireland. It is estimated that around 90,000 Dark-breasted Brent Geese travel to Britain each autumn from their nesting grounds in Siberia, wintering in the sheltered estuaries and coastal marshes on the east and south coasts of England. It is also estimated that around 30,000 Pale-breasted Brent Geese arrive in Strangford Lough in Northern Ireland in October before dispersing to other estuarine sites in Ireland.

In Scotland it is a scarce passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor.

The most likely subspecies to be seen on Arran is the Pale-breasted. Looking at the data in the Arran Natural History Society annual bird reports, in seven out of the last ten years Brent Geese have been reported on Arran with the largest group being thirty-one in Machrie Bay in April 2017. Looking at only the autumn records Brent Geese have been reported on Arran in just three of the last ten years with the largest group being four by Fisherman's Walk in 2016. That is until this year. In September there were three reports: two birds by the Fisherman's Walk on 24th and one on Torrylinn shore also on 24th and six on the shore at Thunderguy on 29th.

The photo taken by Colin Cowley captures the main features of this small goose, the black head and neck, the grey-brown back, the pale belly and the small white neck patch.



Siberian Chiffchaff: November 2021

On Saturday 13 November in a garden in Sliderry a small bird was trapped, ringed, photographed, identified, and released by licensed bird ringers, Chris Southall and Rachel Dobson.

It was a Chiffchaff. The legs were black. But they noticed that it was a bit different from the familiar summer visiting Chiffchaff. As it was being extracted from the garden mist net, the general colour was browner and paler than the common Chiffchaff. For example, the flanks of this bird were whitish with no yellow tinge. All the main features of bird are shown in the photo. The Clyde Rarities Committee had no hesitation in recognising this record. The bird in the hand was a Siberian Chiffchaff. The first confirmed record of this subspecies on Arran.



Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis* is considered to be a sub-species of the common Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita* which is a familiar regular summer visitor to Arran. Some birds over-winter. On the other hand, Siberian Chiffchaff breed in Siberia east of the Pechora River and usually winter in Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States and the lower Himalayas. It is a rare visitor with small numbers occurring in late autumn in the UK. These birds have got “lost” during migration. Perhaps weather conditions have deflected them from their intended southerly migration.

Systematic List 2021 BOU/IOC ORDER

The systematic list is in the order of the British List as published by the British Ornithologists' Union (2018). 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 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.

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>

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla* 12,6

Occasional winter visitor.

Sightings included 2 Fisherman's Walk on 24 September, 6 Thunderguy on 29 September and 2 Cleats Shore on 5 October. See Species Report page 30.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis* 32,17

Localised breeding and occasional visitor numbers increasing.

No confirmed breeding this year. Groups included 28 by Lagg Distillery on 14 January, 28 Cleats Shore on 10 February, 11 Shannochie on 29 July and 29 Clachaig on 24 December.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis* 2,1

Occasional winter visitor.

Sixteen flying over Kingscross on 11 October and 26 flying over same location on 15 October are all the records for 2021.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser* 113,33

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

In Shiskine Valley up to 400 between January and April and up to 550 between November and end of year. In the Slidderly area taking in Clachaig and Cleats Shore up to 200 between January and April and up to 300 between November and end of year.

There is also a naturalised population of Greylag which is found mainly around Lamlash Bay throughout the year. Largest count of 257 at Clauchlands on 21 January may have included some wintering birds.



White-fronted Goose - Alex Penn

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus* 30,10

Regular winter visitor and passage migrant.

Numbers increasing. Groups included 100 Clachaig Farm on 18 March, 250 flying over Whiting Bay on 14 April, 120 on Cleats Shore on 15 April, 70 in Slidderly on 13 November and 50 in Torbeg on 5 December.

White-fronted Goose (Greater White-fronted Goose) *Anser albifrons* 11,6

Occasional winter visitor.

Sightings included 5 in Feorline on 9 February, 6 in Shiskine on 16 February and 5 Torbeg on 24 March.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor* 262,65

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Breeding included pairs with young; seven young Lamlash Bay on 24 May, five young Cordon on 4 June, 4 young Catacol Bay on 5 June, five young Blackwaterfoot on 7 June, five young Whiting Bay on 15 June and four young Machrie Bay on 22 June. Groups included thirteen Whiting Bay on 21 March, eighteen Sandbraes on 5 April and fourteen Fisherman's Walk on 17 October.

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

Rare winter visitor.

No records for 2021. Last record was one at Lagg 6 January 1991.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* 83,34

Regular winter visitor and passage migrant. Plus, two over-summering single birds.

Groups included seventy-two Slidery on 21 March, one hundred Kildonan on 22 March, forty Clauchlands Point on 4 April, thirty Drumadoon Farm on 25 September, thirty Shiskine on 14 October and fifty Lamlash Bay on 17 October. Re the solitary summering birds, one first appeared in the winter of 2017-18 and the other in the winter of 2020-21.

Shelduck (Common Shelduck) *Tadorna tadorna* 128,55

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

Breeding included 2 young Porta Buidhe on 15 May, 7 young Kilpatrick on 26 June, 4 young Cosyden on 6 July. Groups included 12 Cleats Shore on 21 February, 10 Port na Feannaiche 3 March and 9 adults with 16 young Cleats Shore on 1 June.

Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata*

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

No records for 2021. Last record Rosa and Cloy Burns in Brodick on 27 March 2009.

Garganey *Anas querquedula* 1,1

Rare summer visitor.

No records for 2021. Last record pair Slidery Shore on 3 May 2020.

Shoveler (Northern Shoveler) *Anas clypeata*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record one male by the Fisherman's Walk on 24 May 2015.

Wigeon *Anas penelope* 47,25

Regular winter visitor and passage migrant with records from January to April and August to December.

Groups included 32 Machriewaterfoot on 2 January, 70 Torbeg on 20 January, 90 Shiskine on 30 January, 100 Kilpatrick Point on 31 January and 40 Kilpatrick Point on 24 October.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* 212,88

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Breeding included 10 young Corrie on 25 April, 4 young Imachar on 29 May, 6 young Port na Lochan on 25 June and 9 young Cordon on 6 July. Groups included 40 Kilpatrick Point on 31 January, 76 Porta Buidhe on 5 May, 40 Fisherman's Walk on 5 October and 35 Torbeg on 19 October.



Pintail (Northern Pintail) *Anas acuta*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record one male Machriewaterfoot on 19 May 2014.

Teal (Common Teal) *Anas crecca* 30,19

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

No confirmed breeding. Groups included 120 Kilpatrick Point on 31 January, 38 Carlo on 2 February, 14 Corrie on 7 October, 35 Corriecravie on 20 November and 23 Cleats Shore on 28 December.

Pochard (Common Pochard) *Aythya ferina*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was a male at Port na Lochan from 15 to 18 September 2011.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Occasional visitor.

No records for 2021. Last record was a male on Mossend Pond from 24 June to 26 June 2019.



Scaup - Colin Cowley

Scaup (Greater Scaup) *Aythya marila* 4, 1

Occasional winter visitor.

A male was by Fisherman's Walk from 14 May to 17 May.

Eider (Common Eider) *Somateria mollissima* 135,56

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Breeding included 5 young Silver Sands on 28 May, 3 young Porta Buidhe on 6 June, 2 young Cleiteadh Buidhe on 26 June and 4 young Slidderly Shore on 17 July. Groups included 68 Lamlash Bay on 4 April, 52 Whiting Bay on 18

May, 100 in Lamlash Bay on 31 October and 73 Pirmill on 2 November. For information on the annual September Clyde Eider Survey visit the website <http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/files/Firth-of-Clyde-Eider-News-No.19-Aug-2021.pdf>

King Eider *Somateria spectabilis*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was a long staying drake in Lochranza in April 1980.

