

The Arran Bird Report 2014



Compiled by
Dr Jim Cassels for the Arran Natural History Society

Published by



The Arran Natural History Society

Arran Natural History Society

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Members receive a copy of the annual *Arran Bird Report*.
Annual Subscription is £10 for adults, £16 for couples and £5 for junior members.
The subscription is payable to:

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Printed by Ardrossan Printing Company Ltd.
Tel: 01294 603402 e:ardossanprintco@hotmail.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 was granted.

Records were also received from North Ayrshire RSPB group who have a presence on some of the weekend ferries during the summertime.

All bird records given to the National Trust rangers at Brodick Country Park and to the Brodick Tourist Information Centre were forwarded to me.

Introduction

Welcome to the *Arran Bird Report* for 2014. This is the thirty-fifth consecutive annual bird report for the Isle of Arran and the ninth one compiled by me.

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

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

In 2014, over three hundred contributors submitted over nine and a half thousand records on one hundred and sixty species, one of which had never been recorded before on Arran, namely Green Woodpecker. 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 2014.

The chronological summary gives the highlights for each month. The systematic list is in the order of the British list as published by the British Ornithologists' Union (2006). This is in line with the Clyde Report. For each species, as well as the common name, the (new) official name and its scientific name have been given. 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 2015, please send any bird notes with "what, when, where" to me before Monday 11 January 2016, at Kilpatrick Kennels, Kilpatrick, Blackwaterfoot, KA27 8EY, or telephone 01770 860316, or email me at james.cassels@virgin.net.

I look forward to hearing from you.

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

Chronological Summary

2014 was another fascinating birding year on Arran.

The highlight to start the year was a White-tailed Eagle over Kingscross in January followed by two Black-necked Grebe in Whiting Bay in February. The winter storms took their toll of seabirds with many bodies washed up on the shores. A warm, dry spring encouraged the early arrival of our summer migrants. These warmer, drier conditions continued over the summer helping to provide ideal breeding conditions for some of the islands iconic birds like Hen Harrier, Golden Eagle and Red-throated Divers. Many of our summer visitors like Cuckoo and Swallow thrived as well. Overall it was a good breeding season. The migration period in autumn did not disappoint with Osprey and Long-tailed Duck being particular highlights. The year ended with a report of a first ever Green Woodpecker on Arran

Now read on.

January

The weather in January was characterised by regular, sometimes storm force, Atlantic fronts sweeping across the island. It was mild, wet and unsettled.

A particular highlight this month was a White-tailed Eagle off Kingscross Point on 16 January. The observers watched the bird in good visibility for about thirty minutes. This is the first record of this rare vagrant to Arran since an immature was reported being seen off by two Golden Eagles over Torr Head on 27 October 2012.

Another feature of the month was the number of gulls on the island. There were large flocks in most bays and in adjacent fields. It is thought that many had come from the Baltic or further afield. These included: six hundred Common Gull in Whiting Bay on 8th, five hundred Common Gull in North Feorline on 11th, nineteen Black-headed Gull in Whiting Bay on 17th and on 30th one hundred and fifty Herring Gull at Kilpatrick and twenty Great Black-backed Gull at Machriewaterfoot.

Other highlights included: fifteen Woodcock at Sliddery on 8th, a Puffin in Catacol Bay on 13th, a Jack Snipe at Sliddery on the 19th, a Tufted Duck at Kingscross Point on 20th, a male Goosander in the Rosa Burn on 29th and a Bar-tailed Godwit at Clauchlands on 30th. The Jack Snipe was caught and ringed. The godwit was the first Arran record since September 2012. A winter record of Puffin is most unusual but may have been a result of the recent strong southerly winds.

Wintering wildfowl numbers included: two Common Scoter at Blackwaterfoot on 7th, five hundred Greylag Geese and twenty-five Pink-footed Geese in the Shiskine Valley on 10th, a Barnacle Goose at Lenimore on 12th, thirty Wigeon at Sliddery on 17th, four Goldeneye at Catacol Bay on 18th and twelve Whooper Swan in Feorline on 28th.

Other winter visitors in January included: four Golden Plover at Sliddery on 4th, three Purple Sandpiper at Kildonan on 9th, a Merlin at Sliddery on 11th, thirty Redwing in Shiskine on 16th, eleven Twite in Sliddery on 17th, a Greenshank at Clauchlands on 20th, forty Fieldfare in Kilpatrick on 26th, thirty-two Lapwing also in Kilpatrick on 30th and twenty-two Rook in Sliddery also on 30th.

Interesting garden birds included: five Yellowhammer at Shedog on 1st, a Bullfinch at Whiting Bay on 25th and on 26th five Long-tailed Tit at Glenashdale, a Great Spotted Woodpecker in Lamlash and a Blackcap in Brodick.

There were some signs of approaching spring with a pair of Golden Eagle displaying over Lochranza on 2nd, a Gannet in Lamlash Bay on 3rd, Shags in breeding plumage with their wispy crests at Whiting Bay on 11th, two early returning Lesser Black-backed Gulls at Kilpatrick on 14th and twelve Red-breasted Merganser displaying off Blackwaterfoot on 30th.

February

In February the unsettled wet winter continued. There was more than twice as much rain as in February 2013 and the mean temperature was one degree higher.

A February highlight was the report of two Black-necked Grebe in winter plumage at the south end of Whiting Bay on 14th. They gave good close views. This is the first Arran record of this occasional winter and passage migrant since one was reported on 30 October 2010, also in Whiting Bay.

Other winter visitors to the fore included: four Goldeneye off Newton on 5th, thirteen Redwing at Kilpatrick on 12th, sixteen Turnstone in Whiting Bay on 16th, thirty Fieldfare at Machriewaterfoot also on 16th, two Purple Sandpiper at Drumadoon Point on 18th and the long staying Greenshank at Clauchlands on 19th.

Wintering wildfowl were still present in numbers including: fourteen Pink-footed Geese at the Rodden on 5th, two hundred and fifty Greylag Geese in the Shiskine Valley on 11th and thirty-four Teal and forty-six Wigeon at Machriewaterfoot on 16th. Two of the Greylag Geese had on identifying collars. The details were passed to *Euring*.

Other flocks included: one hundred and twenty-five Chaffinch at Sliderry on 2nd, thirty-five Lapwing at Kilpatrick on 3rd, twenty-one Golden Plover at Machriewaterfoot on 17th, one hundred and ten Rook at Sliderry on 24th, seventy Skylark also at Sliderry on 17th, thirty Black-headed Gull at Whiting Bay on 16th and seventy Curlew at Clauchlands on 19th. Some of these flocks may have included birds beginning to migrate north.

The prolonged stormy weather throughout December and January with heavy seas had an effect on the ocean-living birds. In February there was the annual systematic count of dead shore birds. Razorbills, in particular, were washed up in numbers. For example on 22nd there were eleven at Kildonan and twenty-seven at Dougarie. These birds had virtually no flesh on them. Two of the dead birds had rings. From information from the BTO, one was ringed at a nest site on the Treshnish Isles off the coast of Mull in 1996 and another was ringed at a nest site at Garbh Eilean on the Western Isles in 2011.

On the occasional days when the sea was calm, it was ideal for sea watching. Reports included: four Black-throated Diver off Cosyden, forty-two displaying Eider in Machrie Bay and twelve displaying Red-breasted Merganser in Whiting Bay all on 16th, three Great Northern Diver off Kilpatrick Point on 18th and a Red-throated Diver in Brodick Bay on 22nd.

With sources of food for some species of bird becoming scarce, gardens were havens for many species. Among the many garden highlights were five Long-tailed Tit at the Dyemill on 11th, three Bullfinch in Lamlash on 15th, seven Coal Tit at Lochranza on 17th, a Great Spotted Woodpecker at Torbeg on 26th, a Treecreeper in Whiting Bay on 27th and five Yellowhammer at Shedog on 28th.

Other sightings included: a Jack Snipe at Cnoc Moine nan Cuile on 2nd, three Little Grebe by the Fisherman's Walk on 14th, two Common Scoter off Blackwaterfoot on 18th and a pair of Goosander at Machriewaterfoot also on 18th.

Finally, there were some signs of approaching spring with reports of garden birds in song throughout the island towards the end of the month, plus a pair of Starling inspecting nest holes in Shiskine on 14th, twelve nesting Fulmars on the cliffs at Drumadoon on 18th, a Grey Heron collecting sticks from a garden in Lamlash on 21st, five Black Guillemot in breeding plumage at Brodick pier on 22nd, Golden Eagles displaying over Lochranza on 26th and a Collared Dove on a nest in Shiskine on 28th.

March

Unlike March 2013 when large parts of the island were covered with snow, spring arrived in March this year and with it the first of our summer visitors. Spring is an exciting time of year, awaiting the arrival of all of our summer visitors and seeing the last of our winter visitors leaving.

As always the weather impacted on the movement of the spring migrants. Here are some "first" reported dates: Chiffchaff singing at Kingscross on 23rd, a pair of Wheatear at Machrie Golf Course on 25th, a Sand Martin at the top of the String on 27th, two male White Wagtail on Kilpatrick Point on 30th and a House Martin at South Feorline on 31st. These dates are up to a fortnight earlier than the corresponding dates in 2013 but even by the end of the month, perhaps because of the more easterly direction of the wind, the bulk of the migrants had still to arrive.

Signs of migration included: an Iceland Gull in Brodick Bay on 5th, three Manx Shearwater also in Brodick Bay on 7th, Whooper Swans, eleven at Sandbraes, twenty-one at Rubha Salach, twenty-two at Kildonan all on 13th, a female Merlin in Allt na Calman on 19th, a Common Scoter off Largybeg on 12th, eight Black-throated Diver off Cosyden on 13th, a Slavonian Grebe in Whiting Bay on 22nd, around thirty Meadow Pipit and a similar number of Pied Wagtail in High Kildonan on 22nd, eleven Great Northern Diver off Pirnmill on 30th and an Osprey over Sliderry also on 30th.

In March, winter visitors were still present including: a Goldeneye at Clachlands on 9th, thirty Wigeon at Cosyden on 13th, a Greenshank at Clachlands on 14th, three hundred Greylag Geese at Shiskine on 16th, two hundred and fifty Greylag Geese at High Clachaig on 23rd, one hundred Fieldfare at Glenscorrodale on 19th, six Twite at Kilpatrick Point on 30th and eight Pink-footed Geese at Shiskine on 31st.

Among the Greylag Geese were two with collars. The information back via *Euring* from the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) indicated that one had been ringed in Lough Swilly by Londonderry in February 2012 and the other had been ringed by Loch Eye, Easter Ross, in November 2004. This bird had been reported from Norway and East Lothian during the winter of 2013-14 before arriving in Shiskine.

Finally, the much maligned Magpie may be common on the adjacent mainland, but it is a vagrant on Arran. One turned up in Lamlash on 19th and moved to the Whiting Bay area where it remained until the end of the month. There were no records in 2013 and only one in 2012. Before 2008 there were only seven records in the previous twenty-five years.

Spring is a great time to be birding, as most birds are getting on with the business of breeding. The business of breeding involves attracting a mate by song, courtship display and ritual, defining a territory, nest building, and generally establishing relationships. In March the signs were there, including: thirty Eider displaying in Whiting Bay on 9th, Lapwing displaying in Kilmory on 11th, two Buzzard copulating in Levenorroch on 23rd, Skylarks singing over Machrie Golf Course on 25th and Yellowhammers singing in Sliderry on 31st.

April

April is the month when spring migration gets underway, with arrivals and departures of birds, all seeking their best breeding territories. Warmer and drier than March, April this year was more than two degrees warmer than both the previous Aprils. This, combined with relatively clear weather conditions on the migratory routes from Africa, meant that the first wave of summer migrants generally arrived on Arran earlier than last year, some species up to two weeks earlier.

Here are April "firsts" with the 2013 arrival date in brackets for comparison: a Swallow at Cordon on 1st (14 April) a Willow Warbler singing in Sliddery on 8th (23 April), a Whitethroat also singing in Sliddery on 9th (17 April), a Common Sandpiper at South Feorline on 15th (14 April), a Cuckoo calling at the Narachan on 15th (19 April), Grasshopper Warbler reeling on Corriecravie Moor on 26th (5 May), three Tree Pipit singing in Glen Rosa on 27th (7 May) and a Whinchat singing in Glen Rosa on 30th (14 May). By the end of the month there were widespread reports of Cuckoo and the songs of other summer migrants like Willow Warbler, Blackcap and Chiffchaff filled the air.

April is an ideal time for watching migration. For example, on the coast there was a Merlin hunting Meadow Pipit at Kildonan on 2nd, both species on migration. Other coastal examples included: three Great Northern Diver off King's Cave on 4th, two Sandwich Tern in Lamash Bay on 6th, fourteen White Wagtail in Port na Feannaiche on 15th, fourteen Whimbrel in Auchenhew Bay also on 15th, four Arctic Tern off Largsbeg on 16th, thirty-two Golden Plover at Machriewaterfoot on 18th, two hundred Manx Shearwater off Largsmore on 19th and fifteen Wheatear on Cleats Shore on 24th. Some of the Wheatear were of the Greenland race.

The signs of migration were also evident from the garden records in April. There were numerous Lesser Redpoll garden records ranging from Kildonan in the south to Lochranza in the north. In addition there were many widespread records of Goldfinch, with fifteen at Clachaig on 20th being the largest group seen. Siskin were similar, with twelve at Lochranza on 17th being the largest group seen. There could have been thousands of birds on the move through Arran.

In April some of our wintering birds were still around including: three Wigeon at Sliddery on 6th, a mixed flock of Redwing and Fieldfare at Auchencar on 12th, two Rook in Shiskine on 12th, twelve Greylag Geese in Shiskine on 14th, thirty-four Pink-footed Geese in Clachaig on 20th and eight Whooper Swan at Sandbraes on 21st.

With all this movement, there were one hundred and fourteen species of birds recorded on Arran in April. Some of the highlights included: two Common Scoter off King's Cave, a Red Kite in North Sannox and a Slavonian Grebe in Whiting Bay all on 4th, a Jack Snipe in Sliddery on 9th, a Short-eared Owl at Clachaig on 20th, a male Pintail at Cleats Shore on 24th, a pair of Tufted Duck at Port na Lochan on 27th, a Lesser Whitethroat in Auchenhew Bay on 28th and two Puffin south of Pladda on 29th. The Magpie that arrived in March was still around in April. With records at Kilpatrick on 21st and Braehead Farm on 25th.

May

May was milder and a little drier than May 2013 and with the wind predominantly from the south our summer visitors continued to arrive. The following "firsts" were reported: a Swift over Whiting Bay on 6th, a Garden Warbler in Merkland Wood on 13th and a Spotted Flycatcher on Machrie Moor on 16th. Throughout the month the numbers of summer visitors like Swallow, House Martin, Willow Warbler and Cuckoo continued to build up. For example, there were over fifty reports of Cuckoo including one that struck a window in a house in Blackwaterfoot. By the end of May there were no reports this year of Wood Warbler, Redstart, Corncrake or Nightjar but a Turtle Dove at Sliddery on 24th was the first spring record this century.

