

Arran Bird Report 2012



This report was compiled by **Jim Cassels**,
Bird Recorder for the Arran Natural History Society.

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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 summer time.

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 2012. This is the thirty third consecutive annual bird report for the Isle of Arran and the seventh 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, our resident 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 the BirdAtlas survey, the Wetlands Bird Survey, the Breeding Birds 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: Angela Cassels, David Callan, Brian Couper, Robert Lambie, Dennis Morrison, Douglas Moore, Jackie Newman, Carl Reavey and Malcolm Whitmore. 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 just interested 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 2012, almost three hundred contributors submitted almost seven thousand records on one hundred and sixty species, one of which had never been recorded before on Arran, namely Garganey. 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 2012.

The Chronological Summary gives the highlights for each month. The Systematic List is in Voous order 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 2013, please send any bird notes with "what, when, where" to me before Monday 13 January 2014, at Kilpatrick Kennels, Kilpatrick, Blackwaterfoot, KA27 8EY, or telephone 01770 860316 (you can leave a message), 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

2012 was another fascinating birding year on Arran.

The unsettled weather at the beginning of the year resulted in an influx of white-winged gulls into the UK. Arran did not miss out. With the latter half of April decidedly colder than April last year and winds from a more northerly and easterly direction, our summer migrants seemed to arrive later. By the end of April even the bulk of the Swallows did not seem to be around. Over one hundred species of birds were reported in May including the first ever record of Garganey on Arran. This small duck winters in Africa and is a summer visitor to the UK. Our insect-eating summer visitors like Willow Warbler and Whitethroat seemed to have been particularly badly affected by the prolonged wet spell during the breeding season and by the end of July many had already left and started their journey south. On the other hand, some of our breeding birds in the remoter areas, with fewer people venturing into these areas, had been less disturbed and had a better breeding season than usual. Towards the end of the year the colder weather saw an influx of winter visitors including an abundance of Waxwing.

Now read on.

January

January was milder, windier and wetter than the three previous Januarys.

As in December, there were further reports of: Redwing including thirty four at Kilpatrick on 8th, Fieldfare including forty at South Feorline on 28th and Jay was sighted in Merkland on 4th and Cnoc na Dail on 25th. This rare species on Arran had been around since 17 October 2011 and this was the first record since 1985.

Other highlights included: a Slavonian Grebe in Whiting Bay on 3rd, first record of this occasional winter and passage migrant since March 2010, eleven Yellowhammer in Sliddery on 19th and a long staying Iceland Gull also in Sliddery from 5th to the end of the month. The last Arran record of this white winged gull was 25 April 2010.

Wintering wildfowl numbers included: one Barnacle Goose in Shiskine on 5th, thirty six Whooper Swan over Lamlash on 16th, forty Wigeon in Kildonan on 19th, one White-fronted Goose with three hundred and sixty Greylag Geese in Shiskine on 24th and fifty two Pink-footed Geese in Sliddery on 28th.

Other winter visitors in January included: a Greenshank at Clauchlands on 2nd, a Kingfisher at Carlo on 9th, ten Purple Sandpipers at Kildonan on 9th, a Dunlin at Whiting Bay on 20th, twenty six Lapwing at Shiskine on 22nd, a Knot at Blackwaterfoot on 22nd and sixteen Turnstone at South Feorline on 30th.

Interesting garden birds included: a Great Spotted Woodpecker in Lamlash on 13th, eleven Long-tailed Tit at Mayish also on 13th, a Treecreeper at Dhunan on 16th and a pair of Bullfinch in Margnaheglis on 26th.

There were some signs of approaching spring with Fulmars on the cliff at Catacol on 19th, ten male and female Red-breasted Merganser displaying off Margnaheglis on 28th and a pair of Collared Doves mating in Kilpatrick on 29th.

February

In terms of weather, February was very similar to January. It was generally mild, wet and unsettled. This unsettled weather resulted in an influx of white-winged gulls into the UK. These Arctic breeding gulls move into the Atlantic in the winter and this year's storms had blown more of them onshore. Arran did not miss out. Following on from the report of the long staying Iceland Gull in Slidderly in January, there were reports in February of an Iceland Gull in Brodick Bay on 5 February, a Glaucous Gull in Catacol Bay on 8th and a Glaucous Gull in Brodick Bay on 11th.

It was a good month for seeing wildfowl. A pair of Shoveler on Cleats Shore on 2nd was only the third record in the last fifteen years. Other highlights included: twelve Whooper Swan at Shannochie on 1st, a pair of Pintail on Cleats Shore from 7th to 19th, a pair of Common Scoter in Machrie Bay on 11th, a pair of Goldeneye in Lamlash Bay on 12th and with the increasing flock of Greylag Geese in Shiskine, there were nine Pink-footed Geese on 26th and a Barnacle Goose on 27th.

Other winter visitors were to the fore including: fourteen Fieldfare at Shannochie on 3rd, two Greenshank in Lamlash on 13th, seventy Lapwing in Shiskine also on 13th, six Purple Sandpipers at Kildonan on 26th and twelve Redwing in Lochranza on 27th.

Occasional days with calm sea were ideal for sea watching. Throughout the month there were reports of all three divers, including two Red-throated Divers off Largymore on 5th, four Black-throated Divers off Catacol on 7th and a Great Northern Diver in Machrie Bay on 19th.

With sources of food for some species of bird becoming scarce, gardens were havens for many species, including some more unusual garden birds like Great Spotted Woodpecker in Lamlash on 1st, fifteen Long-tailed Tit in Lochranza on 3rd, a Goldcrest in Kilpatrick on 7th, a Treecreeper at Dhunan on 18th and a pair of Bullfinch in Brodick on 29th. In addition, there was a further report of Jay with one in Glen Cloy on 18th.

Other sightings included a male Black Grouse by the Narachan Track on 5th, a male Merlin by Auchenhew on 10th, two Little Grebe in Loch Ranza on 12th, an immature White-tailed Eagle at Imachar on 19th, two Bar-tailed Godwit at Torrylinn on 24th and a Knot at Kildonan on 26th.

Finally, there were some signs of approaching spring with reports of garden birds in song throughout the island towards the end of the month, thirteen Black Guillemot displaying off Brodick Pier on 2nd, six pairs of Fulmar on the cliff at Catacol on 10th, a pair of Golden Eagle displaying over Lochranza on 12th, ten Lesser Black-backed Gulls in Lamlash on 12th and a Buzzard carrying nest material by the String on 25th.

March

After a gloomy dreich start to the month, an anticyclone sat over Scotland for the second half bringing unseasonably warm dry air from the continent with day temperatures reaching around twenty degrees. Overall, March was generally settled and dry with around a third of the rain of February and around half the rain of March 2011.

The settled spell encouraged the arrival of the first of the spring migrants. Chiffchaff were heard in Kiscadale and in Cladach on 22nd. Two male and a female Wheatear were seen on the shore by Shannochie on 25th and a single Sand Martin was in Slidery on 25th. These dates are a few days later than the 2011 arrival dates.

Other migrants passing through included a female Merlin on Cleats Shore on 11th and a pair of Ring Ouzel in Glen Sannox on 28th. Ring Ouzel breed in the higher regions of western and central Europe often in gullies, rocky areas or scree slopes. Ringing information reveals these migrants travel further to the west in spring than in autumn.

In March, winter visitors were still present including: a Glaucous Gull at Thunderguy on 3rd, a Bar-tailed Godwit at Shannochie also on 3rd, a mixed flock of two hundred Fieldfare and Redwing at Balmichael on 4th, a Greenshank at Clauchlands on 8th, fifteen Pink-footed Geese at Shiskine on 10th, a pair of Goldeneye at Catacol on 14th, nineteen Wigeon at Machriewaterfoot on 17th, two hundred and fifty Greylag Geese in Blackwaterfoot on 19th and thirty six Whooper Swans at Sandbraes on 24th.

Other sightings included Magpie and Canada Geese. For different reasons neither of these species would be welcomed on Arran. The much maligned Magpie may be common on the adjacent mainland, but it is a vagrant on Arran. One in Sannox on 31st was the first record on Arran since one at Port-na-Lochan on 11 June 2011. Before 2008 there were only seven records in the previous twenty five years. There were no records for 2010. There were three March reports of Canada Geese, four on Cleats Shore on 13th, two at Port-na-Lochan on 22nd and five at Kildonan on 26th. Canada Geese were first introduced to the UK in 1665, as an addition to the waterfowl collection of King Charles II at St. James' Park. Last year on Arran there was a first breeding record when four goslings were seen in Slidery/Corriecravie.

Spring is a great time to be birding, as most birds are getting on with the business of breeding. In March the signs were there, including, ten male Eiders displaying to two female Eiders in Whiting Bay on 4th, a Grey Heron carrying sticks in Whitehouse Woods Lamlash on 20th, eight pairs of Fulmars on Drumadoon cliffs on 22nd, Skylarks singing on the hills above Lochranza on 23rd, Great Spotted Woodpecker drumming in Glen Cloy on 24th, two pairs of Shelduck fighting over territory on the shore at Blackwaterfoot on 25th and five Lapwings displaying in Kilmory on 26th.

April

April is the month when spring migration gets underway with arrivals and departures of birds, all seeking their best breeding territories. With the latter half of April decidedly colder than April last year and winds from a more northerly and easterly direction, our summer migrants seemed to be arriving later, in some cases more than ten days later than 2011. By the end of April even the bulk of the Swallows did not seem to be around. In addition there were no April records of Whinchat, Tree Pipit, Redstart, Grasshopper Warbler, Spotted Flycatcher and Wood Warbler, all of which are often reported before the end of April.

The April "firsts" for Arran summer migrants were: Willow Warbler in Whiting Bay on 1st, House Martin at Clauchlands on 2nd, Blackcap at Cladach on 6th, Sandwich Tern at Blackwaterfoot on 10th, Swallow at Clauchlands on 11th, White Wagtail at Kildonan also on 11th, Common Sandpiper at Dougare on 19th, Garden Warbler at Torr Righ on 28th,

Whitethroat at Dhunan also on 28th and Sedge Warbler on Corriecravie shore on 29th. As for that harbinger of summer the Cuckoo, the first report was a bird calling in Glen Rosa on 18th, the same date as last year. By the end of the month there were widespread reports of Cuckoo and the songs of other summer migrants like Willow Warbler, Blackcap and Chifchaff were beginning to fill the air.

April is an ideal time for watching migration particularly on the coast. For example on 11th there were over one thousand Manx Shearwaters off Largymore, on 13th there were six Great Northern Divers off Imachar and on 23rd eight Black-throated Divers off Pirnmill.

Other birds moving to breeding grounds further north included: a Grey Plover on Torrylinn shore on 5th, a Ring Ouzel at North Newton on 7th, thirty one Turnstone at Machriewaterfoot and six Whooper Swans at Sandbraes on 13th, seventy five Pink-footed Geese flying over Kildonan on 15th, two Purple Sandpipers at Drumadoon on 16th, a Merlin in Glen Sannox on 19th and seven Whimbrel at Auchenhew on 22nd.

Other highlights from the many that have been shared with me in April included: a Jay on the road to Glen Rosa on 9th, a photographed Snow Bunting on Goatfell summit on 11th, two Puffin south of Pladda on 13th, a male Tufted Duck on Port-na-Lochan on 18th and an intriguing report of three Common Cranes. On Saturday 21st April a couple were carrying out a bird survey to the south of Skipness when they saw three Common Cranes flying high and east towards the Isle of Arran. At one point a juvenile Golden Eagle flew up and briefly circled below them before they were lost from view in a hail shower. The last record of Common Crane on Arran was two in the Shiskine Valley in September 1989.

May

The colder weather in April continued well into May, but around the 20th it got much warmer with temperatures reaching the high twenties. In comparison with May 2011 the rainfall was around 50% less.

In May, although summer visitors continued to arrive, the cold weather seemed to delay their arrival by around a fortnight. The following "firsts" were reported: Tree Pipit in Glen Rosa on 1st, Spotted Flycatcher in Strathwillan on 2nd, Grasshopper Warbler in Springbank on 3rd, female Redstart in Auchenhew on 4th, Whinchat in Sliderry on 5th, Wood Warbler in Glenashdale on 8th, Lesser Whitethroat in Auchenhew on 18th, Arctic Tern on Pladda on 20th and a Swift over Port-na-Lochan also on 20th.