Surf Scoter *Melanitta perspicillata*

North American Species. Rare

No records for 2021. Last record was one immature/female type in Catacol Bay from 24 November 2019 to 1 January 2020. This was the first Arran record of this species.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was one male Cosyden on 14 October 2019.

Common Scoter (Black Scoter) *Melanitta nigra* 7,4

Occasional visitor.

Sightings included 3 Catacol bay on 31 May, 3 Fisherman's Walk from 5-8 July on 4 Pirmill on 6 September.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis* 1, 1

Rare vagrant.

One record for 2021. A male in Porta Buidhe on 5 January (DaSma).

Goldeneye (Common Goldeneye) *Bucephala clangula* 21,11



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

Sightings included 4 Mossend Pond on 2 January, 3 Lamlash Bay on 6 January, 2 Blackwaterfoot on 9 February, one Holy Isle on 16 March and 2 Kingscross Point on 9 November.

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

Occasional winter visitor.

No records for 2021. Last record a male with four redheads off the Fallen Rocks car park on 25 April 2016.

Goosander *Mergus merganser* 55,29

Breeding. Localised.

No confirmed breeding in 2021. Sightings included 2 Cordon on 14 January, 2 Blackwaterfoot on 30 January, 3 Whiting Bay on 31 January, 2 Catacol Bay on 14 April, 3 Imachar on 29 October and 2 Sannox Bay on 5 December.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator* 195,69

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

Breeding included 6 young Corrie on 15 July, 9 young Catacol Bay on 19 July, 7 young Loch Ranza on 27 July and 11 young Cladach on 28 July. Groups included 30 Machrie Bay on 27 April, 22 Whitefarland on 22 August, 21 Cosyden on 28 August, 20 Machriewaterfoot on 30 August and 17 Fisherman's Walk on 18 September.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Introduced species which first bred in Ayrshire in 2001.

No records for 2021. Male on Port na Lochan on 21 April 2007 is the only Arran record of this species.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix* 9,4

Previously bred. Reintroduction programme. (See arranbirding website).

All records associated with reintroduction programme.

Ptarmigan *Lagopus mutus*

Very localised.

No records for 2021. Last record 6 Coire a' Bhradain on 21 January 2015.

Red Grouse (Willow Ptarmigan) *Lagopus scoticus* 9,9

Resident. Breeding. Underreported.

Sightings included 4 Tighvein on 11 February, 2 Goatfell on 20 May, 2 A'Chir on 22 June, 4 Carn Mor on 10 July and 2 Clachan on 6 October.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Local introduced resident. Around 500 released in 2019.

Twenty-nine records in 2019 and only two in 2020. None in 2021.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Previously bred.

No records for 2021. Last record, excluding released birds in the 1990s, was 4 at Clauchlands on 15 November 1989.

Quail (Common Quail) *Coturnix coturnix* 4,1

Occasional summer visitor. Previously bred.

One record for 2021. Two birds calling Sliderry from 8th to 16th June (CS).

Pheasant (Common Pheasant) *Phasianus colchicus* 90,37
Common introduced resident. Around 3,000 released in 2019.
Reports from all areas.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata* 89,42
Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Poor breeding season. Human disturbance is a factor. See Species Report page 25. Population remains healthy. Groups on sea included 3 Lamlash Bay on 6 January, 3 Whiting Bay on 1 March, 4 Machrie Bay on 12 May, 3 Blackwaterfoot on 19 August and 4 Loch Ranza on 22 October.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica* 95,30

Regular passage migrant with records in every month of the year in 2021. Arran is a site of national importance for birds in autumn.

Groups included 10 Whiting Bay on 19 January, 5 Dougarie on 19 March, 8 Cosyden on 28 August and 7 off Drumadoon Point on 29 October.



Great Northern Diver - Ewan Urquhart

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer* 131,50
Regular passage migrant with records in every month of the year in 2021.

Groups included 13 Dougarie on 27 February, 7 off Pladda on 7 March, 6 Machrie Bay on 12 May, 10 off Drumadoon Point on 29 October and 6 off Pirmill also on 29 October.

Storm Petrel (European Storm Petrel)
Hydrobates pelagicus

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record two Brodick Bay on 12 July 2013

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

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was one off Pirmill 24 September 1991.

Fulmar (Northern Fulmar) *Fulmarus glacialis* 33,15

Breeding. Round coast all year. In decline.

No young were reported from any nesting area in 2021. Largest groups at some nest areas; 3 Catacol on 23 March, 4 Bennan Head on 11 April, 2 King's Cave on 28 April, 4 Dippin on 2 May and 16 Drumadoon Cliff on 19 May.

Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was one off Largymore on 22 July 2012.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was 7 in Machrie Bay on 6 September 2009.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus* 11,6

Regular passage migrant with records from 02 April to 28 August.

Groups included 450 Whiting Bay on 20 May, 40 Dippin on 23 May, 6 Brodick Bay on 21 August and 3 Blackwaterfoot on 25 August.

Mediterranean Shearwater (Balearic Shearwater) *Puffinus mauretanicus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was one off Corriecravie 14 October 1990.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* 39,17

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor. One breeding record in 2021.

Pair with young at Mossend Pond. Sightings included 2 Fisherman's Walk on 15 January, 5 Loch Ranza on 16 January, one Holy Isle on 15 February, 5 Mossend Pond on 19 August, one Cordon on 20 August and one Auchenhew Bay on 3 December.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

No records for 2021. Last record one Catacol Bay on 6 March 2016.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

No records in 2021. Last record one off Laggan on 1 April 2018.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus* 1,1

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

One record for 2021. One Machriewaterfoot on 20 January (JC).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

No records for 2021. Last record one Whiting Bay on 14 February 2014.

Spoonbill (Eurasian Spoonbill) *Platalea leucorodia*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was one at Corrie on 13 October 1978.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was a dead one found in Shiskine on 10 March 1996.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* 256,103

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Reports of activity at all known heronries namely Stronach Wood, Lagg, Lochranza, Whitehouse Woods and Whiting Bay. Groups included 8 Lagg on 28 May, 6 Porta Buidhe on 20 August, 4 Lochranza on 17 October, 12 Cordon on 1 November and 13 Cordon on 30 December



Grey Heron - Arthur Duncan

Little Egret *Egretta gargetta* 74,28

Vagrant. Records increasing.

This is the sixth year in which this species has been recorded. The first record was in 2013. In 2020 there were 20 records. All 74 records in 2021 were of single birds with no records between 16 April and 29 October. All records were close to the coast between Carlo in the north and Sliderry in the south. Fifteen of the records were at Cordon in Lamlash Bay and 10 from Fisherman's Walk in Brodick Bay.

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.

Gannet (Northern Gannet) *Morus bassanus* 157,71

Nearest breeding colony Ailsa Craig. Records every month except November and December in 2021.

The algae bloom in the sea in June had an impact on the number of records and the size of the groups (see page 11). Groups included 12 Machrie Bay on 27 April, 16 Whiting Bay on 5 May, 13 Cleats Shore on 22 August, 10 Porta Buidhe on 29 September and 16 Silver Sands on 23 October.

Shag (European Shag) *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* 213,74

Common round coast all year. Breeding Pladda.

Around thirty nests on Pladda. Groups included 40 Cleats Shore on 1 January, 100 Porta Buidhe on 19 July, 100 Pladda on 12 September, 68 Claulchlands Point on 10 October and 30 Drumadon Point on 21 October.

Cormorant (Great Cormorant) *Phalacrocorax carbo* 111,42

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

Around twenty nests on Pladda. Groups included 8 Hamilton Rock on 8 April, 7 Pladda on 27 April, 9 Brodicky Bay on 26 May, 27 Porta Buidhe on 31 July and 8 Cleats Shore on 24 October.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* 2,2

Occasional passage migrant.

One Shiskine on 15 April and one Lamdash Bay on 18 July are all the records in 2021.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* 115, 72

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

All territories occupied. Poor breeding season. There is a healthy breeding population but only one young fledged. Numerous sightings throughout the year mainly to the north of the String.



Sparrowhawk - Howard Sargent

Sparrowhawk (Eurasian Sparrowhawk) *Accipiter nisus* 117,59

Resident. Breeding widespread.

Good breeding season. There is a healthy population with numerous widespread sightings throughout the year. Fourteen forest nest sites were checked and active nests were found in 4 of them.

Goshawk (Northern Goshawk) *Accipiter gentilis* 1,1

Irregular sightings. No confirmed breeding.

One record for 2021. One Glenloig 22 August (MF).

Marsh Harrier (Eurasian Marsh Harrier) *Circus aeruginosus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was one female type/juvenile Machrie farm on 15 May 2019.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* 227,121

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

Poor breeding season. Vole numbers crashed. In recent years, the number of young fledged has varied depending on factors like food availability and weather. The population remains healthy. In 2018 a minimum of fifty-two young fledged. This is the most recent data available from the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme. Numerous widespread sightings mainly within the Arran Moors Special Protection Area.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus* 5,5

Occasional visitor from British reintroduction projects.

Sightings included 6 by the Lakin on 5 October, one Lochranza also on 5 October, one Glen Shurig on 7 November and 3 the Knowe on 25 November. Sightings of more than one bird together are exceptional.

White-tailed eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla* 19,14

Vagrant.

Increase in sightings in 2020 continued into 2021 with sightings from January to May and from August to the end of year mainly between Imachar and Machrie, often two birds together.

Rough-legged buzzard *Buteo lagopus* 1,1

Rare vagrant.

One Glenree on 25 April was the first Arran record since 1974 (CS/RD). See Species Report page 26.

Buzzard (Common Buzzard) *Buteo buteo* 314,150

Resident. Breeding widespread.

Good breeding season. There were numerous widespread sightings throughout the year including 10 Glenscorrodale on 21 March, 8 Glenree on 27 March, 5 Glen Cloy on 17 April, 7 Maol Donn on 30 April and 5 Balliekine on 15 November. Nine forest sites were checked and 6 were occupied.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus* 3,2

Localised breeding resident and passage migrant.

Reports of this secretive bird included one Port na Lochan on 24 April and 4 Corriecravie on 23 November.

Corncrake *Crex crex*

Rare summer visitor. Previously bred.

No records in 2021. The last records were in 2020, one calling North Sannox Farm around 13 May and one calling the Rodden on 14 May.

Spotted Crane *Porzana Porzana*

One historical record. One found dead by Pladda lighthouse on 24 October 1895.

Moorhen (Common Moorhen) *Gallinula chloropus* 5,2

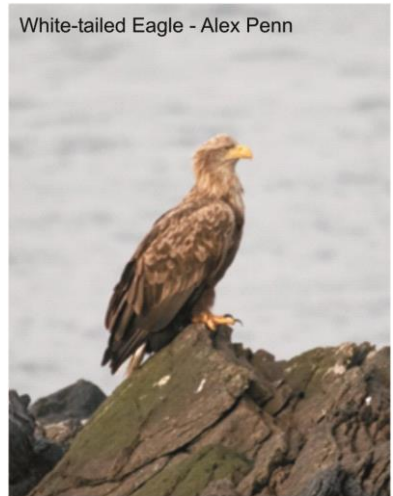
Scarce localised breeding resident.

Only two locations in 2021 compared with nine in 2019. Sightings included 2 Port na Lochan on 7 February and 2 Mossend Pond on 20 October.

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

Occasional visitor.

One record for 2021. One Mossend Pond on 19 August (ChCl).



Crane (*Grus grus*)

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record two over Dougarie on Wednesday 22 April 2015.

Oystercatcher (*Eurasian Oystercatcher*) *Haematopus ostralegus* 415,126

Resident. Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Nests recorded included Clauchlands, Cleats Shore, Dougarie, Machrie, Kilpatrick, Sandbraes, Shannochie, Thunderguy and Kildonan. Groups included 30 Silver Sands on 14 February, 35 Dougarie on 27 February, 35 Fisherman's Walk on 21 July, 34 Kilpatrick Point on 22 August, and 31 Whitefarland on 24 September.

Lapwing (Northern Lapwing) *Vanellus vanellus* 81,29

Increasingly localised breeding and regular winter visitor.

Five areas of confirmed breeding in Kilmory but none in the Shiskine Valley. Winter groups included 55 Clachaig Farm on 21 January, 21 Shiskine on 9 February, 38 Kilpatrick Farm also on 9 February and 35 Cleats Shore on 25 February.

Golden Plover (*European Golden Plover*) *Pluvialis apricaria* 48,20

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 51 Sliderry on 1 January, 60 Clachaig Farm on 22 April, 80 Dougarie on 28 August, 144 Machriewaterfoot on 12 September and 120 Machriewaterfoot on 4 November.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records in 2021. Last record was one Cleats Shore 26-27 April 2019.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* 257,75

Resident. Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Nests recorded Clauchlands, Cleats Shore, Dougarie, Kilmory, Kilpatrick, Machrie, Sandbraes and Kildonan. Groups included 50 Cordon on 21 January, 70 Dougarie on 30 January, 150 Machrie Bay on 28 August, 50 Blackwaterfoot shore on 8 September, 90 Machrie Bay on 12 September and 60 Fisherman's Walk on 23 October.



Ringed Plover - Jim Dickson

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records in 2021. Last record was two Caisteal Abhail on 4&5 May 2019.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* 35,10

Regular passage migrant and occasional winter visitor.

Groups included 33 Porta Buidhe on 24 April, 19 Auchenew Bay on 25 April, 31 Porta Buidhe on 27 April, 7 Sliderry Shore on 9 May and one Cleats Shore on 12 September. One Whimbrel, A2, was on a Kildonan shore from 25 to 27 April feeding before heading north. Having been ringed in 2017 on Arran, this was the fourth year in a row, that the bird had passed through after spending the winter in Africa!

Curlew (Eurasian Curlew) *Numenius arquata* 286,106

Resident but underreported breeder.

Signs of breeding were reported from Balnacool, Bennecarrigan, Burrigan, Kilbride Hill, Machrie Moor and Penrioch. Groups included 58 Cordon on 2 February, 70 Slidery Shore on 22 February, 105 Corriecravie on 20 November and 75 Port na Feannaiche.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* 2,2

Uncommon passage migrant.

Two Glenscorrodale on 13 August and one Blackwaterfoot on 26 August are all the records for 2021.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* 3,3

Uncommon passage migrant.

Sightings, all single birds, Auchenhew Bay on 21 March, Slidery Shore on 3 April and Shannochie on 11 April are all the records for 2021.

Turnstone (Ruddy Turnstone) *Arenaria interpres* 132,50

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor with records from all months except June in 2021.

Groups included 26 Silver Sands on 16 January, 50 Machrie Bay on 26 February, 25 Blackwaterfoot on 20 April, 26 Catacol Bay on 19 August and 30 Lochranza on 26 August.

Knot (Red Knot) *Calidris canutus* 8,4

Regular passage migrant.

Sightings included one Silver Sands on 2 January, 3 Porta Buidhe on 11 February, one Fisherman's Walk on 14 August and one Cleats Shore on 12 September.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was 2 at Kildonan on 26 August 1987.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was one Drumadoon Point on 18 September 2020.

Sanderling *Calidris alba* 11,5

Regular passage migrant.

