

Arran Bird Report

The First Forty Years



Compiled by
Dr Jim Cassels for the Arran Natural History Society

Published by



The Arran Natural History Society

Dedication

This publication is dedicated to the large number of enthusiastic and skilled people who made forty years of the *Arran Bird Report* possible.

The chairpersons, office bearers and committee members of the Arran Natural History Society have been consistent in their support for the annual bird report. The local “volunteers” involved in national surveys have provided consistent invaluable data. The members of South Strathclyde Raptor Study Group, individuals and groups with specialist knowledge of species and the local British Trust for Ornithology bird ringers, all generously shared their expertise and understanding. The work of illustrators and photographers enhanced the publications. The contributors collectively generated the annual bank of records for the recorder to use to produce each annual report. To date there have been four recorders of the Arran Natural History Society. Maggie H. Dunn was recorder until 1991. The last two years were in collaboration with Tristan ap Rheinallt who also did the 1992 report. From 1993 until 2005 Audrey Walters was the bird recorder and in 2006 the responsibility passed to me.

While the dedication is to all involved with the *Arran Bird Report*, it is dedicated in particular, to Maggie H. Dunn. Maggie was a founder member of the Arran Natural History Society which was formed in 1977. It was through Maggie's enthusiasm and commitment that the first *Arran Bird Report* was produced. Maggie was also a local primary teacher. Both as a teacher and as a member of the society, Maggie was, and is, an inspiration. Through her, many developed and shared her passion for the birds of Arran. In her role as bird recorder, she produced the annual report until 1991. After that she continued to support all the subsequent Arran Natural History Society bird recorders and contributed to every bird report in the last forty years. In the year of this publication Maggie is ninety-five years young. Her enthusiasm for Arran and its birds continues undiminished.

Jim Cassels, Bird Recorder, Arran Natural History Society.

The First Forty Years

	Page
Foreword	5
Acknowledgements	6
Part 1	
The Beginning	7
Before the Arran Bird Report	7
The Report	8
Production Challenges	8
Content Changes	9
The People	10
Recorders	10
Supporters	16
Illustrators and Photographers	16
Contributors	18
The Birds	21
Special Birds	21
Absentees	21
Going	22
Coming	24
Rare and Scarce	27
Americans on Arran	31
Home or Away	31
Garden Highlights	32
Coincidences?	32

	Page
Birds (continued)	
Dead	33
Impact of Incidents	34
Changes in Arran	34
The Future of the Arran Bird Report	36

Part 2

Arran Bird Report 1980	37-44
------------------------	-------

Part 3

Arran Bird Report 2019	45-108
------------------------	--------

Foreword

As the present chairperson of the Arran Natural History Society it would be remiss of me not to start this foreword without referring to the contribution of my predecessors. This 40th consecutive Arran Bird Report stands testament to their dedication and commitment in producing the “go to” publication for birding enthusiasts of all levels, be they locals or visitors to the island.

Our present bird recorder Jim Cassels is worthy of special mention for his idea to research and produce this edition, which charts some of the changes that the report has gone through over the forty years as well as documenting the bird life which helps to make Arran a special place.

Recognising Arran as a special place, the inclusion of the 1980 report provides an opportunity to draw comparisons with present day Arran in the context of increased visitor pressures, habitat changes and conservation measures.

Jackie Kemp, Chairperson Arran Natural History Society.

Compiling records of birds sighted on islands such as Arran is vitally important. It gives a diary of all the species connected with that well-defined part of Scotland and lists the most common with the rarest, their numbers and their distribution on the island. The comparison between years is also important and indicates which species are either increasing, decreasing or remaining stable. Fortunately, the bird reports from the various recording areas of Scotland is nowadays well co-ordinated. Indeed when compiling the weighty tome *The Birds of Scotland* the original idea was to assimilate and distil all the published records of every species recorded in Scotland at that time, from all recording areas. Publications such as the Arran Bird Report both individually and as a contribution to the Clyde Islands Bird Report were indispensable when gleaning records of importance.

Over the years it has been my privilege to know and share birding ventures on Arran with those compilers of previous reports. Margaret Dunn, who had the foresight to see the need for a local report all those years ago, the late Audrey Walters who stepped in when Margaret temporarily left the island, and the present incumbent Jim Cassels who has raised the report to a new level and produced the *Arran Bird Atlas*. Their enthusiasm and desire to extract even the commonest observations from local and visiting birdwatchers has been positively infectious.

In the world of ornithology nothing stands still but hopefully the records will continue to be accumulated and published annually.

Dr Bernard Zonfrillo, SOC Local Recorder for Arran, Bute and the Cumbraes.

Acknowledgements

When I realised that this year marked the fortieth year of the Arran Bird Report produced by the Arran Natural History Society, I felt that this achievement needed to be marked by the production of a special edition of the report. I was encouraged by the committee to try to do this.

The result is this publication. It is an attempt to celebrate forty years of bird recording by the Arran Natural History Society. The changes in the report in these first forty years are outlined. There is an insight into the people who helped shape the report and the birds that help make Arran a special place are highlighted. The uniqueness of Arran bird life is featured, as are the changes in that bird life, together with a range of birding highlights from these first forty reports. In addition the first report, the *Arran Bird Report for 1980*, is included in its entirety together with the fortieth report, the *Arran Bird Report for 2019*. The reader will be the judge of whether or not this publication achieves its aim of celebrating forty years of Arran bird reports.

Both in my role as bird recorder and in preparing for this publication I acknowledge the on-going support of numerous individuals and organisations. In addition to the Arran Natural History Society, the organisations include the British Trust for Ornithology, the Clyde Ringing Group, the Community of Arran Seabed Trust, Forestry and Land Scotland, the National Farmers Union, the National Trust for Scotland, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Scottish Natural Heritage, the Scottish Ornithologists' Club and the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme. All have been consistent in their encouragement, sharing information and expressing views that have helped in my development as bird recorder as well being invaluable in the preparation of this publication. While I acknowledge this support and encouragement the views expressed in the publication are my own.

In preparing for this publication I was particularly pleased to be able to tap into the experience of two previous bird recorders of the Arran Natural History Society, Tristan ap Rheinallt and Maggie H. Dunn. I appreciated Tristan giving of his time, during a family visit to Arran in 2019, to meet with me. Maggie's knowledge of the birds of Arran is virtually encyclopaedic and throughout the preparation period of this publication I had the pleasure of spending many hours listening to Maggie. The assistance of Maggie and Tristan has been invaluable.

At the writing and production stage the editing and proof reading skills of Alan Hollick and Angela Cassels have been crucial. Having said that, I accept full responsibility for all errors and omissions. Alan has been a consistent source of good sense. Angela's support is immeasurable. Her encouragement, her insights and constructive criticism all delivered with patience are a source of inspiration.

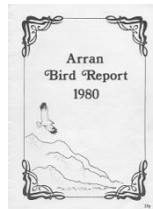
When it came to the actual preparation for publication, the staff at Ardrrossan Printing Company, in particular Sharon Smith is also acknowledged. Sharon's professional, helpful approach together with her expertise had a major influence on the overall appearance of the report including the attractive cover.

Jim Cassels, Bird Recorder, Arran Natural History Society.

Part 1

The Beginning

The Arran Natural History Society was founded in 1977 and the first edition of the society's journal *The Arran Naturalist No1 Summer 1978* contained on pages 20-22 "An Arran Bird Checklist" with one hundred and sixty-five species. This was produced by Maggie Dunn. One year later *The Arran Naturalist No3 Summer 1979* contained on pages 42-46 an "Annual Bird Report 1978" also produced by Maggie Dunn. This list of the one hundred and thirty-seven birds recorded on Arran that year was based on Maggie Dunn's notes. There was no similar bird list published in 1979 but some of the sightings from 1979 were incorporated in the *Arran Bird Report 1980*. (This has been re-printed and incorporated into this publication on pages 37-44.) For the first time there was an annual bird report on Arran that was a distinct separate booklet. The first report consisted of five pages plus a cover. One hundred and thirty-one species were recorded in that report. The booklet cost 25p. There were forty-five contributors and the report was compiled by Maggie Dunn.



This was the beginning of the production of an annual bird report for the Isle of Arran. This publication attempts to celebrate the first forty years of the Arran Natural History Society producing an annual bird report each year.

Before the Annual Report

Before the annual bird report there are a number of historical publications on the birds on Arran including, *Birds of Arran* written by Robert Gray in 1872 published by Bell and Bain of Glasgow and *The Birds of the Island of Arran* written by J.A. Gibson in 1956 published by Bute Newspapers Limited.

In addition to these publications there are some private notes. For example, the notes kept by John Lawrence Craigie. In August 2014 the Arran Heritage Museum received his hand written manuscript on Arran birds. This had been donated by Stewart Brochie, nephew of the author. The document consists of one hundred and fourteen A4 pages.

Each page starts with the name of a bird, followed by information and finishing with a list of references like Robert Gray, *Birds of Arran*, Bell, 1872; John Morell McWilliam, *Birds of the Firth of Clyde*, Witherby, 1936 and J A Gibson, *Birds of the Island of Arran*, Bute Newspapers, 1956. The information on each bird is a combination of quotes from these sources plus the author's own observations. The earliest observation is from 1929 and the latest 1974. It is an extensive piece of work. More information can be found here: <http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/john-lawrence-craigie.html>

While these historical publications are interesting, Arran bird records are sparse until in 1980 the Arran Natural History Society began to publish systematically each year an annual bird report. All of these annual reports are available for consultation from the archivists section of the Isle of Arran Heritage Museum. An increasing number of the reports, including all the most recent ones, are also available free on line <http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/annual-bird-reports.html> In addition since 2007, all Arran records are available through the British Trust for Ornithology, firstly through the national Bird Atlas 2007-2012 data and from 2013 through Bird Track.

The Report: Production Challenges

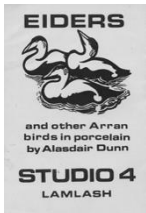
From that first report for 1980 consisting of five pages plus a cover, there have been a number of changes as the Arran Natural History Society wrestled with the challenge of producing an accessible document at a realistic price.

This table gives an indication of how unit cost and size have changed over the years.