Species who breed further north continued to pass through including: twelve Whimbrel at Blackwaterfoot on 3rd, three White Wagtail at Kilpatrick Point also on 3rd, a Purple Sandpiper at Drumadoon Point on 4th, nine Turnstone at Blackwaterfoot on 8th, four Sandwich Tern at Silver Sands on 10th, eight Sanderling at Drumadoon Point on 15th, a male Pintail at Machriewaterfoot on 19th, nine Dunlin on Cleats Shore also on 19th, twelve Great Northern Diver off Blackwaterfoot on 20th, three Whooper Swan over Sliderry on 21st, six Black-throated Diver in Machrie Bay on 23rd and seven Tufted Duck on Port na Lochan also on 23rd.

In May, breeding was well underway for many species including: a Moorhen with three young at Port na Lochan on 23rd, two pair of Shelduck with seventeen young on Cleats Shore also on 23rd, twelve Fulmar on the cliffs at Catacol on 24th, a pair of Mute Swan with seven young in Catacol Bay on 27th, Snipe, with their distinctive call, holding territories on top of the String and at Penrioch on 28th and 29th respectively and a Barn Owl nest with eight eggs in East Bennan on 23rd. In addition, particularly towards the warmer end of the month, there were lots of reports of garden birds carrying food and feeding recently fledged young. The most unusual garden report was of a Nuthatch taking food from feeders in a garden in High Corrie on 18th. Again from garden sightings, there were widespread reports of Goldfinch, Siskin and Lesser Redpoll.

Over one hundred species of birds were reported to me in May including: three Twite on Shiskine Golf Course on 3rd, the solitary Magpie that has been touring the island since 19 March showed at Strathwillan on 6th, a Ring Ouzel at Coire Daingean on 19th, a female Goosander at Machriewaterfoot on 20th, a Ptarmigan on Beinn Bhreac on 25th, a Long-eared Owl at dusk over Machrie Moor on 26th and a Red Kite over the War Memorial Hospital in Lamlash on 29th.

June

June 2014 was much drier than the three previous Junes and a little warmer as well, providing ideal conditions for raising young, which is the priority during the long daylight hours of June. This was reflected in the many reports of fledged birds in gardens including unfamiliar looking young birds, like Goldfinch without the red face of the adult birds, Robin with spots and no red breast, streaky looking Dunnock and “washed out” Pied Wagtail. In Kingscross, a pair of Pied Wagtail nested in a filled skip and the builders delayed moving the skip until the birds had fledged.

As well as the more regular nesting garden birds there were reports of a family of Bullfinch in Kilmory on 8th, nesting Chiffchaff in Corrie on 18th, twenty Long-tailed Tit in Dhunan on 23rd and most unusual of all, for the second year in a row, a pair of Common Sandpiper successfully nested in a garden in Blackwaterfoot.

Away from gardens there were signs of breeding including: eleven Black Guillemot at the colony by the King's Cave, fledged Dipper by a river in Lochranza on 14th, a nest of Great Spotted Woodpecker in Glenkiln on 15th, Mute Swan with six young in Blackwaterfoot on 16th, a crèche of fourteen Eider at Cleats Shore on 27th, a family of Linnet in Kilpatrick on 29th, a pair of Shelduck with six young in Cosyden on 30th and five families of fledged Kestrels along a stretch of the west coast. The largest group of House Sparrow reported was thirty in North Feorline on 21st. On the negative side, there seemed to have been a reduction in reports of Common Gull on the west coast and no reports this year of Nightjar.

Cuckoos, whose decreasing numbers are a cause for concern nationally, seem to be thriving on Arran. Throughout May and June there were many widespread reports.

On the coast there were some signs that the breeding season was coming to an end when birds that had failed to breed appeared there. These included a Bar-tailed Godwit at Clauchlands on 26th and two Black-tailed Godwit on Cleats Shore along with nine Lapwing also on 26th. On Arran, breeding Lapwing, a once widespread farmland bird, was reported from only one area.

Other reports included: a Black-throated Diver off Machriewaterfoot on 15th, two Puffin off Dippen Head on 16th, five Common Crossbill in Glen Cloy on 20th, a Sandwich Tern at Glenashdalewaterfoot on 22nd, three Swift over High Kildonan on 25th, a male Hen Harrier gave good views from the Machrie Moor road also on 25th, a Little Grebe on a pond in Kilmory on 26th, a male Tufted Duck in eclipse at Port na Lochan also on 26th, a Short-eared Owl gave good views from the Ross Road on 29th and two Great Northern Divers off Cosyden on 30th.

July

The dry warm June was followed by a warmer but slightly wetter July. Two consecutive months of warm, generally dry weather provided ideal conditions for raising young during the long daylight hours. This was reflected in the many reports of fledged birds in gardens. These reports of young birds included: four Dunnock at Clauchlands on 5th, a Great Spotted Woodpecker at Gortonallister on 11th, twelve Chaffinch in Lamlash on 15th, six Greenfinch at Corrie on 17th, ten Blackbird at Glenashdale on 29th, six Robin in Whiting Bay on 30th and fifty House Sparrow in Corrie on 27th. Unusually there were three leucistic House Sparrow at Alma Park in Brodick on 3rd. There were also lots of second broods of Swallow and House Martin reported including twenty House Martins in Kildonan on 20th and thirty Swallow at Auchencar on 30th.

Away from gardens other species also had a good breeding season including Red-throated Diver, Golden Eagle and Hen Harrier. Other Schedule 1 species like Barn Owl also did well with fledged young reported in widespread areas including at Torbeg on 7th, Glenkiln on 9th and Kingscross on 29th. The good breeding season was also reflected in other reports including: a family of Spotted Flycatcher at the Cat Stone on 6th, a pair of Mute Swan with six young in Blackwaterfoot on 9th, a family of Long-eared Owl in Glencloy on 10th, a family of Teal at Torr Rìgh Beag on 11th, a family of Shelduck at Cosyden on 15th, families of Whinchat in Glen Rosa on 17th and a family of Red Grouse on the Boguille on 29th. Finally, there were two reports of breeding Little Grebe, with pairs with young at ponds in Kilmory and Brodick, both on 17th. There has only been one previous Arran breeding record of this species and that was in 2011.

Other highlights included: a Great Skua in Brodick Bay on 14th, two reports of Ring Ouzel - a family group on the northern range of mountains on 17th and a family group on the Western Hills on 21st, three Common Crossbill in High Kildonan on 28th and a Swift over Lamlash on 27th.

July marks the end of the breeding season for some birds. These are some of the highlights of birds which were already dispersing, flocking or migrating south after breeding: a Greenshank at Clauchlands on 7th, thirty-two Curlew at Kilpatrick Point on 15th, three Black-throated Divers in Machrie Bay and fifty Starling in Lamlash on 17th, a Black-headed Gull and a Sandwich Tern in Machrie Bay on 20th, five hundred Manx Shearwater in Brodick Bay on 21st, twenty-seven Dunlin at Drumadoon Point on 23rd and twelve Linnet on Moss Farm on 30th.

The latest date received for Cuckoo was a young bird in Glean Easan Biorach on 30th.

August

While August 2014 was a little cooler than August 2013, the warm, generally dry summer continued. Towards the end of the month, with lower temperatures some nights, there was more than a hint of the approach of autumn.

Having said that, summer visitors were still to the fore including family groups of the following: Willow Warbler at Strathwillan on 4th, Chiffchaff at Largymore on 13th, Spotted Flycatcher at High Kildonan on 14th, Common Sandpiper at Blackwaterfoot on 21st and Whitethroat at Corriecravie on 24th. In addition, there were fifty Swallow at Kilpatrick Farm on 20th and seventy House Martin at Cordon on 22nd.

Other signs of successful breeding this month included: a pair of Mute Swan in Blackwaterfoot with six large young on 7th, a crèche of twenty-eight Eider off Cosyden on 8th, a family of Moorhen at Braehead Quarry Pond on 11th, a fledged Golden Eagle flying over Lochranza on 21st and widespread groups of House Sparrow including up to thirty in Lochranza and North Feorline on 29th.

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: one hundred and eight Lesser Black-backed Gull at Sandbraes on 17th, a thousand Manx Shearwater off Largymore on 20th, one hundred Gannet in Brodick Bay on 23rd, one hundred and thirty-four Shag off Pladda on 23rd, eighty Golden Plover at Machriewaterfoot on 27th, seventy Red-breasted Merganser off Cosyden on 27th, eighty Starling at Kilpatrick on 27th and one hundred and twenty Kittiwake and thirty Redshank at Sandbraes on 30th.

All around the coast were signs of birds on migration, including a Whimbrel in Auchenhew Bay on 1st, twelve Dunlin at Drumadoon Point on 7th, a Knot at Drumadoon Point on 16th, a Greenshank at Blackwaterfoot on 20th, two Wheatear at Cosyden on 27th, five Arctic Tern at Drumadoon Point on 28th and three Sandwich Tern at Sandbraes on 30th.

Other birding highlights this month included: a Yellowhammer at North Feorline on 2nd, a Common Crossbill in High Kildonan on 2nd, nine Black-headed Gull at Sandbraes on 17th, a Goosander off Cosyden on 27th and a Dipper at Glenashdalewaterfoot on 30th.

September

September 2014 was the driest September for many years. There was a fifth of the rain of September 2013 and indeed the mean temperature in September this year was warmer than August this year. This prolonged dry warm spell was ideal for many breeding species. In addition with September being the start of the peak migration season, when many birds are on the move, there was a wide range of species recorded. It was certainly the time to expect the unexpected.

Among unusual records a Great Crested Grebe off Cordon on 1st was the first report this year, a Black-tailed Godwit in a field by Sliderry on 2nd was only the second report of the year and there were two reports of Great Skua, one in Brodick Bay on 10th and three in Kilbrannan Sound on 13th.

Other birds on migration included: five Sanderling at Drumadoon Point on 7th, three Wheatear by Shiskine Golf Course on 9th, five Twite on Blackwaterfoot shore on 11th, two White Wagtail on Kildonan shore on 13th, ten Sandwich Tern at Sandbraes on 14th, a Merlin on Beinn Bharrain on 22nd, eight Dunlin at Silver Sands on 23rd and several reports of Greenshank including Cosyden on 10th, Clauchlands on 12th and Silver Sands on 14th.

At this time of year birds begin to flock together, often in preparation for migration. Reports included: thirty-five Mistle Thrush at North Sannox on 1st, fourteen Skylark at Sliderry on 11th, four hundred Kittiwake by the mouth of the Blackwater also on 11th, two hundred Linnet on Cleats Shore on 12th, nine Black-throated Divers off Drumadoon Point also on 12th, one hundred and fifty Starling at Kilpatrick on 28th, one hundred Gannet off Cosyden on 29th, forty-four Redshank in Whiting Bay also on 29th, and thirty Pied Wagtail on Brodick Golf Course on 30th.

Some of our winter visitors began to be reported including: seven Rook at Sliderry on 8th, two Wigeon at Clauchlands on 19th, twelve Fieldfare at Dhunan on 26th, and two reports of nine Whooper Swan on 29th. The first report was of them calling as they flew down the Shiskine Valley and in the second report they were in a field at Bennecarrigan.

Having said that, some summer visitors were still around including: a singing Chiffchaff at Strathwillan on 14th, a Whitethroat by Silver Sands on 24th and both House Martin and Swallow were still around on 30th. While there were reports of both species taking advantage of the good spell of weather to rear broods late into September, most of the birds had left by the end of the month. The largest group of House Martin was sixty at Knockenkelly on 19th and the largest group of Swallow reported was one hundred and fifty at Corrie on 5th.

Other sightings this month included a male Black Grouse in one of the Arran Black Grouse Group release areas by the northern range on 8th. This bird was one that was released five years ago by the Arran Black Grouse Group. This is an encouraging sign that habitats on Arran are suitable for long term survival of Black Grouse. In addition, there were two reports of juvenile Puffin on 17th, one in Brodick Bay and one off Glenashdalewaterfoot. Further encouraging breeding signs this month were the increased reports of Grey Wagtail and Stonechat. Both species had declined after the two recent consecutive very cold winters. This September also saw increased numbers of dispersing Kingfisher with reports from Catacol, Cordon, Fisherman's Walk and Lochranza.

October

October had almost ten times as much rain as September this year, which had been particularly dry. The rainfall, temperature and wind speeds were similar to October last year but a little drier and with no frost. During the month there were plenty of interesting birds to enjoy. Over one hundred species were recorded. October is arguably the busiest birding month, as summer breeders depart, migrants pass through, winter visitors arrive and there is always a strong chance of something unusual.

That was certainly the case this year. From 9 October for four days there were reports of Red Kite from High Kildonan in the south to Sail an Im in the north. On 10 October there were two reports of an adult White-tailed Eagle, one from the King's Cave where it was photographed and the other from Auchenhew Bay. This was presumably the same bird. It was last seen heading out to sea. These species have been part of re-introduction programmes in the UK and are occasional visitors to Arran. On 28 October there was a female Long-tailed Duck off Kilpatrick Point. The last Arran record was 1998.

Other occasional passage migrants included: a Common Scoter off Rubha Glas on 8th, a Great Crested Grebe in Sannox Bay on 11th and two Slavonian Grebes off Largymore on 20th.

With migration in full flow, flocks of birds were a feature including: three hundred Linnet on Cleats Shore on 1st, thirty Long-tailed Tit in Whiting Bay on 3rd, seventy Mistle Thrush in Glenashdale on 9th, fifteen Twite on Cleats Shore on 11th, eighty Golden Plover at Machriewaterfoot on 12th, two hundred and fifty Skylark on Cleats Shore also on 12th, over three hundred Chaffinch at West Bennan on 13th, over one thousand Kittiwake in Whiting Bay on 21st and three hundred Starling at Kilpatrick on 31st.

There were widespread reports of our winter visitors arriving including: three Rook on Cleats Shore on 1st, twenty Fieldfare at Clauchlands on 8th, five Barnacle Geese at Sliderywaterfoot on 9th, two Wigeon at Machriewaterfoot on 12th, four Lapwing and five Yellowhammer on Cleats Shore on 13th, a Brambling at Benlister on 17th, thirty Redwing in Glenree on 22nd, six Greylag Geese in Shiskine on 25th and one hundred at Clachaig on 28th, forty-three Whooper Swan at Shannochie on 25th, one hundred and twenty Teal at Kilpatrick Point on 28th and a female Goldeneye off Cosyden on 31st.