In May, breeding was well underway for many species including: over twenty Black Guillemots in the colony at Brodick Pier on 9th, a pair of Golden Eagles displaying over Lochranza on 11th, a pair of Canada Geese with four young on the pond on Cnocan Donn on 16th, only the second Arran breeding record for this species, three pairs of Shelduck all with young on Cleats Shore on 28th, while the pair of Mute Swans at Port-na-Lochan had young hatched on 31st, twenty four days later than the hatching in 2011. 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.

Species who breed further north continued to pass through including: four Whimbrel in Auchenhew Bay on 4th, five Common Scoter off Dougarie on 6th, ten Great Northern Divers off Blackwaterfoot also on 6th, two Purple Sandpipers at Clauchlands on 8th, the

last over-wintering Whooper Swan left Sandbraes on 10th, five Sanderling at Drumadoon Point on 21st and seven Dunlin also at Drumadoon Point on 24th.

Over one hundred species of birds were reported to me in May including the first ever record of Garganey on Arran. This small duck winters in Africa and is a summer visitor to the UK. A pair was on the lochan at Torr Righ on 9th. In addition there was a pair of Goosanders at Machriewaterfoot on 7th, two Ptarmigan in Coire nam Meann on 24th and a female Tufted Duck, an occasional visitor to Arran, on Corriecravie pond on 28th.

June

June 2012 was almost a re-run of June 2011, with similar mean temperature and similar rainfall. However, whereas the winds in 2011 were predominantly from the west, the winds in 2012 were predominantly from the cooler east and north.

Raising young is the priority during the long daylight hours in June, and despite the cool unsettled weather, there were many reports of fledged birds in gardens. As well as the more familiar species there were, unusually, reports of family groups of Lesser Redpoll from a number of locations including Catacol, Corriecravie and Lamlash.

In addition, there was a pair of Common Sandpiper with young at Sliderrywater on 4th, four pairs of Fulmar on the cliffs at Shannochie on 7th, a family of Long-tailed Tits in Glen Cloy on 13th, a pair of Shelduck with nine young at Clauchlands on 14th, a group of fifty Starling with many young in Lamlash on 17th, two young Great Spotted Woodpecker in Brodick on 20th, an Eider with six young at Blackwaterfoot on 24th and a family of Bullfinch in Mayish on 25th. The population of Arctic Terns on Pladda was the largest for some years. To prevent disturbance, visitors are asked not to enter the colony. On the negative side, there seemed to have been a reduction in reports of Stonechat and Grey Wagtail. They could have been badly affected by the prolonged cool wet spring.

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.

Other reports included: a male Dotterel feeding and calling on Beinn Tarsuinn on 4th, a Black-throated Diver in summer plumage in Whiting Bay on 9th, three reports of Ring Ouzel singing including one in Glen Catacol on 9th, two Great Northern Divers off North Sannox on 10th, a male Tufted Duck on Port-na-Lochan on 16th (the third record for this year), thirty Gannet in Whiting Bay on 22nd, fifty Manx Shearwater in Brodick Bay on 27th and, also on that date, five Swift over Clauchlands, the largest group reported this year.

Finally, on Wednesday 6 June there was a report of two Quail singing in Glenscorrodale. This small game bird winters in sub-Saharan Africa and is the UK's only migrant game bird, reaching the northern fringes of its breeding ranges here. This was the first Arran record of this species since 1995 and interestingly there were also reports from Ayrshire and Argyll in June.

July

A wet June was followed by an equally wet July with twice as much rain as July 2011. This was less than ideal for birds whose main priority at this time of year is raising young.

Our insect-eating summer visitors like Willow Warbler and Whitethroat seemed to have been particularly badly affected by the prolonged wet spell and by the end of the month many had already left and started their journey south. On the other hand, some of our breeding birds in the remoter areas, with fewer people venturing into these areas, had been less disturbed and had a better breeding season than usual. Reports suggested that while Barn Owl and Hen Harrier had a poorer breeding year, Short-eared Owl had done better than recent years.

Reports of breeding included: five occupied Fulmar nests on Dun Fionn with one young on 1st, five adult with seven young Eider on Cleats Shore on 7th, at least twenty Black Guillemot by the King's Cave on 9th, a pair of Shelduck with seven well grown young at Clauchlands on 16th, up to twenty young Chaffinch at Balmichael on 20th, four breeding pairs of Common Sandpiper on South Feorline shore on 21st and on 28th seven young Grey Herons at the Fisherman's Walk in Brodick.

Inclement weather on 22nd drove a number of sea birds close to the shore. On that date a Cory's Shearwater was reported flying south off Largymore. This is the first report of this species in Arran waters since September 2009. At the time there was a considerable passage of Manx Shearwaters, Gannets and Auks. Around three hundred Manx Shearwaters and fifty Gannets were reported in an hour in Whiting Bay.

July marks the end of the breeding season for some birds and these are some of the highlights of birds which were already dispersing, flocking or migrating south after breeding: a Merlin on the Ross Road on 6th, a Little Grebe on Port-na-Lochan on 19th and on 21st sixty three Red-breasted Merganser in Machrie Bay and two Dunlin and a Knot all in partial breeding plumage at Drumadoon Point.

Other observations received included: a Shoveler close inshore by Catacol on 6th was only the second Arran record this year, nine Red-throated Divers in Machrie Bay on 21st and a Goosander in Glen Rosa on 31st.

In addition there were two intriguing records. A male Yellowhammer was heard and seen on Machrie Moor on 9th. There have been few summer records of this species in recent years and no confirmed breeding records for several years. A Nuthatch was heard calling in the mature trees between Duchess Court and the Mountain Rescue Centre in Cladach on 13th. The last record of this species on Arran was one in Corrie in 2002.

August

August 2012 had a mean temperature two degrees higher than the previous two Augusts but there was twice as much rainfall as the previous two Augusts.

Having said that, summer visitors were still to the fore including family groups of Spotted Flycatcher in Shannochie on 2nd, Tree Pipit in Lochranza on 5th and Willow Warbler in Pirnmill on 18th. In addition there were forty Sand Martin in Sannox Quarry on 10th, one hundred House Martin in Largymore on 14th, four Swift over Lamlash on 24th and sixty Swallow in Shiskine on 27th.

Other signs of successful breeding this month included: a family of Bullfinch by Kilmory Church on 2nd, a family of Blackcap in Lamlash on 14th, a pair of Mute Swan with four large young in Whiting Bay on 18th, a crèche of twelve Eider at Machrie on 19th, a pair of Blackbird with their third brood this year in Lochranza on 20th and a young Great Spotted Woodpecker with its red cap at Balnacool also on 20th.

In August, breeding was coming to an end, and after breeding a number of species begin to flock together, some in preparation for migration. These included: eighty three Golden Plover at Machriewaterfoot, eighty eight Ringed Plover at Drumadoon and one hundred and seventy six Starling at Kilpatrick all on 19th, over ninety White Wagtail on Cleats Shore on 25th, a mixed flock of over three hundred Goldfinch and Linnet on Cleats Shore on 26th, eight Wheatear also on Cleats Shore on 26th and forty Red-breasted Merganser at Whitefarland on 30th.

All around the coast were signs of birds on migration, including two Arctic and four Sandwich Tern at Sandbraes on 2nd, one hundred and twenty Manx Shearwater in Whiting Bay on 16th, a juvenile Knot at Machrie on 21st, eighty Turnstone on Pladda on 24th, a Black-tailed Godwit on Cleats Shore on 25th, thirteen Dunlin on Cleats Shore on 26th, fifty Kittiwake in Whiting Bay on 27th and five Sanderling at Drumadoon on 28th.

Other birding highlights this month included: a Greenshank calling over High Kildonan on 15th, forty Canada Geese on a sandbar off Pirnmill on 19th, two Goosander at Cosyden on 19th, a Dipper at Glenashdalewaterfoot on 24th and sixty Gannet off Cleats Shore on 28th.

Finally, a word on the familiar House Sparrow. It is in severe decline in the UK and as a result on the "red" conservation list. Here on Arran it seemed to have had an excellent breeding season with observers reporting second and third broods. In August, groups with young included twenty in Kildonan on 4th, sixty at Largymore on 14th, twenty in Lochranza on 28th and thirty in Kilpatrick on 29th.

September

September was fifty percent wetter than September last year with several stormy days. With September being the start of the peak migration season, when many birds are on the move, the unsettled weather may have contributed to the wide range of species recorded in September. It was certainly the time to expect the unexpected.

Unusual records included a Great Skua flying south through Machrie Bay on 8th. This was the first report in Arran waters this year. There were three reports of female Merlin - at Laggan on the 8th, Shiskine on 9th and Auchenhew on 23rd. An Osprey at Slidderywaterfoot on 10th was only the second record this year. A group of eight Common Scoter in Brodick Bay on 11th was a large group for Arran. Two Tufted Duck in Whiting Bay on 21st was only the fourth record for Arran this year and the first of more than one bird. A Ptarmigan on the slopes of Beinn Nuis on 19th was the second record in this area this year. There were no records in 2011. A female Scaup on the sea off Blackwaterfoot on 27th was the first record this year.

Other birds on migration included: a Whimbrel at Sliddery on 7th, three Sandwich Tern at Machriewaterfoot on 8th, thirty Manx Shearwater at Auchenhew on 9th, four Dunlin at Cleats Shore on 12th, five Sanderling at Machriewaterfoot on 12th, six Wheatear at Glenashdalewaterfoot on 12th, a Bar-tailed Godwit at Machriewaterfoot on 15th, a Knot at Blackwaterfoot also on 15th and fifteen White Wagtail at Auchenhew Bay on 23rd.

The ringing of two hundred and fifty Lesser Redpolls by licensed bird ringers in one area in Auchenhew Bay over 22nd and 23rd gives an indication of the number of birds on the move in September.

At this time of year, birds begin to flock together, often in preparation for migration. Reports included: fourteen Black-throated Divers off Cosyden on 8th, eight Red-throated Divers in Whiting Bay on 12th, one hundred and fifty Starling and one hundred Meadow Pipit on Kildonan shore on 16th, sixty Swallow in Kildonan on 22nd, one thousand Kittiwake in Whiting Bay on 23rd, two hundred Goldfinch on Cleats Shore on 26th and fifty Linnet at Drumadoon Point on 27th.

With the approach of winter some birds move to the milder coast. Dipper was reported at the mouth of the Machriewater on 8th and the mouth of the Glenashdalewater on 17th. Other birds more associated with winter included: a Greenshank at Clauchlands on 21st, four Wigeon in Auchenhew Bay on 27th and a Whooper Swan flying over Sliderry on 29th.

Having said that, some summer visitors were still around including: fifty Sand Martin at Corrie Golf Course on 26th, a Chiffchaff at Auchenhew on 23rd and a Willow Warbler at Margnaheglish on 28th. There were two unusually late reports of young being fed in nests: Swallow in Whiting Bay on 28th and House Martin in Sandbraes on 30th.

Other sightings this month included: one hundred and fifty Shag at Kildonan on 9th, a Snipe in Glen Sannox on 16th, three Moorhen at Port-na-Lochan on 23rd and a Water Rail was found dead on the Dhunan track in Corriegills on 27th. This secretive species is easily overlooked.

October

October was three degrees colder than last October with thirty percent more rain than recent previous Octobers. During this month almost one hundred different species of birds were recorded. Here are a few highlights.

On Saturday 27 October, in an aerial display allowing comparison between two species of eagle, an immature White-tailed Eagle was seen off by the pair of resident Golden Eagles over Lochranza. On Tuesday 9 October, here was a report of a juvenile Ring Ouzel in Glen Rosa. In June there had been reports of males singing in this glen. On Friday 19 October, a female Black Redstart was reported on the shore at Blackwaterfoot towards Drumadoon Point. Black Redstart is a scarce passage migrant on Arran. This was the first record for 2012. The last record was on Cleats Shore on 15 December 2011.

Other birds on migration included: two hundred Kittiwake in Whiting Bay on 5th, over one hundred Skylark on Cleats Shore on 6th, six Barnacle Geese also on Cleats Shore on 7th, twelve Black-throated Divers off Cosyden on 14th and eighty Turnstone at Kildonan on 18th. Throughout the month there were widespread reports of groups of Whooper Swan moving through. The largest group was thirty-six at Sliderry on 27th.

There were some "last sightings" of summer visitors including: four House Martin at Cladach on 3rd and a Chiffchaff at Sliderry on 25th. A pair of wintering Blackcap was reported at Shannochie on 23rd.

There were widespread reports of wintering thrushes, with the largest groups being one hundred and twenty Redwing at Newton on 16th and over one thousand Fieldfare by the Narachan track on 29th. There was also an influx of continental Blackbirds, with twenty in Kilpatrick on 19th being the largest group reported.

Other sightings included: one hundred Greylag Geese in the Shiskine Valley on 6th, two Little Grebe in Loch Ranza on 7th, twelve Rook on Cleats Shore also on 7th, ten Wigeon at Auchenhew on 9th, a female Merlin at Clachaig on 19th, a female Goldeneye at Drumadoon Point on 20th, a Greenshank at Clachlands on 21st, four Moorhen at Port-na-Lochan on 25th, a Yellowhammer at Sliderry on 27th and three Common Scoter in Brodick Bay on 28th.

Finally, there were two reports of Brambling in October, two at Sandbraes on 22nd and one at Sliderry on 29th. While last winter there was only one record of this species on Arran, the winter of 2010-2011 was remarkable with sightings from 26 October to 3 April.

November

November was about three degrees colder and forty percent drier than November 2011.

This colder weather, not only here but on the continent, may have had an influence on the arrival of our winter visitors. Waxwings were certainly here in abundance with many records throughout the month, mainly from the east of the island. The largest group recorded was five hundred and thirty at Cnoc na Dail on 17th. Other large flocks of foraging birds included: four hundred Woodpigeon in Brodick Country Park on 4th, over one thousand Fieldfare and Redwing at Gortonallister on 9th and two hundred Starling in Kilpatrick on 28th.

Other records of wintering birds included: four Whooper Swan at Sliderry on 4th, a Yellowhammer at Torbeg on 6th, three Brambling at Gortonallister on 9th, twenty two Wigeon off Cosyden on 17th, one hundred Greylag Geese in Shiskine on 26th, seven Purple Sandpiper at Kildonan on 28th and thirty two Rook in Sliderry on 30th.

Gardens are safe refuges during the winter months and these are some of the November reports from gardens round the island: twenty seven Collared Dove in Whiting Bay on 20th, seven Blue Tit in Brodick on 25th, twenty Coal Tit and twelve Long-tailed Tit in Lamlash also on 25th, thirteen Blackbird in Kilpatrick on 28th and widespread reports of Great Spotted Woodpecker including in a garden in Glenloig on 29th.

A Slavonian Grebe in Whiting Bay on 5th was only the second record this year. The first was in January. Also in Whiting Bay were nine Common Scoter on 6th. In addition other highlights included: three Dipper at the mouth of the Rosa Burn on 12th, a male Tufted Duck at Strabane gravel pit also on 12th, three Goosander off Catacol on 14th and two Little Grebe in Lamlash Bay also on 14th.

All three divers were reported round the coast. These included: six Great Northern Diver off Blackwaterfoot on 5th, ten Black-throated Diver off Cosyden on 17th and three Red-throated Diver in Machrie Bay on 20th.

Finally as winter approached, two Swallow were reported in Whiting Bay on 1st surely the last record of the year!

December

Although the start of December was relatively dry and cold, the rain in the latter part meant that it was one of the wettest months of the year with a rainfall of about three times that of December 2010.

Winter visitors were to the fore. Waxwings continued to be reported with fifty-eight at Corrie on 3rd and thirty five at Lochranza on 12th being the largest groups. Other winter visitors included: thirty two Rook at Sliddery on 1st, two Pink-footed Geese in the Shiskine Valley on 5th, twenty Linnet and six Redwing at Sliddery on 9th, two hundred and fifty Greylag Geese at Shiskine on 10th and three male and two female Goldeneye off Cordon on 17th.

Highlights this month included: three Ptarmigan on the hills south of the Boguille on 11th, three Moorhen on Port-na-Lochan on 13th, a female Black Redstart on the shore near Brodick pier on 17th, two Little Grebe at Clauchlands on 26th and eleven Common Scoter off Kings Caves on 27th. Interestingly there were no reports of Kingfisher this winter.

On the shore, reports included: a Greenshank at Clauchlands on 1st; one hundred and thirty Eider, seven Black-throated Diver, thirty-four Teal and eighteen Wigeon all at Cosyden on 15th; fourteen Lapwings at Kilpatrick Point on 18th; and nine Purple Sandpipers and sixty Turnstones at Kildonan on 26th.

On Tuesday 18 December there were two reports of male Stonechat on the coast, one at Kilpatrick Point and one by Shiskine Golf Course. On 24th a pair was also reported at Clauchlands. After the two severe winters of 2009-10 and 2010-11, the numbers wintering on Arran crashed. These records may indicate that the population is trying to re-establish.

Reports of Gannet off Sandbraes on the 23rd and off Corrie on 30th were only the fourth and fifth December reports in the last eight years. This species normally returns to waters around Arran in January.

Garden reports included: Great Spotted Woodpecker at Largybeg on 11th, ten Blackbird at Dyemill on 16th, ten Long-tailed Tit at Whitefarland on 17th, thirty Chaffinch in Brodick on 18th and widespread reports of Coal Tit including nine in Lamblash on 19th.

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 2012

The weather influences the timing of bird migration.

With the latter half of April 2012 decidedly colder than April last year and winds from a more northerly and easterly direction, our summer migrants seemed to be arriving later, in some cases more than ten days later than 2011.

The weather influences the timing of breeding.

In comparison with 2011, May 2012 was cooler with the winds often from a northerly direction. This may have delayed the timing of the breeding of some of our summer visitors.

The weather influences the success of breeding.

The heavy rain in June and July may have had an impact on the poor breeding records for some of our raptors.

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 after a milder winter there were 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 2012 from our weather station at Kilpatrick on the west of the island.

	Temperature (degrees C)			Rainfall (mm)	Rainfall (mm)	Wind Speed (mph) and Direction		
	Mean	High	Low		BCG	Average	High	Dom. Dir.
January	6.7	11.8	-1.3	101.7	287.6	7.5	71.0	W
February	6.9	11.7	-1.2	90.0	170.6	6.8	39.0	W
March	9.5	18.4	0.5	29.0	71.3	4.9	27.0	SSE
April	7.7	15.1	-0.8	61.8	94.0	5.1	41.0	ENE
May	11.2	27.2	-0.8	59.0	80.8	5.3	35.0	ENE
June	12.5	19.4	3.8	102.2	151.0	4.7	35.0	ENE
July	14.1	24.2	6.7	95.2	132.7	3.9	30.0	W
August	15.1	22.8	6.1	148.0	177.9	4.2	30.0	SSE
September	12.4	18.9	3.7	149.2	201.7	6.2	34.0	W
October	8.8	16.6	-0.6	130.2	252.2	4.2	34.0	ENE
November	7.6	13.2	-0.9	70.8	194.9	6.8	38.0	SSE
December	5.9	11.5	-1.6	142.8	320.4	6.7	50.0	SE

Dom.Dir. – dominant direction

Also included for comparison is the rainfall data from Brodick Castle Gardens (BCG) provided by Colin Totty, Head Gardener. This clearly demonstrates variation from the Kilpatrick data. The total rainfall at Kilpatrick in the west was 1180mm whereas in Brodick Castle Gardens in the east the rainfall was 2135mm. Other rainfall totals received were Pirnmill 1920mm and Shiskine 1158mm

As well as a variation in rainfall, during the cold spell at the start of December the lowest temperature recorded in Kilpatrick was negative 1.6 degrees Celsius, whereas in Brodick Castle Gardens the lowest temperature was negative 4.5 degrees Celsius.

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 2012
Wheatear	13-Mar-05	25 March
Chiffchaff	17-Mar-05	17 March
Sand Martin	18-Mar-09	25 March
Willow Warbler	20-Mar-94	01 April
Swallow	23-Mar-05	11 April
White Wagtail	24-Mar-08	11 April
House Martin	28-Mar-05	02 April
Common Sandpiper	29-Mar-98	19 April
Whinchat	01-Apr-88	05 May
Sandwich Tern	03-Apr-09	10 April
Manx Shearwater	03-Apr-11	11 April
Tree Pipit	07-Apr-90	01 May
Redstart	08-April-11	04 May
Cuckoo	10-Apr-01	18 April
Grasshopper Warbler	12-Apr-11	03 May
Garden Warbler	12-Apr-95	28 April
Sedge Warbler	14-Apr-11	29 April
Arctic Tern	16-Apr-09	20 May
Whitethroat	17-Apr-06	28 April
Corncrake	20-Apr-90	None recorded in 2012
Common Tern	21-Apr-93	None recorded in 2012
Spotted Flycatcher	21-Apr-11	01 May
Wood Warbler	25-Apr-09	06 May, one of three records
Lesser Whitethroat	27-Apr-10	18 May, one of three records
Pied Flycatcher	28-Apr-98	None recorded in 2012
Swift	01-May-09	20 May
Nightjar	23-May-94	None recorded in 2012

Regular Winter Migrant Arrival and Departure Dates

	"earliest" Arrival date	"latest" Departure date	2012 Arrival date	2012 Departure date
Whooper Swan	18-Sep-11	10-May-12	29 September	10 May
Pink-footed Goose	11-Oct-10	15-Apr-12	05 December	15 April
Greylag Goose	04-Oct-12	15-Apr-11	04 October	25 March
Wigeon	11-Jul-11	06-Apr-08	27 September	17 March
Goldeneye	12-Oct-09	04-May-06	20 October	14 March
Purple Sandpiper	09-Nov-06	11-May-10	28 November	08 May
Kingfisher	13-Jul-07	27-Mar-08		13 March
Waxwing	21-Oct-10	15-Apr-09	01 November	
Fieldfare	25-Sep-11	18-Apr-08	01 October	30 March
Redwing	30-Sep-07	05-Apr-07	16 October	27 February
Rook	03-Jul-07	20-Apr-11	03 October	
Brambling	09-Oct-07	25-Apr-08	22 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 Clachlands.

Bird Surveys and Projects on Arran

Bird Atlas 2007-2011 and the Arran Bird Atlas

What is it?

For the first time the partnership of the British Trust for Ornithology, BirdWatch Ireland and the Scottish Ornithologists Club are combining 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. For full details of the national Atlas project and progress towards publication of the National Atlas, visit the website <http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/birdatlas>.

What is happening on Arran?

In 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. To gather enough data to do this, every area of Arran has been surveyed. The island was divided into around one hundred and forty tetrads. Tetrads are 2km x 2km squares. Each tetrad has been surveyed twice during winter and twice during the breeding season, using the same methodology as used for the National Atlas. In addition, as many records as possible have been collected by tetrad, in order to build up comprehensive species lists for every tetrad.

In order to achieve this coverage the fieldwork for the local atlas started in the winter of 2007/2008 and lasted for five winters. Breeding season fieldwork took place in the summers of 2008 to 2012.

The last of the data was uploaded onto the Bird Atlas data base on 30 September 2012.