Year	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015
Pages	5	12	20	22	46	46	60	60
Cost	£0.25	£0.75	£1.20	£3.95*	£3.50	£3.50	£4.00	£5.00

* Incorporated in the *The Arran Naturalist No19 Summer 1995*

During the forty years a range of printers have been used. Initially some were only used for a year or two, like Midas in Lowestoft or Kilbrannan. Others were used for longer: the Arran Banner for twelve years and Arran Graphics for four. There was a period from 1996 to 1999 when the society itself produced the report as a desk top publication. For the last fifteen years Ardrossan Printing Company has produced the annual bird report.



In an attempt to reduce cost, advertising space was sold in the report. This started in the 1981 report and finished in 1995. The longest running advert was for Studio 4.

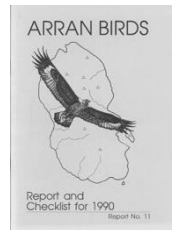
This advert ran on the back page from 1982 to 1990. Studio 4 was the outlet for Alasdair Dunn's artistic work and the advert was a support to his wife Maggie Dunn who was compiling the report throughout this time.

With the exception of 1994 and 1995, when the annual bird report was incorporated into *The Arran Naturalist*, the publication size has always been A5. The binding has changed. Initially from 1980 to 1995 it was stapled together. With the increasing number of pages, the report was bound together by a plastic comb from 1996 to 2013. Following the publication of the first ever local bird atlas for Arran, *Arran Bird Atlas 2007-2012*, which was perfect bound, the decision was taken by the Arran Natural History Society to have the annual bird report perfect bound. Since 2014 the report has been perfect bound and this has improved its appearance.

Appearance has always been an important factor in the production of the annual report



and over the first forty years a range of front covers have been developed. These are reflected in the selection on the back cover of this publication. From 1980 to 2006 a range of drawings were used for the front cover. From 1981 to 1987 the front cover was by Julian Chanter and from 1988 to until 1993 the drawing used was by Bernard Zonfrillo. His eagle theme continued in various guises until 2006. In 2007 a coloured photograph was used for the front cover for



the first time. The eagle theme continued until 2010 and thereafter the front cover photograph was selected by the Arran Natural History Society committee from bird photographs taken on Arran.

Looking at the front covers, the lack of consistency in the name of the annual report is apparent. In 1980 the report was called simply *Arran Bird Report*. From 1981 to 1987 it was *The Birds of Arran Annual Bird Report/Checklist* then it became *Arran Birds Report and Checklist* before changing again in 1996 to *The Arran Bird Report*. In 2013 it changed again and reverted to the original 1980 name of *Arran Bird Report*.

The Report: Content Changes

More significant than the change in the name has been the change in content during the first forty years. A comparison of the 1980 report on pages 37-44 with the latest report for 2019 on pages 45-108 gives an indication of these content changes.

Here are some of the milestones.

1981. First report to include a Check List. This continued until 2005

1986. First one containing black and white drawings and summer migrant arrival dates.

2006. First with black and white photographs in the text. First to use common, official and systematic names in report. Check list removed and replaced by a brief statement after each name giving the status of the bird.

2007. First colour photograph on front cover. First to include Birdwatchers Code.

2009. First to include a bird ringer report, data on weather on Arran, information on surveys e.g BTO Wetland Bird Survey and projects e.g. Forestry Commission Barn Owl Nest Boxes, plus a list of species requiring a written report to the records committee before acceptance.

2011. First with winter migrant arrival and departure dates and first with a gazetteer and reference to Arran Birding Website and the Arran Moors Special Protection Area

2013. Systematic list order changed from Voous to BOU (British Ornithological Union).

2014. The first report with coloured covers and an insert with coloured photos.

2015. First time that the number of records received and the number of sites in which it was recorded were included for each species.

The People: Recorders

In the first forty years there have been four bird recorders of the Arran Natural History Society, Maggie Dunn was recorder until 1991. The last two years were in collaboration with Tristan ap Rheinallt who also did the 1992 report. From 1993 until 2005 Audrey Walters was the bird recorder and in 2006 the responsibility passed to me, Jim Cassels.

It was Maggie Dunn through her enthusiasm and vision who not only started the annual report but who maintained it through her meticulous and and prolific note taking. *The Arran Naturalist No15 (1992)* edited by Tristan ap Rheinallt contains on page 11 this very apt tribute to Maggie written by her friend Audrey Walters

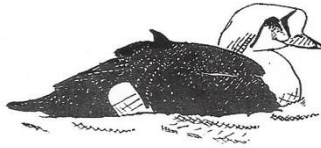
Margaret Dunn

Sadly we now have to say farewell to Maggie Dunn who has moved to a new home in Hampshire. As a founding member of the Arran Natural History Society and the collector of Arran's bird records she will be sorely missed. From the time she first came to live in Arran in the 50s until she left she meticulously recorded the birdlife here, writing up her notes in longhand into a series of files. Her enthusiasm was boundless - everyone who sent her records of sightings was thanked personally by letter, and every doubtful record was followed up. She served continuously on the Natural History Society Committee with total dedication to its ideals, hardly ever missing a meeting and we owe her an enormous debt of gratitude for all her work. She was also responsible for the annual Bird Report - a mammoth task done without the help of a computer until last year. During her years as a teacher at Brodick Primary School she encouraged the children to take an interest in birds and natural history in general, and there will be many former pupils who will be grateful for the trouble she took to foster a lifelong love of wildlife. We would all like to thank her for her work both in recording Arran's birdlife and as a committee member, and wish her every happiness in her new home.

(Contributed by Audrey Walters)

That same year in the *Arran Bird Report 1992*. Tristan ap Rheinallt wrote "One of the consequences of the small number of observers resident on the island is that the absence of just one of them can result in a considerable reduction in the number of records. This year, I have valiantly attempted to fill the gap left by the departure of Maggie Dunn, a prolific note taker,I would appeal to all observers to submit as many records as they can, not only of the scarcer species and the ever popular birds of prey but also of the commoner ones..."

There follows a reproduction of an article written by Maggie Dunn that appeared in *The Arran Naturalist No15 (1992)* on pages 11 to 13 that gives a flavour of being the first bird recorder on Arran.



King Eider

Memories of Birds in Arran 1956-1991

by Margaret Dunn

Since I came to live in Arran in 1956, with a young child, a baby and a husband to look after, every available opportunity was taken to watch birds, even if only in the garden and surrounding fields. Later when I began teaching in Brodick School there was often a lunchtime to have a quick walk or drive to observe birds while consuming sandwiches. My constant companion on walks was my late husband Alasdair who although not a birdwatcher, was interested to make ceramic birds. His eyes would often be on the seashore looking for driftwood to use in his sculptures while mine would be raised to the skyline! Sometimes Sue King and I climbed hills in our search for birds and I am not sure which one of us said "Let's start a Natural History Society". Before long about ten of us found ourselves sitting round a table in the old Boathouse at Cladach, forming a committee and drawing up the Constitution for what is now our Arran Natural History Society, much of the credit for which must go to Danny McNicol.

During the earlier years at King's Cross I remember hearing the drumming of what turned out to be Great Spotted Woodpecker, and watching its striking coloured red, black and white plumage as it flew off, with typical bounding flight, never to reappear in the following years. Another early memory at King's Cross was in 1968 when the Corncrake used to call, continuously it seemed, day and night, from the field adjacent to Carrick View, now built up. It is no longer there.

One of the first birds to suffer in a hard winter is always the Kingfisher and one year when the Rosa Burn was frozen upstream, I watched with delight as one dived several times into the ice-free water at the burn mouth until, appetite satisfied, it flashed past me leaving me dazzled by its shimmering brilliance.

Waxwing irruptions from the continent have on occasion caused some to visit Arran, and in one such year (1982), a solitary Waxwing which roosted with Starlings by night in the tree in front of Brodick Post Office, by day enjoyed chips and pastry crumbs kindly thrown out for it from what was then known as Kames Corner Tearoom.

In November of 1977 there was the surprise of finding a Black Redstart feeding near the tide line on the shore at Kildonan. Later it perched on the wall in front of the Kildonan Hotel, leaping up from time to time and flicking its red tail as it did so. By night it found a window of the lounge bar conveniently open a few inches at the top and finding the surroundings most congenial, spent several free nights' accommodation therein.

Angus MacIver featured largely throughout those 35 years, not only as a leader of Holiday Fellowship groups but as an excellent birdwatcher and naturalist who influenced and encouraged me.

Accompanied by Angus and others one night, I trod carefully along a track in Brodick Country Park towards the sound of two Nightjars churring, and was rewarded by hearing the "coick" call and witnessing the dramatic wing-clapping display of a male Nightjar silhouetted above us against the moonlit sky. We just held our breath, watched and listened-spellbound.

In 1980 I found myself in charge of a small party on one of Jonathan Williams' Island Safaris. We had climbed to the top of the Narachan searching the horizon for eagles, had given up hope and were descending on rough ground when the resident pair of "Goldies" swept down so low overhead that we could almost have touched them. Those from south of the border were overawed, indeed we all were, by the effortless soaring and huge wingspan of these majestic birds. Now below us, they ignored the mobbing crows which were completely dwarfed by comparison.

One whose name, in my mind, will always be synonymous with Fulmar Petrels, is Bernie Zonfrillo, who visited Arran whenever he could in order to ring these birds. This involved me standing by, averting my eyes, as he leant over cliff-tops such as Drumadoon, lowering his long pole with a net at one end in which he would bring up a Fulmar. The objective was to weigh, measure and ring the struggling bird while at the same time trying to avoid the evil-smelling oil coming from its gullet. He was concerned about the mink and rats that preyed on Fulmars and hoped traps could be set in an effort to control these predators. I once had the pleasure of 'assisting' Ian Hopkins when he came to ring Peregrines. He went over the cliff on a rope and brought up three fluffy partially feathered eyasses in a bag. We took care to avoid their razor-sharp talons as they were being ringed. Meantime, they kept up

the loudest most deafening cries of "ke ke ke" which rang in my ears long after they were safely returned to their eyrie. I shall never forget that thrilling experience.

I have omitted more recent events since articles on selected birds have appeared in the "Arran Naturalist" or "Arran Birds" but I must mention how exciting was the visit of the Cranes to Shiskine and I was fortunate enough to see them along with Audrey Walters, keen birder and friend. Some times we were not so lucky, like the day we missed seeing the Hoopoe! The day John Rhead phoned to say he had seen an American visitor at Slidderwaterfoot. It was a Long-billed Dowitcher. The Addisons and I considered the soaking we received from a south-westerly well worth it when we watched this stranger to our shores feeding, preening and resting.