There were some late sightings of summer visitors including: a House Martin at Silver Sands on 1st, six Swallow at High Kildonan on 8th, a Chiffchaff at Auchenhew Bay on 10th, a Wheatear at Sail an Im on 13th, a Gannet off Pladda on 23rd and two Lesser Black-backed Gulls at the mouth of the lorsa on 31st. A possible wintering Blackcap was reported in Lamlash on 12th.

Finally, on the last day of the month there was a report of a single Waxwing in a garden in Blackwaterfoot. This irruptive species does not appear every winter. The last record on Arran was in February 2013. In November/December 2012 they were a feature with hundreds on the island.

November

November 2014 was two degrees warmer and had over thirty percent more rain than November 2013. This milder, wetter November may have had an influence on a number of late records of passage migrants and lingering summer visitors. These included: an Osprey hunting by the Machrie Water between the 5th and 10th, two Lesser Black-backed Gull by Machriewaterfoot on 9th, a Great Skua off Dougarie on 12th, a Knot at Blackwaterfoot on 21st and Swallows searching for flies over the kelp on the shore at Kildonan, two on 29th and one on 30th. Swallows should be in South Africa at this time of year.

Throughout the month there were widespread reports of foraging Fieldfare and Redwing, sometimes in mixed flocks. The largest group was at Sliderry on 3rd with one hundred and fifty Fieldfare and over three hundred Redwing. With these wintering thrushes at Cnoc na Dail on 11th was a Waxwing and two Brambling. Other records of wintering birds included: fifty Rook at Sliderry on 3rd, four Purple Sandpiper at Kildonan on 16th, a Snow Bunting on Silver Sands on 18th, a Greenshank at Clauchlands on 24th and twenty-three Yellowhammer at Sliderry on 30th.

Groups of wintering wildfowl included: thirty-five Pink-footed Geese at Shiskine on 6th, one hundred Teal at Kilpatrick Point on 8th, a Brent Goose with one hundred and thirty-two Greylag Geese at Shiskine on 10th, fifteen Whooper Swan flying over Whiting Bay on 12th and twenty Wigeon at Cosyden on 21st. Other groups included: fifty Lapwing in Shiskine on 3rd, one hundred and thirty-eight Golden Plover at Machriewaterfoot on 5th, thirty-two Turnstone also at Machriewaterfoot on 9th, thirty Twite at Dougarie on 12th and forty-three Curlew at Kildonan on 19th. Large groups of gull were also reported including at Machriewaterfoot on 9th: four hundred Herring Gull, three hundred Kittiwake, one hundred Common Gull and twenty Great Black-backed Gull.

Gardens are safe refuges during the winter months and these are some of the November reports from gardens round the island: eleven Long-tailed Tit at Kildonan on 3rd, twelve Blackbird in Blackwaterfoot on 8th, thirty Chaffinch in Sannox on 9th, four Robin at South Feorline on 10th and eight Wren roosting overnight in a nest box in Whiting Bay on 20th. There was also widespread garden reports of Blackcap including at Whiting Bay on 7th, High Kildonan on 12th, Sannox on 20th and Shiskine on 22nd.

Other November highlights included: nine Black-throated Diver off Cosyden on 9th, eight Great Northern Diver off Machriewaterfoot also on 9th, a male Goosander in Lochranza on 20th, a Moorhen at Port na Lochan on 21st and a female Merlin at the Crow on 25th.

Finally, between 24th and 28th there were reports of Common Crossbills from Dunan Mor, Benlister, Auchareoch, Dyemill, Clauchlands and Shedog. The largest group was sixteen. The groups contained singing males preparing for their next breeding season. Common Crossbills have one of the most protracted breeding seasons of any British bird. In parts of their range, they have been recorded breeding in every month of the year including the winter. They breed whenever there is a good cone crop.

December

The weather in December was characterised by regular, sometimes storm force Atlantic fronts sweeping across the island. It was wet and unsettled with only occasional dry frosty days. The pattern was similar to December last year but this year the mean temperature was some two degrees colder than last year. In these conditions it is highly unlikely that the Swallows reported in Whiting Bay and in Kildonan on 2nd would make it to the wintering grounds in South Africa.

This unsettled weather was almost certainly responsible for the Little Auk on the road by Fairhaven, Catacol on 12th. This Arctic breeding species, which spends the winter in the Atlantic, had been driven ashore by the storms and unfortunately died. Also on that date there were reports of thousands of gulls along the west coast. For example the mixed flock of Herring Gull, Common Gull, Black-headed Gull and Kittiwake at Whitefarland was estimated at over three thousand.

Another possible result of the weather was the appearance of three White-fronted Geese and two Barnacle Geese in the Shiskine Valley on 11th. This is the first Arran record of White-fronted Geese since January 2012. Other wintering wildfowl were to the fore including: three hundred and fifty Greylag Geese and thirty-five Pink-footed Geese in the Shiskine Valley on 1st, eleven Whooper Swan in High Kildonan on 11th, thirty-one Wigeon at Machriewaterfoot and a pair of Goldeneye at Clauchlands both on 28th.

Other reports of winter visitors included: sixteen Redwing at Kildonan on 7th, ten Fieldfare at Corriecravie on 10th and on 18th fourteen Rook and nineteen Yellowhammer in Slidery. Other large groups of wintering birds included: eighty-three Lapwing on Cleats shore on 2nd, fifty Siskin in Cnocan Wood on 15th, forty Golden Plover at Machriewaterfoot on 28th and eighteen Snipe at Clauchlands also on 28th.

Gardens provided a safe refuge for some birds and among the more unusual records received were: a Great Spotted Woodpecker in Lamash on 1st, a male Blackcap in Marganaheglish on 21st, ten Long-tailed Tits by the Dyemill on 14th, a male Bullfinch in Brodick on 26th and a male Yellowhammer in Shedog on 29th. By far the most unusual garden visitor was a Green Woodpecker in a garden in Lamash on 28th. The two observers got good close views and were able to describe a number of salient features including red on top of the head, black round the eye, green on the back and wings and the vivid yellow rump as the bird flew off. This is the first ever Arran record of this species.

Other interesting records this month included: a Merlin at North Sannox on 12th, two Little Grebe in Loch Ranza on 17th, two Greenshank in Slidery on 18th, a Kingfisher by the Fisherman's Walk on 25th, and six Moorhen on Port na Lochan on 26th. Also on 26 December there was a report of a male Stonechat at Drumadoon. After the two severe winters of 2009-10 and 2010-11, the numbers of Stonechat wintering on Arran crashed, so this was a welcome record..

Despite the unsettled weather there were signs of normal bird activity. After their autumn absence for their post-breeding moult, Shelduck returned to the island, first to Kildonan on 5th, Auchenew on 27th and then to Clauchlands on 29th. In addition, there were reports of courting Red-breasted Merganser including in Whiting Bay on 20th.

Towards the end of an interesting birding year there was a report of Water Rail in the community land in Whiting Bay on 30 December. This is the first record of this species on Arran this year. The last record was at the Lakin in November 2013.

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

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

The Weather 2014

The weather influences the timing of bird migration.

April this year was more than two degrees warmer than the two previous Aprils. This, combined with relatively clear weather conditions on the migratory routes from Africa, meant that the first wave of summer migrants generally arrived on Arran earlier than last year, some species up to two weeks earlier.

The weather influences the timing of breeding.

The warmer spring may have brought forward the timing of the breeding of some of our summer visitors.

The weather influences the success of breeding.

June 2014 was much drier than the three previous Junes and a little warmer as well, providing ideal conditions for raising young. Many breeding passerines had multiple broods.

The weather influences survival.

The cold winters of 2009-10 and 2010-11 resulted in a decline in some species like Stonechat and Grey Wagtail. In 2012 and again in 2013 after milder winters there was some signs of recovery.

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

Here is a summary of weather data for 2014 from our weather station at Kilpatrick on the west of the island.

	Temperature (degrees C)			Rainfall (mm)	Wind Speed (mph) and Direction		
	Mean	High	Low		Average	High	Dom. Dir.
January	5.8	9.8	0.6	160.6	7.0	42	SE
February	5.8	9.9	0.3	150.8	9.2	46	SSE
March	6.8	12.9	0.0	88.4	7.8	46	W
April	9.3	18.6	0.8	54.8	6.8	38	ENE
May	10.9	19.0	4.9	74.4	4.0	29	SSE
June	13.7	23.1	5.6	30.8	3.1	27	NNW
July	15.1	25.4	6.8	68.8	3.5	24	W
August	13.3	19.2	5.3	65.2	4.5	31	NNW
September	13.7	20.8	5.9	11.2	2.7	30	SE
October	11.0	16.9	2.6	114.2	5.7	43	SSE
November	8.5	13.4	2.0	119.0	3.3	33	E
December	5.9	11.1	-1.9	124.5	8.7	61	W

Dom.Dir. – dominant direction

The topography of the island results in a variation in weather. For example here are the 2014 annual rainfall figures from various areas: Pirnmill 2058mm, Whiting Bay 1917mm, Shiskine 1098mm and Kilpatrick 1062mm.

If you are keeping records of the weather where you live on Arran and would like to share these records with me for inclusion in the *Arran Bird Report*, please get in touch.

Summer Migrant Arrival Dates

	"Earliest" Recorded Date	Arrival Date 2014
Wheatear	13-Mar-05	25 March
Chiffchaff	17-Mar-05	23 March
Sand Martin	18-Mar-09	27 March
Willow Warbler	20-Mar-94	06 April
Swallow	23-Mar-05	01 April
White Wagtail	24-Mar-08	30 March
Manx Shearwater	27-Mar-14	27 March
House Martin	28-Mar-05	31 March
Common Sandpiper	29-Mar-98	15 April
Whinchat	01-Apr-88	30 April
Sandwich Tern	03-Apr-09	06 April
Tree Pipit	07-Apr-90	27 April
Redstart	08-Apr-11	None recorded in 2014
Cuckoo	10-Apr-01	15 April
Grasshopper Warbler	12-Apr-11	26 April
Garden Warbler	12-Apr-95	13 April
Sedge Warbler	14-Apr-11	16 April
Arctic Tern	14-Apr-13	16 April
Whitethroat	17-Apr-06	09 April
Corncrake	20-Apr-90	None recorded in 2014
Common Tern	21-Apr-93	None recorded in 2014
Spotted Flycatcher	21-Apr-11	16 May
Wood Warbler	25-Apr-09	None recorded in 2014
Lesser Whitethroat	27-Apr-10	28 April
Pied Flycatcher	28-Apr-98	None recorded in 2014
Swift	01-May-09	06 May
Nightjar	17-May-13	None recorded 2014

Regular Winter Migrant Arrival and Departure Dates

	"earliest" Arrival date	"latest" Departure date	2014 Arrival date	2014 Departure date
Whooper Swan	18-Sep-11	21-May-14	28 September	21 May
Pink-footed Goose	11-Oct-10	20-Apr-14	06 November	20 April
Greylag Goose	01-Oct-14	14-Apr-14	01 October	14 April
Wigeon	11-Jul-11	14-Apr-13	19 September	06 April
Goldeneye	12-Oct-09	04-May-06	31 October	09 March
Purple Sandpiper	09-Nov-06	11-May-10	12 November	04 May
Kingfisher	13-Jul-07	27-Mar-08	26 August	
Waxwing	21-Oct-10	15-Apr-09	31 October	
Fieldfare	02-Sep-13	18-Apr-08	26 September	12 April
Redwing	30-Sep-07	10-Apr-13	09 October	12 April
Rook	03-Jul-07	23-Apr-14	20 July	23 April
Brambling	09-Oct-07	25-Apr-08	11 October	

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

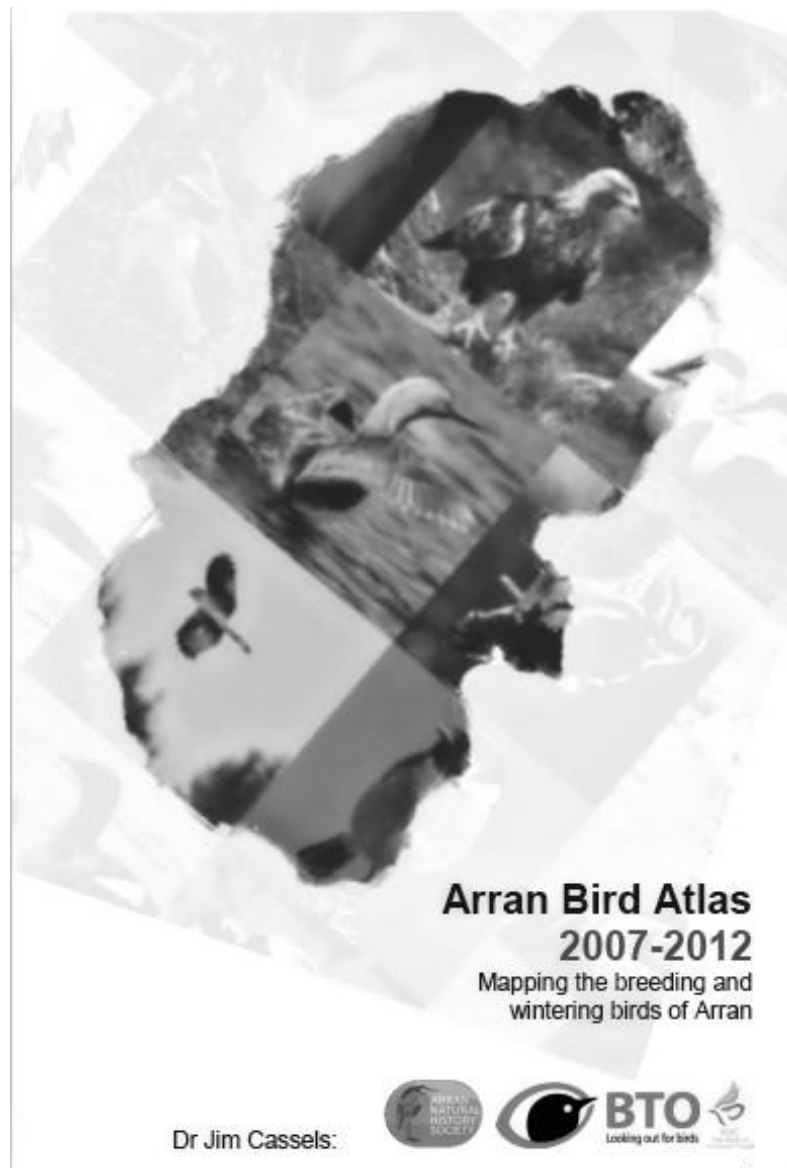
Note: there is also a naturalised population of Greylag Geese which is frequently seen in the summer in Clauchlands.

Bird Surveys and Projects on Arran

Bird Atlas

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

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



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

Breeding Bird Survey

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

Garden BirdWatch

In the last weekend in January 2013 twenty-five households on Arran took part in the RSPB Big Garden Bird Watch and share their results with me. A report on the Arran results is available here http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/top_ten_garden_birds.html

Garden BirdWatch is a national survey run by the BTO that monitors the changing fortunes of birds and other garden wildlife through its network of volunteers. There were nine volunteers on Arran in 2014. Observations collected by BTO Garden BirdWatchers from each week during the year are analysed by BTO researchers.

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

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

Peregrine Survey

The BTO working closely with Raptor Study groups and Peregrine specialists ran a Peregrine survey in 2014 to record the number of occupied territories in the UK, Isle of Man and the Channel Islands. Two volunteers covered Arran.

The BTO intends to compare the findings with surveys from 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991 and 2002 to determine change and to inform the future of this once almost extinct species. For more information visit this website <http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/peregrine-survey>

Woodcock Survey

The latest national Bird Atlas showed a considerable reduction in the range of Woodcock since the previous breeding atlas, *1968-72 Breeding Atlas (Sharrock 1976)*. As a result, the BTO decided to run a follow up survey in 2014. The nocturnal habits and cryptic nature of this species makes it difficult to monitor the breeding population using the traditional survey methods, such as the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS). However, a special survey method for Woodcock was devised, which used the counts of the territorial roding flights, undertaken by males at dusk and dawn, to estimate the number of individual males present. One volunteer on Arran covered a designated area. For more information visit this website <http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/woodcock-survey>

Wetland Bird Survey - Arran Summary for 2014

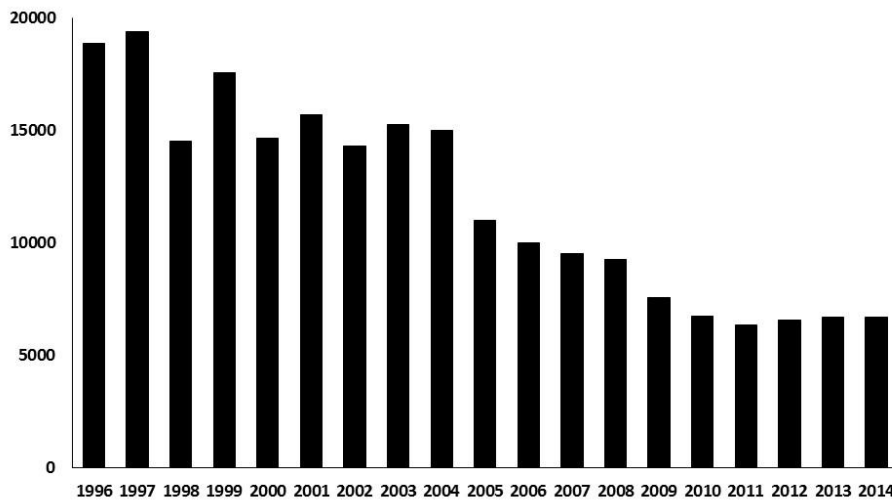
This is a joint scheme involving the British Trust for Ornithology, the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee which monitors non-breeding waterbirds in the UK. The survey is dependent on volunteers. Eight of the survey sites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

Species	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Mute Swan	43	51	32	38	28	46	28	23	32	62	37	37
Whooper Swan			4	5			5	3		13		
Greylag Goose	96	126	80	5	3	2						125
Canada Goose				3								
Barnacle Goose												1
Shelduck	9	21	23	30	14	37	10	2				
Wigeon	32	71	38									32
Teal	98	92	100	8		1	2	4	70	161	140	70
Mallard	110	100	90	72	77	66	42	87	121	131	137	149
Tufted Duck	2											
Eider	74	96	105	74	88	44	49	47	52	79	114	28
Common Scoter	2	2			14					1		
Goldeneye	3	4	2									2
Red-breasted Merganser	41	36	53	31	8	9	19	86	46	43	28	32
Goosander				3	1							
Red-throated Diver		1	4	1		7	2	2	5	1		
Black-throated Diver	1	7	14	4	7	1	1			7	13	
Great Northern Diver	1	6	5	5	15	2	1		1	1	12	3
Little Grebe	4	1	2			1			4	4	5	5
Cormorant	6	3	2	1		1		2	2	6	4	14
Shag	82	79	48	42	32	20	15	16	53	62	40	87
Grey Heron	13	11	7	8	5	11	8	5	13	23	12	13
Moorhen			4									
Oystercatcher	203	430	282	269	108	132	133	133	130	191	168	177
Ringed Plover	70	64	33	31	46	41	27	59	116	113	119	37
Golden Plover							8	38	149	81	64	40
Lapwing		16									21	
Purple Sandpiper											1	
Dunlin					11			12	1			
Snipe		9	10							1		
Bar-tailed Godwit									1			
Whimbrel								2		1		
Curlew	63	169	70	33	6	7	44	65	66	102	130	26
Redshank	28	34	18	6	4		15	13	15	32	34	17
Greenshank	1		1							1		1
Common Sandpiper				2	4	15	12	1				
Turnstone	40	31	24	16				8	27	87	67	33

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

Eider Survey

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



Chris Waltho, a past president of the Scottish Ornithologists Club, has organised September surveys in the Clyde for about twenty years. Chris's data above clearly shows that the post breeding population of Eiders in the Firth of Clyde is in decline and has halved in the last ten years.

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

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

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

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

Report from Forestry Commission Barn Owl Nest Box Project

For twenty-five years, Barn Owl nest boxes have been put up and monitored on Arran by Rab Logan, Wildlife Ranger of the Forestry Commission (Scotland).



The winter of early 2014 was less harsh than the previous winter. The breeding success of Barn Owl is closely associated with the vole population. This year was another good breeding year. In 2014 there were sixty-seven young raised from the thirty-six nests checked, compared to 2013 when thirty-nine young were raised from the twenty-eight nest boxes checked on Forestry Commission Scotland land on Arran,

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

Report from the Arran Black Grouse Group

In 2011, after an absence of over thirty years, there were Arran bred Black Grouse on the moors of Arran again. This was a result of the work of this group.



To keep in touch with this project and find out how the release programme is going, the Arran Black Grouse Group has established a free newsletter service.

Subscribers automatically receive an email whenever anything is added to the website.

To find out how to join visit the website <http://www.arranblackgrouse.com/blog/>

Bird Ringing

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

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

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

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

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

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

Code	Explanation
M, F, J	Male, female and juvenile
1	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.

Bird ringing on Arran in 2014

Report by Terry Southall

This year the emphasis was on gull ringing, helping Glasgow University with their project into gull breeding success. Running concurrently alongside this investigation, a Clyde Ringing Group study on gull movements was also started. A note "Gull Colour Ringing Project" is part of this report. Although the total of birds ringed for this year was substantially higher than last year the warbler numbers were down due to my absence during the autumn migration period.

Ringing Totals for 2014

Species	FG	Pulli	Retrap	Total	Species	FG	Pulli	Retrap	Total
Cormorant	0	11	0	11	Stonechat	1	5	0	6
Shag	0	8	0	8	Wheatear	8	0	0	8
Mute sawn	1	0	0	1	Blackbird	35	0	4	39
Mallard	1	0	0	1	Song Thrush	6	4	0	10
Kestrel	0	4	0	4	Sedge Warbler	17	0	1	18
Oystercatcher	2	1	0	3	Whitethroat	9	0	0	9
Jack Snipe	2	0	0	2	Blackcap	33	0	1	34
Snipe	5	0	0	5	Chiffchaff	22	0	0	22
Redshank	1	0	0	1	Willow Warbler	120	0	0	120
Common Gull	22	5	2	29	Goldcrest	80	0	1	81
Lesser Black-backed Gull	5	35	1	41	Spotted Flycatcher	2	0	0	2
Herring Gull	19	35	1	55	Long-tailed Tit	9	0	1	10
Great Black-backed Gull	0	11	0	11	Coal Tit	25	0	1	26
Razorbill	0	0	1	1	Blue Tit	31	0	4	35
Black Guillemot	0	1	0	1	Great Tit	32	0	4	36
Rock Dove	0	4	0	4	Jackdaw	2	0	0	2
Collared Dove	1	0	0	1	Raven	0	4	0	4
Barn Owl	0	9	0	9	Starling	6	6	0	12
Skylark	2	0	0	2	House Sparrow	21	0	0	21
Swallow	19	25	0	44	Chaffinch	149	0	2	151
House Martin	5	0	0	5	Greenfinch	32	0	1	33
Meadow Pipit	21	0	0	21	Goldfinch	40	0	8	48
Rock Pipit	11	5	0	16	Siskin	158	0	57	215
Pied/White Wagtail	1	0	0	1	Linnet	58	0	0	58
Dipper	0	5	0	5	Twite	9	0	0	9
Wren	20	0	0	20	Lesser Redpoll	18	0	7	25
Duncock	29	0	3	32	Bullfinch	4	0	0	4
Robin	44	0	3	47	Yellowhammer	4	0	0	4
Whinchat	5	10	0	15	Reed Bunting	2	0	0	2
					Total	1149	188	103	1440

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

Selected list of recoveries.

Species	Age & Sex	Date ringed	Date recovered	Lapsed days	Where recovered	Distance moved
Cormorant	1	15/06/14	29/10/04	136	Meikleross Bay, Argyll & Bute.	67km
Common Gull	1	22/06/04	07/07/14	3667	Isle of Arran	12km
Common Gull	1	24/06/00	24/06/14	5113	Isle of Arran	18km
LBB Gull	1	30/06/14	28/09/14	91	Faro, Portugal	2107km
LBB Gull	10	24/06/14	21/11/14	151	Madrid, Spain	1713km
LBB Gull	10	31/05/14	05/11/14	159	Porto, Portugal	1661km
Chaffinch	3 F	02/09/07	23/04/14	2425	Isle of Arran	0km
Goldfinch	3J	26/08/12	28/02/14	551	Bournonville, France	708km
Lesser Redpoll	5	07/05/13	14/01/14	252	Fairburn Ings West Yorks	310km

Codes for age and sex are given on page 23.

The first Cormorant recovered from the recently established and growing colony on Pladda was ringed as a nestling. This shows how far youngsters disperse.

The Common Gulls were both retrapped in the breeding season and presumed to be breeding locally. The first, ringed as a chick on Pladda, was caught 10yrs later in Lamlash. The second, ringed as a chick at King's Cave, was caught again at Kildonan 14yrs later.

The three Lesser Black-backed Gulls records, involving coloured rings, show the long distance movements of these species. A chick ringed at the end of June on Pladda was seen in the south of Portugal less than three months later. More surprising is the adult bird photographed on a refuse tip at Madrid in central Spain. The majority of Lesser Black-backed Gulls migrate down the west coast of Iberia, as with the adult bird reported from Porto in November.

Other birds of note included the female Chaffinch ringed as a juvenile and caught over six years later at the same site, a good age for a small bird. A Goldfinch ringed as a juvenile on Cleats Shore caught in northern France in late February, was possibly on its way back north having wintered further south in Europe.

Finally a Lesser Redpoll wintering in East Yorkshire fits the pattern of these birds using bird feeders in the second half of the winter and early spring.

Birds ringed elsewhere and recovered on Arran.

Species	Age & Sex	Date ringed	Date recovered	Lapsed days	Where ringed	Distance moved
Razorbill	6	30/06/11	05/03/14	979	Garbh Eilean, Western Isles	285km
Razorbill	6	28/06/96	02/03/14	6456	Lunga, Western Isle	143km
Siskin	6 F	17/03/14	09/04/14	23	Lockerbie, Dumfries and Galloway	120km
Siskin	5 M	09/04/13	30/04/14	386	Tarbet, Argyll & Bute	81km
Siskin	6 F	17/02/13	22/04/14	429	Chiddingstone, Kent	429km
Siskin	4 F	23/09/12	11/03/14	534	Doncaster, York's	332km
Lesser Redpoll	3 M	16/11/13	19/06/14	215	Sandwich Bay, Kent	633km

Codes for age and sex are given on page 23.

The Razorbills were part of a huge "wreck" of seabirds which happened after prolonged gales in February. Unexpectedly the majority of birds were adults as can be seen from the age of the two birds reported. It is possible to assume the Lesser Redpoll was about to cross the English Channel to winter in the Low Countries.

All the Siskins ringed elsewhere and caught on Arran fit into the movements described below.

Siskin wintering areas

The Siskin (*Cardulis spinus*) is a common and abundant breeding bird and passage migrant on Arran during the spring and summer months but it is mostly absent during the autumn and winter. Returning birds start to reappear at feeders from the beginning of March onwards and local birds may start to breed from the middle of this month. The majority of birds arrive during April although some may still continue to arrive as late as May. During this period Siskins which are migrating to breeding grounds further north, add to the number of birds on Arran. Birds start to move away from Arran during late summer once the breeding season has ended.

Siskins feed predominantly on small seeds, favouring spruce and pine during the spring and summer months when they are available but turn to alder and birch during the autumn and winter once the cone seeds have been depleted. Over the last fifty years Siskins have become common visitors to peanut feeders in gardens. They have learnt to utilise this resource when their normal supply of food is unavailable due to weather conditions or failure of the seed crop. Because of this relatively new habit of visiting feeders, Siskins are easily caught by bird ringers and our knowledge of Siskin movements has increased greatly.

Illustrated on the map opposite are movements of 31 of the 57 re-trapped Siskins, which had travelled over 50kms from Arran. The majority of these birds were caught in the second half of the winter (January to March) in England. Two birds crossed to the Low Countries, one to Holland (793kms SW) and the other to Belgium (812kms SW). By their capture dates, only two of the four birds in Ireland were wintering there, the other two were caught in spring and were on migration heading north. Birds to the north of Arran (shown in red on the map) were birds passing though Arran to breeding areas further north. It is of interest that only two birds were caught before January in their wintering areas, one on the east coast of Yorkshire in September and the other in Holland in late December. It is easy to speculate that for the first half of the winter Siskins are feeding on an abundance of seeds high in trees where they are difficult to catch!

From these movements it can be deduced that the majority of Siskins breeding on Arran winter to the southwest, with some birds even crossing the North Sea.

Gull Colour Ringing Project

To most of us, gulls are synonymous with the coast and are colloquially called "seagulls". Love them or loathe them, the coast would not be the same without their familiar cries.

For the last two years researchers from Glasgow University have been studying Herring Gulls here in the Firth of Clyde. Three islands have been selected in the Clyde which have breeding gulleries, Horse Island, Lady Island and Pladda here off the south end of Arran.

In general, gull populations have been declining and to understand aspects of this decline the researchers are looking at breeding success and adult gull foraging behaviour to see how the two are related.

This summer, six adult Herring Gulls on Pladda were fitted with data-loggers - small, light electronic devices which are powered by mini solar panels. These devices record the movements of the gulls during their foraging trips. The information from the data-logger is relayed to a receiver unit which downloads the bird's movements, although the birds have to be within 1km of the receiver for the data to be down-loaded.