The Arran Natural History Society plans to publish the local atlas results. Details on how this will be done will be announced in due course on the website http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/bird_atlas_2007-2011.html

Garden BirdWatch

In the last weekend in January 2012 thirty five households on Arran took part in the RSPB Big Garden Bird Watch. A report on the Arran results is available here http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/top_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. On Arran in 2012 there were nine volunteers. Observations collected by BTO Garden BirdWatchers, not just in one weekend of the year, but throughout 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>

Wetland Bird Survey - Arran Summary for 2012

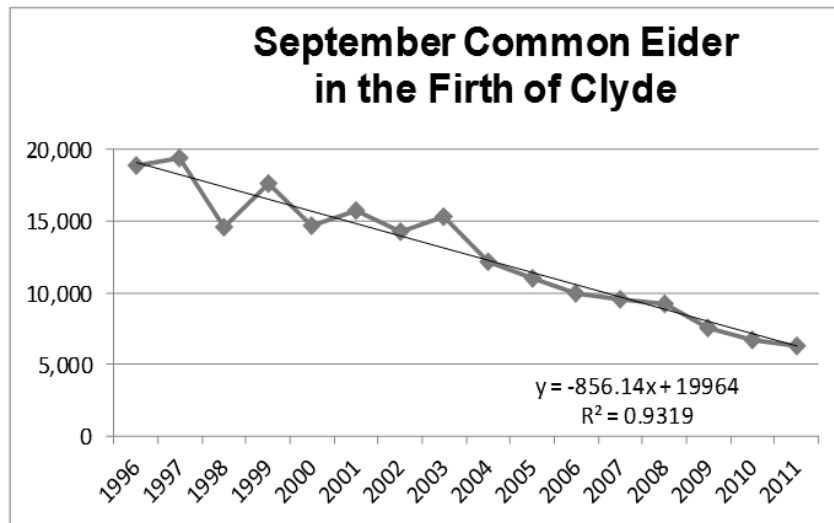
This is a joint scheme involving the British Trust for Ornithology, the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee and monitors non-breeding waterbirds in the UK. The survey is dependent on volunteers. Eight of the survey sites are on Arran, the coastlines at Brodick, Lamlash, Whiting Bay, Kildonan, Blackwaterfoot, Machrie, Pirmill and Lochranza. These are counted one Sunday each month with total results 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	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Mute Swan	39	25	30	32	26	32	25	17	24	28	29	27
Whooper Swan	5	7	3	2								
Greylag Goose	6	77	67	18	25						32	
Canada Goose			3									
Shelduck	10	15	22	46	26	23	15			1		2
Wigeon	38	39	37	2						9	26	25
Teal	56	81	61	1		3		16	4	31	68	61
Mallard	162	103	81	75	47	91	36	95	116	77	158	163
Eider	104	114	203	91	59	22	24	22	24	154	128	135
Common Scoter			2									8
Goldeneye		6	1									
Red-breasted Merganser	35	58	51	55	29	38	77	39	39	38	39	33
Goosander								2			1	
Red-throated Diver			2	2	1		11	2	5	2		1
Black-throated Diver	1	2	8	7			1		5	12	10	7
Great Northern Diver	2	3	12	17	1			1	1		1	4
Little Grebe	1			1					1	2	1	1
Cormorant	9		1	2	2	2	2	3	4	8	15	9
Shag	53	96	39	64	48	49	24	53	111	207	76	66
Grey Heron	8	5	2	2	2	7	7	8	13	17	12	10
Oystercatcher	391	299	344	300	167	156	190	190	225	224	288	249
Ringed Plover	70	127	48	19	25	16	25	124	93	56	85	74
Golden Plover	17	3					62	83	63			
Lapwing		18								1		14
Knot							1		1			
Sanderling					5				2			
Purple Sandpiper	5	3										
Dunlin					2	1	3	18	5			
Snipe	1		2								3	
Bar-tailed Godwit									1			
Curlew	183	102	64	16	7	10	31	72	59	55	70	81
Redshank	27	25	34	15	2		8	9	9	23	37	33
Greenshank	1	1	1					1		1	1	
Common Sandpiper				4	8	7	12	6	1			
Turnstone	40	29	8	42	10	3	11	46	66	72	67	58

If you would like to find out more the Wetland Bird Survey visit 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. See graph below.



Chris Waltho, a past president of the Scottish Ornithologists Club, has organised September surveys in the Clyde for about twenty years. Chris's data clearly shows that the post breeding population of Eiders in the Firth of Clyde is in decline and has more than 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 out 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 2012 the total figure from the census done in September was one hundred and thirty one.

In addition, 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.

Raven Study



In the *Arran Bird Report 2011* Malcolm Whitmore gave some background on the work that he was doing on Ravens for Scottish Natural Heritage. This is his report.

The ravens on Arran were the subject of a study started in the Autumn of 2011 and continuing throughout the breeding season in 2012.

The study found that about half the breeding sites are currently on sea cliffs and half on inland crags but tree sites are also used. Nest sites were spread over suitable territory and averaged 3.7 km apart.

Nineteen territories were occupied of which 18 are known to have produced from one to six young. In total, 57 birds are believed to have successfully flown. Being early breeders, they may have benefited from the relatively dry, if cold, breeding season in 2012. Breeding pairs tend to remain within their territory throughout the year and roost on their chosen cliff, crag or clump of trees but the study also looked at the mobile, non breeding population. The study found that juveniles and non - territorial adults foraged widely, mainly in the south and west of the island and roosted communally in a conifer plantation. Numbers counted in and out of the roost fluctuated but peaked at 99.

Overall the population is on a par with other parts of the west coast of Scotland.

The study was commissioned by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) in response to concern from farmers about predation of farm animals by ravens. During the study there were a number of incidents and SNH issued licenses for limited control by shooting. By learning more about the raven population on Arran it is hoped that a viable population can be maintained whilst minimising damage to farming.

Great Spotted Woodpecker on Arran

These striking black and white birds with the bright red vent are making appearances at garden feeders throughout Arran and their drumming is becoming a familiar feature of Arran woodlands. In 2012 there were reports from north, south, east and west, namely from Lochranza to Kildonan and from Whiting Bay to Shiskine often with comments like "*Where have these birds come from? I have lived here all my days and I have never seen them before.*"

Great Spotted Woodpecker is distributed over an immense range covering almost the entire Palearctic from Britain in the west to Japan in the east and reaching North Africa and the Canary Islands in the south-west.

The species is believed to have been widely distributed in Scotland prior to the destruction of indigenous forests. In the first half of the nineteenth century there was a rapid decline and by the middle of the century Great Spotted Woodpecker was considered to be exterminated. This was attributed to clearance of woodland. Competition with Starlings over nest holes and predation by red squirrels were possibly also important as both their populations were increasing at the time. During the later 19th century, following a northwards expansion from England, breeding was recorded in Solway 1888, Duns, Berwickshire 1893, and by the turn of the century in Central Scotland. Within fifty years all mainland Scotland recording areas had breeding populations. This is according to *Birds of Scotland*: editor R. Forrester et al (SOC 2007). The first Ayrshire breeding record was in 1925 as noted in the *Birds of the Firth of Clyde*: J.M. McWilliams (Witherby 1936), and according to *Birds of Scotland*: E.V. Baxter and L.J. Rintoul (Oliver and Boyd 1953) the only island on which it was known to breed was Bute, with nesting since 1938.

What about Arran? According to *Birds of Arran*: R.Gray (Bell and Bain 1872) there were no Arran records and according to *Birds of the Firth of Clyde*:J.M. McWilliam (Witherby 1936) there were no Arran records. However *Birds of the Island of Arran*: J.A. Gibson (Bute Newspapers 1956) states..."Great Spotted Woodpecker now nests not uncommonly in the woods around Brodick." Maggie Dunn, a previous bird recorder for the Arran Natural History Society, has some records from around that time but the population does not seem to have become established. Perhaps at that time there was not enough appropriate woodland. From the annual Arran Bird Report in the 1980s and 1990s there were only five occasional records mainly from the Brodick area. This century the first record was in 2002 in Merkland Wood. There were also records in 2003 and 2004, and in 2005 there was the first confirmed breeding record in Kilmichael, Brodick. From this stronghold round Brodick, over the next few years there were increasingly widespread reports and the species now seems to be well established on Arran.



Report from Forestry Commission Barn Owl Nest Box Project

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



2012 was a poor year for breeding Barn Owl. The adult pairs seemed to be in such poor condition that in most instances they did not even attempt to nest or started to lay one or two eggs before abandoning them although there were one or two exceptions. This poor breeding was due to the naturally occurring crash in the vole population and poor winter weather. Two out of the 28 nest boxes on Forestry Commission Scotland land had late success and in both situations this was due to a significant rat population near by.

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. Although 2012 was a poor year, 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.

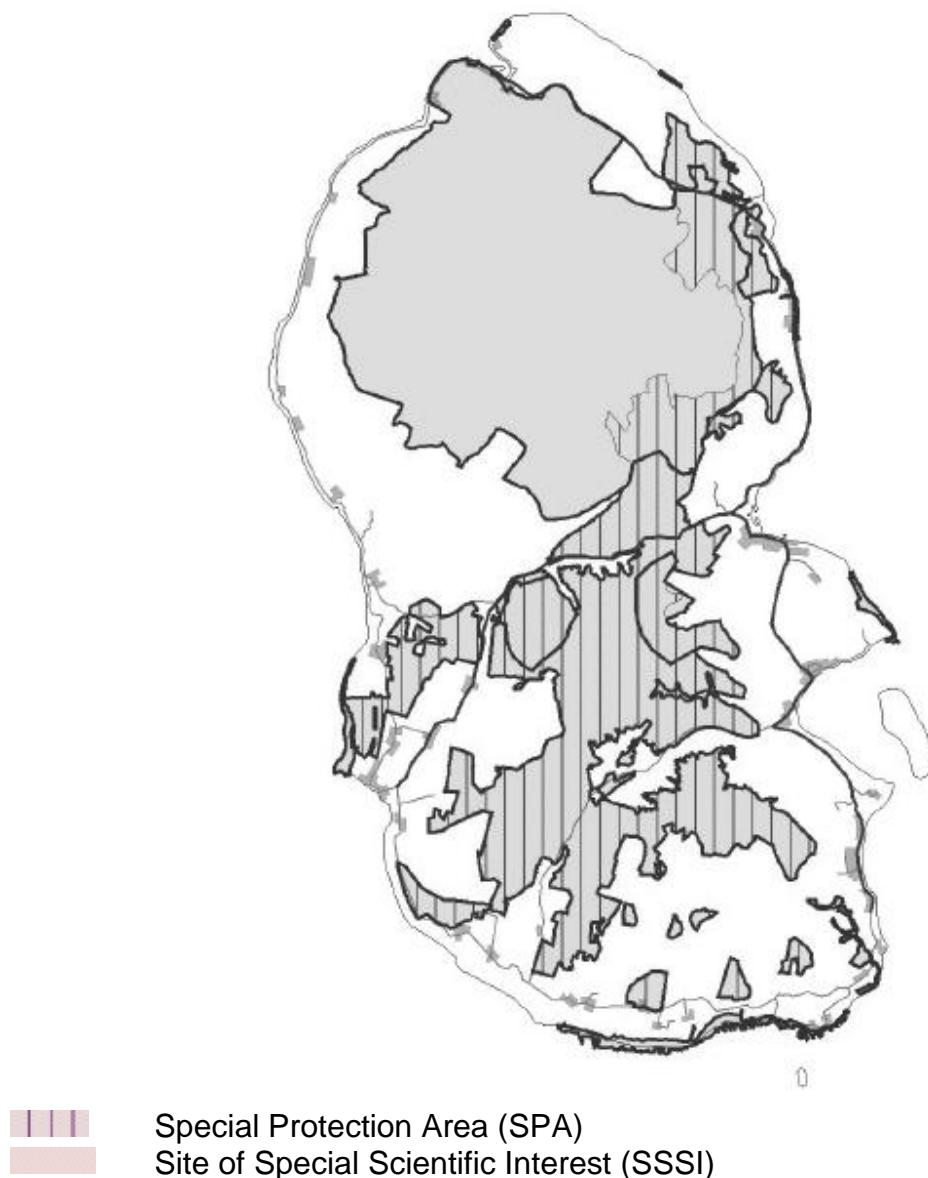
To find out how to join visit the website <http://www.arranblackgrouse.com/blog/>

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 Divers, 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.

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?

Much has been discovered about birds by watching and counting them, but such methods rarely allow birds to be identified as individuals. This is essential if we are to learn about how long they live and when and where they move, questions that are vital for bird conservation. Placing a lightweight, uniquely numbered, metal ring around a bird's leg provides a reliable and harmless method of identifying birds as individuals. Each 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.

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.

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. About twenty percent are ringed as chicks in the nest; this is valuable because their precise age and origin are then known. The method most frequently used to catch fully-grown birds is the mist net. This is a fine net erected between poles and is designed to catch birds in flight. This method is very effective but birds can only be removed safely from mist nets by experienced ringers who have received special training.

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>

There is one licensed ringer living on Arran, Terry Southall. The following report is from Terry

Bird ringing on Arran in 2012

This year's total was less than half of 2011, which was mainly due to poor weather conditions and the time available to Terry Southall to catch and ring birds.

No visits to Pladda were made to ring seabird chicks owing to poor weather conditions. The ringing totals also reflect the low breeding success of many species of birds this year due to the wet conditions especially the warblers, these being birds that depended on insects to feed their young. This trend was not isolated to Arran but was seen nationally. Although to buck the trend, the finch species had a good breeding season especially Siskin, Goldfinch and Lesser Redpoll.

The breeding Whinchat study continued with birds now being colour ringed so that they can be more easily identified in the future. Please report all colour ringed Whinchats.

Ringling Totals for 2012

SPECIES	Full grown	Pulli	Retraps	Total
Red-throated Diver	0	3	0	3
Red-breasted Merganser	1	0	0	1
Sparrowhawk	1	0	0	1
Kestrel	0	10	0	10
Oystercatcher	0	1	0	1
Common Sandpiper	0	3	0	3
Collared dove	0	2	0	2
Swallow	10	0	0	10
Meadow Pipit	9	0	0	9
Rock Pipit	7	0	1	8
Pied/White Wagtail	6	0	0	6
Waxwing	33	0	0	33
Wren	26	0	1	27
Dunnock	23	0	2	25
Robin	35	0	4	39
Whinchat	2	38	0	40
Wheatear	4	0	0	4
Blackbird	14	0	1	15
Song Thrush	6	0	0	6
Whitethroat	3	0	0	3
Blackcap	8	0	0	8
Chiffchaff	4	0	0	4
Willow Warbler	40	0	0	40
Goldcrest	60	0	2	62
Long-tailed tit	58	0	0	58
Coal Tit	8	0	0	8
Blue Tit	24	0	2	26
Great Tit	14	0	1	15
Treecreeper	1	0	0	1

Continued

SPECIES	Full grown	Pulli	Retraps	Total
Hooded Crow	0	1	0	1
House Sparrow	2	0	0	2
Chaffinch	35	0	5	40
Greenfinch	3	0	1	4
Goldfinch	79	0	8	87
Siskin	112	0	36	148
Linnet	11	0	0	11
Twite	1	0	0	1
Lesser Redpoll	221	0	4	225
Bullfinch	2	0	0	2
Total:	863	58	68	989

Pulli – Young birds in nest

Selected List of Recoveries

Birds ringed on Arran and recovered in 2011 and 2012

Species	Age & Sex	Date Ringed	Date Recovered	Lapsed days	Where recovered	Distance from place ringed
Willow Warbler	3J	01/07/11	11/05/12	315	Burnham Overy, Norfolk	471km
Siskin	5 M	01/06/11	05/07/12	400	Whiting Bay, Arran	6km
Siskin	5 F	03/04/10	13/03/11	344	Lockerbie, Dumfries & Galloway	116km
Greenfinch	6 M	06/03/11	01/05/12	422	Leswalt, Dumfries & Galloway	56km

Age and sex were at time of ringing.

The Willow Warbler recovered in Norfolk, having flown into a window, was returning to Scotland in the spring having wintered in Africa.

Greenfinch numbers reduce considerably during the winter on Arran. This bird was caught by another ringer and gives an indication of where some of our birds move to. A May recovery date is late for the bird to be moving and it may have settled down to breed locally.

Birds ringed elsewhere and recovered on Arran in 2012

Species	Age & Sex	Date Ringed	Date recovered	Lapsed days	Where ringed	Distance from place ringed
Siskin	5 F	13/02/12	18/04/12	65	Burghfield Common, West Berkshire	522km
Lesser Redpoll	4 M	05/11/11	27/09/12	327	Orfordness, Suffolk	577km
Sparrowhawk	3	09/07/12	10/09/12	63	Lawers Bridge, East Ayrshire.	52km

Age and sex were at time of ringing.

The Siskin had been ringed while wintering in southern England.

The Lesser Redpoll had been ringed while moving south east after breeding and would probably cross the channel to the low countries where most spend the winter.

The Sparrowhawk was found by Brian Couper after flying into a glass window at his home and reflects the dispersal of young birds from their natal areas.

Codes for Age and Sex

- 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.

M = male and F = female.

Finally if you find a ringed bird

The details on the ring can be reported on line using this link <http://blx1.bto.org/euring/main/>. If you find a ringed bird on Arran please share this information with Jim Cassels, Bird Recorder of the Arran Natural History Society. The contact details are at the beginning of the report.

Systematic List 2012

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Best breeding season for a number of years as a result of fewer disturbances at hill lochans. Groups on sea included 5 Whiting Bay on 9 January, 9 Machrie Bay on 21 July, 6 off Cosyden on 8 September and 8 Whiting Bay on 12 September.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Passage migrant with records in every month of the year in 2012. Arran is a site of national importance for birds in autumn.

The largest groups were a group of 14 off Cosyden on 8 September, 12 off Drumadoon Point on 27 September and 7 Whiting Bay on 9 November.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Passage migrant. Records from January to June and August to December in 2012.

Groups included 6 off Imachar on 13 April, 10 off Blackwaterfoot on 6 May, 13 off the King's Cave on 4 August and 6 off Pirnmill on 30 November.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Passage migrant and winter visitor. One breeding record in 2011.

Groups included 2 Loch Ranza on 12 February and 7 October, 2 Port-na-Lochan on 8 November, 2 off Cordon on 2 December and 2 off Clachlands on 26 December.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

No records for 2012. Last record was one in Loch Ranza on 15 September 2011.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

No records for 2012. Last record was one in Whiting Bay on 9 March 2009.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

One Whiting Bay on 3 January and on 5 November (MHD).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

No records for 2012. Last record was one Whiting Bay on 30 October 2010.

Fulmar (Northern Fulmar) *Fulmarus glacialis*

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Largest groups at nest areas included 8 Catacol on 9 April, 10 Brown Head on 21 April, 16 Drumadoon on 5 May and 24 Holy Isle on 1 July. Only one successful breeding record, one downy young at Dun Fionn on 1 July.

Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea*

Rare vagrant.

One off Largymore on 22 July (MG).

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record was 7 in Machrie Bay on 6 September 2009.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Passage migrant with records from 11 April to 9 September.

Large groups included over 1000 off Largymore on 11 April, 300 Whiting Bay on 22 July and 100 off Cleats Shore on 28 August.

Mediterranean Shearwater (Balearic Shearwater) *Puffinus mauretanicus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record was one off Corriecravie 14 October 1990.

Storm Petrel (European Storm Petrel) *Hydrobates pelagicus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record was two off Blackwaterfoot on 26 May 2011.

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

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record was one off Pirnmill 24 September 1991.



Gannet (Northern Gannet) *Morus bassanus*

Nearest breeding colony Ailsa Craig. Round coast all year, but much more common in summer with records from 2 January to 30 December.

Groups included 50 off Catacol on 15 April, 30 Whiting Bay on 22 June, 60 off Cleats Shore on 28 August and 30 off Kildonan on 12 September. Two December records one off Sandbraes on 23rd and one off Corrie on 30th were unusual.

Cormorant (Great Cormorant) *Phalacrocorax carbo*

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

Nest area on Pladda in July had 10 pairs. Groups included 4 Cleats Shore on 11 March, 10 Machriewaterfoot on 24 May and 6 Pladda on 24 August.

Shag (European Shag) *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Common round coast all year. Breeding Pladda.

Nest area on Pladda in July had 15 pairs. Groups included 100 Pladda on 24 August, 150 Auchenhew Bay on 9 September, 60 off Imachar on 27 September and 77 Lamlash Bay on 14 October.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. 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.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Nest areas in 2012 included 2 at Lochranza on 14 May, 4 at Stronach Wood on 15 May, 4 at Lagg on 16 May and 6 Whitehouse Wood Lamlash on 17 May. Groups included 7 by Fisherman's Walk on 28 July, 3 Cosyden on 14 October and 4 Shiskine on 28 December.

Spoonbill (Eurasian Spoonbill) *Platalea leucorodia*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record was one at Corrie on 13 October 1978.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Breeding included 7 young Sandbraes on 28 May, 5 young Port na Lochan on 31 May, 4 young Machrie bay on 17 June and 5 young Thunderguy on 30 June. Winter groups included 20 at Sandbraes on 7 February and 6 Brodick on 26 October.

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

Rare winter visitor.

No records for 2012. Last record was one at Lagg 6 January 1991.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Groups at Sandbraes from 1 January to 10 May where the largest group was 36 on 22 March. Passage groups included 16 over Kilpatrick on 16 October, 47 at High Clachaig on 23 October and 36 at Slidery on 27 October.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Groups in Shiskine valley from January to March returning in December. Largest group was 15 on 17 March. Other reports included: 3 at Clachaig on 17 January, 52 flying over Slidderly on 28 January and 75 flying over Kildonan on 15 April.

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

Occasional winter visitor.

One with Greylags in Shiskine valley on 24 January (SKT).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Winter visitor with small naturalised population around Lamlash Bay.

Up to 400 in Shiskine valley between 1 January and 17 March. Up to 250 in Shiskine Valley between 19 October and end of year. Other groups included 200 at Slidderly on 28 January and 200 at Clachaig on 6 February. Largest count of the non-migratory naturalised population was 66 at Clauchlands on 25 November.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Occasional visitor. Breeding.

Increasing reports including 40 Pirnmill on 19 August, 11 Slidderly on 22 August and 13 Tighenfroach on 24 August. This is the second year that this species has bred. A pair with four goslings was on the pond at Cnocan Donn on 16 May.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*.

Occasional winter visitor.

One with Greylags in Shiskine valley from 5 January to 27 February and 6 Cleats Shore on 7 October were all the records for 2012.

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Occasional winter visitor.

No records for 2012. Last record was one at Clauchlands on 13 December 2010.

Shelduck (Common Shelduck) *Tadorna tadorna*

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

Breeding included 7 young Carlo on 22 May, 6 young Shannochie on 25 May, 6 young South Feorline on 30 May, 10 young Pirnmill on 4 June and 9 young Clauchlands on 14 June.

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

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

No records for 2012. Last record Rosa and Cloy Burns in Brodick on 27 March 2009.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

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

Groups included 30 Machriewaterfoot on 17 January, 40 Kildonan on 19 January, 20 Cleats Shore on 6 February, 10 Auchenhew Bay on 9 October, 22 Cosyden on 17 November and 6 Clauchlands on 25 December .

Teal (Common Teal) *Anas crecca*

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

Groups included 24 Kilpatrick Point on 13 January, 32 Machriewaterfoot on 17 January, 80 Cleats Shore on 7 February, 42 Cosyden on 17 November and 24 Kilpatrick Point on 18 December.



Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Summer Visitor

A pair on the pond at Torr Righ on 9 May is the first Arran record of this species (PGM).

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Breeding included 7 young Stephen's Pond on 19 April, 5 young Torr Righ on 28 April and 8 young Pirnmill on 19 June. Groups included 40 Kilpatrick Point on 13 January, 36 Cosyden on 17 January, 30 Clachaig on 19 October and 32 Machriewaterfoot on 15 December.

Pintail (Northern Pintail) *Anas acuta*

Rare vagrant.

Long staying pair were at Cleats Shore from 7 February to 3 March.

Shoveler (Northern Shoveler) *Anas clypeata*

Rare vagrant.

Pair at Cleats Shore on 1 February and a female or male in eclipse off Catacol on 6 July. These are all the records for 2012.

Pochard (Common Pochard) *Aythya ferina*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record was a male at Port na Lochan from 15 to 18 September 2011.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Occasional visitor.

A male on Port na Lochan from 18 to 21 April, a female on Corriecravie pond on 18 May, a male on Port na Lochan on 16-17 June, two males Whiting Bay on 19 September and a male at Strabane Gravel Pit on 12 November. These are all the records for 2012.

Scaup (Greater Scaup) *Aythya marila*

Occasional winter visitor.

A female off the mouth of the Blackwater on 27 September (JRTC).

Eider (Common Eider) *Somateria mollissima*

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Breeding included 5 young Lamlash on 23 May, 6 young Glenashdalewaterfoot on 23 May, 12 young Kildonan on 28 May, 4 young Cordon on 1 June and 7 young Cleats Shore on 7 July. Groups included 54 Machriewaterfoot on 17 January, 25 Kildonan on 7 October, 24 Brodick on 1 December and 130 Cosyden on 15 December.

