

Firth of Clyde Eider News

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Introduction

Coverage in 2020 was excellent, thanks to another great effort by more than 40 observers.

The 5283 birds recorded in 2020 increased a little from the low point in 2019, which had been below 4500. However, the 2020 count is only 27.2% of the numbers recorded in 1997: a decline of nearly 73%.

In celebration of 25 years of effort from many many observers, this issue includes some of the excellent evidence we now have for short and medium-terms population trends, and how this compares with some long-term population modelling for the Firth of Clyde.

I hope that you find this interesting and thanks again for all your effort and support.

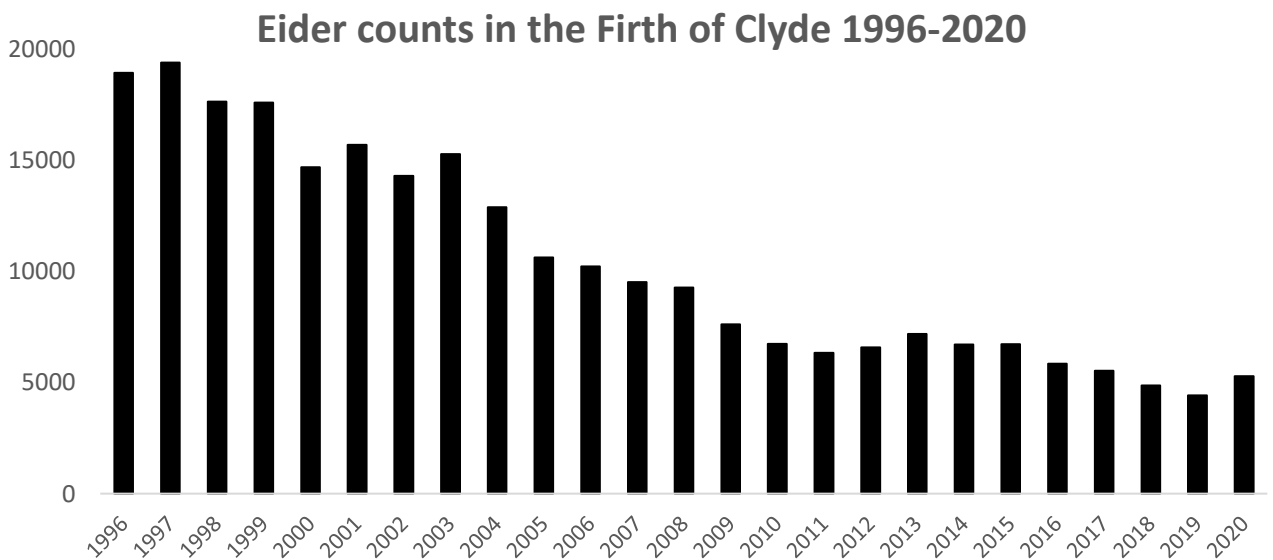
2020 counters - a special thanks to everybody who took part.

Tony Baboolal, Tony Baker, Robin Barnden, Bunny Campbell, Jenny Campbell, Jim Cassels, John Clark, John Conner, Brian Couper, Simon Davies, John and Jean Fitzpatrick, Dave Freeman, Christopher Garvie, Jim Gibb, Iain Gibson, Nick Giles, Jenni & Steve Grover, Alan Hollick, Ian Hopkins, David Kilpatrick, Simon Lawrence, Elanor and Andy McNamara, Ann and Tom McNeish, Doug Menzies, Rab Morton, Alec Nicol, David and Janet Palmar, Katy Penn, Stevie Reid, Allan Russell, Kate Sampson, Nigel Scriven, Dave Smallwood, Luke Wake, Lucy Wallace, Chris Waltho, Ray Welland, Kathy and Nigel Wells, Toby Wilson, Alan Wood.