In addition, over 40 adult and juvenile Herring Gulls and 27 adult and juvenile Common Gulls were fitted with unique colour rings allowing them to be individually identified without having to be caught again. These rings are marked with letters and numbers which can be easily read using binoculars or a telescope (see photograph opposite). It is hoped that sightings from these rings will show where both adults and juveniles spend their winters.

Running in conjunction with this study, five adult and thirty-five juvenile Lesser Black-back Gulls have been colour ringed. It is hoped to trace their movements both to and from their wintering grounds but also to locate their wintering sites in the Mediterranean and North Africa.

It is hoped to continue these colour ringing projects over the next few years to get a more comprehensive insight into the movements of our gulls here on Arran and the surrounding Firth of Clyde.

So the next time you come across a group of gulls, give them an extra look and 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 that area.

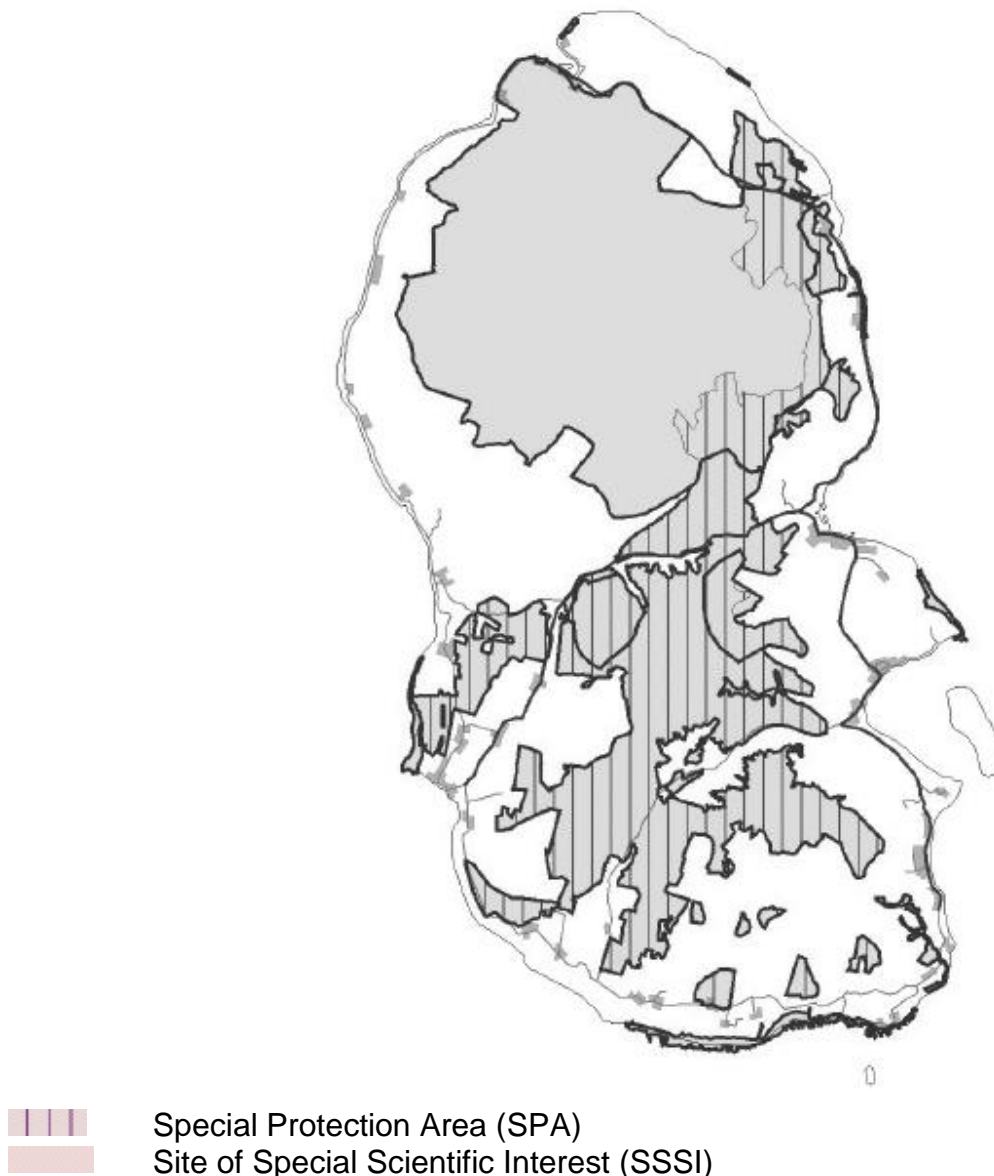
Terry Southall. Email address terrysouthall789@btinternet.com

Arran Moors Special Protection Area

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

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

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



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

Systematic List 2014

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Breeding included pair with 7 young Clauchlands on 3 June, pair with six young Port na Lochan on 9 June, pair with 3 young Whiting Bay on 19 June and a pair with 7 young Catacol on 27 July. Winter groups included 19 Whiting Bay on 11 February, 25 Lamlash Bay on 13 February and 20 Blackwaterfoot on 3 November.

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

Rare winter visitor.

No records for 2014. Last record was one at Lagg 6 January 1991.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Regular winter visitor and passage migrant.

Groups at Sandbraes from 1 January to 21 April and from 7 November until end of year where the largest group was 11 on 11 January. Passage groups included 22 Kildonan on 13 March, 20 Machrie on 3 April, 40 High Kildonan on 24 October and 30 Clachaig Farm on 29 October.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Regular winter visitor and passage migrant.

Groups in Shiskine Valley from January to March returning in November. Largest groups 25 on 12 January and 35 on 5 November. Reports from other areas included 34 Clachaig on 20 April, one moulting bird on Pladda on 15 June and three in Sliderry on 4 November.

White-fronted Goose (Greater White-fronted Goose) *Anser albifrons*

Occasional winter visitor.

Three Shiskine Valley on 11 December (SKT).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Regular winter visitor with small naturalised population around Lamlash Bay.

Up to 500 in Shiskine Valley between 1 January and 14 April and up to 350 in Shiskine Valley between 25 October and end of year. Other groups included 160 in Sliderry on 19 February, 250 in High Clachaig on 23 March and three pairs nesting on Pladda on 19 May. Nests failed. There is a naturalised population which is found mainly at Clauchlands. Largest count at Clauchlands of 140 on 14 March may have included some of the wintering birds.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Localised breeding and occasional visitor.

This is the fourth year that this species has bred with breeding reports from Corriecravie area and Pladda. Increasing reports included 6 Lamlash Bay on 3 March, 8 Machrie Bay on 10 April, 10 Pladda on 6 June and 19 Sliderry on 29 October.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*.

Occasional winter visitor.

One Lennimore on 12 January, 5 Sliderry on 30 October, one Clauchlands on 7 December and 2 in the Shiskine Valley on 11 December are all the records for 2014.

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Occasional winter visitor.

One in the Shiskine Valley on 10 November (JC).

Shelduck (Common Shelduck) *Tadorna tadorna*

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

Breeding included 5 young Carlo on 20 May, 17 young Cleats Shore on 23 May, 6 young Blackwaterfoot on 14 June, 6 young Cosyden on 15 June and 4 young Whitefarland on 17 June. Groups included 12 Cleats Shore on 3 March, 9 Auchenhew Bay on 19 March, 9 Kilpatrick Point on 16 May and 8 Clauchlands on 3 June.

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Irregular visitor. Introduced species. Nearest breeding group is at Loch Eck, Cowal, Argyll.

No records for 2014. Last record Rosa and Cloy Burns in Brodick on 27 March 2009.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

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

Groups included 30 Sliderry on 17 January, 46 Machriewaterfoot on 16 February, 30 Cleats Shore on 4 March, 10 Auchenhew Bay on 16 March, 2 Clauchlands on 10 October, 20 Sliderry on 5 November, 20 Cosyden on 21 November and 31 Machriewaterfoot on 28 December.

Teal (Common Teal) *Anas crecca*

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

One confirmed breeding record, young Torr Righ on 11 July. Groups included 30 Sliderry on 8 January, 40 Machriewaterfoot on 14 March, 40 Kilpatrick Point on 30 March, 25 Sliderrywaterfoot on 5 September, 120 Kilpatrick Point on 28 October and 80 Cosyden on 9 November.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Breeding included 8 young Auchenhew Bay on 14 May, 6 young Port na Lochan on 23 May and six young Corriecravie on 23 June. Groups included 30 Fisherman's Walk on 14 February, 22 Machriewaterfoot on 15 July, 61 Kilpatrick Point on 11 October and 30 Clauchlands on 7 December.

Pintail (Northern Pintail) *Anas acuta*

Rare vagrant.

One male Cleats Shore on 23 and 24 April and one male Machriewaterfoot on 19 May are all the records for 2014.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Rare summer visitor.

No records for 2014. A pair on the pond at Torr Righ on 9 May 2012 is the only Arran record of this species.

Shoveler (Northern Shoveler) *Anas clypeata*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was a female or male in eclipse off Catacol on 6 July 2012.

Pochard (Common Pochard) *Aythya ferina*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was a male at Port na Lochan from 15 to 18 September 2011.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Occasional visitor.

A male off Kingscross on 20 January and from Port na Lochan a male on 7 April, a pair on 27 April, four males and three females on 23 May and a male in eclipse on 26 June are all the records for 2014.

Scaup (Greater Scaup) *Aythya marila*

Occasional winter visitor.

No records for 2014. Last record was two males off Shannochie from 1 to 4 October 2013.

Eider (Common Eider) *Somateria mollissima*

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Breeding included 8 young Silver Sands on 4 June, 8 young Cleats Shore on 27 June, 4 young Corrie on 4 July and 4 young Whitefarland on 6 July. Groups included 37 Imachar on 18 February, 100 King's Caves on 4 April, 42 Machrie on 20 May, 70 Cosyden on 5 November and 47 Silver Sands on 26 December.

King Eider *Somateria spectabilis*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was a long staying drake in Lochranza in April 1980.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Rare vagrant.

A female off Kilpatrick Point on 28 October was the first record since April 1998 (JC).

Common Scoter (Black Scoter) *Melanitta nigra*

Occasional visitor.

In addition to six records of single birds, other sightings included 2 Blackwaterfoot on 7 January, 2 in the same location on 18 February, 2 King's Cave on 4 April and 14 Cosyden on 4 April.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record 2 off Catacol on 5 April 1998.

Goldeneye (Common Goldeneye) *Bucephala clangula*

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

Groups included 4 Catacol Bay on 10 January, 4 Loch Ranza on 5 February, 2 Cosyden on 31 October and 2 Clauchlands on 28 December.

Smew *Mergellus albellus*
Occasional winter visitor.

No records for 2014. Last record a male off Pirnmill on 28 November 2004.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

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

Breeding included 8 young Loch Ranza on 12 June, 11 young Catacol on 22 June, 7 young Fisherman's Walk on 25 June, 6 young Lamlash Bay on 6 July and 8 young Brodick Bay on 10 July. Groups included 12 Whiting Bay on 16 February, 54 Machrie Bay on 8 August, 70 Cosyden on 27 August, 30 Blackwaterfoot on 16 September and 38 Thunderguy on 15 October.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Breeding. Localised.

No confirmed breeding in 2014. Sightings included a pair Loch Ranza on 7 January, a pair in Brodick Bay on 15 February, a pair Machriewaterfoot on 18 February and a pair Dougarie on 12 March.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Introduced species which first bred in Ayrshire in 2001.

No records for 2014. Male on Port na Lochan on 21 April 2007 is the only Arran record of this species.

Red Grouse (Willow Ptarmigan) *Lagopus scoticus*

Resident. Breeding. Underreported.

Groups included 7 Carn Ban on 23 March, 6 Dereneneach on 27 April, 6 the Ross on 4 July, 5 Beinn Nuis on 17 July, 7 the Boguille on 26 July and 15 Kilbride Hill on 6 September.

Ptarmigan *Lagopus mutus*

Very localised.

One Beinn Bhreac on 25 May (AB). Five on the top of Cioch na h-Oighe on 9 January 2013 is the largest group in at least seven years .

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Previously bred. Reintroduction breeding programme.

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

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Scarce and local introduced resident.

Sightings included 2 Dyemill on 27 February, 2 Kilmory on 29 April, 3 Strathwillan on 9 September, 15 Dougarie on 12 October and again on 2 December.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Previously bred.

No records for 2014. Last record, excluding released birds in the 1990s, was 4 at Clauchlands on 15 November 1989.

Quail (Common Quail) *Coturnix coturnix*

Occasional summer visitor. Previously bred.

No records for 2014. Last record 2 calling birds in Glenscorrodale on 6 June 2012.

Pheasant (Common Pheasant) *Phasianus colchicus*

Common introduced resident.

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

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

A good breeding season. Groups on sea included 4 Kilpatrick Point on 9 March, 5 King's Cave on 4 April, 4 Cosyden on 15 June, 4 Largymore on 13 August, 9 Sandbraes on 16 August and 7 Whiting Bay on 27 September.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Regular passage migrant with records in every month of the year in 2014. Arran is a site of national importance for birds in autumn.

Groups included 6 Whiting Bay on 2 January, 5 Drumadoon Point on 18 February, 8 Whiting Bay on 12 March, 6 Cosyden on 13 March, 9 Drumadoon Point on 12 September and 9 Cosyden on 29 September.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Regular passage migrant with records in every month of the year in 2014 except August.

Groups included 4 Kilpatrick Point on 9 March, 4 Catacol Bay on 30 March, 4 Pirnmill on 30 March, 5 Drumadoon Point on 23 April, 5 Cleats Shore on 23 April, 12 Blackwaterfoot on 20 May, 4 Machriewaterfoot on 20 May, 4 Cosyden on 9 September and 8 Machriewaterfoot on 9 September.

Fulmar (Northern Fulmar) *Fulmarus glacialis*

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Largest groups at nest areas included 12 Catacol on 14 May, 20 Holy Isle on 10 June, 4 Brown Head on 14 June, 6 Bennan Head on 26 June, 16 Drumadoon Cliffs on 27 June, 10 Cleiteadh Buidhe on 30 June and 15 King's Caves on 17 July. No reports of young from any sites.

Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was one off Largymore on 22 July 2012.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was 7 in Machrie Bay on 6 September 2009.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Regular passage migrant with records from 7 March to 29 September.

Large groups included 200 Whiting Bay on 21 March, 500 Brodick Bay on 15 July, 1000 in both Whiting Bay and Brodick Bay on 22 August, 500 Brodick Bay on 4 September, 100 Blackwaterfoot on 23 September and 200 Cosyden on 29 September.

Mediterranean Shearwater (Balearic Shearwater) *Puffinus mauretanicus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was one off Corriecravie 14 October 1990.

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

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was one off Pirnmill 24 September 1991.

Storm Petrel (European Storm Petrel) *Hydrobates pelagicus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record two Brodick Bay on 12 July 2013.

Gannet (Northern Gannet) *Morus bassanus*

Nearest breeding colony Ailsa Craig. Round coast all year, but much more common in summer with records from 3 January to 4 November.

Groups included 40 Newton on 8 March, 60 Dougarie on 18 April, 40 Fallen Rocks on 4 July, 100 Kilpatrick on 5 August, 50 Whiting Bay on 18 August, 100 Largymore on 20 August, 100 Brodick Bay on 23 August and 100 Cosyden on 29 September.

Cormorant (Great Cormorant) *Phalacrocorax carbo*

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

Nest area on Pladda in June had 12 pairs. This breeding colony is increasing. Groups included 8 Catacol on 18 March, 5 Whiting Bay on 5 June, 4 Machriewaterfoot on 12 October, 14 Brodick Bay on 17 October and 6 Kilpatrick on 27 December.

Shag (European Shag) *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Common round coast all year. Breeding Pladda.

Nest area on Pladda in June had 134 birds. Groups included 20 Newton on 5 February, 12 Cosyden on 20 April, 11 Cleats Shore on 20 April, 14 Whiting Bay on 15 May, 20 Kilpatrick Point on 5 August, 100 Pladda on 14 September and 49 Claulchlands on 7 December.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was a dead one found in Shiskine on 10 March 1996.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*

One record of this American species.

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

Little Egret *Egretta gargetta*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. One on Sliderry Shore on 1 July 2013 is the first Arran record of this species. More records are anticipated.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

At nest areas in 2014 included 2 at Lochranza on 10 May, 4 at Stronach Wood on 14 May, 4 at Lagg on 18 May and 6 Whitehouse Wood, Lamlash on 20 May. Groups included 8 Auchenhew Bay on 23 April, 4 Lamlash on 6 July, 3 Pirnmill on 2 September, 3 Machriewaterfoot on 5 September, 4 Cosyden on 11 September, 5 Loch Ranza on 16 October and 8 Catacol Bay on 18 October.

Spoonbill (Eurasian Spoonbill) *Platalea leucorodia*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was one at Corrie on 13 October 1978.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor. Two breeding records in 2014.

Pairs with fledged young at Strabane gravel pit on 12 July and in High Clachaig on 17 July. Other sightings included 3 Loch Ranza on 1 February, 2 Fisherman's Walk on 14 February, one Cordon on 23 March, 5 Loch Ranza on 28 September, 5 Loch Ranza on 11 October, 2 Fisherman's Walk on 10 November and one Port na Lochan on 2 December.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

One Cordon on 1 September and one off the Fallen Rocks picnic area on 11 October are all the records for 2014.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was one in Whiting Bay on 9 March 2009.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

One Whiting Bay on 22 March, 2 Whiting Bay on 4 April and 2 Largymore on 20 October are all the records for 2014.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

One Whiting Bay on 14 February (MHD).

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Occasional visitor from British reintroduction projects.

One Torr na Lair Brice on 4 April, one High Kildonan on 9 October and one Sail an Im on 12 and 13 October are all the records for 2014.

Marsh Harrier (Eurasian Marsh Harrier) *Circus aeruginosus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was a juvenile in Lamlash 19 August 2004.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

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

A very good breeding year with over seventy young fledged. It was a good vole year. Again some evidence of single males supporting more than one female. In recent years the number of young fledged has varied from around twenty to over forty depending on factors like food availability and weather. Numerous widespread sightings mainly within the Special Protection Area. See page 27.

Goshawk (Northern Goshawk) *Accipiter gentilis*

Irregular sightings. No confirmed breeding.

Two records both from the south end of the island. On 31 March a female killed a male Sparrowhawk. A female was again seen in the same area on 5 November.

Sparrowhawk (Eurasian Sparrowhawk) *Accipiter nisus*

Resident. Breeding widespread.

From the seven sample nest sites that were checked, occupied nests were found in six of them. A minimum of 7 young were fledged from 5 successful nests. This is a big improvement on 2013 breeding. Numerous sightings throughout the year.

Buzzard (Common Buzzard) *Buteo buteo*

Resident. Breeding widespread.

From the two nest sites that were checked 3 chicks were fledged from 2 successful nests. Numerous widespread sightings throughout the year including 3 Slidery on 1 January, 3 Machrie Moor on 7 February, 3 Clachlands on 19 February, 3 Laigh Kilmory on 25 March, 3 Cnocan Donn on 11 May, 4 Imachar on 7 July, 6 Glenscorrodale on 8 July and the top of the String on 4 October.

Rough-legged buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was one at Cleats Shore on 10 November 1974. See also page 54.

White-tailed eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*

Rare vagrant.

An immature bird was over Kingscross Point on 7 January. An adult was photographed by the King's Cave on 10 October and an adult, presumably the same bird, was seen at Kildonan later that day heading south. These are all the records for 2014.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

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

All territories occupied and some strong evidence that other territories are being established. More than three young fledged. Numerous sightings throughout the year mainly to the north of the String.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Occasional passage migrant.

One Slidery on 30 March and one by the Machrie Water from 5 November to 10 November are all the records for 2014.

Kestrel (Common Kestrel) *Falco tinnunculus*

Resident. Breeding widespread.

Good breeding season. Numerous widespread sightings throughout the year including with fledged young at Brown Head on 18 June, Imachar on 19 June, Drumadoon on 21 June, Dereneneach on 28 June, Dougarie on 29 June, Loch Sail Chalmadale on 30 June and Creag Rosa on 5 July.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

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

Singles recorded including male Sliddery on 11 January, one Cleats shore on 4 March, female Allt nan Calman on 10 March, male Carn Ban on 23 March, one Kildonan on 2 April, female Beinn Bharrair on 22 September, one Sliddery on 11 October, one Catacol on 22 November, one The Crow on 25 November and one North Sannox on 12 December.

Hobby (Eurasian Hobby) *Falco subbuteo*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was an adult bird by the Ross Road on 22 June 2011.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Resident. Breeding widespread at inland and coastal sites.

Good breeding season. Pairs present at usual breeding sites and seen throughout the year. At least ten young fledged. Numerous sightings throughout the year.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Localised breeding resident and passage migrant.

One on the community land in Whiting Bay on 30 December (MW).

Spotted Crane *Porzana Porzana*

One historical record.

One found dead by Pladda lighthouse on 24 October 1895.

Corncrake *Crex crex*

Rare summer visitor. Previously bred.

No records for 2014. Last record one calling at Port na Lochan from 7 to 9 May 2008.

Moorhen (Common Moorhen) *Gallinula chloropus*

Scarce localised breeding resident.

Sightings from Port na Lochan throughout the year, including young in May, except July and August with up to six birds on 13 January, 8 February and 26 December. Other sightings included one Sliddery 9 January, one Fisherman's Walk on 14 February, one Strabane on 12 March, two High Clachaig on 26 June, 2 Sliddery shore on 11 August and one Corriecravie Pond on 9 November.

Coot (Common Coot) *Fulica atra*

Occasional visitor.

No records for 2014. Last record one Port na Lochan on 22 June 2013.

Crane (*Grus grus*)

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was two in the Shiskine valley in September 1989.

Oystercatcher (Eurasian Oystercatcher) *Haematopus ostralegus*

Resident. Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Nests recorded Kilpatrick, Dougarie, Machrie, Clauchlands, Sandbraes, Cleats Shore, Kildonan, Shannochie and Thunderguy. Groups included 52 Lochranza on 16 February, 70 Clauchlands on 19 February, 65 Catacol on 1 March, 50 Cleats Shore on 4 March, 45 Machriewaterfoot on 13 March, 40 Blackwaterfoot on 16 March, 42 Cosyden on 20 April, 39 Porta Buidhe on 30 October and 95 Clauchlands on 7 December.

Golden Plover (European Golden Plover) *Pluvialis apricaria*

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 4 Sliddery on 2 January, 21 Machriewaterfoot on 7 February, 32 Machriewaterfoot on 13 April, 80 Machriewaterfoot on 27 August, 149 Machriewaterfoot on 27 April, one Cleats Shore on 13 October, 24 Sliddery on 28 October, one Corriecravie on 4 November and 139 Machriewaterfoot on 5 November.

Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*)

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records 2014. Last record was one on Torrylinn Shore on 5 April 2012.

Lapwing (Northern Lapwing) *Vanellus vanellus*

Increasingly localised breeding and regular winter visitor.

One area of confirmed breeding in Kilmory and one other possible breeding area in the Shiskine valley. Groups included 30 Kilpatrick on 30 June, 12 Sliddery on 18 February, 2 Mayish on 20 February, 4 Cleats Shore 13 October, 50 Shiskine on 3 November, 83 Cleats Shore on 2 December and 84 Sliddery on 18 December.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Resident. Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Nests recorded Kilpatrick, Dougarie, Machrie, Kilmory, Clauchlands, Sandbraes, Cleats Shore and Kildonan. Groups included 40 Drumadoon Point on 30 January, 31 Whiting Bay on 16 February, 30 Blackwaterfoot on 16 May, 40 shore by Shiskine Golf Course 27 August, 23 Brodick Bay on 4 September, 64 Machriewaterfoot on 5 September, 52 Clauchlands on 19 September, 65 Whiting Bay on 26 September, 52 Sandbraes on 24 October and 58 Machriewaterfoot on 9 November.

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records 2014. Last record was one calling summit of Beinn Tarsuinn 4 June 2012.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Regular passage migrant and occasional winter visitor.

Groups included 2 Cleats Shore on 20 April, 7 Sliddery on 26 April, 14 Auchenhew Bay on 28 April, 12 Blackwaterfoot on 3 May, 11 Cleats Shore on 4 May, 12 Kilpatrick on 5 May, 2 Sliddery on 6 August, 2 Cosyden on 8 August, 2 Machriewaterfoot on 5 September and one Auchenhew Bay on 17 September.

Curlew (Eurasian Curlew) *Numenius arquata*

Resident but underreported breeder.

Signs of breeding were reported from Machrie Moor, Balnacoole, Kilbride Hill, Penrloch and Torr Beag. Groups included 30 Carlo on 19 January, 30 Silver Sands on 30 January, 42 Kilpatrick Point on 18 February, 70 Clauchlands on 19 February, 67 Cleats Shore on 4 March, 65 Port na Feannaiche on 23 March, 30 Kilpatrick Point on 15 July, 36 Sliderry on 6 August, 40 Machriewaterfoot on 27 August and 43 Silver Sands on 19 November.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Uncommon passage migrant.

Two Cleats Shore on 26 June and one Sliderry on 2 September are all the records for 2014.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Uncommon passage migrant.

One Clauchlands on 30 January, one Clauchlands on 26 June, one Cosyden on 11 September and one Rubha Glas on 17 September are all the records for 2014.

Turnstone (Ruddy Turnstone) *Arenaria interpres*

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

Groups included 60 Drumadoon Point on 30 January, 16 Whiting Bay on 2 February, 46 Machriewaterfoot on 5 September, 25 Clauchlands on 19 September, 25 Silver Sands on 23 September and 26 Lamlash on 10 October.

Knot (Red Knot) *Calidris canutus*

Regular passage migrant.

One Drumadoon Point on 16 August and one Blackwaterfoot on 21 November are all the records for 2014.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was 2 at Kildonan on 26 August 1987.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was one on Kildonan shore on 27 August 2006.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Regular passage migrant.

Groups included 8 Drumadoon Point on 15 May, 4 Blackwaterfoot on 16 May, 5 Drumadoon Point on 5 September and 2 Drumadoon point on 11 September.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Regular passage migrant with records from most months of the year. No breeding records.

Groups included 6 Drumadoon Point on 16 May, 9 Cleats Shore on 19 May, 12 Blackwaterfoot on 29 July, 12 Drumadoon Point on 7 August and 8 Silver Sands on 23 September.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

Most records from Kildonan and Auchenhew Bay between 6 January and 30 January and between 12 November and end of the year including 3 on 30 January and 4 on 16 November. There were two records from outwith this area namely 3 Drumadoon Point on 30 January and one Cleats Shore on 4 March.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was 3 at Machriewaterfoot on 8 September 2002.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was 2 in Wineport area of Brodick Bay on 28 August 1983.

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was one in Brodick Bay on 23 March 1989.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

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

Pairs each with young included Blackwaterfoot on 22 May, King's Cave on 25 May, Kilpatrick Point on 14 June, Eilean Mor Blackwaterfoot on 14 June, Corriecravie 23 June, Catacol 3 July, Imachar on 9 July and Cladach on 12 July.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was at High Thunderguy on 1 August 2008.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was one at South Feorline shore on 5 August 2010.

Greenshank (Common Greenshank) *Tringa nebularia*

Uncommon passage migrant and occasional winter visitor.

One wintering bird at Clachlands from 1 January to 14 March returning 7 July to end of year. Other sightings away from Clachlands included one Slidery on 16 July, one Blackwaterfoot on 20 August, one Cosyden on 27 August, one Kildonan on 16 September, one Slidery on 3 December and 2 Slidery on 16 December.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Rare passage migrant.

No records 2014. One at Drumadoon Point on 22 May 2011 is the only Arran record of this species.

Redshank (Common Redshank) *Tringa totanus*

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

Groups included 10 Lochranza on 14 January, 15 Whiting Bay on 16 February, 16 Sandbraes on 14 March, 30 Sandbraes on 30 August, 10 Kildonan on 4 September, 44 Whiting Bay on 29 September and 10 Catacol on 12 October.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

Sightings included one Sliddery on 17 January, one Lenimore on 30 March, one Glaister on 3 April, one Sliddery on 4 April, one Sliddery on 9 April and 2 Sliddery on 5 November.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaeceus*

One record of this American species.

One juvenile was at Slidderywaterfoot from 15 to 17 September 1990.

Woodcock (Eurasian Woodcock) *Scolopax rusticola*

Resident but underreported breeder. Numbers increase in winter.

Pairs flying at dusk over Clachlands on 24 April, Sliddery on 5 May, Machrie Moor on 7 May, Cnoc na Dail on 31 May, Brodick Country Park on 6 June, Lochranza on 22 June and Kingscross on 24 June. Other sightings included 15 at Sliddery on 8 January and 4 Clachlands Hill on 5 July.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

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

No confirmed breeding records. One drumming Lochranza on 4 May and “chipping calls” heard top of the String on 28 May and Penrioch on 29 May. Groups included 12 Machrie on 10 January, 17 Sliddery on 20 January, 9 Port na Feannaiche on 11 March, 3 Cleats Shore on 1 October, 2 Pladda on 4 November, 9 Sliddery on 18 December and 18 Clachlands on 28 December.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Uncommon passage migrant. Underreported.

No records for 2014. Last record was 2 off Kildonan on 16 May 2009.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Uncommon passage migrant. Underreported.