If I had to select the most outstanding year it would be 1979 when on a Natural History Society outing to Ailsa Craig we enjoyed the sight and sound (though not the smell) of the thousands of nesting seabirds, highlighted on the journey to and fro in Howard Walker's boat by Arctic Skuas, Manx Shearwaters, Storm Petrels and a whale. That too was the year of first records of Turtle Dove, Green Sandpiper, Pied Flycatcher and Willow Tit, all very exciting to see for the first time on Arran. If asked to choose my most memorable bird it would be the King Eider. Why? First it is a beautiful bird with its black and white body, pale pink breast, greyish-blue head and striking orange facial shield. Secondly there was the thrill of an Arctic nesting bird, rare in Britain, not only coming to Lochranza for three successive summers but performing courtship display and mating with a female Common Eider. Its call was reminiscent of our own Eider's but also contained some lovely dove like notes.

These memories, never to be forgotten, are all part of Arran, and will linger with me forever.

In the *Arran Bird Report 1991* Maggie wrote that it was with regret but with confidence that she handed over to Tristan ap Rheinallt. The two of them had co-edited the 1990 and the 1991 reports and in 1992 Tristan was the sole bird recorder. In his own words prior to coming to Arran his interest in birds was mainly chasing rarities. In modern parlance he was a twitcher. On Arran he developed his passion for seawatching, adding a number of species to the Arran list including Mediterranean Gull. He also clearly demonstrated his aptitude for recording and communicating being, in his relatively short tenure, not only bird recorder but also editor of the *Arran Naturalist*.

In the *Arran Bird Report 1992* Tristan highlighted a recurring concern of all Arran bird recorders when he wrote "It is strongly recommended that visiting observers use the checklist to familiarise themselves with the status of the birds here on Arran and become aware that species such as Stock Dove and Tree Sparrow are rarities." This concern was expanded in an article in the *Arran Naturalist* No. 16 (1993) pages 3-10. "Notes on Some Little Known Arran Birds". In that same *Arran Naturalist* on page 21 with the title "Another Bird-watching Record" Tristan spoke of his low record of seven birds in a five hour walk on Arran and his high record of ninety one species that he got on 25 May 1991 when he spent a whole day birding from well before dawn until after dusk. As far as I know these records still stand!



As well as writing the bird report Tristan, also for the first and only time in his life, became a bird illustrator. An example of his work is the Pied Flycatcher drawing on the left. The drawing on the right the Great Shearwater is by Audrey Walters, the person who took over as bird recorder from Tristan.

In the *Arran Bird Report 1993*, the first one compiled by Audrey Walters, she wrote in the introduction "To lose one experienced bird recorder with the departure of my good friend Maggie Dunn to fresh fields and pastures new in the south of England was bad enough but to lose a second when Tristan ap Rheinallt and his family moved to Islay was a loss we could ill afford. His absence is reflected in the much reduced reporting of seabirds which were his special interest...We are also grateful to him for undertaking a complete revision of the checklist, a task taking up a great deal of time and research. Despite not having a car I agreed to take on the task of bird recorder for Arran in the meantime...."

That "meantime" lasted for thirteen years until 2005 inclusive!

Audrey had first contributed to the bird report in 1983. In 1984 in the introduction, Maggie Dunn acknowledged Audrey's help with the typing of the report. In the introduction to the 1987 report Audrey's help in providing illustrations for the report is first acknowledged. When Audrey took over the responsibility of bird recorder, she had already been involved with the production of the report in various ways for ten years. She had willingly assisted both her predecessors during their tenures and would continue to support and encourage the recorder who eventually took over from her. From her "meantime" comment Audrey did not anticipate her tenure lasting for thirteen years but she was committed to the production of an annual bird report and ensured its continuity. Without her commitment the report would have faltered.

In the *Arran Bird Report 2005*, the last one compiled by Audrey she wrote "I took over in 1993 mainly because no one else was willing to take it on and I could not bear to see the Arran Bird Report go the same way as the Arran Naturalist. Thirteen years later, I decided it was high time that someone else took over". That someone else was me!

In the *Arran Bird Report 2014* there was this tribute to Audrey Walters.

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

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

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

Jim Cassels

I had first contributed to the annual bird report in 1982 and have contributed every year since. The first contribution was after our annual summer holiday. Having bought a caravan in 1992 and then established our home here in 2004, contributions became year round. In birding terms I moved from being a summer visitor to a passage migrant to a resident. On my retirement in the autumn of 2005, Audrey saw this as the ideal opportunity to hand over responsibility for being the bird recorder. I have never regretted saying that I would give it a go.

There was a period of apprenticeship ably supported by my predecessors, Maggie and Audrey, when I had to hone the skills necessary to do the job. Not just recording and collating sightings but also validating sightings. The reported "penguin like bird" standing at the mouth of the Blackwater turned out to a juvenile Cormorant! A large part of the role was trying to establish and maintain communication with people with a range of interest in birds and to share information in a way that did not compromise the



welfare of the birds. Unlike my predecessors, who depended heavily on pencil and paper, technology was embraced including the use of computers, spreadsheets, emails, a birding website ([arranbirding http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/index.html](http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/index.html)) and social media (Follow@arranbirding on twitter). The use of digital images from smart phones and cameras meant that frustrating descriptions of possible birds seen by contributors were to a large extent replaced by useful photographs.

Early in my tenure, the plans for a national bird atlas, *Bird Atlas 2007–2011* were announced. This is a partnership between the British Trust for Ornithology, BirdWatch Ireland and the Scottish Ornithologists' Club. I persuaded the Arran Natural History Society to attempt to do not only the work needed for a national atlas but to cover the whole of the island and produce a local atlas of breeding and wintering birds. With only a handful of keen birders on the island, it was recognised that efforts needed to be made to engage with the wider community on Arran, encouraging residents and visitors to submit records for the atlas. This was done by writing regular articles for the local weekly paper the *Arran Banner*, giving talks and building special atlas pages on the Arran birding website. Bird walks were organised to give local people valuable fieldwork experience and to build their confidence levels. Nearly 700 people submitted over thirty-six thousand records on one hundred and seventy-seven species of bird for the Arran atlas. Complete coverage of the 139 tetrads (2-km squares) on Arran over five winters and five breeding seasons resulted in the publication in 2014 of *Arran Bird Atlas 2007-2011*. In the foreword Bob Swann, Scottish organiser of *Bird Atlas 2007-11* wrote: "The bird watching community on Arran is to be congratulated in undertaking this project and seeing it through to completion. Gathering atlas data is not easy. It requires dedicated volunteers to get out and cover the ground as well as a good local organisation to ensure full coverage and that the results are properly validated, collated and presented. This work has been recognised by the presentation of the Marsh Local Ornithology Award 2013 to the Arran Natural History Society."

This table gives an indication of changes in number of records received during my tenure. In the last thirteen years there have been contributions from over 1,500 people.

Year	2006	2011	2014	2015	2017	2018
Contributors	60	300+	300+	300+	300+	300+
Records	2,000	6,000	10,021	11,917	21,467	17,591

Two hundred and sixty-five people, residents and regular visitors, receive email notifications and two hundred people Follow@arranbirding on Twitter. In the first forty years the Arran bird recorders have relied on the support of a great many people to produce the annual report. This is reflected in the following sections.

The People: Supporters

Over the first forty years the chairpersons, office bearers and committee members of the Arran Natural History Society have been consistent in their support for the annual bird report, not just with the provision of funds for publication but in a myriad of ways including encouragement, advice, distribution of copies to outlets, proof reading and, for a short period, actually stapling the pages of copies of the report together. The Scottish Ornithologists' Club (SOC) recorders have been a regular source of welcome advice on a diverse range of subjects from the format of the report to dealing with rarities. Bernard Zonfrillo, Val Wilson and Angus Hogg have been at the forefront of this.

The local "volunteers" involved in national surveys like the Wetland Bird Survey, the Breeding Bird Survey and the Garden BirdWatch have been an invaluable support. The National Trust Rangers at Brodick Country Park and the staff at the Arran Tourist Office help by regularly forwarding bird sightings received. It has also been helpful to be given permission to access the Arran records submitted to both BirdTrack and BirdGuides as well as the Arran data held by the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme

The specialist knowledge of members of South Strathclyde Raptor Study Group under the chairmanship of Gordon Riddle which contributes to the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme has been readily shared. On Arran, the expertise of Robert Logan, John Rhead, Andrew Walker and Malcolm Whitmore has been a welcome addition to annual reports. The knowledge of the Hen Harrier population on the island is due to the many years of effort by John Rhead. Through this work the Arran Moors Special Protection Area was ratified in 2003. (See page 77). John Rhead continues to provide the Arran data on Hen Harrier held by the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme.

Over the years the local British Trust for Ornithology ringers, namely David Keats, Alex



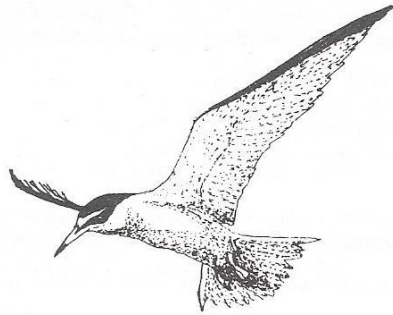
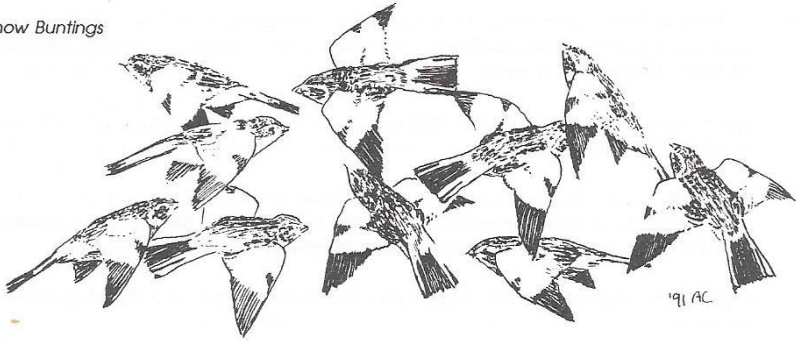
Penn, Dave Smallwood, Chris Southall and David Southall under the able direction of Terry Southall have been a constant source of support to the recorders. Their shared insights into matters like population dynamics, migration and breeding have been a source of fascination. Their collective work, sometimes in conjunction with the Clyde Ringing Group, has over the years looked at a diverse range of species including Whinchat, Rock Pipit, a range of gulls and waders and most recently Short-eared Owls. The Bird Ringing on Arran section in the annual bird report written by Terry Southall (See pages 68-72) is a much looked for highlight reflecting the dedication of this group. For example in

2017, over 2,400 birds were ringed on Arran.

The People: Illustrators and Photographers

From 1980 to 2005, drawings were used in the annual report. This is a list of individuals who contributed drawings. Julian Chanter, Amanda Cree, Tristan ap Rheinallt, Audrey Walters and Bernard Zonfrillo. By far the largest number of drawings has been provided by Audrey Walters. On the following page is a very small selection from the many drawings that enhanced the annual bird reports

Snow Buntings



Little Tern

From 2006, photographs were used in the annual report. Initially these photographs were small black and white photos within the text. In 2007 the first coloured photograph was used on the outside front cover. In 2011 colour photographs were used on the front cover, the back cover, the inside front cover and the inside back cover. In 2014, the first year that the report was perfect bound, a four page colour insert was also added. This is a list of individuals whose photographs have been used in the annual report, although many others have generously provided photographs for consideration.

Sue Archer, Carl D. Baggott, David Callan, Angela Cassels, Jim Cassels, Tony Church, Peter Curran, Brian Couper, Charlotte Clough, Colin Cowley, Norma Davidson, Simon Davies, Peter Dobson, Arthur Duncan, John Fitzpatrick, Alastair Forsyth, Nick Giles, Clive Harding, Len Hartley, Brian Henderson, Angus Hogg, David Hogg, David Keates, David Kilpatrick, Robert Lambie, Liz Leyden, Finn McArthur, Colin McCort, Jim MacKenzie, Penny McWatters, Javier Marchamato, Dennis Morrison, Douglas Moore, Sue Naylor, Jackie Newman, Jane Nichol, Malcolm Ogilvie, Linda Offord, Alex Penn, Carl Reavey, Shona Redmayne, Gordon Riddle, Graham Ross, Kate Sampson, Ethan Sillars, Don Smith, Chris Southall, Terry Southall, Walter Vanderveken, Howard Walker, Graeme Wallace and Malcolm Whitmore. (Total 52)

The People: Contributors

Without the contributors there would be no bird report. There follows extracts from several Arran Bird Reports showing the list of contributors from various years

1980

In 1980 there were forty-five contributors.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the 1980 report with special thanks to Ian Puckrin and Angus Maciver who sent detailed reports. Apologies to anyone omitted.

LIST OF OBSERVERS: M.Bailey, J.Basford, F.Chorley, J.Clerk, Mrs.S.Docker, A.Dunn, M.Dunn, D.J.Ellis, J.Gibson, R.H.Hogg, I.Hopkins, Mrs.J.Howe, S.Lambie, Miss S.Lansdale, J.Lough, A.Maciver, N.Marshall, D.McNicol, Mrs.I.McNicol, D.Morgan, A.Nicol, M.Nind, R.Nisbet, P.Ormerod, Mrs.J.Ormerod, Miss S.Paul, J.Phillips, I.Puckrin, D.Robertson, Mrs.C.Robertson, A.Ross, Mrs.P.Sillars, Miss S.Sillars, Mrs.G.Small, V.Small, B.Spence, D.Tapson, H.Walker, Mrs.R.Walker, G.Watson, J.Williams. | C.Bailey, I & S.Martin, S.King.

1990

In 1990 there were one hundred and twelve contributors.

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

C Addison	J B Ellis	A Nicol
G Addison	I English	M Oakes
E Alderson	D Errey	S O'Kane
Dr T ap Rheinallt	G Errey	S Pairman
R Armour	M K Fanshawe	B Pashby
M Bailey	G Foley	S Pashby
D Baillie	J Foley	A Rampton
D Bain	S Gough	J Reid
T R Bain	D Goldsbrough	J Rhead
C J Baister	A Gratton	T Riddle
G Bannatyne	Col J Gratton	E Robertson
J Barker	Prof N R Grist	G Robertson
L Baxter	G Hamilton	A Robinson
D C Bearhop	H Hamilton	B Shand
A Boyle	M Hamilton	G Small
L Boyle	M Hart	V Small
Dr N J B A Branson	J H Harvey	T Smith
B Brock	J Hazlett	SOC Fife Branch
J Brown	V Iutz	I Struthers
Jim Brown	J Kinloch	P Tupman
R Brown	J Lacey	B Turner
S Bullen	S Lambie	G Tysoe
Dr J T R Cassels	J Larter	S Tysoe
L Cassels	R Leishman	A Vincent
M Cauldwell	M Logan	K Walkden
E Chave	R Logan	M Walkden
A Clark	S Lowe	H Walker
H Cole	D McAlone	R Walker
A Cree	B McFadyen	A Walters
L Crossan	C McFadyen	R B Warren
I Cumming	A Maciver	D W Warner
C Davies	L McDonald	J G Williams
N Davies	T McKie	D Whiteley
S Davies	A McLauchlan	B Zonfrillo
W Davies	T Malin	
J Dick	N Marshall	
M Dunn	Dr S Milligan	
M H Dunn	N Muirhead	
L Drummond	H Murdo	

2000

In 2000 there were one hundred and eighteen contributors.

CONTRIBUTORS

J.Adderkin; D.Aitcheson; J.Bains; G.Bannatyne; K.Bear; I.Bearhop; Dr.N.Branson; M.Brown; C.Burgess; C.Burns; R.Burns; Dr.J. & A.Cassels; J.Cassels; A.Clark; J.Clark; S.Clifton; G.Coles; E.Colquhoun; B.& J.Cowell; M.Crockett; N.Davidson; Dechi; J.Delaney; J.Dick; A.Dickie; H.Donaldson; I.Duckworth; A.Duncan; M.H.Dunn; J.Fitzpatrick; J.Gallagher; R.Gibson; M.Giles; D.Goldsbrough; A.Handley; P.& H.Hanmer; K.Harvey; J.Hawkins; K.Hesp; A.Hollick; G.Jones; M.Kelly; J.Kinloch; B.Kinnaird; M.Knox; J.Lacey; F. & A.Laing; S.Lambie; R.Logan; M.Lyth; C.McAllister; R.McCarthy; A.McIvor; T.McKie; H.McKinnon; J.McKinnon; A.McLaughlin; E.McMaster; T.McNeish; D.McQueen; P.McWaters; R.McWhirter; T.Malin; P.Meldrum; J.Murchie; B.Murray; K.Norton; V.Padfield; G.Parkins; M.Paterson; J.Penrice; J.Perkins; R.Popplewell; J.Rhead; C.Robertson; C.Rollie; K.Sampson; I.Scott; B.Shand; G. & V.Small; D.Smith; T.Smith; T.Southall; A.Southgate; J.Steel; D.Stevenson B.Stewart; M.Strang; M.Strath; I.Struthers; J.Sutherland; F.Tait; A.& R.Thompson; C.Todd; P.Tupman; K.Turner; M.Tweeddale; D.Underdown; R.Unwin; A.Walker; H.Walker; R.Walker; G.Wallace; N.Wallace; A.Walters; J.Watson; M.Welford; M.Welsh; M.White; J.Williams; B.Wilson; J.Wood;

By 2010 (see following page) the number of contributors including members of visiting bird clubs, was regularly over three hundred.

Three of the contributors, M.H. Dunn, A. Nicol and J Williams were contributors to the 1980 report, the first one and to the 2019 report the fortieth. (See page 48)

While some contributors were resident on Arran, others were visitors including regular visitors. Even a comparison of these lists of contributors from 1980, 1900, 2000, 2010 and the list of contributors for 2019 on page 48, the fortieth Arran Bird Report, shows that many of these contributors sent in records over a large number of years. This core of regular contributors was the bedrock on which these bird reports was based. Many have contributed for more than ten years and some for more than twenty years. Angela and Jim Cassels, Grace Small, Tony Smith and Audrey Walters have contributed for more than thirty years and Maggie H Dunn has contributed to every annual Arran bird report for the last forty years.

List of Contributors 2010

M. Allan	M. Currie	H. Hamilton	S. McMahon	K. Sampson
J. & B. Anthony	E. Dale	L. Hartley	J. McManus	K. Sayer
S. Archer	J. Daniels	P. Heivers	T. McNeish	D. Scott
T. Baboolal	N. & H. Davidson	D. Henderson	D. Macniven	S. Scott
M. Baillie	D. Dee	N. Henderson	D. McQueen	J. Sills
R. Baker	M. Devine	F. Hoban	P. McWatters	G. Small
T. & S. Bambridge	A. Dinwoodie	C. Hocking	R. Mair	T. & C. Southall
A. Banks	J. Dinwoodie	L. Hocking	L. Mansfield	A. Stefanuti
G. Bannatyne	C. Drennan	K. & A. Hogge	K. Mawson	A. Stevenson
S. Bannatyne	F. Dowell	L. Holburn	N. May	E. Stevenston
J. Baraclough	H. Driver	A. & J. Hollick	B. & R. Mearns	B. Stewart
R. Barnden	A. Duncan	F. & L. Hopkins	E. Miller	R. & M. Stewart
A. Barr	M. Dunn	M. Howes	J. Millier	S. Strachan
R. Besant	A. Elliot -Walker	J. Howie	R. Milligan	I. Struthers
D. Bevan	P. Emsley	G. Hulme	C. Mills	B. Swann
A. Bigrigg	A. Fannin	A. & S. Hume	P. & G. Moon	W.B. & M.G. Tait
J. Bonthron	I. Farquharson	M. Iutz	D. Morrison	F. Tait
C. Boon	V. Firminger	A. & C. Irving	J. Morrison	S. Talbot
M. Boothman	J. & J. Fitzpatrick	J. & G. Jackson	J. Murchie	E. Taylor
M. Boyett	A. Fallows	S. Jackson	M. Murchie	A. & R. Thompson
I. Boyle	S. Ferris	P. Jardine	J. Nelson	P. & A. Thompson
B. Brock	Lady J. Fforde	M. Jeeves	A. Nicol	S. & K. Thompson
D. Brookes	J. Fish	D. & P. Johnston	J. Nichol	N. & B. Thomson
F. Brown	R. Flannagan	H. Kemp	C. G. Norman	J. Totty
H. & H. Brown	A. Fletcher	M. Kerr	North Ayr. RSPB Group	D. & T. Turner
K. Brown	M. Flynn	S. Kerr-Hunter	M. & D. Oakes	C. & D. Turbett
S. Bullen	J. Ford	B. & E. Kinnaird	N. Page	R. & M. Tweedsdale
S. Bunyan	S. & J. Ford	S. King	D. & M. Parker	D. Underdown
G. Bussell	Z. Frayne	H. Knight	V. & S. Pierce	W. Vanderveken
M. Burton	S. & A. Freear	F. Laing	J. Plenderleith	H. Vernon
K. Calman	D. Freeman	R. Lambie	P. Potter	A. Walker
A. & C. Cameron	N. Frost	S. Lambie	V. Price	B. Walker
J. Cameron	A. Fyffe	B. Latham	A. Prince	G. Walker
D. Campbell	R. & A. Garratt	A. Latona	D. Proctor	L. Walker
E. Campbell	N. Garraway	J. Lees	L. Proudfoot	H. Walker
J. Campbell	D. Gilby	P. Lock	F. Rae	G. & J. Wallace
A. & J. Cassels	R. & J. Gibson	R. Logan	D.F Reid	L. & S. Wallace
L. Cassels	F. Gillies	M.H. Lyth	J. Rhead	J. & A. Walsh
C. Chalmers	N. Gillies	C. McAllister	J. Richardson	D. Walsh
R. Cheshire	M. Given	A. McBain	B. Roberts	A. Walters
T. Church	J. Glenscorrodale	T. McCann	L. Robertson	N. Wells
Z. Clelland	C. Goekeritz	C. & C. McCort	A. Robinson	A. White
B. Cochran	M. Granger	J. McDonald	C. Robinson	M. Whitmore
S. Collins	D. Grant	M. McGinty	C. & A. Robinson	J. Wilkinson
B. Couper	J. & I. Grant	A.J. McGowan	M. Robinson	J. Williams
D. Cowan	J. Gray	J. Mackenzie	G. Ross	J. Wilson
S. & R. Cowan	J. Green	J. McKillop	J. & J. Sale	P. Wright
B. & J. Cowell	S. Hall	J. McKinnon	D. Samuels	T. & M. Young
A. & V. Cross	E. Hamilton	M. McLelland	A. Sallow	B. Zonfrillo

The Birds: Introduction

The species list for Arran stands at two hundred and forty-two species. Not all of these are going to be covered in this section. In Part 3, the Arran Bird Report 2019 in the Systematic List section starting on page 78, a brief statement is given on each species on the Arran list giving its current status. This can be markedly different from the status of the same species on the adjacent mainland. In addition there is further information on each of the species in the *Arran Bird Atlas 2007-2012*.

While the previous sections have tried to reflect on the changes in the report in these first forty years and to give an insight into the people who helped shaped the report, this section is about the birds of Arran. It is the birds that help make Arran a special place. There is a uniqueness about Arran bird life. There have been changes covered by these first forty reports. Species have gone as well as come. These changes together with some of the birding highlights from these forty reports feature in this section in an attempt to celebrate forty years of bird recording by the Arran Natural History Society.

The Birds: Special Birds

People living on Arran and people visiting Arran may have their own list of birds that they feel help to make Arran special and in most lists, I think the following three breeding species would be included Golden Eagle, Hen Harrier and Red-throated Diver. From the information from the national atlas survey work conducted by the British for Ornithology and its partners in 1968-72, 1988-91 and 2007-2011, all of these Schedule 1 breeding species are becoming more widespread on Arran. As part of the last national survey, the first Arran atlas was produced by the Arran Natural History Society in 2014 (*Arran Bird Atlas 2007-2012*). In that publication the healthy population trend of these special birds was evident. Indeed the island is considered to be a stronghold of both Golden Eagle and Hen Harrier and it is the most southerly breeding area in Scotland of Red-throated Diver. In 2003 the Arran Moors Special Protection Area was established to help protect these species. (See page 77)



The Birds: Absentees

On the adjacent mainland Rook, Magpie and Tawny Owl are all widespread and familiar breeding birds. None of them have bred on Arran during the forty years of the Arran Bird Report. Magpie is a vagrant with no records some years. The longest staying Magpie was from 9 November 1999 to 29 April 2000. That was the case until 2019 (See page 94). In 2018, between 31 March and 2 April, there were reports of Magpie from both Kildonan and Lochranza suggesting the presence of two birds on Arran. That was a first for Arran. Rook is a regular winter visitor but there are no breeding records. The only Arran records of Tawny Owl are from a long lived introduced bird that frequented Brodick Country Park.



In addition, two species that breed in nearby Ayrshire are absent from Arran, namely Stock Dove and Tree Sparrow. There are Stock Dove records in four Arran Bird Reports, the last one was in 1989. Tree Sparrow had a run of six years from 1987 to 1992 with sightings each year from an area in Lamlash with possible breeding. After that, there was one report in 1994, one in 1995 and the last report was in 1997.



Similarly there is the enigma of Merlin and Kingfisher. Both are species that regularly feature in the annual report, Merlin as a passage migrant and winter visitor and Kingfisher as a dispersing bird after the breeding season. While there seems to be suitable habitat for both species, there is no confirmed breeding of either species on Arran.

As indicated earlier on page 9, Tristan highlighted in the *Arran Bird Report 1992* a recurring concern of all Arran bird recorders when he wrote "It is strongly recommended that visiting observers use the checklist to familiarise themselves with the status of the birds here on Arran..... because in many cases it is different from even the adjacent mainland."

The Birds: Going

From the information in the first forty years of the Arran Bird Report a number of species are in decline influenced by complex inter-related factors like climate change, habitat change and human interference.

Black Grouse: In the living memory of people on Arran, Black Grouse were considered a pest species at harvest time, raiding the stooks of drying corn. In the 1981 report there were only records of small numbers from four areas. In 1982, three birds were reported in one area and in 1983 none were reported. Following a feasibility study in 2005, the Arran Black Grouse Group was set up with the intention of trying to re-establish this species on Arran. There is a report of the group on page 67.

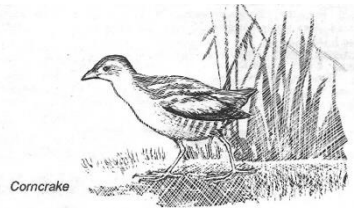


Ptarmigan: Arran is the most southerly breeding area of this species in Scotland (Information from the *Birds of Scotland: Forrester R.W. et al (eds.): 2007: Scottish Ornithologists' Club* and from the *Bird Atlas 2007-2011; the breeding birds of Britain and Ireland: Balmer D.E. et al (eds.): 2013; BTO Books*). In the first twenty years of the Arran Bird Report there were records every year. However that is not the case this century, when there have been records from only twelve years, the last record being a group of six in Coire a' Bhradain on 21 January 2015. The number generated from all the records of birds seen in the 2000s is thirty-nine, while the equivalent number for the 1990s is seventy-eight and for the 1980s it is one hundred and thirty-three. The best year in each decade in terms of number of birds seen in various locations was: in the 2000s, six birds in one location in 2015; in the 1990s, fourteen birds in five locations in 1991 and in the 1980s, forty birds including young in eight locations in 1981. The population has never been large. It may be being sustained by dispersing birds moving to Arran from strongholds further north. Without this, the species may be lost as a breeding bird.



Fulmar: In the 1987 report, 284 pairs were reported and in 1992 approximately 150 pairs were present on the breeding cliffs around the island. Ten years later numbers were a fraction of these and in 2017 the highest total count was around fifty birds.

Corncrake: Even by the 1980s, Corncrake, this once familiar farmland bird, was in decline in Arran and the decline continued. In the 1980s Corncrake was reported each year except 1980. Often there was just a single bird calling but in 1983 three or four birds were reported. In the 1990s, there were reports of a single bird calling in 1990, 1993 and 1997. In the 2000s, again single records in 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008. Interestingly the last three were all from the same location. The last report was 2008.

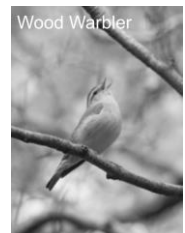


Nightjar: In 1980, nine churring Nightjar were reported from Merkland. In 1984, eight pairs were reported but the rest of the 1980s show a decline with four or five pairs in 1985 and three or four pairs in 1987 and one calling male in 1988. Single birds continued to be reported mainly in the Merkland area until 1995. In 1996 there no reports from Merkland but two from elsewhere. The last report in 1990s was one in 1998 at Maol Donn. There was then a gap with no records until 2013 when one was calling at Merkland from 17 June to 26 June. Since then there has been one record in 2017. With the extensive clear-felling being done by the Forestry Commission it was hoped that the increase in suitable habitat may result in resurgence of this species but there has been no sign of that yet.

Yellowhammer: This is another familiar farmland bird in decline. Throughout the 1980s between ten and fifteen pairs were reported each year. In the 1990s numbers declined with eight pairs in 1990, four pairs in 1992 and in 1994 there were no breeding records. From 1997 to 1999, each year there was a breeding record from Shiskine Golf Course but after that there have been no Arran breeding records. Yellowhammer is now a passage and winter visitor with most records between September and March.



These are by no means the only birds in decline. Here are a few more examples. Lapwing and Curlew as a breeding species have become extremely localised and are just hanging on in a small number of areas. Even the numbers of breeding Herring Gull and Lesser-black backed Gull is in decline with no inland Arran breeding grounds where once eggs were so numerous that people collected gull eggs for food. The decline in these gull breeding areas may be related to the closure of the refuse landfill site in 2006. Among the summer visitors Wood Warbler has the most noticeable decline. From an average of nine territories each year between 1981 and 1989 to an average of just over one territory between 2008 and 2018 with no records in four of those years.



Just one final example. In some areas shore birds are in severe decline.

In 2017 a person who had meticulously counted the shore birds on Arran for almost thirty years decided to step down. He is one of thousands of counters who once a month on a designated date count the number of the birds on UK shores. The count is organized by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) and is called the Wetland Bird Survey or WeBS for short. On Arran there are currently eight stretches of shore monitored each month. His stretch of shore was Whiting Bay. When he indicated to me his intention to step down, he expressed the view that he felt the number of birds that he was counting each month was considerably less than when he started. I felt this was a valid observation from a reliable, methodical counter.

As the local organiser of the count I felt that I would like to investigate this further, so I approached the BTO and asked if they would provide me with the shore bird count data for Whiting Bay for 1993 and 1994 when the present WeBS arrangements started and the data for the last two years, 2016/17. This was provided. From this I extracted all the counts of Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Curlew, Redshank and Turnstone. These are our most familiar shore birds. While some breed on our shores, others feed on the shore on their way to and from breeding grounds further north. A comparison between the sum of the totals of these five species between 1993/94 and the sum of the totals of 2016/17 showed an 86% decline in number. In twenty plus years that is a huge decline and from my point of view alarming.

While there could be many inter-related factors at work including aspects associated with climate change, the general marine health of the Firth of Clyde or changes in distant



breeding grounds, one factor that does contribute to this decline is human disturbance associated with dogs. While some of the large global factors may be difficult to manage, the local factor of human disturbance is one that could be managed and I would argue should be managed for the benefit of our wildlife. That is why I am delighted to see this local initiative lead by the Arran Access Trust and supported by the Arran Natural History Society asking dog owners to keep their dogs under control particularly in the bird breeding season. Notices encouraging this are on display in areas where there are likely to be ground breeding birds. This is in line

with the legislation in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. These notices are a genuine attempt to protect our wildlife while giving appropriate access for humans. Hopefully those who love Arran will support this initiative and help ensure that the shores on Arran retain their wildlife because otherwise Arran will be a poorer place.

The Birds: Coming

In contrast to the last section, from the information in the first forty years of the Arran Bird Report, a number of species are on the increase. Some species have simply increased in number like the Golden Eagle and Hen Harrier mentioned in the Special section. Others in this category include Collared Dove and Black Guillemot. In addition Mute Swan and Great Spotted Woodpecker have become established as breeding birds while others like Nuthatch and Little Egret have made their first appearance.

Collared Dove: In the mid-twentieth century there was a rapid expansion of Collared Dove from the Middle East across Europe. First recorded in Hungary in 1932, in France in 1952, it was first recorded breeding in Scotland in 1957. The first bird seen on Arran was as recently as 1966 and now it is a well established breeding bird around all the settlements on Arran.



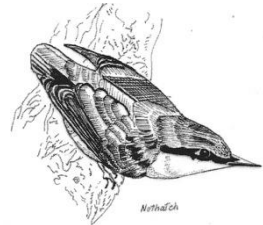
Black Guillemot; There was a rapid expansion of this circumpolar species between 1980-90, in particular the colonisation of new sites around the Irish Sea, including man-made structures like harbour walls, jetties, piers as well as into north-east Scotland. On Arran this expansion has continued. In 1980 there were four breeding pairs on Pladda. In 1993 it was first reported breeding in Brodick Pier and by 2017 there were one hundred and thirty records from fifty-nine locations round the coast of Arran.

Mute Swan: In 2017 there were three hundred and eighty records of Mute Swan from one hundred and forty locations mainly round Arran's coasts. This familiar species successfully bred as recently as 1994 when Mute Swan near the fish farm at King's Cross produced seven young, the first Arran bred cygnets since before the last war. Previous attempts to nest particularly at Lochranza had always met with failure.



Great Spotted Woodpecker: In the 1980s and 1990s there were only five occasional records of Great Spotted Woodpecker 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. The species now seems to be well established on Arran, with seventy-four records from thirty-seven locations in 2017.

Nuthatch: Like Great Spotted Woodpecker, Nuthatch is a woodland species that is spreading north. Well established south of the border, this species first bred in the Borders of Scotland in 1989 rapidly moving into a large area of southern Scotland in the 1990s. Now the nearest well established breeding area is in South Ayrshire including Ayr itself. The first Arran record was in 2001. In 2002 there were two records but there were no further records until 2012 when there was one. While there was none the following year, there were records in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 with seven records in 2016 followed by one in 2017. Surely it can only be a matter of time before Nuthatch becomes established on Arran.





Little Egret: Following an expansion across Europe, Little Egret first appeared in the UK in significant numbers in 1989 and first bred in Dorset in 1996. In Ireland it first bred in 1997, the first in Wales was 2002, but to date there is no confirmed breeding in Scotland. The first Arran record was a single bird on Sliderry Shore on 1 July 2013. It did not linger. The second record was in 2017 and this bird lingered from Friday 4 August to Monday 7 August mainly in Sandbraes. In 2018 there were fourteen records from twelve locations between 27 September and 20 December. The increase continued in 2019.

Finally in this section are two species, which were persecuted to extinction in the UK in the nineteenth and very early twentieth century, that have been part of a successful re-introduction programmes namely White-tailed Eagle and Red Kite and one, the Osprey, which after similar persecution re-colonised without any need for a re-introduction programme.

White-tailed Eagle: Numbers of this species were released on Rhum between 1975 and 1985 and further releases were made in Wester Ross between 1993 and 1998. The first successful breeding was in Mull in 1985. In 1992, after an absence of over one hundred years, the first White-tailed Eagle was seen at close range in the Clachland Hills on 3 November. This juvenile bird was later seen over Holy Isle and Lamblash Bay. Its appearance made the front page of the local paper the "Arran Banner" on Saturday 21 November 1992. The following is an extract from the original front page story.



The Eagle has Landed from "Arran Banner" 21 November 1992

The White-tailed Eagle is even bigger than the Golden Eagle but, being persecuted last century, has ceased to be seen in Scotland until recently. And last week a White-tailed Eagle was seen off Clachlands Point. It was seen flying around by Tony and Irmgard Church from Lochranza. Both bird lovers they thought it was a sea eagle but were not sure so drove down to Kilmory to tell birdman John Rhead who dropped what he was doing and came to look. An hour later it was still there and it was a sea eagle, a White-tailed Eagle.

The next White-tailed Eagle record was in 2004 on 23 February at Catacol. It was a "tagged" juvenile bird that had been tagged in Mull in 2003. In the following years there were small numbers of records 2006 one, 2008 two, 2009 two, 2010 three, 2011 two, 2012 two, 2014 three, 2016 one and in 2017 there were two records and for the first time one of the records was of two juvenile birds together.

Red Kite: Numbers of this species were released in 1989 in the Highlands and in Buckinghamshire. In 1992, young were successfully fledged in both areas. In 2001 birds were released in Dumfries and Galloway for the first time and on 10 November that year one of those "tagged" birds was reported on the Rodden, the first Arran record since the mid 1800s. In the following years there were small numbers of records 2005 one, 2006 one, 2007 four, 2008 two, 2010 two, 2011 two, 2013 five, 2014 three, 2016 three and 2018 twelve and one of these was of two birds together.



It does not look as if any time soon either of these species the White-tailed Eagle or the Red Kite is going to establish as a breeding species on Arran. Rather it looks as if they will continue to be rare vagrants giving Arran occasional visits.



Osprey: After their demise in Scotland in 1916, their successful recolonisation of Scotland started in Loch Garten in 1954. Extensive measures to prevent further persecution by egg collectors was necessary to achieve this. From the Arran Bird Reports in the 1980s there were two records of this passage migrant, in the 1990s ten records, in 2000s twelve and to date in the 2010s eighteen including one that lingered for five days in November 2014. With these increasing records, the encouragement of Forestry and Land Scotland who put up breeding platforms on the island in 2010 and the continued success of the breeding pair on the near-by Isle of Bute

since 2011, Osprey may become established as a breeding species on Arran in the near future.

The Birds: Rare and Scarce

Over the forty years of the Arran Bird Report a number of species could be described as rare or scarce. For example each of these species has appeared only once in the report; Bewick's Swan 1991, King Eider 1980, Ruddy Duck 2007, Hobby 2011, Ruff 1987, Black Tern 1992, Ross's Gull 1995, Blyth's Reed Warbler 2014 and Corn Bunting 1984. In addition a number of species have been reported only two or three times: Pochard 1984 and 2011; Velvet Scoter 1997, 1998 and 2019; Leach's Petrel 1986, 1990 and 1991; Marsh Harrier 1988, 2004 (a juvenile bird that had been radio tagged on Tayside and overflew Lamblash on 19 August) and 2019; Common Crane 1989 and 2015; Curlew Sandpiper 1979, 1990 and 2006; Red-necked Phalarope 1983 and 2016; Grey Phalarope 1984 and 2015; Pomarine Skua 1991 and 2009; Roseate Tern 1980 and 1984; Sabine's Gull 1982, 1992 and 1994; Mediterranean Gull 1992, 2015 and 2018; and Chough 2001 and 2011.

There was quite a contrast between the two Common Crane records. This is the drawing followed by the article that appeared in the 1989 report.



Common Crane

UNCOMMON COMMON CRANES

As the R.S.P.B. has now disclosed one of the best-kept ornithological secrets ever, that several pairs of Common Cranes (*Grus grus*) have nested successfully in Britain over the last nine years, it is therefore not so surprising that two of these lovely birds turned up here in the Shiskine Valley last September. As their timing coincided with a Royal visit from the Princess of Wales, they were reported to be two security men in disguise! Word quickly spread, and as they stayed from 26th September until 1st October, this delighted some keen birders, although strangely for such large birds, they managed to disappear frequently during that time, disappointing more than a few.

Loud trumpeting calls heralded their arrival just before dusk on 26th September as they circled and landed in a stubble field beside the Blackwater. About 4 feet tall, these large long-legged, long-necked grey birds with tail "bustles" surprised Hugh Hamilton and Alex McMillan who were the first to see them.

Next day several of us admired them from a distance as they fed in the stubble, long necks raised turn about on guard duty. Both adult birds, each had a black head and throat extending down the front of neck with distinctive white cheeks continuing down sides of neck. No red on the head was visible at a distance. Being extremely wary, they often took wing and this showed the contrast of their grey bodies with long extended black-tipped primaries which were separated and up-curved at the ends. The flight was truly majestic, interspersed with long glides and soaring. They sometimes circled up to the arable fields around High Fiorline or disappeared into marshier ground at Balnacoole.

On 30th September at 1.30am people coming from a dance at the Kinloch Hotel were surprised to find them at the Blackwater river mouth. They were last seen at 10am on 1st October in Tornacraig field between Monyquil on the String and Glaister. Let's hope we may have the pleasure of a return visit from these most distinguished birds. This is an important first record for Arran.

While in 1989 these visitors were obviously enjoyed by many people on Arran, in 2015 it was a passing visit seen by only one observer. Two Common Crane were seen soaring over An Torr, Dougarie on 22 April and ten minutes later they were heading towards Sanda in Argyll. The previous day there had been a similar report from near Port Glasgow on the mainland.



Red-necked Phalarope juvenile

The two recent records of the phalarope, the Grey Phalarope in 2015 and the Red-necked Phalarope in 2016 were both seen by an experienced birder who had recently moved to the island. The juvenile Red-necked Phalarope appeared on a pond near his home on 31 July and was photographed caught and ringed. It stayed until the 1 August before moving on.

From the number of Mediterranean Gull records on the nearby Ayrshire coast, it is anticipated that the records on Arran will increase. There were two records in both 2015 and 2018. In one of the 2015 records a visiting experienced birder had photographed the first summer bird resting on the shore at Blackwaterfoot on 28 June. Later that day the birder called in at the home of the local bird recorder but no mention was made of that bird. It was not until the birder went home and shared the photograph that the identification was confirmed. Who would be a bird recorder?



Mediterranean Gull

A number of other species should be considered in this section on rare and scarce species on Arran. In the ducks, both Pintail and Shoveler have only nine records, four this century. The last Pintail record was 2014 and the last Shoveler was 2015. In 1984 there was a report of twenty Quail at Bennecarrigan but since then there have only been three further records, the last one in 2012. In the waders, Dotterel has nine records the last one in 2012, Little Stint has six records the last one in 2002 and Spotted Redshank has also six records the last one in 2010. Little Tern has eleven records the last one in 2007, while Little Gull has ten records the last one in 2013. Turtle Dove had two records in the 1980s, none in the 1990s, five in the 2000s and more recently one in 2013 and one in 2014.



Dotterel

one in 2013. Turtle Dove had two records in the 1980s, none in the 1990s, five in the 2000s and more recently one in 2013 and one in 2014.

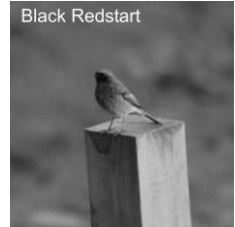


Red-backed Shrike

Records of shrikes feature from time to time in the annual report. The Great Grey Shrike has three in the 1980s, one in the 1990s and, most recently, one in 2007. The Red-backed Shrike has two in the 1980s, one in 1990s and, most recently, one in 2017 and 2018.

In the crow family, Jay had three records in the 1980s and then none until 2011 when there were seven records followed by five records in 2012. These latest records seemed to follow an autumnal irruption of Jays from Europe.

Redstarts on Arran are also scarce. Common Redstart is a scarce summer visitor with records from ten of the last eighteen years and no confirmed breeding. Black Redstart is a scarce passage migrant with records from twelve of the last eighteen years.



Black Redstart

The last species to be considered in this section is Pied Flycatcher an irregular summer visitor. It was first reported on Arran in 1979. There were records from the following four years up to and including 1983. Then it was sporadic with records from 1989, 1992, 1996 and 1998. That was the last record until 2019 and in 2019 there were two records. One a male Pied Flycatcher appeared in a garden in Corriecravie on 3 May 2019 and later that year a male appeared in North Sannox on 21 August. On neither occasion did the bird stay.



Pied Flycatcher

There is a story connected to the first record of Pied Flycatcher. *The Arran Naturalist No4 Spring 1980 page 36* features reports written by members of Brodick Young Ornithologists Club. Under the direction of Maggie Dunn, the group was meeting up with John Noakes and his dog Shep for the filming of an episode of "Go with Noakes". This was in Merkland Wood on 10 June 1979. The youngsters wrote that the camera crew were about an hour and half late but that they had seen during that time many interesting birds including a Pied Flycatcher, a rare bird for Arran. It was in fact the first Arran record.

The youngsters were duly filmed clearing the invasive *rhododendron ponticum*, planting trees and watching birds. The youngsters said they were there for three and a half hours and had had "a super time". As well as getting autographs from John Noakes all the youngsters made sure they gave Shep a pat. As for the filming on Arran, when broadcast, it did not feature the Pied Flycatcher nor the YOC group but focussed instead in looking for a white stag on Arran and then moved on to the Loch Ness monster!

The Birds: Americans on Arran

In the first forty years there have been four reports of North American species on Arran. The first was a Long-billed Dowitcher which was by Cleats Shore from 15 to 17 September 1990. This was the first record of this species on Arran. The second North American visitor was not just a first for Arran but a first for the UK. The Snowy Egret was a long staying much travelled bird whose exploits in the west of Scotland were reported in *British Birds* Vol 97, June 2004 pages 270-275. It was first reported at Balvicar, Seil



Snowy Egret

Island on 5 November 2001 and last reported at Lochar Water, Dumfries and Galloway on 17 September 2002. In that time it was on Arran for two spells from 3 to 18 December 2001 mainly in the Fisherman's Walk area and from 12 January to 28 March again mainly in the Cloy/Rosa Burn area but latterly further up the east coast at Carlo. Many well travelled birders as well as local people had the opportunity to enjoy this visitor. The third visitor was again a first for the island, a Spotted Sandpiper at Clauchlands

between 19 and 21 May 2015. The observer photographed the bird, developed the images and posted these to the bird recorder. His first knowledge of the bird was when he opened the envelope! Few people had the opportunity to enjoy this visitor to Arran. The fourth American visitor, a Surf Scoter, appeared in November 2019 There is an account of this first ever record on page 76.

The Birds: Home or Away

Sometimes rare or scarce birds turn up on Arran when the bird recorder is away from home. This was the case in July 2006 when a Hoopoe, a bird more associated with sunny Mediterranean groves, made an appearance in a garden in Thunderguy. This was only the third record of the bird on the island. The first was in Lamlash 4-5 September 1985 and the second ten years later at Corriegills Farm on 16 September 1995. In July 2006 the bird recorder was in Australia. The Hoopoe was only seen by one person but that person had the good sense to photograph it and share it with the Head Ranger at Brodick Country Park, who knew what it was.



Hoopoe

Later that year a Turtle Dove, an occasional passage migrant, appeared in a garden in Alma Park in Brodick along with the more common Collared Doves. Courtesy of the residents, on this occasion the bird recorder and others were able to enjoy views of this bird from their home. The bird was there from 25 October to 8 November.

Even better, in February 2008 an Iceland Gull, an uncommon winter visitor, almost reported to the home of the bird recorder, turning up on the field opposite his house on 27 February and staying in the area until 11 May.



On the 9 May 2012 two visitors got the first ever record of Garganey on Arran when a pair were on the lochan at Torr Righ. The bird recorder was off the island that day but on his return the next day the visitors shared this and together the area was revisited. The outcome of their efforts? No sign of Garganey and a good soaking!

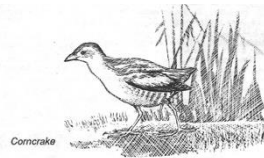
The Birds: Garden Highlights

Gardens provide a range of habitats on Arran and are well watched. Over the first forty years of the Arran Bird Report, a few rare and scarce species have even made their first Arran appearance in a garden including: from 7 to 11 December 1994 a Yellow-browed Warbler in a garden in Kilmory; on 25 September 1997 a Wryneck in a garden in Sannox; and on 28 December 2014 a Green Woodpecker in a garden in Lamlash. In the 2019 report there is an account of the first ever record of Black-headed Bunting on Arran (See page 75). Rare vagrants turn up in gardens as well including in 2016 Hawfinch with one reported in Pirnmill on 21 April and one Lochranza on 22 April. Probably the same bird.



The Birds: Coincidences?

In early May 2006 a Corncrake was calling from a small patch of tall vegetation between the pond at Port na Lochan and the shore. In early May 2007 and again in 2008 from seventh to ninth of May a Corncrake was calling in the same place. For three years in a row that happened. Was this a passing bird testing the area before moving on to more productive islands to the north and west of Arran? To date this is the last Arran record.



On 21 October 2011 a juvenile Scarlet Rosefinch was caught and ringed in High Kildonan. It felt like déjà vu for the ringer because he had caught a juvenile Scarlet Rosefinch in the same place on 24 October 1999. To date this is the last Arran record.

On 16 June 2017 a male Red-backed Shrike was reported at Kingscross. This was the first Arran record since 1997. One year on, on 13 June 2018 a male Red-backed Shrike was reported at Port na Lochan.



Around this period there was a similar pattern with Rose-coloured Starling. On 10 July 2017, a resident in Slidderly was keeping an eye on the garden birds, when a Rose-coloured Starling appeared. As an experienced bird-watcher, he knew instantly what it was. The bird was later photographed, caught and ringed by a licensed ringer. This was the first Arran record since June 2002.

One year on, on 19 July 2018, the same Slidderly resident saw a Rose-coloured Starling on his early morning walk. Like the previous year, it was in a flock with Common Starling. In 2018 the bird was not caught and ringed, so we do not know

if was the same bird. It certainly was the same species. The same species, in the same area, on almost the same date.

This selection of coincidences from the Arran Bird Report gives a small insight into the movement through Arran of birds on migration.

The Birds: Dead

From time to time dead birds feature in the Arran Bird Report. For example in 1996 the discovery of a dead Bittern in Shiskine on 10 March was described as extraordinary, as indeed it was. This was the first Arran record since 1835.

In 2014 it was not the death of one bird that featured but the report of many dead birds, mainly Razorbill on Arran's shore that was extraordinary.

In February each year there is an annual systematic count of dead shore birds called the "*Beached Bird Survey*". It is part of a European wide survey and here on Arran twenty volunteers from the Arran Natural History Society walked the shores counting and identifying dead birds around the weekend of 22/23 February 2014. The twenty Arran volunteers walked almost seventy kilometres of beaches and found a total of 281 dead seabirds. This works out at over four dead seabirds per kilometre. The previous year was more typical at 0.15 dead bodies per kilometre. By far the largest group were Razorbill, being eighty percent of the bodies found. Many of the Razorbills were young inexperienced birds. These birds seemed to have died of exhaustion or starvation as a result of days of gale-force winds, which made it impossible for them to fish. This death toll was repeated throughout most of Europe's western seaboard. For example a total of 21,341 dead birds were found in western France by 500 volunteers working over three weekends in February.



The Birds: Impact of Incidents

The impact of the severe weather in the incident described in the last section is by no means unique. Over the years a range of incidents have featured in the Arran Bird Report.

Here are a few examples. The severe winter weather of January 1984 brought Common Crossbill, Snow Bunting as well as Brambling to bird tables.

In 2001, restrictions imposed by foot and mouth disease reduced the number of bird records received but also probably reduced the disturbance to ground nesting birds.

However that same year in the summer, there was a fire in Glen Rosa that spread across the island to Dougarie affecting many ground nesting birds. It was considered to be the biggest fire ever on Arran and took three days to be brought under control. On the plus side it cleared some crag ledges opening up breeding sites for raptors.

December 2010 and January 2011 were one of the coldest spells since records began with deep penetrating frost. In January twelve Robin were reported following a tractor that was disturbing the ground in Glenkiln. Later that year on 8 March twenty Snow Bunting were on the approach to Goatfell summit.

In May 2011, storm force winds scorched fresh foliage and blossom. Hedges looked burnt. High winds combined with high tides swamped nests of shore birds. On the plus side, Long-tailed Skuas on migration were moving into the Clyde estuary in almost unprecedented numbers. On 18 May, sitting at Kildonan watching the squalls coming in I got regularly soaked and saw no skuas. The following day my predecessor bird recorders, Maggie Dunn and Audrey Walters, watched two Long-tailed Skua between Pladda and Kildonan while enjoying a coffee in the comfort of the local hotel. This was the first Arran record of this species.



Birds: Changes in Arran

In the forty years of the Arran bird report, Arran has changed. Some of these changes are touched on in this section.

This is an extract from the *Arran Bird Report* of 1983. "*2,000 Gannet in June diving in Whiting Bay after fish followed by more than a thousand mixed Gull flocks feeding on stranded sand eels also in Whiting Bay*" That spectacle has not been repeated since. In addition the Lamlash Sea Angling Festivals used to attract hundreds of anglers to the area until it was cancelled in the mid 1990s, as the catches were down by 96% from the catches in the 1970s. These changes came about as a result of the three mile in-shore fishing ban being lifted in 1984. That plus inshore scallop dredging contributed to the damage of inshore habitat and the collapse of the ecosystem which the mixed fishery of the Clyde and the coastal birds relied on.

Birds: Changes in Arran (continued)

For the past three decades the people of Arran have campaigned to stop mobile fishing that damages seabeds, jeopardising livelihoods and wildlife. In 2008 our community proposed and achieved protection for the first community-led No Take Zone in Lamlash Bay (NTZ). In 2016, the South Arran Marine Protected Area (MPA) extended this area to nearly 300 sq km to exclude scallop dredging but allow for other, potentially more sustainable, fishing methods in various zones. The Community of Arran Seabed Trust (COAST) is a community-led organisation that is making a huge difference to the conservation and restoration of the seas around Arran. More information on COAST website <https://www.arrancoast.com/>

On the land, one of the major landowners on Arran is Forestry and Land Scotland who manage the land for far more than just timber. Our national forests are managed as a productive environmental and recreational resource too. On Arran during the forty years of the annual bird reports, the forests managed by Forestry and Land Scotland have been evolving. In the 1980s some of the Arran forests were being planted while some had been planted decades earlier. There was, however, a uniformity of planting. For example areas like Kilpatrick and Machrie were planted in one year so trees were all of a similar age. The start of the second fifty year cycle of felling and replanting started on Arran in 1998. In this second cycle, plans are in place to ensure that in each forest there is less uniformity of age, a wider variety of species of trees using both conifer and broadleaf and more open space created, for example bogs and areas adjacent to waterways are not planted. The overall effect is to provide a wider range of habitats, increasing the biodiversity with more opportunities for wildlife including a variety of birds to thrive. Species benefitting from the roll out of this second cycle include Lesser Redpoll, Siskin, Common Crossbill, Grey Wagtail, Tree Pipit, Whitethroat and a range of raptors. However diseases like ash die back and sudden larch death caused by a range of fungus-like pathogens are a major cause for concern. Their increase is being attributed to aspects of climate change in particular increasingly damp summers and autumns. Visitors to forests are being urged, before visiting any forest, anywhere, to make sure that shoes, bikes, and dogs are clean to help minimise the risk of introducing or spreading pests and diseases.

Over 70% of the UK's land is farmed in some way and how this land is managed has a big impact on wildlife. On Arran in the last forty years, while the field patterns and hedgerows are basically the same as the previous hundred years, there has been a reduction in crop growing and dairy farming and a move towards livestock rearing, of sheep and cattle, with fields for silage for winter feeding.

All farms on the island balance commercial and wild life interests and over the years have made use of various Rural Stewardship Schemes that have provided financial support for example to establish ponds, leave field margins, fence in water courses and plant unharvested crops to provide food and shelter for birds. In 2004 an Arran farm was second in the Farmland and Wildlife Advisory Group Silver Lapwing Award for balancing commercial farming and conservation. In 2005 an Arran farm won the National Farmers Union/ Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (NFU/RSPB) farming for wildlife award for Scotland.

In all of the sections above, coast, forest and farm the influence of people is clear.

One major change that has occurred in the last forty years is the increasing number of people coming to visit the island. Since 1980 there have been two main ferries on the Ardrossan Brodick route. The MV Isle of Arran (448 passengers 76 cars) took over from MV Clansman in August 1983 and the MV Caledonian Isles (1000 passengers 110 cars) took over in 1993. From the summer of 2005, MV Saturn helped out and then from 2012 MV Caledonian Isles and MV Isle of Arran were both on the route together. These forty years have seen the introduction of ferries with bigger capacities, and more ferries with more sailings. In addition, with the introduction of road equivalent tariffs (RET) to the Arran routes in October 2014, costs of travel were reduced. This has resulted in ever increasing visitor numbers. There has been a more than 25% increase in visitor numbers to Arran since 2009. (Data from Scottish Tourism Economic Activity Monitor.) While this may have resulted in more visiting birders generating more records for the annual bird report, there is a very real danger that the increasing use of Arran for recreational purposes by people will put wildlife under increasing pressure. There is an example of this on page 24. This loss of wildlife would make Arran a poorer place.

The solution is not going to be easy but I think that the model of COAST and what it is achieving in our coastal waters through a combination of information, education and legislation is applicable to all of Arran, because only when all of Arran's people, residents and visitors alike, get a sense of ownership for Arran, its environment and its wildlife, will Arran retain the biodiversity that makes this island a special place.

The Future of the Annual Bird Report

Who could have predicted the changes in bird reporting in the last forty years? In this increasingly digital age of smart phones, social media and the world wide web the sharing and transfer of information including images has changed beyond recognition. Bird guides are being published with QR codes for each bird and by using a QR app on your smart phone or tablet you can hold your device over the code and get additional text, photographs as well as bird songs and calls. Unimaginable forty years ago.

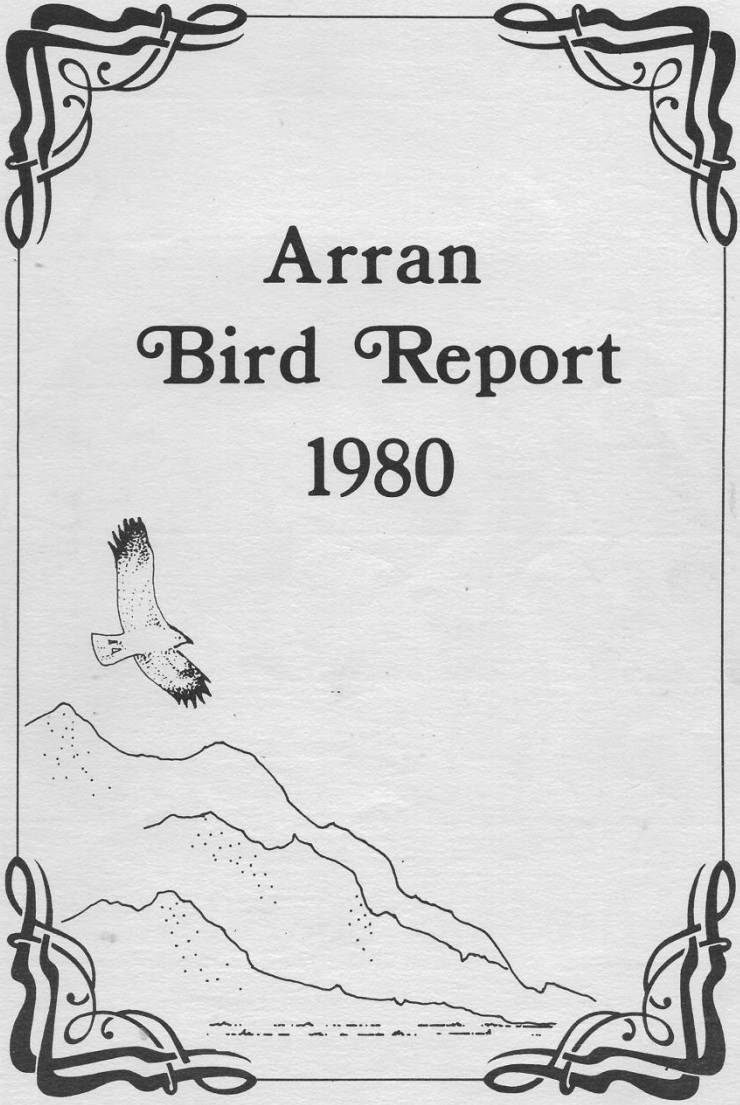
Who knows what changes to the annual report may lie ahead? This is an extract from page 23 of the Scottish Ornithologists' Club Annual Report 2018/19 which seems to suggest publication is increasingly problematic and digital versions rather than print versions may be on the increase.

Regional bird reports

In the 2018/19 period, the following reports were published: Angus & Dundee 2013/14, Argyll 2017, Arran 2018, Ayrshire 2015/16, Borders 2017, Dumfries & Galloway 2017, Fair Isle 2017, Fife 2015 (digital), Highland 2016 & 2017, