

Firth of Clyde Eider News

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Introduction

Coverage in 2018 was again very good, thanks to another great effort by nearly 40 observers.

Numbers recorded in 2018 continued the ongoing decline, reaching a new low point below 5000 for the first time.

The 4872 birds counted in 2018 is now only 25% of those counted in 1997 (representing a 75% decline over 22 years).

While similar declines have been widely reported during the same period across much of Europe, from Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and the White Sea in Russia, the cause of these declines have yet to be fully determined. There appears to be no single obvious cause, but likely different combinations of factors operating in each area.

2018 counters - a special thanks to everybody who took part.

Iain Andrews, Tony Baboolal, Tony Baker, Robin Barnden, Daphne Campbell, Jenny Campbell, Jim Cassels, John Clark, John Conner, Brian Couper, Phil Cowie, Simon Davies, John and Jean Fitzpatrick, Dave Freeman, Christopher Garvie, Jim Gibb, Iain Gibson, Nick Giles, Jenni & Steve Grover, Alan Hollick, Ian Hopkins, Simon Lawrence, Elanor and Andy McNamara, Ann and Tom McNeish, Doug Menzies, Rab Morton, Alec Nicol, Katy Penn, Allan Russell, Nigel Scriven, Luke Wake, Chris Waltho, Ray Welland, Kathy Wells, Alan Wood

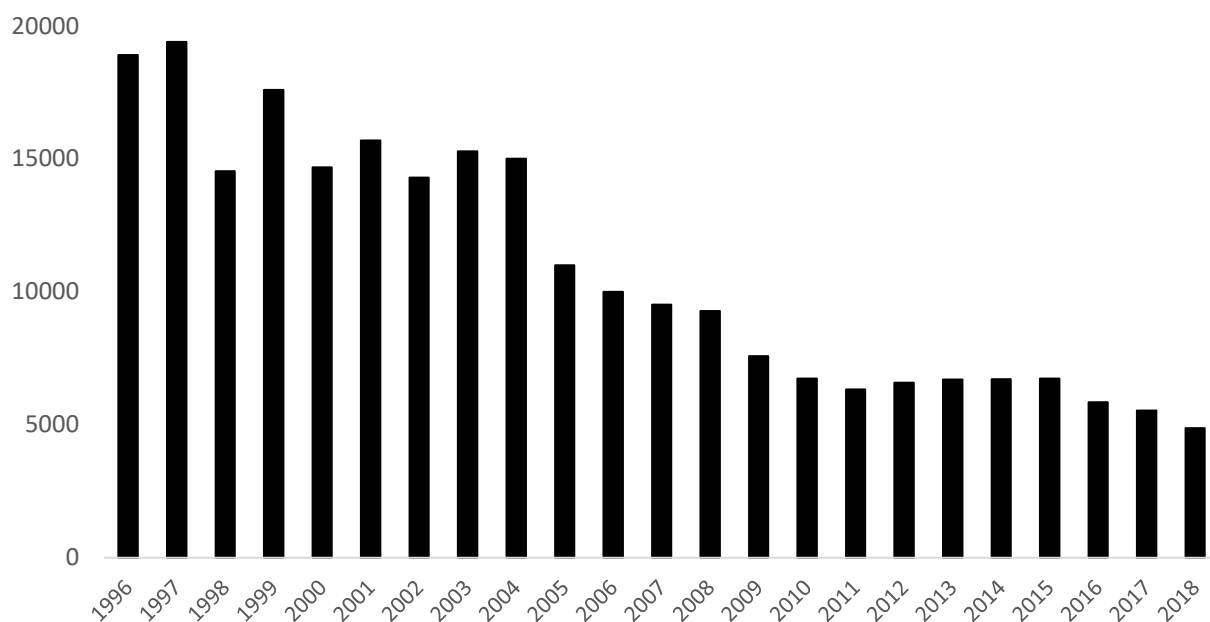
Apologies for anyone inadvertently missed.