No records for 2014. Last record one off Largymore on 13 September 2013.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Uncommon passage migrant. Underreported.

No records 2014. Two off Kildonan on 19 May 2011 is the only Arran record of this species.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*.

Uncommon passage migrant. Underreported.

One Brodick Bay on 14 July, one Brodick Bay on 10 September, 3 off Machrie Bay on 13 September and one Dougarie on 12 November are all the records for 2014.

Puffin (Atlantic Puffin) *Fratercula arctica*

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

One Catacol on 13 January, 2 off Pladda on 29 April, 2 off Dippin Head on 16 June, one juvenile in Brodick Bay on 17 September and one juvenile off Glenashdalewaterfoot also on 17 September are all the records for 2014.

Black Guillemot *Cepphus grylle*

Breeding. Round coast all year.

Breeding included Brodick pier, Catacol, Corrie, Imachar, Kilpatrick, King's Cave, Thunderguy and Pladda. Numbers and sightings are increasing. Groups included 10 Catacol on 18 March, 20 King's Cave on 4 April, 18 Brodick pier on 26 May, 60 Pladda on 4 June, 6 Corrie on 4 July and 8 Imachar on 9 July.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

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

The prolonged winter storms had a heavy impact on this species with over one hundred bodies washed up on the shore in February including 27 at Dougarie on 22 February. Groups included 25 Brodick Bay on 6 March, 10 Kilpatrick on 5 August and 100 Catacol Bay on 9 September.

Little Auk *Alle alle*

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

One found on the road on 12 December was another storm driven bird. It later died (FL).

Guillemot (Common Guillemot) *Uria aalge*

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

Groups included 135 Brodick Bay on 6 March, 200 Catacol on 9 September, 400 Sannox Bay on 18 September and 400 Cosyden on 29 September.

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

Uncommon summer visitor.

No records for 2014. Last record one in Brodick Bay on 11 August in 2007.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2014. Last record one at Pirnmill on 12 September 1992.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Summer visitor. Non breeding.

Groups included 4 Kildonan on 10 May, 3 Pirnmill on 11 May, 4 Drumadoon Point on 25 August, 6 Auchenhew Bay on 11 September and 10 Sandbraes on 14 September.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Uncommon summer visitor.

No records for 2014. Last record was one Machriewaterfoot on 19 April 2013.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Rare summer visitor.

No records for 2014. Last record 2 at Dougarie on 5 May 1984.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Regular summer visitor. Breeding colony Pladda.

Most sightings were from on or around Pladda between May and August with the maximum number reported 7 on Pladda on 6 June. No confirmed breeding this year. Sightings away from Pladda and the south coast included 2 Whiting Bay on 2 April, one Machrie on 11 May, one Drumadoon Point on 31 May and 5 Drumadoon Point on 28 August.

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 2014. Last record one adult Brodick Bay on 3 September 2009.

Kittiwake (Black-legged Kittiwake) *Rissa tridactyla*

Nearest breeding colony Ailsa Craig. Round coast all year.

Groups included 100 Brodick Bay on 22 August, 400 Blackwaterfoot on 11 September, 300 Whiting Bay on 26 September, 1000 Whiting Bay on 21 October, around ten percent of which were juveniles, and 1000 Whitefarland on 12 December.

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

Non breeding. Present round coast from January to April and July to December.

Groups included 20 Glenashdalewaterfoot on 4 February, 30 Whiting Bay on 16 February, 9 Sandbraes on 17 August, 20 Lamlash on 2 September and 20 Blackwaterfoot on 3 September.

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

Uncommon irregular visitor.

No records for 2014. Last record 2 Whiting Bay on 2 September 2013.

Ross's Gull *Rhodostethia rosea*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record one at Kildonan on 21 November 1995.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record one at Catacol on 30 December 1992.

Common Gull (Mew Gull) *Larus canus*

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Poor breeding season with few reports of fledged young from coastal nesting areas including Machriewaterfoot, Dougarie, Holy Isle, Pladda, Sannox and Thunderguy. Groups included 500 North Feorline on 11 January, 100 Shannochie on 12 January, 250 Slidderly on 28 February, 200 Dyemill on 15 March, 200 Blackwaterfoot on 13 August and 100 Machriewaterfoot on 19 November.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Breeding. Common round coast from February to October.

Colony on Holy Isle had 120 birds on 2 May and the colony on Pladda had 150 birds on 6 June. No reports from colony by Cnoc na Croise. Other groups included 31 Slidderly on 8 April, 20 Cleats Shore on 23 April, 32 Whiting Bay on 7 July and 30 Catacol and 108 Sandbraes on 17 August.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Colony on Holy Isle had 150 birds on 2 May and the colony on Pladda had 250 birds on 6 June. No reports from colony by Cnoc na Croise. Other groups included 150 Kilpatrick on 30 January, 257 Slidderly on 1 March, 200 Dyemill on 3 March and 400 Machrie on 9 November.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

Uncommon winter visitor.

One Brodick Bay on 5 March (TD).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Uncommon winter visitor.

No records for 2014. Last record was one Thunderguy on 3 March 2012.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Groups included 18 Machrie on 30 January, 12 Catacol on 17 August, 14 Lochranza on 6 October, 17 Dougarie on 31 October and 20 Machriewaterfoot on 9 November.

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*

Resident. Breeding. Localised round the coast.

Groups included 42 Kilpatrick on 7 January, 27 Slidderly on 1 March, 10 Cleats Shore on 23 April and 26 Drumadoon on 2 May.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Very scarce.

No records for 2014. Last record one on footpath to Fallen Rocks on 14 June 1989.

Woodpigeon (Common Woodpigeon) *Columba palumbus*

Resident. Breeding. Common.

Groups included 54 Sliddery on 8 January, 30 Shiskine on 13 January, 100 Machrie on 13 October, 50 Lochranza on 18 October and 50 Lamlash on 22 December.

Collared Dove (Eurasian Collared Dove) *Streptopelia decaocto*

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

Present around all villages. Groups included 6 Glenashdale on 29 May, 12 Sliddery on 11 September, 20 Whiting Bay on 19 September and 4 Lamlash on 14 October.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Occasional passage migrant.

One Sliddery on 24 May and one High Kildonan on 5 June are all the records for 2014.

Cuckoo(Common Cuckoo) *Cuculus canorus*

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread.

First one reported calling in Lochranza on 15 April. Later widespread reports from around the island. Population seems to be healthy. The last one reported was of a juvenile on Leac Gharbh on 18 July.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Resident. Breeding. Widespread.

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

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

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

No records for 2014.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Resident. Underreported. Breeding.

One Machrie Moor on 26 May and a family in Glen Cloy on 10 July are all the records for 2014.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Resident. Underreported. Breeding.

Good breeding season with increased number of reports including at least twelve occupied territories. Sightings included one Garbh Alt on 2 March, one Fuar Achadh on 5 March, one Alt a' Chapuill on 30 March, one Boguille on 8 July and one High Clachaig on 21 July.

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Summer visitor. Previously bred.

No records in 2014. Last record one at Merkland churring from 17 June to 26 June 2013 which was the first record since one at Maol Donn on 24 May 1998.

Swift (Common Swift) *Apus apus*

Summer visitor and passage migrant. No breeding records. Reports from 6 May to 27 July.

Sightings included 2 Sliddery on 23 May, 4 Kilmory on 22 June and 3 High Kildonan on 25 June. All other records were of single birds.

Kingfisher (Common Kingfisher) *Alcedo atthis*

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

Up to two by Fisherman's Walk from September to December, up to two in Lochranza from September to October, one Cordon in August and one Catacol on 8 September.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was one in Thunderguy on 25 June 2006.

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was one in Sannox on 25 September 1997.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Rare vagrant

One in a garden in Lamlash on 28 December is the first Arran record of this species.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Resident. Breeding. Localised but spreading.

Regularly heard drumming in Brodick Country Park and Merkland Wood from January to April. As well as breeding records from this area, fledged young were reported from Lamlash on 5 June, Glenkiln on 14 June, Lochranza on 3 July, Dyemill on 4 July, Machrie on 6 July, Gortonallister on 11 July and Glenashdale on 18 July. Widespread sightings from throughout Arran.

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record a female in Lochranza on 7 June 1979.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record a male at Kildonan on 27 September 1997.

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubiter*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was one in Fairy Glen, Lochranza on 24 October 2007.

Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

Rare vagrant. Previously bred.

No records for 2014. Last record one by Narachan Track from 5 to 29 September 2011.

Magpie (Black-billed Magpie) *Pica pica*

Vagrant.

One bird first reported on 19 March in Lamlash and last reported 6 May in Strathwillan. No records in 2013 and one record in 2012.

Jay (Eurasian Jay) *Garrulus glandarius*

Rare vagrant. Before 2011 the last record was 1985.

No records for 2013. Last record one on road to Glen Rosa on 9 April 2012.

Jackdaw (Eurasian Jackdaw) *Corvus monedula*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Groups included 80 Machrie on 26 January, 90 Sliddery on 27 February, 80 Shiskine on 9 July, 100 Lochranza on 2 September, 100 Kilpatrick on 28 October and 150 Blackwaterfoot on 31 October.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Regular winter visitor.

Most records from Sliddery from all months except May and June, including 110 on 23 February, 24 on 20 July and 124 on 9 October. Other sightings included 2 Shiskine on 13 April, one Cleats Shore on 23 April, one Port na Lochan on 16 September and 3 Cleats Shore on 1 October.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone* **Hooded Crow** *Corvus cornix*

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

Groups included 36 North Feorline on 9 February, 50 Dyemill on 8 March, 26 Sliddery on 15 March, 50 Kildonan on 31 March and 44 Silver Sands on 31 December.

Raven (Common Raven) *Corvus corax*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Breeding pairs included Beinn a Chliabhain, Bennan Head, Brown Head, Catacol and Imachar. Groups included 25 Sliddery on 26 January, 20 Cleats Shore on 4 March, 5 Catacol on 17 May, 6 Kilpatrick on 14 June, 4 Goatfell on 10 July, 4 Lochranza on 4 September and 4 Glen Rosa on 8 October.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Regular passage migrant.

Records included 2 Cordon on 22 March, 3 Glenashdale on 23 March, 4 Merkland on 10 July, 6 Torr Righ Beag on 11 July, 20 Auchenheew Bay on 10 October and 25 High Kildonan on 16 October.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

Very rare and irregular passage migrant.

One Whiting Bay 17 November 2007 is the only accepted record. See page 59.

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Regular passage migrant.

Reports from all villages of birds visiting garden feeders. Confirmed breeding included reports from Whiting Bay on 29 April, Lamlash on 27 May, Clauchlands on 3 June, Shannochie on 19 June, Catacol on 19 June, Dhunan on 23 June and Alma Park on 26 June. Largest group was 12 Lochranza on 26 June.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Regular passage migrant.

Reports from all villages of birds visiting garden feeders. Confirmed breeding included reports from Lamlash on 1 June, Kilpatrick on 7 June, Shannochie on 19 June, Dhunan on 23 June, Catacol on 28 June and Strathwillan on 15 July. Largest group was 9 Lamlash on 2 March.

Coal Tit *Parus ater*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Regular passage migrant.

Reports from all villages of birds visiting garden feeders. Confirmed breeding included reports from Cordon on 16 June, Glenashdale on 19 June, Pirnmill on 20 June, Brodick 24 June and Lochranza on 30 June. Largest group was 16 at Torr Righ Beag on 11 July.

Willow Tit *Parus montanus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was one at Mill House Lamlash from 16 to 18 May 2009.

Skylark (Sky Lark) *Alauda arvensis*

Breeding resident, Regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding territories occupied in Ard Bheinn, Corriecravie Moor, Drumadoon, Drumaghinier, Glen Cloy, Kilbride Hill, Kilpatrick, Leac a'Ghille, Machrie Moor, Penrioch and Sannox. Groups included 70 Sliddery on 18 February, 15 High Kildonan on 24 February and a passage of around 300 birds along Cleats Shore on both 1 and 12 October.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Summer visitor. Breeding. Localised.

First report top of the String on 27 March. Breeding colonies occupied in Auchencar, Clauchlands, Glen Rosa, Kilpatrick, Sannox, Shiskine Golf Course, Strabane and Whitefarland with up to 100 birds in Sannox on 8 July. Other sightings included 16 Sliddery on 24 April, 10 Kilpatrick on 3 May, 16 Clauchlands on 14 June and 15 Imachar on 7 July.

Swallow (Barn Swallow) *Hirundo rustica*

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread.

First report Cordon on 1 April. Widespread breeding with double and triple broods raised. Groups included 150 Corrie on 5 September, 100 Porta Buidhe on 13 September and 70 Port na Lochan on 16 September. Last record was one Silver Sands and one Whiting Bay on 2 December!

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread.

First report was from Glenloig on 15 April. Widespread breeding with double and triple broods raised. Groups included 40 Blackwaterfoot on 9 September, 43 Brodick on 12 September, 60 Sandbraes on 14 September and 60 Knockenkelly on 19 September. Last record Kingscross on 9 October.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Groups included 20 Dhunan on 23 June, 10 Cnoc na Dail on 22 July, 30 High Kildonan on 3 October, 30 Whiting Bay on 4 October, 20 Kilpatrick on 10 October, 11 Silver Sands on 3 November and 10 Dyemill on 24 December.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Very rare and irregular passage migrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was one in Whiting Bay from 4 to 6 December 2007.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

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

No records in 2014. In 2013 there were records from only two areas namely, Glenashdale and Merkland Wood.

Chiffchaff (Common Chiffchaff) *Phylloscopus collybita*

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

First report was from Kingscross on 23 March. Records included males singing Kildonan on 29 March, Clachaig on 20 April, Cladach on 13 May, Merkland on 27 May and Glenashdale on 28 May. Last record was one Auchenhew Bay on 10 October.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

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

First report was from Sliddery on 6 April. Records included fledged young Cloined on 13 July, Kilpatrick on 31 July, Strathwillan on 4 August, Feorline on 9 August, Lamdash on 12 August and Dun Fionn on 23 August. Last record was one at Margnaheglish on 2 September.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

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

Records included singing males Pirnmill on 11 May, Corrie on 18 May, Lochranza on 29 May, Strabane on 14 June and Brodick Country Park on 24 June. Winter records included male Brodick 26 January, male Shiskine on 22 November and female Lochranza on 8 December.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

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

A male singing at each of the following: Merkland on 13 May, Glenashdale on 28 May and Corrie on 6 July, are all the records for 2014.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Scarce summer visitor. Breeding. Records from May to August.

Male singing Auchenhew Bay on 28 April (TS).

Whitethroat (Common Whitethroat) *Sylvia communis*

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

First report was from Sliddery on 9 April. Records included fledged young at Imachar on 19 June, Clachlands on 5 July, Holy Isle on 9 July, Porta Buidhe on 25 July, High Kildonan on 25 July and Shiskine on 29 July. Last record was one at Silver Sands on 24 September.

Grasshopper Warbler (Common Grasshopper Warbler) *Locustella naevia*

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

Reports of reeling birds included Corriecravie Moor on 26 April, Corriegills on 28 April, Mayish on 9 May and Glen Cloy on 19 July.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

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

First report was from Corriecravie on 16 April. Records included singing males Silver Sands on 20 April, Auchenhew on 25 April, Drumadoon on 2 May, Machrie on 23 May, Clauchlands on 27 May and Bennecarrigan on 30 May. Last record was one at Sliderry on 6 August.

Waxwing (Bohemian Waxwing) *Bombycilla garrulus*

Irruptive late autumn and winter visitor.

One Blackwaterfoot on 31 October and one Cnoc na Dail on 11 November are all the records for 2014.

Nuthatch (Wood Nuthatch) *Sitta europea*

Rare vagrant.

One High Corrie on 18 May (HSK).

Treecreeper (Eurasian Treecreeper) *Certhia familiaris*

Resident. Breeding. Widespread but underreported.

Sightings included two Merkland on 25 February, 2 Cladach on 28 May, 2 Lochranza on 29 May, 4 Lamblash on 6 July, two Lagg on 3 September and one Marganaheglish on 17 October.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Records from varied habitats throughout the island from high tops to shore. Groups included 16 Clachaig on 20 April, 8 Cnoc Donn on 14 June, 6 Torr Rìgh Beag on 11 July, 6 Brodick Country Park on 8 October, 20 Pladda on 4 November and 8 Whiting Bay on 3 December.

Starling (Common Starling) *Sturnus vulgaris*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included reports Lochranza on 3 May, Kilpatrick on 15 May, Lamblash on 27 May, Strathwillan on 15 June, Shannochie on 19 June, Sliderry on 22 June and Whiting Bay on 7 July. Larger groups included 100 Kilpatrick on 10 January, 100 Glenree on 12 January, 114 Sliderry on 14 February, 200 Sliderry on 29 October and 300 Kilpatrick on 31 October.

Rose-coloured Starling *Sturnus roseus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record one adult in Brodick on 28 June 2002.

Dipper (White-throated Dipper) *Cinclus cinclus*

Resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Pairs recorded included Benlister, Dyemill, Fisherman's Walk, Cladach, Glenashdale, Bennecarrigan, Glen Chalmadale, Lochranza, and Sliderrywater. Move towards coast in winter.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Scarce summer visitor, possibly underreported.

Two Beinn Bhreac on 27 April, one Pagoda Ridge on 18 May, fledged young Beinn Tarsuinn on 17 July and Glen Catacol on 21 July. These are all the records for 2014.

Blackbird (Common Blackbird) *Turdus merula*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Pairs reported from all villages. Reports of double and triple broods. Groups included 14 North Feorline on 11 January, 11 Pirnmill on 25 January, 16 Slidderly on 13 February, 11 Shannochie on 27 May, 14 Kildonan on 7 November and 12 Blackwaterfoot on 8 November.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Regular winter visitor with records from January to March and October to December.

Groups, sometimes with Redwings, included 40 Kilpatrick on 10 January, 40 Cosyden on 31 January, 100 Glenscorrodale on 19 March, 50 High Kildonan on 23 March and 160 Slidderly on 9 November.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Pairs reported from all villages. Groups included 12 North Feorline on 11 January, 5 Slidderly on 28 February, 6 Lochranza on 13 April, 4 Kildonan on 28 April and 4 Catacol on 11 July.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Regular winter visitor with records from February to March and October to December.

Groups, sometimes with Fieldfares, included 30 Shiskine on 16 January, 50 Kilmory on 18 January, 30 Glenree on 22 October, 81 High Kildonan on 2 November and 500 Slidderly on 9 November.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included fledged young Dyemill on 18 May, Torr Righ Beag on 19 May, North Sannox on 18 June, Narachan on 22 June, Machrie on 2 July and Brodick Country Park on 16 July. Groups included 20 Kilpatrick on 10 January, 35 North Sannox on 1 September, 70 Whiting Bay on 9 October and 20 Dyemill on 20 October.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

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

Confirmed breeding included reports from Whiting Bay on 30 May, Brodick Country Park on 10 June, Tormore on 16 June, Monamore Glen on 6 July, Corrie on 7 July, Glenashdale on 7 July, Cloined on 13 July, Benlister on 16 July and Sannox on 20 August.

Robin (European Robin) *Erithacus rubecula*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Fledged young included reports from Shannochie on 19 June, High Clachaig on 26 June, Holy Isle on 9 July, Merkland on 10 July, Cladach on 12 July plus all villages. Other groups included 6 Pirnmill on 25 January, 14 Slidderly on 10 February, 10 Kingscross on 23 August, 10 Brodick Country Park on 8 October and 10 Kilpatrick on 9 October.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Irregular summer visitor.

No records for 2014. Last record was one on Newton Shore on 28 April 1998.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Scarce passage migrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was one first winter female from 11 March to 30 March 2013.

Redstart (Common Redstart) *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Scarce summer visitor. Possibly underreported. Previously bred.

No records for 2014. Last record was a male singing by Narachan track on 5 June 2012.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Summer visitor. Breeding. Localised. Passage migrant.

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

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Continuing signs of recovery after the two cold winters 2009-2011. Fledged young reports included Clauchlands on 14 June, Narachan on 22 June, Loch Iorsa on 26 June, Holy Isle on 9 July, Dougarie on 1 August and Dun Fionn on 23 August.

Wheatear (Northern Wheatear) *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

First report was from Machrie Golf Course on 25 March. Fledged young reports included Kilpatrick on 29 June, Kildonan on 7 July, King's Cave on 17 July and Laggan on 24 July. Last record was one Sail an Im on 13 October.

Dunnock (Hedge Accentor) *Prunella modularis*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Fledged young included reports from Kilmory on 12 June, Strathwillan on 15 June, Catacol on 25 June and Kilpatrick on 28 June. Other groups included 8 Sliderry on 26 January, 9 Pladda on 4 November and 8 Kilpatrick on 11 November.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Pairs reported from all villages. Reports of double and triple broods. Larger groups included 30 Shiskine on 21 June, 21 Catacol on 4 July, 25 Whiting Bay on 7 July, 50 Corrie on 27 July, 30 Kilpatrick on 6 August, 30 Lochranza on 29 August and 150 Sliderry on 11 September.

Tree Sparrow (Eurasian Tree Sparrow) *Passer montanus*

Rare vagrant. Previously bred.

No records for 2014. Last record was 2 in Brodick on 17 June 1997.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Scarce passage migrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was a first winter bird on the shore at Kildonan from 13 December to 15 December 2013.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Resident. Breeding. Localised.

Breeding records included adults with fledged young Auchenhew on 4 June, Glenloig on 6 June, Lagg on 6 July, Glenashdale on 12 July, North Glen Sannox on 15 July, Clauchlands on 19 July, Kildonan on 20 July and Kilpatrick on 31 July.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

Breeding resident. Widespread. Passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding records included adults with fledged young at Brodick on 2 June, Tormore on 15 June, Kilmory on 16 June, Shannochie on 19 June, Lamlash on 21 June and Blackwaterfoot on 28 June. . Other groups included 30 Sliderry on 18 February, 20 Dyemill on 8 March, 30 High Kildonan on 22 March, 25 Cordon on 22 August and 20 Blackwaterfoot on 8 November.

White Wagtail *Montacilla alba*

Regular passage migrant.

First report was from Kilpatrick Point on 30 March. Other sightings included 14 Port na Feannaichie on 15 April, 15 Cleats Shore on 20 April, 10 Kilpatrick Point on 21 April and 2 Kildonan on 13 September

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Scarce summer visitor. Possibly underreported.

Birds holding territories included Glen Sannox on 5 May, Mullach Buidhe on 11 May, Glen Rosa on 20 May, Merkland on 27 May and Glen Cloy on 20 June,

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Breeding resident. Widespread. Passage migrant and winter visitor.

Numerous breeding records. Groups included 40 Sliderry on 7 February, 30 Shiskine on 24 March, 80 Cleats Shore on 23 April, 60 Lochranza on 5 August, 30 Clauchlands on 2 October.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

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

Numerous breeding records including pairs carrying food at Auchenhew Bay on 28 April, Drumadoon Point on 16 May, Kilpatrick Point on 9 July, Catacol on 10 July, Whiting Bay on 12 July and Blackwaterfoot on 14 July. Groups included 14 Kilpatrick on 10 March, 20 Kildonan on 23 March, 15 Blackwaterfoot on 4 October and 50 Silver Sands on 17 November.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Lamlash on 24 April, Kilmory on 12 June, Corrie on 19 June, Shannochie on 19 June, Brodick on 26 June, Catacol on 28 June and Holy Isle on 9 July. Larger groups included 100 Kilpatrick on 13 January, 125 Sliderry on 17 January, 40 Pirnmill on 25 January, 45 Shiskine on 4 September and 300 West Bennan on 13 October.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

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

One Sliderry on 11 October, one Benlister on 17 October and one Cnoc na Dail on 11 November are all the records for 2014.

Greenfinch (European Greenfinch) *Carduelis chloris*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Dyemill on 18 May, Kilmory on 9 June, Kilpatrick on 28 June, Benlister on 16 July and Corrie on 17 July. Largest group was 45 Kildonan on 9 January.

Goldfinch (European Goldfinch) *Carduelis carduelis*

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Dyemill on 18 May, Kilpatrick on 19 May, Lamlash on 8 June, Kilmory on 8 June, Shannochie on 19 June and Lochranza on 13 July. Largest group was 70 at Mayish on 12 August.

Siskin (Eurasian Siskin) *Carduelis spinus*

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Most records between January and June.

Confirmed breeding included reports Margnaheglish on 1 June, Kilmory on 12 June, Kilpatrick on 28 June, Whiting Bay on 30 June, Corrie on 6 July and Shiskine on 9 July. Largest group was 50 in Cnocan Wood on 15 December.

Linnet (Common Linnet) *Carduelis cannabina*

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Most records between April and November.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Shannochie on 19 June, Port na Feannaiche on 23 June, Cosyden on 8 July, Kilpatrick on 9 July and Clauchlands on 19 July. Larger groups included 200 Slidery on 11 September and 300 Cleats Shore on 1 October.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

Resident. Breeding. Localised. Passage migrant.

No confirmed breeding. Groups included 11 Slidery on 17 January, 15 Cleats Shore on 11 October, 12 Catacol on 15 October, 20 Machrie on 29 October, 100 Cleats Shore on 30 October, 30 Dougarie on 12 November and 20 Silver Sands on 13 November.

Redpoll (Lesser Redpoll) *Carduelis cabaret*

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

Confirmed breeding included reports from Glenashdale on 7 July, Holy Isle on 9 July and Cloined on 13 July. Larger groups included 20 Clachaig on 20 April, 4 Catacol on 16 June, 6 Slidery on 6 August and 5 Kingscross on 23 August.

Crossbill (Common Crossbill) *Loxia curvirostra*

Resident. Breeding. Localised.

Sightings included 5 Glen Cloy on 20 June, 16 Dunan Mor on 24 November, 8 Auchareoch on 26 November, 10 Clauchland Hills on 26 November, 8 Dyemill on 27 November, 15 Shedog on 28 November and 12 Dun Fionn on 25 December.

Scarlet Rosefinch (Common Rosefinch) *Carpodacus erythrinus*

Rare vagrant.

No records in 2014. The last record was a juvenile caught and ringed at High Kildonan on 24 October 2011.

Bullfinch (Common Bullfinch) *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Resident. Breeding. Localised.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Corriecravie on 1 June, Auchenhew on 5 June and Kilmory on 12 June. Groups included 4 Lag a' Bheith on 3 January, 3 Lamlash on 15 February, 6 Mayish on 8 March and 3 Whiting Bay on 27 March.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2014. Last record was one Port na Lochan on 29 May 2013.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Varying numbers on passage and in winter.

One Silver Sands on 18 November (DSm).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

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

Reports of a singing male in Sliddery on 31 March. Other reports included 5 Shedog on 1 January, 12 Sliddery on 19 February, 2 Shiskine on 25 April, 5 Cleats Shore on 13 October, 23 Sliddery on 30 November and 19 Sliddery on 18 December.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Resident. Breeding. Localised. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included North Sannox on 23 May, Newton on 31 May, Sliddery on 22 June and Catacol on 27 June. Groups included 4 Kilpatrick Point on 14 April, 4 Machrie Moor on 5 May, 6 Sliddery on 9 November and 8 Clauchlands on 28 December.

Corn bunting *Miliaria calandra*

Rare vagrant. Previously bred.

No records for 2014. Last record 2 in Brodick area on 7 October 1984.

Records Awaiting Decision

Rough-legged Buzzard: November 2014

Being considered by Clyde Bird Record Panel.

Blyth's Reed Warbler: July 2014

Being considered by British Birds Rarities Committee.

Gazetteer of Arran Place Names

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

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



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

Previous Annual Reports

There is a facility to download previous annual reports.

Bird Notes

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

Photo Gallery

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

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

Finding Birds

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

Bird Sightings

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

How to be a good birdwatcher

Some points to bear in mind.

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

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Audrey Walters

Bird Recorder, the Arran Natural History Society 1992 to 2005

A Tribute

On 27 August 2014 Audrey Walters died suddenly aged seventy-eight. At her funeral on Wednesday 10 September family and friends gathered together to celebrate her full and varied life. As her body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Lamlash on a beautiful, still, warm, sunny day the songs of Robins filled the air. This seemed an apt tribute to Audrey who had a lifelong passion for birds.

As the bird recorder for the Arran Natural History Society from 1992 to 2005 Audrey collated all the Arran bird sightings, organised surveys, contributed regularly to the nature notes in the *Arran Banner* and each year produced the annual bird report. Howard Driver, the previous editor of the *Arran Banner*, rightly commented that she was an enthusiastic character and always so cheerful. Striding the Clachlands shore with her binoculars round her neck, she was a familiar figure.

When she handed over the reins of bird recorder to me in 2006, her passion for Arran and its birds was undiminished. She assiduously kept her bird records and shared these. Each year she kept her own annual list and regularly when I saw some bird that I thought she would like to add to her list, I would phone her, hoping that the bird would hang around for her also to enjoy. She did enjoy her birds. Her enthusiasm shone through. Her delight when she saw familiar favourites or something new was obvious in those twinkling eyes and characteristic smile.

Her home in Margnaheglish was called Sula. From Icelandic roots, its meaning is Gannet, one of her favourite birds. The attached image of the sunlit Gannet was taken by Arthur Duncan at her beloved Clachlands. In some ways it epitomises Audrey, a ray of sunshine in the Arran birding community.

Audrey brightened the lives of all who knew her.