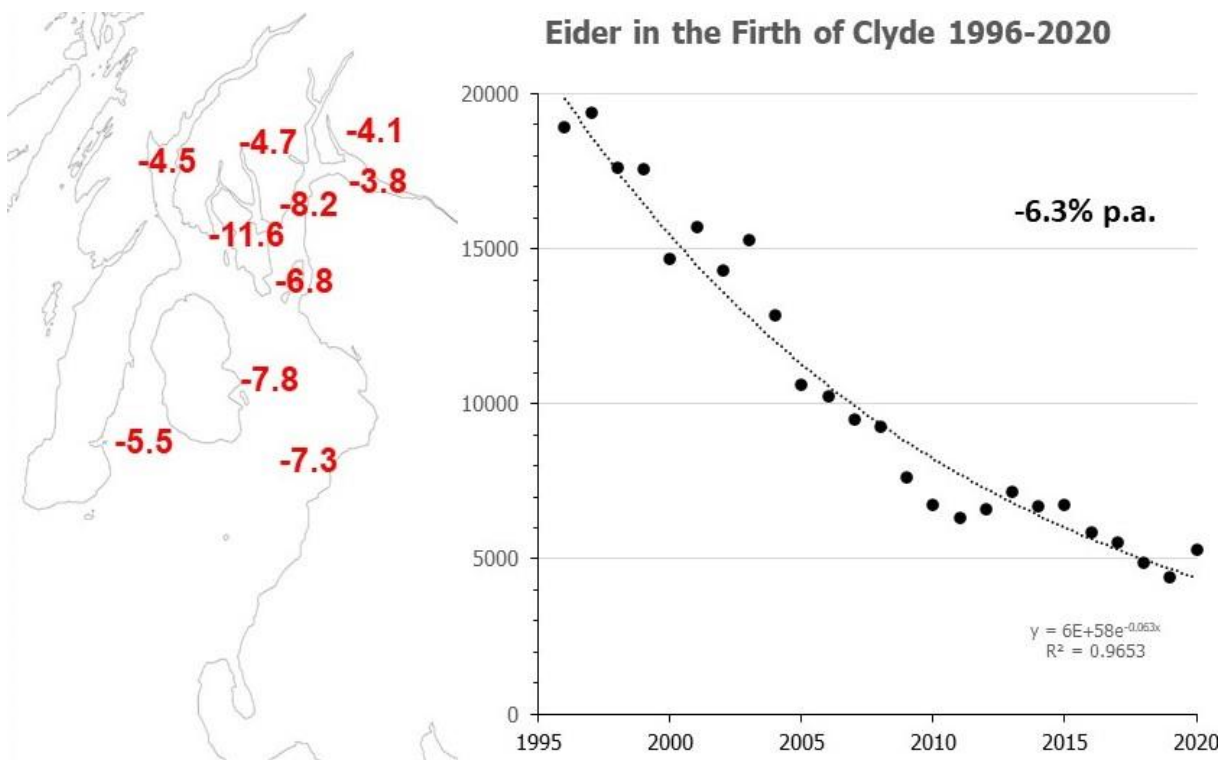
Apologies for anyone inadvertently missed.

**Please note that the 2021 count will take place
during period 11th-30th September**

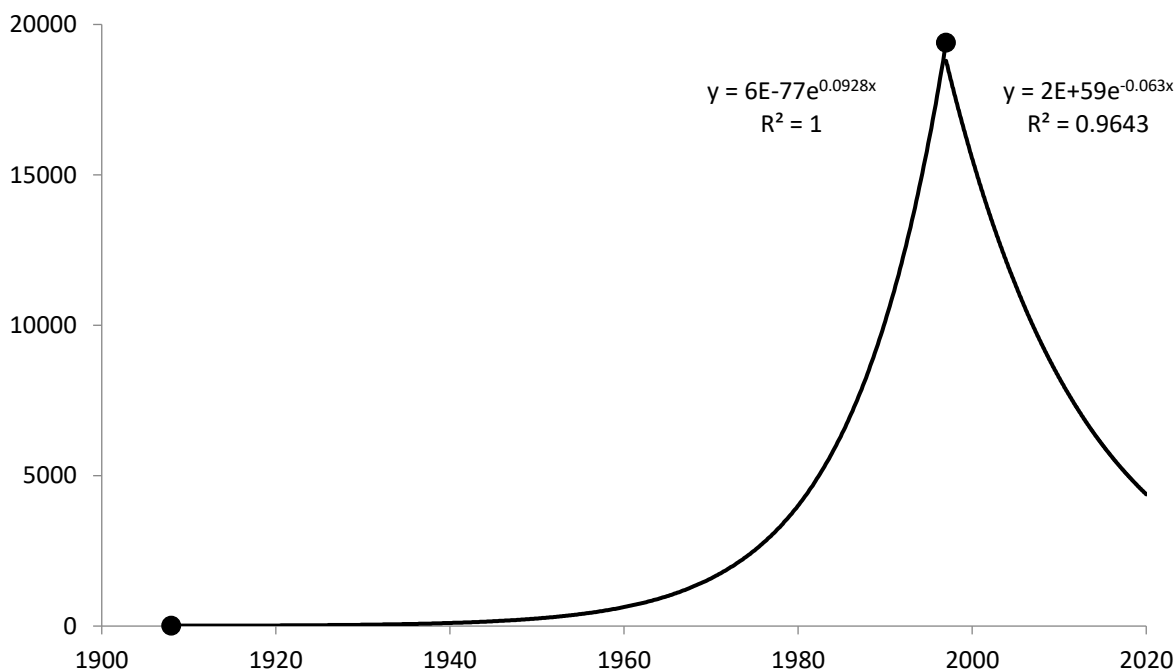
	<u>September Count stretch</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	2016-20 mean
1	Clyde Estuary (Gourock-Craigendoran)	730	373	291	388	263	409
2	Craigendoran-Kilcreggan (Gare Loch)	1540	1638	1448	1174	1176	1395
3	Kilcreggan-Strone Point (L Long/Goil)	583	612	656	470	939	652
4	Holy Loch to Toward Pt	93	198	195	51	233	154
5	Gourock-Largs	365	357	504	452	274	390
6	Bute & Kyles (+ L Ridden & L Striven)	271	167	280	198	56	194
7	Great Cumbrae	264	184	85	106	204	169
8	Loch Fyne	265	966	575	454	988	650
9	E Kintyre (Skipness-Southend)	222	118	138	94	86	132
10	Arran	116	36	33	47	75	61
11	Largs-Seamill	46	60	48	115	34	61
12	Seamill-Saltcoats	35	30	30	33	78	41
13	Irvine & Ayr Bays	741	360	320	349	337	421
14	Dunure-Girvan	153	26	120	89	230	124
15	Girvan-Ballantrae	3	3	3	1	4	3
16	Loch Ryan	423	410	149	408	306	339
	Total Firth of Clyde	5850	5538	4875	4429	5283	5195



Medium-term population trend for Eider in the Firth of Clyde: average % change per year during last 25 years (1996-2020)



Long-term population trends for Eider in the Firth of Clyde (1900-2020)



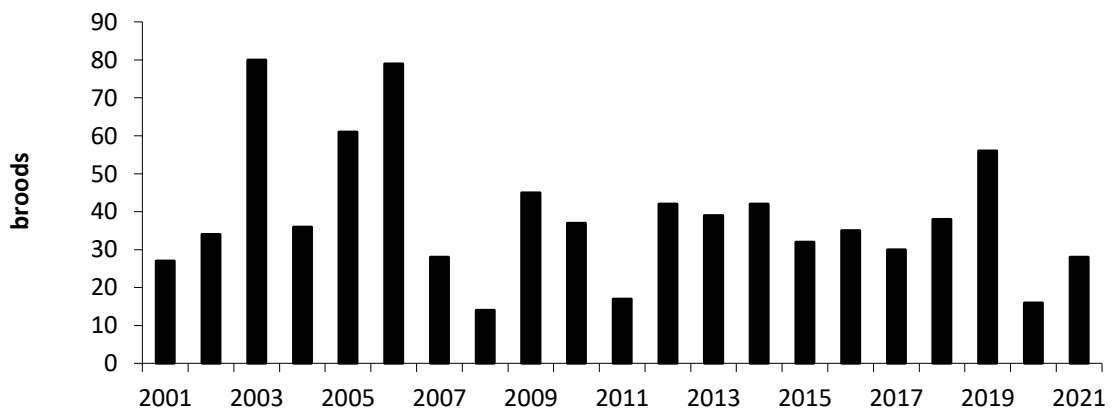
Breeding productivity in Gare Loch/Rosneath Peninsula in 2021

Counts in mid-July 2021 found 28 broods/crèches with a total of 73 ducklings.

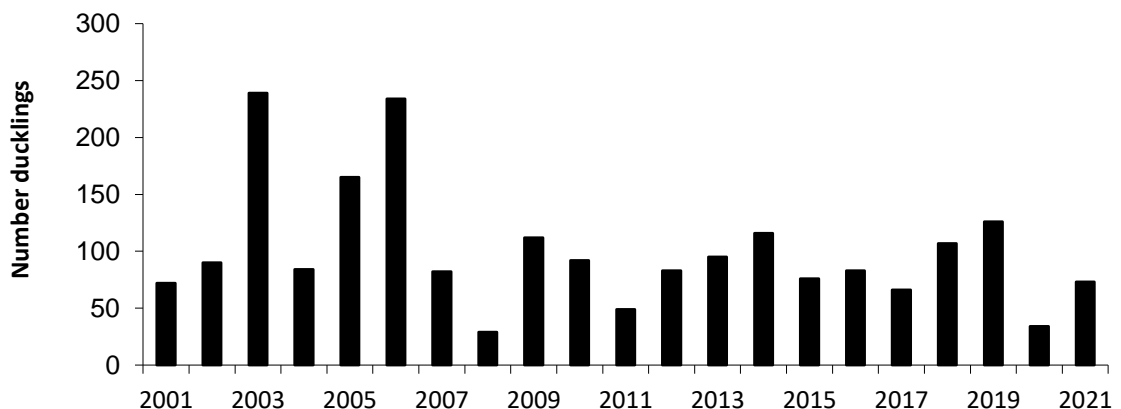
This compares with 16 broods/crèches with 34 ducklings in 2020, 56 broods with 156 ducklings in 2019, 38 broods with 107 ducklings in 2018, 30 broods with 66 ducklings in 2017, 35 broods with 83 ducklings in 2016, 32 broods with 76 ducklings in 2015 and 42 broods with 116 ducklings in 2014.

2021 sees an improvement from 2020, which had been the second worst duckling production here in 20 years, the worst being in 2008. However, the 73 ducklings in 2021 is still below the 5-year average (81 in 2017-21) and the 20-year average (102 in 2001-2020).

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.

Some 15 years ago the Clyde Ringing undertook a colour-ringing programme of females for several years. Some these birds should still be around.

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 2021 count will take place from the 11th to 30th.