**Please note that the 2019 count will take place
during period 7th-30th September**

5 yr

	<u>September Count stretch</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>mean</u>
1	Clyde Estuary (Gourock-Craigendoran)	459	538	730	373	291	478
2	Craigendoran-Kilcreggan (Gare Loch)	1187	1741	1540	1638	1448	1511
3	Kilcreggan-Strone Point (L Long/Goil)	1076	988	583	612	656	783
4	Holy Loch to Toward Pt	219	223	93	198	195	185
5	Gourock-Largs	237	423	365	357	504	377
6	Bute & Kyles (+ L Ridden & L Striven)	137	135	271	167	280	198
7	Great Cumbrae	236	306	264	184	85	215
8	Loch Fyne	1096	795	265	966	575	739
9	E Kintyre (Skipness-Southend)	144	152	222	118	138	155
10	Arran	116	117	116	36	33	84
11	Largs-Seamill	104	130	46	60	48	78
12	Seamill-Saltcoats	41	3	35	30	30	28
13	Irvine & Ayr Bays	585	308	741	360	320	463
14	Dunure-Girvan	340	115	153	26	120	151
15	Girvan-Ballantrae		5				5
16	Loch Ryan	729	753	423	410	149	493
	Total Firth of Clyde	6706	6732	5847	5535	4872	5943

Eider counts in the Firth of Clyde 1996-2018

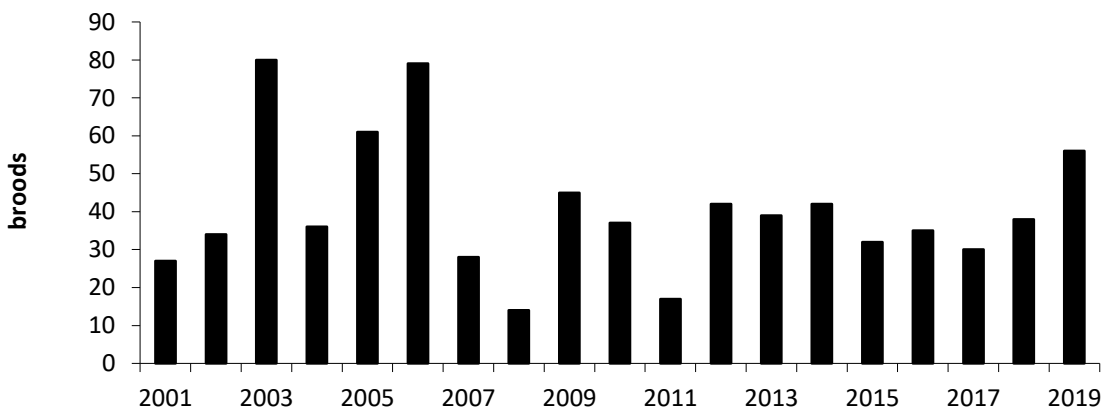


Breeding productivity in Gare Loch/Rosneath Peninsula in 2019

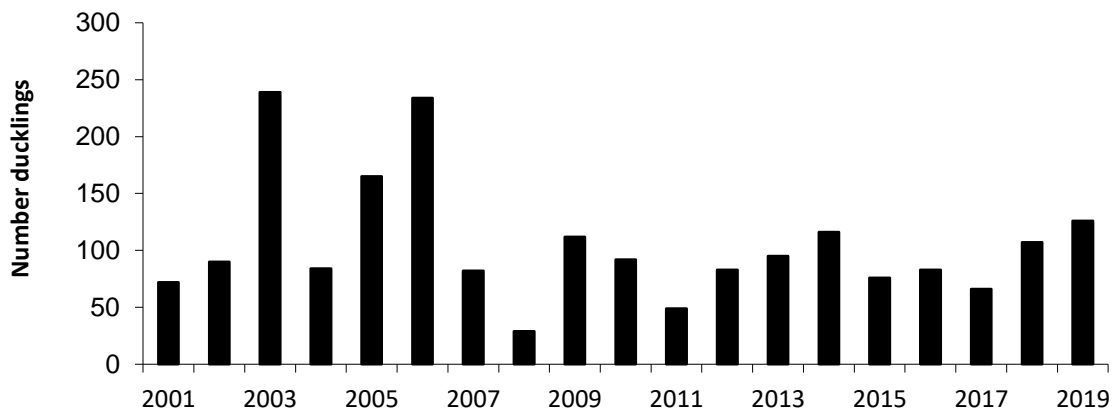
Counts in mid-July 2019 found 56 broods/crèches with total of 126 ducklings. This compares with 38 broods with 107 ducklings in 2018, 30 broods with 66 ducklings in 2017, 35 broods with 83 ducklings in 2016, 32 broods with 76 ducklings in 2015 and 42 broods with 116 ducklings in 2014.

2019 has seen the best duckling production here since 2006. A sign of hope?

Broods Rhu-Coulport



Ducklings Rhu-Coulport



Ringed Eider

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

To date, around 2000 birds have been ringed in the Firth of Clyde, all but 5 being adult females.

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



Colour ringed birds.

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

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

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

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

Photo by
David Palmar Photography
www.photoscot.co.uk

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

Please note that the September 2019 count will take place from the 7th to 30th.