King Eider *Somateria spectabilis*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record was a long staying drake in Lochranza in April 1980.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record was one at Blackwaterfoot on 27 April 1998.

Common Scoter (Black Scoter) *Melanitta nigra*

Occasional visitor.

There were nine records in 2012 which is the largest number for many years. These included 5 Dougarie on 6 May, 8 Brodick Bay on 11 September, 9 Whiting Bay on 6 November and 11 off King's Cave on 27 December.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. 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 Margnaheglis on 27 January, 3 Lochranza on 3 February and 3 Cordon on 17 December.

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

Occasional winter visitor.

No records for 2012. Last record a male off Pirnmill on 28 November 2004.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Breeding. Common round coast all year. Site of national importance.

Breeding included 4 young Sannox on 25 June, 5 young Machrie on 26 June, 6 young Kildonan on 28 June and 3 young Brodick on 8 July. Groups included 63 machrie on 21 July, 38 Cosyden on 19 August, 36 Whitefarland on 25 August and 14 Clauchlands on 21 September.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Breeding. Localised.

No confirmed breeding in 2012. Sightings included a pair Machriewaterfoot on 7 May, a pair Catacol on 26 May, a pair Slidderwaterfoot on 4 June, a female Glen Rosa on 31 July and two males Fisherman's Walk on 14 November.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Introduced species which first bred in Ayrshire in 2001.

No records for 2012. Male on Port na Lochan on 21 April 2007 was a first for Arran.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Occasional visitor from British reintroduction projects.

No records for 2012. Last record one Brodick Country Park on 27 April 2011.

Marsh Harrier (Eurasian Marsh Harrier) *Circus aeruginosus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record was a juvenile in Lamlash 19 August 2004.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Resident. Breeding widespread. Internationally important area with five percent of UK breeding population.

A poor season. 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 22.

Goshawk (Northern Goshawk) *Accipiter gentilis*

No confirmed breeding.

No records for 2012. Last record was a male Dyemill, Lamlash, on 21 September 2011.

Sparrowhawk (Eurasian Sparrowhawk) *Accipiter nisus*

Resident. Breeding widespread.

Another very poor season with only 1 fledged young from 1 site. 8 nest sites were checked and signs of occupied territory were only found at this successful site. Numerous sightings throughout the year.

Buzzard (Common Buzzard) *Buteo buteo*

Resident, Breeding widespread.

Numerous widespread sightings throughout the year including 3 Lochranza on 2 January, 3 Pirnmill on 22 February, 4 Glenscorrodale on 16 April, 5 Imachar on 16 September and 5 Clachlands on 18 November.

Rough-legged buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last recorded at Cleats Shore 10 November 1974.

White-tailed eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*

Rare vagrant.

An immature at Imachar on 19 February and an immature being seen off by two Golden Eagles over Torr Nead an Eoin on 27 October. These are all the records for 2012.



Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

Resident. Breeding. Nationally important area with one percent of UK breeding population.

All territories occupied. More than three young fledged. Numerous sightings throughout the year mainly to the north of the String.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Occasional passage migrant.

One over Torr Righ on 5 April and one at Slidderlywaterfoot on 10 September. These are all the records for 2012.

Kestrel (Common Kestrel) *Falco tinnunculus*

Resident. Breeding widespread.

Numerous widespread sightings throughout the year including with fledged young at Brown Head on 9 June, Dippen on 10 June, Machrie on 22 June, Glenscorrodale on 6 July, Glen Rosa on 6 July and Lochranza on 10 July.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

No confirmed breeding, possibly underreported. More widely distributed in winter and on passage.

Singles recorded included male Auchenhew on 10 February, female Bridge Farm on 16 March, female Laggan on 8 September, female Shiskine on 9 September, female Clachaig on 19 October and female Cleats Shore on 23 October.

Hobby (Eurasian Hobby) *Falco subbuteo*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. 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.

Pairs present at regular breeding sites and seen throughout the year.

3 young fledged from one site and breeding attempts were made at at least 3 others. Bad weather was possibly responsible for failure at several sites. Numerous sightings throughout the year.

Red Grouse (Willow Ptarmigan) *Lagopus scoticus*

Resident. Breeding. Underreported.

Groups included 8 Coirein Lochain on 11 January, 4 Beinn Bhiorach on 29 January, 4 Beinn Tarsuinn 1 February, 3 Glen Catacol on 2 July and 16 Windmill Hill on 7 October.

Ptarmigan *Lagopus mutus*

Very localised.

Two Coire nam Meann on 24 May, one on slopes of Beinn Nuis on 19 September and three on Sail an Im on 11 December. These are all the records for 2012.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix*

Previously bred.

All records from Arran Black Grouse Group reintroduction programme see page 21.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Scarce and local introduced resident.

Twenty Strathwillan Farm on 5 December (ZK).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Previously bred.

No records for 2012. Last record, excluding released birds in the 1990s, was 4 at Clauchlands on 15 November 1989.

Quail (Common Quail) *Coturnix coturnix*

Previously bred.

Two calling birds in Glenscorrodale on 6 June (CTS).

Pheasant (Common Pheasant) *Phasianus colchicus*

Common introduced resident.

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

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Localised breeding Resident.

One Dhunan track Corriegills on 27 September (JC).

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 2012. Last record one calling at Port na Lochan from 7 to 9 May 2008.

Moorhen (Common Moorhen) *Gallinula chloropus*

Localised breeding resident.

Two on the Rosa Burn between 3 January and 14 April. All other records were from Port na Lochan with up to 4 birds on 25 October.

Coot (Common Coot) *Fulica atra*

Occasional visitor.

No records for 2012. Last record one at Machrie pond on 21 April 2002.

Crane (*Grus grus*)

Rare vagrant.

Three flying high and east towards Arran from Skipness, Argyll, on 21 April. An immature Golden Eagle flew up and briefly circled below them before they were lost from view. The last record of Common Crane on Arran 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, Clachlands, Sandbraes, Cleats Shore, Kildonan, Shannochie and Thunderguy. Groups included 46 Kilpatrick on 13 January, 83 Cleats Shore on 3 March, 54 Drumadoon on 21 July and 70 Kildonan on 26 December.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Resident. Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Nests recorded Kilpatrick, Dougarie, Machrie, Kilmory, Clachlands, Sandbraes, Cleats Shore and Kildonan. Groups included 28 Kildonan on 9 January, 50 Lamlash on 8 February, 88 Drumadoon on 19 August and 40 Whiting Bay on 16 October.

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 53 at Machriewaterfoot on 13 April, 163 at Machriewaterfoot on 15 September and 7 at Sliderry on 18 October.

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

One calling summit of Beinn Tarsuinn 4 June (JW).

Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*)

Uncommon passage migrant.

One Torrylinn Shore on 5 April (LC).

Lapwing (Northern Lapwing) *Vanellus vanellus*

Breeding and winter visitor.

Two possible breeding areas one in Shiskine valley and the other in Kilmory. Groups included 44 Sliderry on 4 February, 54 Kilpatrick on 10 February, 70 Shiskine on 13 February and 41 Corriecravie on 10 December.

Knot (Red Knot) *Calidris canutus*

Passage migrant.

One Blackwaterfoot on 22 January, one Kildonan on 26 February, one Drumadoon on 21 July, one Machriewaterfoot on 21 August and one Blackwaterfoot on 15 December. These are all the records for 2012.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Passage migrant.

Five at Drumadoon on 21 May, one Machriewaterfoot on 20 August, 5 Cleats Shore on 28 August, 5 Drumadoon on 28 August and 5 Machriewaterfoot on 12 September. These are all the records for 2012.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2012. Last record 3 at Machriewaterfoot on 8 September 2002.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2012. Last record one on Kildonan shore on 27 August 2006.



Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Passage migrant and winter visitor.

Groups included 10 Kildonan on 9 January, 5 Drumadoon on 13 January, 7 Kildonan on 28 November and 9 Kildonan on 26 December.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

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

Groups included 7 Drumadoon on 24 May, 7 Kildonan on 13 August, 6 Cosyden on 19 August, 3 Pladda on 24 August and 13 Cleats Shore on 26 August.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2012. Last record 2 at Kildonan on 26 August 1987.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

Uncommon winter visitor.

No records for 2012. Last record one at Auchenhew on 11 December 2011.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Resident but underreported breeder.

No confirmed breeding records. Sightings included one at Bennecarrigan on 16 January, 4 Glen Rosa on 1 February, one Glen Sannox on 16 September, 3 Fisherman's walk on 19 November and one Sliderry on 9 December.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

One record of this American species.

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

Woodcock (Eurasian Woodcock) *Scolopax rusticola*

Resident but underreported breeder. Numbers increase in winter.

Pairs flying at dusk over Claulands on 21 March, High Kildonan on 23 May, Maoll Donn on 28 May and Glenscorrodale on 6 June. Sightings included one Pirnmill on 25 January, 2 Cladach on 29 January, one North Sannox on 3 March and one Sliderry on 21 October.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Uncommon passage migrant.

One Blackwaterfoot on 29 January and one Cleats Shore from 25 to 26 August.

These are all the records for 2012.



Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Uncommon passage migrant.

Records included one Cleats Shore on 6 February, 2 Torrylinn Shore on 24 February, one Shannochie on 15 March and one Machriewaterfoot on 15 September.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Passage migrant and occasional winter visitor.

Groups included 7 Auchenhew on 22 April, 15 Glenscorrodale on 20 May, 5 Corrie cravie on 21 May and 7 Sliderry shore on 8 July.

Curlew (Eurasian Curlew) *Numenius arquata*

Resident but underreported breeder.

Fledged young on Machrie Moor on 20 May and 9 July were the only confirmed breeding records. Groups included 48 Kilpatrick on 13 January, 33 Strathwillan on 17 January, 41 Machriewaterfoot on 17 January, 18 Catacol on 1 September, 42 Strabane on 10 November and 17 Kildonan on 26 December.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erthropus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2012. Last record one at South Feorline shore on 5 August 2010.

Redshank (Common Redshank) *Tringa totanus*

Passage migrant with records from every month of the year. No breeding records.

Groups included 12 Kilpatrick on 13 January, 14 Whiting Bay on 22 February, 23 Sandbraes on 6 August, 23 Cleats Shore on 26 August and 8 Cosyden on 17 November.

Greenshank (Common Greenshank) *Tringa nebularia*

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

One wintering bird (occasionally two) at Clauchlands from 1 January to 13 February returning 21 September to end of year. Other sightings included one Whiting Bay on 27 June, one Lochan na Chamh on 14 August and one over High Kildonan on 15 August.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records 2012. Last record was one at Drumadoon Point on 22 May 2011. This was the first Arran Record.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2012. Last record at High Thunderguy on 1 August 2008.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Summer visitor with records from April to August. Breeding.

Pairs each with young included Slidderlywater on 4 June, Glen Rosa on 6 June, Thunderguy on 14 June, Imachar on 16 June, Pirnmill on 17 June, Clauchlands on 18 June, Kilpatrick on 24 June and Sannox on 25 June.

Turnstone (Ruddy Turnstone) *Arenaria interpres*

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

Groups included 14 Catacol on 11 January, 31 Machriewaterfoot on 13 April, 80 Pladda on 24 August, 32 Blackwaterfoot on 15 September and 80 Kildonan on 18 October.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record 2 in Wineport area of Brodick Bay on 28 August 1983.

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record one in Brodick Bay on 23 March 1989.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*.

Uncommon passage migrant.

One Cosyden on 8 September (JRTC).

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2012. Last record 2 off Kildonan on 16 May 2009.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2012. Last record one in Brodick Bay on 5 November 2011.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records 2012. Last record was two off Kildonan on 19 May 2011. This was the first Arran Record.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record one at Catacol on 30 December 1992.

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

Uncommon irregular visitor.

No records for 2012. Last record one on Machrie shore on 16 July 2011.

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

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

Groups included 4 Sandbraes on 11 January, 3 Shiskine on 20 April, 11 Slidery on 7 July, 6 Brodick on 14 August and 5 Lamlash on 26 September.

Common Gull (Mew Gull) *Larus canus*

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Nests included 24 Machriewaterfoot on 22 May, 8 Dougarie on 22 May, 20 Sannox on 12 June and 4 Thunderguy on 14 June. Groups included 50 Pirmill on 15 January, 200 Lamlash on 14 October, 230 Strabane on 12 November and 200 Kilpatrick on 11 December.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Breeding. Common round coast from February to October.