Sightings included one Silver Sands on 17 February, one Fisherman's Walk on 21 August, 5 Blackwaterfoot on 30 August and one Drumadoon Point on 23 September.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina* 42,14

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

Groups included 6 Holy Isle on 18 February, 7 Cleats Shore on 29 April, 15 Silver Sands on 1 May, 12 Drumadoon Point on 8 September and 10 Blackwaterfoot on 10 September.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima* 7,3

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

Groups included 4 Silver Sands on 20 January, 6 Holy Isle on 2 February and 5 Silver Sands on 5 December.



Purple Sandpiper - Nick Giles

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was 3 at Machriewaterfoot on 8 September 2002.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

One record of this American species.

No records for 2020. One juvenile Slidderlywaterfoot from 15 to 17 September 1990.

Woodcock (Eurasian Woodcock) *Scolopax rusticola* 30,25

Resident but underreported breeder. Numbers increase in winter.

Pairs flying at dusk included Holy Isle on 25 April, Lakin Farm on 30 April, Machrie Moor on 11 May, Creag Rosa on 10 June, Smuraig on 24 June and Kilpatrick on 1 July . Winter groups included 5 Slidderly on 12 January, 9 Slidderly on 10 November and 23 East Bennan on 28 December.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus* 4,4

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

Three Slidderly Shore on 2 January, one Strathwillan on 26 February, one Slidderly on 28 November and one Port na Feannaiche on 8 December are all the records for 2021.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* 27,21

Passage migrant and winter visitor. Localised breeding.

Confirmed breeding on central high ground by the String. Groups included 3 Fern Hill on 16 October, 11 Slidderly on 5 November, 21 Slidderly on 10 November, 4 Clauchlands on 11 November and 18 Port na Feannaiche on 8 December.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was a juvenile at Slidderly on 1 August 2016.

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was one Silver Sands on 6 December 2015.



Common Sandpiper - Helen Logan

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*
124,70

Regular summer visitor with records from 02 April to 19 August. Breeding.

Nests recorded Clauchlands, Cleats Shore, Dougarie, Kilmory, Kilpatrick, Machrie, Pirmill, Sandbraes, Sannox and Slidderly. Largest group 10 Cleats Shore on 16 May.

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia*
North American Species. Rare.

No records for 2021. One Clauchlands from 19 May to 21 May 2015 only Arran record.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2021. Last record one Blackwaterfoot on 11 May 2019.

Redshank (Common Redshank) *Tringa totanus* 165,60

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

Groups included 21 Sandbraes on 18 January, 12 Cordon on 21 January, 27 Whiting Bay on 22 January, 9 Carlo on 2 February, 12 Lamlash on 24 August and 30 Lochranza on 26 August.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Rare passage migrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was one flying and calling over Slidery on 24 July 2020.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was one at South Feorline shore on 5 August 2010.

Greenshank (Common Greenshank) *Tringa nebularia*

Uncommon passage migrant and occasional winter visitor.

No records for 2021. Four records in 2020 the last one Silver Sands on 5 September.

Kittiwake (Black-legged Kittiwake) *Rissa tridactyla* 26,15

Nearest breeding colony Ailsa Craig. Round coast all year.

Numbers considerably less than recent years with few young reported. Groups reported included 380 Lochranza on 3 October, 85 Fisherman's Walk on 4 October, 240 Brodick Bay on 12 October, 260 Blackwaterfoot on 26 October and 50 Machriewaterfoot on 28 October.

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 2021. Last record one adult Brodick Bay on 3 September 2009.

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* 80,36

Nonbreeding. Present round coast every month except June in 2020.

Groups included 7 Lamlash on 24 August, 10 Levenorrach on 24 October, 8 Porta Buidhe on 26 October, 12 Sandbraes on 3 November and 21 Silver Sands on 4 December.

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

Uncommon irregular visitor.

No records for 2021. Last record 2 Whiting Bay on 2 September 2013.

Ross's Gull *Rhodostethia rosea*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record one at Kildonan on 21 November 1995.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*
7,4

Rare vagrant.

Sightings included one adult Clachaig Farm on 18 February, one adult Cleats Shore on 7 May and one first winter Fisherman's Walk from 4th to 6th October.

Common Gull (*Mew Gull*) *Larus canus*
275,100

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Better breeding season. Fledged young at coastal nesting areas including Machriewaterfoot, Dougarie, Holy Isle, Pladda, Sannox and Thunderguy. Groups included 250 Kilpatrick Point on 31 January, 60 Auchenhew Bay on 12 March, 100 Brodick Bay on 26 May, 150 Blackwaterfoot on 20 September and 140 Cleats Shore on 13 December.



Mediterranean Gull - Jim Dickson

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus* 166,57

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Colony on Pladda increasing with over 20 pairs in June. Other groups included 18 Pladda on 26 February, 12 Sannox Bay on 23 March, 17 Porta Buidhe on 25 May, 12 Imachar on 23 September and 25 Fisherman's Walk on 29 October.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus* 1,1

Uncommon winter visitor.

One record for 2021. A first winter Fisherman's Walk on 13 December (CC).



Iceland Gull - Colin Cowley

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucooides* 1,1

Uncommon winter visitor.

One record for 2021. One record for 2021. A first winter Fisherman's Walk on 29 March (CC).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* 320,111

Breeding colonies on Holy Isle and Pladda. Common all year.

At least 65 pairs on Holy Isle. Groups away from colonies included 170 Kilpatrick Point on 31 January, 250 Pladda on 26 February, 150 Brodick Bay on 26 May, 100 Blackwaterfoot on 3 October, 250 Porta Buidhe on 17 October. The leucistic gull first reported and ringed in Sliderry on

24 June 2018 continued to be reported including Shiskine on 11 May and Blackwaterfoot on 7 June.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* 58,35

Breeding colonies on Holy Isle and Pladda. Common from February to October.

Groups away from colonies included 6 Clachaig on 4 July, 10 Shannochie on 25 July, 12 Glenashdalewater Foot on 16 September, 9 Fisherman's Walk on 4 October and 27 Porta Buidhe on 22 October.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicencis* 63,32

Summer visitor. Nonbreeding. Records from 2 April to 20 September.

Groups included 4 Lamlash on 4 April, 7 Silver Sands on 16 April, 11 Auchenhew Bay on 19 April, 4 Blackwaterfoot on 20 April and 8 Porta Buidhe on 18 August.

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

Uncommon summer visitor.

No records for 2021. Last record one in Brodick Bay on 11 August in 2007.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Rare summer visitor.

No records for 2021. Last record was 2 at Dougarie on 5 May 1984.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Uncommon summer visitor.

No records for 2021. Last record was one Machriewaterfoot on 19 April 2013.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea* 5,3

Regular summer visitor. Breeding colony Pladda.

All records from Pladda and Kildonan. Twelve breeding adults monitored on Pladda in June.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2021. Last record one at Pirnmill on 12 September 1992.



Great Skua - Jim McKenzie

one dark phase in Brodick Bay on 7 September.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*
Uncommon passage migrant. Underreported.

No records 2021. Two off Kildonan on 19 May 2011 is the only Arran record of this species.

Little Auk *Alle alle*

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

No records for 2021. Last record one Holy Isle on 8 January in 2016.

Guillemot (Common Guillemot) *Uria aalge* 33,16
Breeding colony Ailsa Craig. Round coast all year. Most sightings in summer.

The algae bloom in the sea in the summer may have had an impact on the number of records. Groups included 40 Whiting Bay on 16 January, 30 Sandbraes on 23 March, 300 Brodick Bay on 21 August, 100 Brodick Bay on 7 September and 20 Cosyden on 12 September.

Razorbill *Alca torda* 11,8

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

The algae bloom in the sea in the summer may have had an impact on the number of records. Groups included 3 Machrie Bay on 1 January, 3 Whiting Bay on 1 March, 2 Brodick Bay on 19 July and 3 Whiting Bay on 27 August.

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle* 111,48

Breeding. Round coast all year.

Breeding included Brodick Pier, Catacol, Corrie, Imachar, Kilpatrick, King's Cave, Thunderguy and Pladda. Numbers are increasing. Groups included 14 Dougarie on 27 February, 11 Imachar on 31 March, 23 King's Cave on 28 April, 10 Pladda on 17 May and 14 Catacol Bay on 6 July.

Puffin (Atlantic Puffin) *Fratercula arctica* 4,3

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

One Fisherman's Walk on 21 April, 3 off Brodick Pier on 23 April, one Brodick Bay on 29 April and 2 Brodick Bay on 8 May are all the records for 2021.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua* 1,1
Uncommon passage migrant. Underreported.

One record for 2021. One Drumadoon Point on 23 August (SW).

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*
Uncommon passage migrant. Underreported.

No records for 2021. Last record was 2 off Kildonan on 16 May 2009.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus* 6,5
Uncommon passage migrant. Underreported.

Sightings included one pale phase Blackwaterfoot on 24 August, one pale phase Sannox on 26 August, two Whiting Bay on 27 August and

Pallas's Sandgrouse *Syrrhaptes 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* 47,25

Resident. Breeding. Localised round the coast.

Groups included 15 Clauchlands Point on 15 April, 27 Kilpatrick on 25 June, 53 Cleats Shore on 14 August, 50 Torrylinnwater Foot on 3 October and 20 Clachaig Farm on 10 November.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Rare.

No records for 2021. Last record one on footpath to Fallen Rocks on 14 June 1989.



Woodpigeon - Arthur Duncan

Woodpigeon (Common Woodpigeon)

Columba palumbus 166,71

Resident. Breeding. Common.

Groups included 13 Lamlash on 7 February, 50 Strabane on 26 February, 55 Strathwillan on 31 March, 125 Invercloy on 19 April and 35 Clachaig Farm on 22 August.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Occasional passage migrant.

No records in 2021. Last record one Clachaig Farm on 30 September 2015.

Collared Dove (Eurasian Collared Dove) *Streptopelia decaocto* 154,39

Resident. Breeding. Common.

Present around all villages. Groups included 12 Whiting Bay on 31 January, 9 Lamlash on 7 February, 20 High Clachaig on 3 September, 20 Clachaig Farm on 5 October and 32 Sliderry on 16 October.

Cuckoo (Common Cuckoo) *Cuculus canorus* 126,75

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread.

First report 14 April in Corriegills. Healthy population. The last report juvenile West Bennan on 2 August. See Species Report page 24.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba* 34,23

Resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Poor breeding season. In 2021 vole numbers crashed as part of the cyclic nature of the vole population. The annual monitoring of nest sites on Forestry Land produced no eggs and no chicks. Only 5 Barn Owls being observed during monitoring. This is in marked contrast to the monitoring in 2020 which was an excellent breeding year as a result of the high density of voles and benign weather at crucial time. Last year a total of 83 chicks were produced with some of these boxes containing 7 chicks. Fifty of these young were ringed. Fewer sightings than in recent years.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

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

No records for 2021.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus* 4,3

Resident. Underreported. Breeding.

Sightings included one the Torr on 2 January, one the Drover's Road on 3 April and one Corriecravie Moor on 22 October.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus* 23,10

Resident. Underreported. Breeding.

Poor breeding season. In 2021 vole numbers crashed, as part of the cyclic nature of the vole population. This is in marked contrast to the good breeding season in 2020. Birds moved from the island in 2021. Two birds with satellite trackers, both females that bred successfully on Arran in 2020, moved as shown on the map. Their nest locations in 2021 are marked with crosses - one in Norway and the other in Russia. For more information on the British Trust for Ornithology Short-eared Owl Tracking Project visit this website <https://www.bto.org/our-science/topics/tracking/tracking-studies/short-eared-owl-tracking>



Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* 2,1

Summer visitor. Confirmed breeding.

See Species Report page 28.

Swift (Common Swift) *Apus apus* 10,6

Summer visitor and passage migrant. No breeding records. Reports from 4 May to 26 August.

Sightings included one Clachaig Farm on 4 May, 5 Sliderry on 19 June, 19 High Kildonan on 28 June and 9 the Rodden on 30 June.

Kingfisher (Common Kingfisher) *Alcedo atthis* 5,3

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

Most records were from the Fisherman's Walk area with one Merkland on 13 May.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was one Levencorroch on 8 April 2020.

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was one in Sannox on 25 September 1997.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major* 69,38

Resident. Breeding. Localised but spreading.

Regularly heard drumming in Brodick Country Park, Glen Cloy, High Kildonan and Merkland Wood. As well as breeding records from this area, fledged young were reported from other sites including Stronach Wood on 8 June, Lagg on 26 June, Knockenkelly on 28 June, Lochranza on 8 July, Clachaig on 19 August and Glenloig on 28 August.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. One in a garden in Lamlash on 28 December 2014 is the first Arran record of this species.

Kestrel (Common Kestrel) *Falco tinnunculus* 168,105

Resident. Breeding widespread.

Poor breeding season related to poor vole season. Reports of fledged young included Cleiteadh Buidhe on 4 July, Dippen Head on 12 July, Kilpatrick Point on 23 July, Glenscorrodale on 26 July, Glenree on 6 August and Cnoc na Dail on 16 August.

Merlin *Falco columbarius* 15,13

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

Sightings included male Porta Buidhe on 22 January, male Sliderry on 23 March, female Cordon on 29 March, one Clauchan Glen on 28 April and juvenile Drumadoon on 2 November.

Hobby (Eurasian Hobby) *Falco Subbuteo* 1,1

Rare vagrant.

One record for 2021. An adult bird by Cnocan Donn on 30 June (AW).



Kestrel and Peregrine - Helen Logan

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus* 35,26

Resident. Breeding widespread at inland and coastal sites.

Puzzling season with no show at some previously reliably occupied sites. Eight sites checked. A minimum of three young fledged. There is a healthy breeding population. Numerous sightings throughout the year.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record one Port na Lochan on 13 June 2018

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubiter*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was one in Fairy Glen, Lochranza on 24 October 2007.

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record a female in Lochranza on 7 June 1979.

Jay (Eurasian Jay) *Garrulus glandarius* 1,1

Rare vagrant.

One record for 2021. One Port na Lochan on 24 April (FH).

Magpie (Black-billed Magpie) *Pica pica* 3,3

Vagrant.

Two records of a single bird from parts of Lamlash on 18 January and one from Clauchlands on 15 February are all the records for 2021.

Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

Rare vagrant. Previously bred.

No records for 2021. Last record one by Narachan track from 5 to 29 September 2011.

Jackdaw (Eurasian Jackdaw) *Corvus monedula* 145,64

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Groups included 150 High Kildonan on 14 April, 140 Lochranza on 23 July, 100 Cordon on 24 July, 200 Clachaig Farm on 18 August and 200 Machrie on 22 November and on 19 December.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus* 25,6

Regular winter visitor.

Most records from Corriecravie/Sliderry/Clachaig area between January and 23 April and between 4 October and December, including 41 Cleats Shore on 5 October, 4 Sliderry on 16 October and 21 Clachaig on 11 November.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone* **Hooded Crow** *Corvus cornix* 148,68 179,72

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

Groups included 50 Kilpatrick Point on 31 January, 75 Cleats Shore on 1 June, 50 Porta Buidhe on 17 October, 90 Clachaig on 30 November and 50 Silver Sands on 4 December.

Raven (Common Raven) *Corvus corax* 203,117

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Breeding pairs included Beinn a Chliabhain, Bennan Head, Brown Head, Catacol and Imachar. Groups included 35 Blackwaterfoot on 14 June, 10 Shannochie on 19 September, 19 Levencorroch on 24 October, 15 Blackwaterfoot on 22 November and 17 Clachaig on 17 December.

Waxwing (Bohemian Waxwing) *Bombycilla garrulus*

Irruptive late autumn and winter visitor.

No records for 2021. Last record was one in a garden in Cordon on 24 February 2020.

Coal Tit *Parus ater* 177,66

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Regular passage migrant.

Reports from all villages of birds visiting garden feeders. Confirmed breeding included reports from Lamlash on 27 May, Lagg on 26 June, Porta Leacach on 27 June, Shiskine on 28 June Strathwillan on 30 June. Largest group was 10 Kilpatrick on 9 January. Some birds have characteristics of the sub species *Hibernicus* (Bird on left in this image.)

Willow Tit *Parus montanus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was one in Lamlash from 16 to 18 May 2009.

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus* 201,69

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Regular passage migrant.

Reports from all villages of birds visiting garden feeders. Widespread confirmed breeding included reports Kilpatrick on 22 June, Sannox on 25 June, Lagg on 26 June, Shannochie on 29 June, Alma Park on 8 July. Largest group was 10 Lagg on 30 October.

Great Tit *Parus major* 208,72

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Regular passage migrant.

Reports from all villages of birds visiting garden feeders. Widespread confirmed breeding included reports Clachaig on 3 June, West Bennan on 6 June, Kilpatrick on 11 June, Lagg on 26 June and Shannochie on 29 June. Largest group was 10 Shannochie on 17 January.

Skylark (Sky Lark) *Alauda arvensis* 39,23

Breeding resident, Regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding territories occupied in Ard Bheinn, Clachaig, Corrie, Corriecravie Moor, Drumadoon, Drumaghinier, Glen Cloy, Kilbride Hill, Kilpatrick, Leac a'Ghille, Machrie, Penrioch and Shiskine. Groups included 10 Braehead Farm on 16 February, 90 Lagg Distillery on 18 February, 80 Clachaig Farm on 5 October and 300 Cleats Shore on 6 October.



Coal Tit hibernicus - Alex Penn

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia* 77,41

Summer visitor. Breeding. Localised.

First report Clauchlands 31 March. Relatively good breeding season. Breeding colonies occupied in Auchencar, Clauchlands, Glen Catacol, Glen Rosa, Kilpatrick, Machrie Golf Course, Sannox and Whitefarland. Groups included 12 Clauchlands on 4 April, 60 Sannox on 11 May, 100 Glen Catacol on 22 June and 19 Corrie cravie on 5 August. Last record Fuar Achadh on 20 August.

Swallow (Barn Swallow) *Hirundo rustica* 202,94

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread.

First report Lochranza on 2 April. Widespread breeding with some failures and some double broods raised. Relatively good breeding season. Groups included 40 Sliderry on 14 April, 75 Shannochie on 22 August, 70 Auchencar on 7 September, 200 Blackwaterfoot on 9 September and 50 Silver Sands on 11 September. Last record was Sliderry 5 November.

House Martin *Delichon urbica* 129,66

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread.

First report Brodick Country Park on 5 April. Widespread breeding with some failures and some double broods. Relatively good breeding season. Groups included 50 Corrie cravie on 5 August, 100 Sliderry on 26 August, 70 Strathwillan on 28 August, 50 High Kildonan on 1 September and 50 Auchrannie on 7 September. Last record Kildonan on 13 October.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus* 76,30

Resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Groups included 11 Alma Park on 3 January, 20 Kildonan on 5 January, 12 Shannochie on 17 January, 12 Benlister on 15 February, 12 Dyemill on 20 September and 16 Corrie on 28 December.



Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* 121,78

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

First report was Kilmory on 2 April. Early records included males singing at Clachaig Dippin, Kildonan, Lagg, Gortonallister, Kingscross, Kiscadale and Sannox all on 17 April. Good breeding season. Last record was Invercloy on 18 September.

Chiffchaff (Common Chiffchaff) *Phylloscopus collybita* 61,33

Summer visitor. Breeding. Localised. Most records from March to October.

First report was from Auchenhew Bay on 3 March. Early records included males singing High Kildonan on 31 March, Stronach Wood on 31 March, Porta Buidhe on 1 April, Corrie on 2 April and Machrie on 3 April. A good breeding season. Last record was from Sliderry on 2 October. Plus, a Siberian Chiffchaff in Sliderry on 13 November. See Species Report page 31.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* 11,6

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

The total of eleven records in 2021, including long-staying reports in Brodick Country Park, was encouraging. In 2020 there had been only one record. After a number of years when there had been none, there had been seven in 2019.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Very rare and irregular passage migrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was one in Whiting Bay from 4 to 6 December 2007.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* 34,14

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

First report was from Cleats Shore on 23 April. Records included singing males Porta Buidhe on 24 April, Silver Sands on 27 April, Auchenhew Bay on 13 May, Clauchlands on 24 May and Sliderry on 26 May. Good breeding season. Last record was from Clachaig on 28 August.

Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*

Rare vagrant

No records in 2021. Male Dereneneach 19 June to 5 July 2014 is the only Arran record.

Grasshopper Warbler (Common Grasshopper Warbler) *Locustella naevia* 17,5

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

Reports of reeling birds included Corriecravie Moor on 19 April, Lakin on 12 May, Glen Rosa on 18 May, Clachaig on 5 May and Balnacoole on 25 July.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* 61,36

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

Records included singing males Auchenhew Bay on 31 March, Cordon on 11 April, Dippin on 17 April, Corrie on 22 April and Brodick Country Park on 1 May. Winter garden records included Whiting Bay on 8 November, Alma Park on 22 November and Lamlash on 31 December.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin* 8,8

Scarce summer visitor. Breeding. Possibly underreported.

The total of eight records in 2021 was encouraging after only two records from one location in 2020. Records in 2021 included singing males Clauchlands on 5 May, Kilpatrick on 18 May, Glen Cloy on 7 June and High Corrie on 22 July.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca* 2,2

Scarce summer visitor. Breeding.

One singing Glenree on 29 April and one singing Cleiteadh on 18 May are all the records for 2021.



Whitethroat - Helen Logan

Whitethroat (Common Whitethroat) *Sylvia communis* 58,38

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

First report was from Sliderry on 22 April. Records included singing males Sliderry on 22 April, Porta Buidhe on 29 April, Lakin on 1 May, Cleats Shore on 7 May, Silver Sands on 15 May and Clauchlands on 24 May. Last record was from Cleats Shore on 12 September.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

Very rare and irregular passage migrant.

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

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus* 36,29

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Regular passage migrant.

Records included 3 Clauchan Glen on 17 January, 2 Holy Isle on 29 January, 6 Glenashdale on 27 February, 3 Lochranza on 27 July and 2 Machrie Wood on 11 October.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* 188,98

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Records from varied habitats throughout the island from high tops to shore. Groups included 16 Whiting Bay on 23 January, 6 Kildonan on 17 April, 5 Allt Ruadh on 1 May, 9 Dereneneach on 13 June, 8 Balmichael on 15 June and 5 Corriecravie on 5 August.

Nuthatch (Wood Nuthatch) *Sitta europaea* 41,2

Vagrant but records increasing as species spreads north across the UK.

One over-wintering bird in Pirmill area was last seen on 1 April. One further record from Dippin from 4th to 6th April.

Treecreeper (Eurasian Treecreeper) *Certhia familiaris* 21,16

Resident. Breeding. Widespread but underreported.

Sightings included 2 Merkland on 30 January, 2 Holy Isle on 27 February, 2 Brodick on 4 March, 2 Cordon on 15 April and 2 Machrie Wood on 11 October.

Rose-coloured Starling *Sturnus roseus* 18,8

Rare vagrant.

See Species Report page 27.



Starling - Arthur Duncan

Starling (Common Starling) *Sturnus vulgaris* 288,95

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included reports Lochranza on 6 April, Feorline on 12 April, Margnaheglish on 27 April, Silver Sands on 3 June and East Bennan on 8 June. Larger groups included 600 Sliderry on 6 March, 200 Kilpatrick on 9 March, 150 Corriecravie on 6 July, 200 Clachaig on 10 November and 200 Cloined on 31 December.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus* 2,2

Scarce summer visitor underreported.

No records in 2021. Last records one male the Narachan on 24 September 2020 and one male North Newton on 17 October 2020.

Blackbird (Common Blackbird) *Turdus merula* 317,118

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Pairs reported from all villages. Good breeding season with reports of double and triple broods. Groups included 14 Porta Buidhe on 12 January, 12 Lagg on 8 February, 14 Auchenhew Bay on 13 May, 10 Strathwillan on 18 November and 15 King's Cave on 26 December.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris* 42,32

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

Groups, sometimes with Redwings, 30 Ballymeanochglen on 27 January, 50 Corriecravie on 8 February, 200 Sannox on 16 November, 200 Cordon on 17 November, 200 the Craw on 21 November and 300 Lochranza on 23 November.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus* 43,24

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

Groups, sometimes with Fieldfares, 6 High Kildonan on 5 March, 250 Lagg on 13 October, 500 Corriecravie on 22 October, 120 Brodick Country Park on 29 October, 800 Sliderry on 30 November.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos* 219,94

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Pairs reported from all villages. Good breeding season. Groups included 4 Holy Isle on 29 January, 12 Glen Cloy on 7 February, 8 Imachar on 3 March and 4 Strathwillan on 22 August.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus* 59,42

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included Machrie Moor on 17 April, Glenloig on 2 May, Dougarie on 25 May and Shiskine Golf Course on 8 June. Groups included 11 Kilpatrick on 4 February, 15 Catacol on 15 February, 20 Cloined on 30 September and 13 Glen Sannox on 5 October.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* 25,20

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

Confirmed breeding included High Kildonan on 9 June, Torbeg on 11 June, Clauchan Glen on 15 July, Fairy Dell on 22 July, Lochranza on 23 July and Holy Isle on 25 August.

Robin (European Robin) *Erithacus rubecula* 323,120

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding all villages. Groups included 5 Blackwaterfoot on 22 January, 6 Whiting Bay on 23 January, 6 Largymore on 31 January, 6 Silver Sands on 1 February, 6 High Kildonan on 6 March and 6 Alma Park on 8 July.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* 1,1

Irregular summer visitor.

One record for 2021. A male Invercloy on 30 July (JS).

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Scarce passage migrant.

No records for 2021. Last record was a male in Porta Buidhe from 21 to 23 November 2019.

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

Scarce summer visitor. Possibly underreported. Previously bred.

One male Fairhaven on 9 May and one male Corriegills on 8 June are all the records for 2021.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* 25,19

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 easily identified in the future. Please report ringed birds to Terry Southall terrysouthall789@btinternet.com.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata* 113,64

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Good breeding season. Fledged young reports included North Glen Sannox on 14 May, Porta Buidhe on 16 May, Sliderry on 26 May, Auchenhew Bay on 27 May, West Bennan on 6 June, Creag Rosa on 12 June and Clachaig Farm on 18 June.

Wheatear (Northern Wheatear) *Oenanthe oenanthe* 90,49

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

First report was from Shannochie on 25 March. Confirmed breeding included Auchenhew Bay on 23 April, Glen Sannox on 30 June, Kilpatrick on 15 July and High Corrie on 19 July. Groups included 11 Machrie Moor stone circles on 29 April, 15 Silver Sands on 1 May, 6 Cleats Shore on 30 April, 3 Sliderry Shore on 9 August, 5 Porta Buidhe on 31 August and 7 Cleats Shore on 18 September. Last record was one Drumadoon Point on 9 November.



Dipper (White-throated Dipper) *Cinclus cinclus* 41,30

Resident. Breeding. Widespread.

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

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* 286,78

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Pairs reported from all villages. Reports of double and triple broods. Larger groups included 49 Silver Sands on 26 January, 50 Alma Park on 25 June, 50 Porta Buidhe on 15 July, 50 Marganaheglish on 10 August, 50 Dippin on 25 August and 50 Blackwaterfoot on 39 August.

Tree Sparrow (Eurasian Tree Sparrow) *Passer montanus*

Rare vagrant. Previously bred.

No records for 2021. Last record was 2 in Brodick on 17 June 1997.

Dunnock (Hedge Accentor) *Prunella modularis* 215,79

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Reports of fledged young, included Newton on 8 April, Catacol on 11 May, Slidderly 11 June and Alma Park on 29 August. Other groups included 4 Shannochie on 10 January, 8 Blackwaterfoot on 22 January, 5 Largymore on 31 January, 7 Silver Sands on 2 March and 4 Auchenhew Bay on 7 April.



Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava* 1,1

Scarce passage migrant.

One record for 2021. One Silver Sands feeding on kelp flies on 27 May (MK).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* 86,56

Resident. Breeding. Localised.

Sightings included

2 Porta Buidhe on 20 February, 2 Pirnmill on 18 March, 3 Cordon on 19 April, 5 Eas Mhor on 5 July, 3 Machriewaterfoot on 18 July, 2 Lochranza on 3 August, 2 Feorline on 20 September and 4 Auchenhew Bay on 22 September.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii* 261,111

Breeding resident. Widespread. Passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding records included adults with fledged young Silver Sands on 3 June, Blackwaterfoot on 25 June, Auchenhew Bay on 26 June, Porta Leacach on 27 June, Clauchlands on 29 June, Corrie on 3 July and Kilpatrick on 9 July. Other groups included 20 Machriewaterfoot on 16 February, 14 Cleats Shore on 2 April, 19 Silver Sands on 19 April, 22 Kilpatrick Point on 22 August, 18 Clachaig Farm on 2 September.

White Wagtail *Montacilla alba* 34,10

Regular passage migrant.

First report was from Silver Sands on 17 March. Other sightings included 15 Silver Sands on 21 April, 20 Auchenhew Bay on 25 April, 24 Porta Buidhe on 29 April, 12 Cleats Shore on 7 May, 21 Slidderly Shore on 2 September and 5 Drumadoon Point on 8 September. Last report was from Porta Buidhe on 29 September.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis* 118,78

Breeding resident. Widespread. Passage migrant and winter visitor.

Numerous breeding records. Groups included 30 Lochranza 21 March, 14 Dereneneach on 13 June, 15 the Ross on 25 July, 50 Shannochie on 29 July, 20 Clachaig on 26 August and 60 Cleats Shore on 18 September.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis* 9,8

Scarce summer visitor. Possibly underreported.

Sightings included one Cnocan Wood on 27 April, one Lochranza on 1 May, 2 Glen Rosa on 16 May, one Machrie Wood on 25 May, 2 File Breugach on 20 June and 6 Corriecravie on 15 August.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

Rare Vagrant.

No records in 2021. Last record was in 2019 when there was one in Machrie Bay from 23 February to 5 April. This was the first Arran record.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus* 193,72

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

Numerous breeding records including pairs carrying food at Porta Buidhe on 17 May, Kilpatrick Point on 25 May, Cosyden on 30 May, Silver Sands on 8 June, Shiskine Golf Course on 19 June, Sannox Bay on 21 June, Pirmill on 24 June and Thunderguy on 2 July. Groups included 23 Porta Buidhe on 21 January, 22 Blackwaterfoot on 22 January, 20 Whiting Bay on 23 January, 20 Cleats Shore on 20 May and 20 Drumadoon Point on 25 October.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* 319,113

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included reports from all the settlements on the island including some double broods. Good breeding year. Groups included 60 Glenkiln on 24 January, 30 Blackwaterfoot on 30 January, 60 Whiting Bay on 7 February, 30 Lagg on 8 February, 70 Sliderry on 6 March and 50 Imachar on 29 October.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla* 6,2

Disruptive winter visitor in varying numbers.

Not seen every year.

Records from two locations in 2021. All towards the end of the year. These included 3 in Sliderry on 19 December, 40 at Cnoc na Dail on 12 December followed by 50 at the same location on 19 December. These are the largest totals of Brambling on Arran. The winter of 2021-22 looks as if it is going to be a Brambling year.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Rare vagrant.

No records in 2021. Last record one Pirmill on 21 April and one Lochranza on 22 April, possibly the same bird, in 2016.

Bullfinch (Common Bullfinch) *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* 43,34

Resident. Breeding. Localised.

Confirmed breeding included reports Lochranza on 10 June, Cordon on 14 June, High Kildonan on 10 July and Whiting Bay on 16 July. Groups included 4 Urie Loch on 11 February, 15 Clauchan Glen on 23 January, 18 Holy Isle on 24 February, 6 Cordon on 14 June and 3 Merkland Point on 8 December.



Scarlet Rosefinch (Common Rosefinch) *Carpodacus erythrinus*

Rare vagrant.

No records in 2021. The last record was a juvenile caught and ringed at High Kildonan on 24 October 2011.

Greenfinch (European Greenfinch) *Carduelis chloris* 127,42

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

In 2021 there was a further increase in the number of locations reflecting a good breeding season and continuing recovery from the impact of trichomonas. Confirmed breeding included reports from Margnaheglis on 17 May, Kilpatrick on 28 May, Blackwaterfoot on 30 May, Lagg on 5 June, Shannochie on 7 June and Porta Buidhe on 19 June. Groups included 10 Pirrill on 22 February, 10 Sliderry on 5 November, 9 Cordon on 30 December and 30 Drumadoon Point on 31 December.



Twite - Alex Penn

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris* 12,9

Resident. Breeding. Localised. Passage migrant.

No confirmed breeding. Groups 12 Cleats Shore on 2 April, 6 Sliderry Shore on 26 April, 2 Imachar on 24 June, 2 Shannochie on 14 August, 11 Port Buidhe on 22 October and 22 Machriewaterfoot on 4 November.

Linnet (Common Linnet) *Carduelis cannabina* 74,42

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Most records between April and November.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Drumadoon on 7 June, Kildonan on 17 June, Kilpatrick on 25 June, Sliderry on 27 June and Imachar on 4 July. Groups included 50 Sliderry on 23 April, 70 Corriecravie on 5 August, 20 Cosyden on 16 August, 78 Kilpatrick Point on 22 August, 22 Cloined on 23 August and 300 Cleats Shore on 12 September.

Redpoll (Lesser Redpoll) *Carduelis cabaret* 72,39

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

Confirmed breeding included reports from Dyemill on 18 May, and Lochranza on 10 June. Groups included 12 Cnocan Wood on 31 May, 10 Newton on 22 July, 30 Corriecravie on 5 August, 15 Holy Isle on 25 August, 30 Auchrannie on 7 September and 60 Catacol on 15 October.

Crossbill (Common Crossbill) *Loxia curvirostra* 9,9

Resident. Breeding. Localised. Possibly underreported.

Groups included 6 High Kildonan on 26 March, 4 High Cloined on 15 June, 6 Machrie Forest on 30 June and 5 Lagg on 20 October.

Goldfinch (European Goldfinch) *Carduelis carduelis* 250,82

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Good breeding season. Reports of young included Sliderry on 19 June, Kilpatrick on 22 June, Porta Leacach on 27 June, Shannochie on 29 June, Cosyden 6 July and Catacol 22 July. Groups included 70 Sliderry on 7 August, 90 Kildonan on 1 September, 70 Imachar on 6 September, 100 Torrylinnwater Foot on 8 September and 50 Lakin Farm on 5 October.



Goldfinch - Howard Sargent

Siskin (Eurasian Siskin) *Carduelis spinus* 162,62
Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Most records between January and June.

Good Breeding season. Confirmed breeding included reports from Slidderly on 19 June, Porta Leacach on 20 June, Kilpatrick on 22 June, Lagg on 26 June and Shannochie on 29 June. Groups included 40 Whiting Bay on 20 May, 25 Monyquil on 22 August, 40 Kingscross on 10 October, 60 Brodick Country Park on 16 October, 30 Corrie on 22 November and 30 Sannox on 29 November.



Corn bunting *Miliaria calandra*
Rare vagrant. Previously bred.

No records for 2021. Last record was 2 in Brodick area on 7 October 1984.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella* 12,4

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

No records between 30 April and 15 October. This year there was a report of a male singing on the Boguille on 21 April and one singing in the Shiskine Valley on 30 April. Neither bird lingered. Then on 3 July a Yellowhammer was seen on the Holy Isle. This is the first Arran July record this century. All other records were from the Slidderly area including 9 on 3 January, 11 on 30 January, 9 on 6 March, 5 on 13 November and 5 on 10 December. See Species Report page 29.

Black-headed Bunting *Emberiza melanocephala*
Rare Vagrant

No records for 2021. Last record one in Strathwillan on 6 June 2019 was the first Arran record.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus* 43,20

Resident. Breeding. Localised. Passage migrant.

Sightings included 8 Moss Farm on 23 January, 2 Holy Isle on 29 January, 2 Narachan on 8 May, 3 Machrie Moor on 4 June, one Corriecravie on 5 August and 2 Drumadoon Point on 23 September.

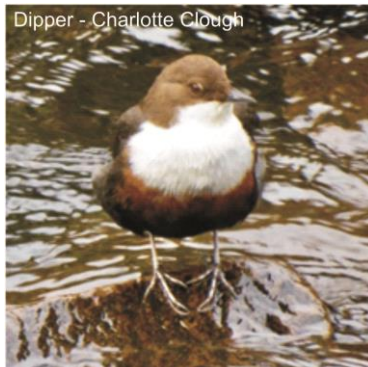
Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

No records for 2021. Last record one Cleats Shore on 11 October 2020 was the first Arran record.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis* 3,3

Varying numbers on passage and in winter.

One Benlister on 21 October, 2 Goatfell summit on 30 October and one Beinn a' Chliabhain on 7 November. In 2018 there were no records. In 2019 there were 20 records.



More Information on Arran Birds



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 all previous annual reports except the two most recent ones. The data from all these annual reports is also incorporated into the Online Scottish Bird Report (oSBR) of the Scottish Ornithologists' Club (SOC).

Arran Bird Atlas

The award-winning local atlas, *Arran Bird Atlas 2007-2012* mapping the breeding and wintering birds of Arran is also available from the website as a free download.

Recent Sightings and Monthly News

These sections on the website provide regularly updated information including a selection of highlights from each month as well as recent bird sightings on Arran.

Bird Notes

These regular articles which have been published in the "*Arran Banner*" provide a wide range of background information on the birds and birding on Arran.

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.

Reporting Sightings

Use of the excellent BirdTrack system is welcomed. Alternatively, on the website there are suggestions on how to report your sightings directly to me.

In addition, on the website there is information on the Arran Moors Special Protection Area, the Arran Black Grouse Group, the annual Clyde Eider Survey, the Raven Survey, the Birdwatchers Code, and how to report rarities including a list of species that require a written report to the local rarities committee before acceptance.

Also, on the website there is accommodation information and links to local and national websites.

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Whitethroat - James Morrison