Colonies with fledged young included 80 Loch Nuis on 17 July, 100 Beinn Lochain on 18 July and 35 Holy Isle on 26 July. Other groups included 10 Lamlash on 12 February, 49 Slidery on 5 July and 40 Pladda on 24 August.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Colonies with fledged young included 80 Loch Nuis on 17 July, 100 Beinn Lochain on 18 July and 40 Pladda on 19 July. Other groups included 100 Blackwaterfoot on 7 January, 90 Glenashdalewaterfoot on 7 February, 63 Pirnmill on 15 February and 192 Lamlash on 18 November.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

Uncommon winter visitor.

One Slidery from 5 January to 31 January, one Brodick on 5 February and 2 Slidery from 3 April to 11 April. These are all the records for 2012.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Uncommon winter visitor.

One Catacol on 8 February, one Brodick on 11 February and one Thunderguy on 3 March. These are all the records for 2012.



Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Groups included 12 Brodick on 15 January, 12 Kildonan on 18 July, 9 Cordon on 20 August and 6 Sandbraes on 24 August.

Sabine's Gull *Larus sabini*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2012. 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 50 Cosyden on 2 January, 65 Brodick on 7 September and over 1,000 in Whiting Bay from 16 September to 23 September with only around ten percent juveniles.

Ivory Gull *Pagophila eburnea*

One historical record.

One shot in Lamlash Bay in 1895.

Ross's Gull *Rhodostethia rosea*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record one at Kildonan on 21 November 1995.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2012. Last record one at Pirnmill on 12 September 1992.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Rare summer visitor.

No records for 2012. Last record 2 at Dougarie on 5 May 1984.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Uncommon summer visitor.

No records for 2012. Last record one at Brodick Bay on 7 September 2011.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Summer visitor. Breeding colony Pladda.

Reports included one Whiting Bay on 18 July and one Sandbraes on 2 August. Most sightings were from on or around Pladda between 20 May and 12 August with the maximum number reported 9 on Pladda on 20 May.

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

Uncommon summer visitor.

No records for 2012. Last record one in Brodick Bay on 11 August in 2007.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

Summer visitor. Non breeding.

Groups included 4 Cosyden on 18 April, 4 Blackwaterfoot on 6 May, 4 Sandbraes on 2 August, 2 Claulands on 16 August and 3 Machriewaterfoot on 9 September.

Little Auk *Alle alle*

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

No records for 2012. Last record one in Brodick Bay on 31 March 2008.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

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

Groups included 20 Cosyden on 2 January, 100 Largiemore on 11 April and 20 Machrie on 14 October.

Guillemot (Common Guillemot) *Uria aalge*

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

Groups included 100 Largiemore on 11 April, 300 Catacol on 15 August, 50 Pladda on 24 August and 50 Machrie on 14 October.

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle*

Breeding. Round coast all year.

Breeding included Corrie, Imachar, Kings Cave, Kilpatrick, Thunderguy, Pladda and Brodick pier. Numbers and sightings are increasing. Groups included 25 Kilpatrick on 21 April, 21 Brodick pier on 9 May, 16 Imachar on 22 May, 20 Catacol on 28 June and 20 King's Cave on 8 July.

Puffin (Atlantic Puffin) *Fratercula arctica*

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

Two south of Pladda on 13 April and one on the east side of Holy Isle on 21 April. These are all the records for 2012.

Pallas's Sandgrouse *Syrhaptes 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.

Sightings included 3 Cleats Shore on 3 March, 6 King's Cave on 26 June, 42 Kilpatrick on 10 October and 8 Cleiteadh Buidhe on 15 December.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Very scarce.

No records for 2012. Last record one on footpath to Fallen Rocks on 14 June 1989.

Woodpigeon (Common Woodpigeon) *Columba palumbus*

Resident. Breeding.

Groups included 46 Cleats Shore on 6 October, 100 Shiskine valley on 7 October, 119 Sliderry on 29 October, 400 Strabane on 4 November and 30 Dyemill on 14 November.



Collared Dove (Eurasian Collared Dove) *Streptopelia decaocto*

Resident. Breeding. First bred in Britain in 1955.

Present around all villages. Groups included 8 Corrie on 28 January, 11 Sandbraes on 4 February, 8 Cladach on 17 March, 27 Whiting Bay on 20 November and 7 Brodick on 25 November.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Occasional passage migrant.

No records for 2012. Last record was one with a group of Collared Doves in Brodick from 25 October to 8 November 2006.

Cuckoo(Common Cuckoo) *Cuculus canorus*

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread.

First one reported calling in Glen Rosa on 18 April. Later reports from around the island. The last one reported was 24 June on Machrie Moor.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Poor breeding season. Sightings from Auchagallon, Auchencar, Balmichael, Carlo, Corrie, Brodick, Cladach, Dippen, Dougarie, Glenkiln, Kildonan, Kilmory, Kilpatrick, Lamblash, 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 2012.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Resident. Underreported. Breeding.

One top of the String on 9 November and again on 26 November. These are all the records for 2012.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Resident. Breeding.

Better year than 2011 with increased number of reports including breeding records. Sightings included one Machrie Moor on 23 March, 2 Benlister on 13 April, one Drumadoon on 5 May, 2 Glenshant on 8 May, 3 Boguille on 12 May and one High Clachaig on 10 June.

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Summer visitor. Previously bred.

No records for 2012. Last record at Maol Donn on 24 May 1998.

Swift (Common Swift) *Apus apus*

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

Sightings included one Port na Lochan on 20 May, 2 High Kildonan on 26 May, 4 Corrie on 17 June, 17 Sliderry on 21 June and 5 Clauchlands on 27 June.

Kingfisher (Common Kingfisher) *Alcedo atthis*

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

Regular reports from Fisherman's Walk, Brodick, in January. Other records one at Merkland on 9 January and one Lochranza on 13 March. The absence of records in the second part of the year may reflect a poor breeding season.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record was one in Thunderguy on 25 June 2006.

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 Brodick on 20 June, Machrie on 21 June, Lamlash on 25 June, Sannox on 7 July and Balnacoole on 20 August. Widespread sightings from throughout Arran.

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2012. Last record in Sannox on 25 September 1997.

Skylark (Sky Lark) *Alauda arvensis*

Breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding territories occupied in Ard Bheinn, Cnoc Dubh, Coire na Ciche, Corriecravie Moor, Drumadoon, Glen Cloy, Kilmory, Kilpatrick, Machrie, Pirnmill, Sannox and Torr Meadhonach. Groups included 14 Sliddery on 3 March, 10 Bennecarrigan on 27 June and 113 Cleats Shore on 6 October.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Summer visitor. Breeding. Localised.

First report Sliddery on 25 March. Breeding colonies occupied in Auchencar, Clauchlands, Kilpatrick, Sannox, Shiskine Golf Course, Strabane and Whitefarland with up to 50 birds in Sannox on 6 September. Other sightings included 20 Slidderywaterfoot 4 June, 10 Clauchlands on 26 June and 21 Strabane on 19 July.

Swallow (Barn Swallow) *Hirundo rustica*

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread.

First report at Clauchlands on 11 April. Groups included 100 Blackwaterfoot on 9 August, 100 Largiemore on 14 August, 150 Lochranza on 16 August, 60 Shiskine on 27 August, 40 Corrie on 7 September and 60 Kildonan on 22 September. Last record was Whiting Bay on 1 November.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread.

First report was at Clauchlands on 2 April. Groups included 36 Kingscross on 4 August, 10 Glen Cloy on 9 June, 40 Auchenhew on 4 August, 100 Largymore on 14 August, 100 Lochranza on 16 August and 30 Cosyden on 15 September. Last record at High Clachaig on 24 October.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Scarce summer visitor, possibly underreported.

Birds holding territories in Brodick Country Park, Glenrickard, Glen Rosa, Glen Sannox and Machrie Moor. Other sightings included 4 Glen Rosa on 6 May, 2 Sliddery on 27 July and 2 Lochranza on 5 August.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Breeding resident, widespread, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Numerous breeding records. Groups included 32 Sliddery on 26 January, 40 Burrigan Hill on 27 April, 20 Goatfell on 3 May, 40 Sannox on 6 May, 100 Kildonan on 16 September and 250 Cleats Shore on 6 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, Catacol, Clauchlands, Cleats Shore, Drumadoon, Kildonan, Kilpatrick, Lamlash, Shannochie, South Feorline and Whiting Bay in May/June. Groups included 30 at Drumadoon on 14 October and 20 Cleats Shore on 24 October.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Scarce passage migrant.

No records for 2012. Last record two at Cleats Shore on 23 April 2006.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Resident. Breeding. Localised.

Breeding records included adults with fledged young Auchenhew on 18 May, Clauchlands on 16 July and Sannox on 10 August. Other sightings included 3 Kildonan on 4 April, two Sliddery on 13 July and two Cleats Shore on 26 August.



Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

Breeding resident, widespread, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding records included adults with fledged young Shiskine 23 May, Sannox 12 June, Pirnmill 17 June, Lochranza 17 June, Lamlash 27 June and Kildonan 28 June. Other groups included 96 Cleats Shore on 26 August and 50 Kildonan on 16 September.

White Wagtail *Montacilla alba*

Regular passage migrant.

Sightings included 5 Kilpatrick on 19 April, 12 Cleats Shore on 19 April, 14 Kildonan on 20 April, 93 Cleats Shore on 25 August and 15 Auchenhew on 23 September.

Waxwing (Bohemian Waxwing) *Bombycilla garrulus*

Irruptive late autumn and winter visitor.

November and December were exceptional months for sightings particularly on the east of the island. Groups included 60 Invercloy on 12 November, 40 Lamlash on 15 November, 120 Brodick on 16 November, 530 Cnoc na Daill on 17 November, 50 Kiscadale on 17 November, 100 Merkland on 26 November, 58 Corrie on 3 December and 35 Lochranza on 12 December.

Dipper (White-throated Dipper) *Cinclus cinclus*

Resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Pairs recorded at Benlister, Glenashdale, Monamore and Rosa Burns. Also pairs at Catacol, Cordon, Dyemill, Glen Cloy, Glenree, Kildonan, Kilmorywater, Lagg, Lochranza, Machriewater and Slidderlywater. Tend to move towards coast in winter.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Records from varied habitats throughout the island from high tops to shore. Groups included 11 Glenscorrodale on 20 May, 4 Auchenheew on 9 October and 6 Slidderly on 21 October.

Dunnock (Hedge Accentor) *Prunella modularis*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Fledged young included reports Pirnmill on 27 May, Lamlash on 11 June, Glenashdale on 11 June, Sannox on 12 June, Corriecravie on 19 June and Brodick on 25 June. Other groups included 5 Whiting Bay on 28 January, 4 Sannox on 12 June and 11 Slidderly on 21 October.

Robin (European Robin) *Erithacus rubecula*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Fledged young included reports from Brodick on 25 May, Corrie on 26 May, Pirnmill on 27 May, Lamlash on 30 May, Lochranza on 17 June and Sannox on 25 June. Other groups included 10 Auchenheew Bay on 9 October and 18 Slidderly on 21 October.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Scarce passage migrant.

Female Drumadoon Point on 19 October and a female by Brodick pier on 17 December. These are all the records for 2012.

Redstart (Common Redstart) *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Scarce summer visitor, possibly underreported. Previously bred.

Female Auchenheew on 4 May and a male singing by Narachan track on 5 June. These are all the records for 2012.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Summer visitor. Breeding. Localised. Passage migrant.

Breeding territories included Boguille, Garbh Allt, Glen Catacol, 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.

Fewer confirmed breeding than before the two cold winters 2009-2011 but some signs of recovery. Fledged young reports included Glen Catacol on 5 June, Glenscorrodale on 6 June, Glen Rosa on 6 June, Machrie Moor on 20 June and North Sannox on 25 July.

Wheatear (Northern Wheatear) *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

First reported was two male and a female at Shannochie on 25 March. Fledged young reports included Machrie on 26 June, Clauchlands on 27 June and Kilpatrick on 21 July. Last report at Cosyden on 27 September.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Scarce summer visitor, possibly underreported.

Pair Glen Sannox on 28 March, male North Newton on 7 April, male Glenscorrodale on 20 May, male Glen Catacol on 9 June and three reports from Glen Rosa on 2 June, 8 June and a juvenile on 9 October. These are all the records for 2012.

Blackbird (Common Blackbird) *Turdus merula*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Pairs reported from all villages. Groups included 9 Glenscorrodale on 20 May, 18 Sliderry on 21 October, 13 Kilpatrick on 28 November and 10 Dyemill on 18 December.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

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

Groups, sometimes with Redwings included 40 Kilpatrick on 28 January, 1000 Narachan Track 29 October, 900 Gortonallister on 9 November and 750 Shannochie on 18 November.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Pairs reported from all villages. Groups included 8 Glenscorrodale on 20 May, 11 Brodick Country Park on 28 October, 6 Sliderry on 21 October and 7 Kilpatrick on 28 November.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

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

Groups, sometimes with Fieldfares included 34 Kilpatrick on 8 January, 110 Sliderry on 18 October, 60 Brodick Country Park on 26 October and 100 Gortonallister on 9 November.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included fledged young Strathwillan on 28 May, Corrie on 14 June, Tormore on 21 July and Whiting Bay on 22 July. Groups included 8 Glen Rosa on 1 June, 12 Auchencar on 3 October and 14 Brodick Country Park on 22 October.

Grasshopper Warbler (Common Grasshopper Warbler) *Locustella naevia*

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

Reports of reeling birds included Springbank on 3 May, Dereneneach on 4 May, Sliddery on 7 May, Auchenhew on 18 May, Glenscorrodale on 6 June and Machrie Moor on 7 July.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

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

Records included singing males Corriecravie on 29 April, King's Cave on 6 May, High Clachaig on 17 May, Port na Lochan on 20 May, Kilpatrick on 28 May, Lagg on 28 May and Shannochie on 7 June.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Scarce summer visitor. Breeding.

Two males singing Auchenhew Bay on 18 May and one at Kildonan on 20 May. These are all the records for 2012.

Whitethroat (Common Whitethroat) *Sylvia communis*

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

Records included fledged young at Clauchlands on 18 June, Machrie Moor on 19 June, Blackwaterfoot on 25 June, Lamlash on 27 June and Kildonan on 1 July.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Scarce summer visitor. Breeding. Possibly underreported.

Records included males singing at King's Cave walk on 28 April, Leac Gharbh on 16 May, Glen Sannox on 6 June and Sannox on 25 June.



Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Summer visitor. Widespread. Breeding. Overwinters in small numbers .

Records included fledged young Sannox on 25 June, Glenashdale on 28 June, Lochranza on 30 June and Lamlash on 14 August. Winter records included 2 at Shannochie on 28 November.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Very rare and irregular passage migrant.

No records for 2012. 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.

In 2012 there were only records from one area namely, Glenashdale. The previous year there had been records also from Merkland Wood and Glen Craigag.

Chiffchaff (Common Chiffchaff) *Phylloscopus collybita*

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

Records included males singing Whiting Bay on 22 March, Lochranza on 23 March, North Sannox on 24 March, Imachar on 14 April, Glen Rosa on 3 May, High Clachaig on 17 May and Stronach Wood on 22 June. Last record was one at Sliderry on 25 October.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

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

Records included fledged young Corriecravie on 19 June, Sannox on 25 June, Lamlash on 27 June, Kildonan on 28 June, Lochranza on 30 June and Holy Isle on 26 July. Last record was one at Margnaheglis on 28 September.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Records included 3 Cnoc na Daill on 8 August, 4 Auchenhew on 9 September, 6 Torr Righ on 19 September, 6 Glenashdale on 19 September and 8 Lamlash on 26 October.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

Very rare and irregular passage migrant.

One Whiting Bay 17 November 2007 is the only record to date accepted by the Clyde Bird Records Panel. See page 57.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

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

Confirmed breeding included reports from Glenscorrodale 6 June, Glen Sannox 6 June, Glen Rosa 6 June, Merkland Wood 22 June, Sannox 4 July, Shannochie 2 August and Lochranza on 5 August.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Irregular summer visitor.

No records for 2012. Last record one on Newton Shore on 28 April 1998.



Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Groups included 11 Mayish on 13 January, 15 Lochranza on 3 February 15 Glenashdale on 11 May, 18 Auchenhew on 23 September, 20 Ross Road on 23 September and 16 Whiting Bay on 30 October.

Willow Tit *Parus montanus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record at Mill House Lamlash from 16 to 18 May 2009.

Coal Tit *Parus ater*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Reports from all villages of birds visiting garden feeders. Confirmed breeding included reports from Lamlash 25 May, Pirnmill 27 May, Brodick 25 June, Lochranza 30 June and Dippen on 18 July. Largest group was 20 at Lamlash on 25 November.

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Reports from all villages of birds visiting garden feeders. Confirmed breeding included reports from Brodick on 25 May, Pirnmill on 27 May, Lamlash on 3 June, Sannox on 25 June, Kildonan on 26 June and Lochranza on 20 August. Largest group was 15 in Brodick on 8 July.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Reports from all villages of birds visiting garden feeders. Confirmed breeding included reports from Lamlash on 3 June, Corriecravie on 8 June, Catacol on 16 June, Margnaheglis on 16 June and Whiting Bay on 14 July. Largest group was 7 Lochranza on 20 August.

Nuthatch (Wood Nuthatch) *Sitta europea*

Rare vagrant.

One calling in Cladach on 13 July (MB).

Treecreeper (Eurasian Treecreeper) *Certhia familiaris*

Resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Confirmed breeding included only two records this year Merkland Wood on 25 May and Glenashdale on 28 June.

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record a female in Lochranza on 7 June 1979.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record a male at Kildonan on 27 September 1997.

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubiter*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record was one in Fairy Glen, Lochranza on 24 October 2007.

Jay (Eurasian Jay) *Garrulus glandarius*

Rare vagrant. Before 2011 the last record was 1985.

One Merkland Wood on 4 January, one Cnoc na Daill on 10 January and again on 25 January, one Glen Cloy on 18 February and one on road to Glen Rosa on 9 April.

These are all the records for 2012.

Magpie (Black-billed Magpie) *Pica pica*

Vagrant. Before 2008 only seven records in previous twenty five years.

While in 2011 there were three records, in 2012 there was only one, a single bird in North Sannox on 31 March.

Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

Rare vagrant. Previously bred.

No records for 2012. Last record one by Narachan Track from 5 to 29 September 2011.

Jackdaw (Eurasian Jackdaw) *Corvus monedula*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Groups included 68 Machrie on 5 July, 50 Lochranza on 3 September, 100 Shiskine on 19 October and 60 Machriewaterfoot on 15 December.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Winter visitor.

Twelve Cleats Shore on 7 October and two Auchenhew on 9 October. All other records from Sliderry between 3 October and December, largest group 32 on 1 December.

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

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

Groups included 30 Shiskine on 5 April, 150 Torbeg on 13 August, 25 Cleats Shore on 12 September and 26 Kingscross on 1 October.

Raven (Common Raven) *Corvus corax*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Breeding pairs included Beinn a Chliabhain on 20 March, Catacol 27 March, Imachar 13 April, Auchencar 13 April and Kilpatrick on 19 April. Largest group was a roosting group of 90 at Aucheleffan on 13 April.

Rose-coloured Starling *Sturnus roseus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record one adult in Brodick on 28 June 2002.

Starling (Common Starling) *Sturnus vulgaris*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Bennan on 25 May, Pirnmill, Kilpatrick, Shiskine all on 27 May, Lamlash 1 June and Sannox on 25 June. Larger groups included 100 Bennecarrigan on 5 January, 176 Kilpatrick on 19 August and 150 Kildonan on 15 September.



House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Shiskine on 19 May, Lamlash on 20 May, Kilpatrick on 21 May, Shannochie on 25 May, Pirnmill on 27 May, Brodick on 9 June, Dippen 19 June and Machrie 19 June. Larger groups included 60 Largymore on 14 August, 30 Kilpatrick on 29 August and 24 Strathwillan on 8 September.

Tree Sparrow (Eurasian Tree Sparrow) *Passer montanus*

Rare vagrant. Previously bred.

No records for 2012. Last record 2 in Brodick on 17 June 1997.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Pirnmill on 27 May, Lamlash on 30 May, Sannox on 6 June, Glenashdale on 11 June, Machrie on 19 June, Kildonan on 28 June and Lochranza on 30 June. Larger groups included 60 Sliddery on 8 January, 38 Shiskine on 29 January, 386 Cleats Shore on 6 October and 50 Machrie on 20 October.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Irruptive winter visitor in varying numbers; not seen every year.

Two Sandbraes on 22 October, one Sliddery on 29 October, 3 Gortonallister on 9 November and 6 Cnoc na Daill on 23 November. These are all the records for 2012.

Greenfinch (European Greenfinch) *Carduelis chloris*

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Shiskine on 19 May, Pirnmill on 27 May, Thurgary on 27 May, Lamlash on 30 May, Whiting Bay on 6 June, Corriecravie on 19 June and Machrie on 19 June. Largest group 50 Clauchlands on 25 October.

Goldfinch (European Goldfinch) *Carduelis carduelis*

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included reports Glen Cloy on 9 June, Corriecravie on 12 June, Glen Shurig on 17 June, Kilpatrick on 17 June, Lamlash on 18 June, Machrie on 19 June and Whiting Bay on 26 June. Largest group 200 at Cleats Shore on 26 August.

Siskin (Eurasian Siskin) *Carduelis spinus*

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Most records between January and June.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Corriecravie on 7 June, Whiting Bay on 9 June, Lamlash on 17 June, Brodick on 25 June, Pirnmill on 26 June and Kilpatrick on 29 June. Largest group 150 Machrie on 19 September.

Linnet (Common Linnet) *Carduelis cannabina*

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.,

Most records between April and November.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Drumadoon on 11 June, Clauchlands on 26 June and Kilpatrick on 4 July. Larger groups included 48 Sliddery on 17 May and 150 Cleats Shore on 26 August.



Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

Resident. Breeding. Localised. Passage migrant.

All records were between August and October. Groups included 30 Cleats Shore on 6 October, 12 South Feorline on 10 October and 4 Drumadoon, 2 Lochranza and 10 Sliddery all on the 20 October.

Redpoll (Lesser Redpoll) *Carduelis cabaret*

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

Confirmed breeding included reports from Corriecravie on 9 June, Whiting Bay on 10 June and Lamlash on 17 June. Largest group 150 Auchenheew Bay on 22 September.

Crossbill (Common Crossbill) *Loxia curvirostra*

Resident. Breeding. Localised.

Small number of reports this year. Four Brodick Country Park on 7 June and 11 in forest above Dippen on 26 October. These are all the records for 2012.

Scarlet Rosefinch (Common Rosefinch) *Carpodacus erythrinus*

Rare vagrant.

No records in 2012. The last record was juvenile caught and ringed at High Kildonan on 24 October 2011.

Bullfinch (Common Bullfinch) *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Resident. Breeding. Localised.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Mayish on 25 June, Brodick Castle Gardens on 2 July, Glenashdale on 8 July and Kilmory Church on 2 August. Groups included 4 Whiting Bay on 27 March and 4 Bailemargaiddh on 15 December.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2012. Last record one at Margnaheglis on 26 April 2000.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Varying numbers on passage and in winter.

One photographed Goatfell summit on 11 April (FH).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

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

Reports of a singing male on Machrie Moor on 1 and 9 July. Other reports included 11 Sliderry on 19 January, 12 Sliderry on 6 March and one Torbeg on 8 November.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Resident. Breeding. Localised. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included Glenscorrodale on 6 June, Machrie 26 June, Boguillie 29 June and Lochranza on 5 August. Groups included 3 Cleats Shore on 6 October, 4 Drumadoon on 20 October and 6 Sliderry on 21 October.

Corn bunting *Miliaria calandra*

Rare vagrant. Previously bred.

No records for 2012. Last record 2 in Brodick area on 7 October 1984.

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

The regular Bird Notes 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.

Species to be submitted to Scottish and Local Record Committees

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 national rarity descriptions for the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) should be sent preferably by email to the Assistant Local Clyde Recorder, Val Wilson val.wilson38@btinternet.com or by post to Flat2/1, 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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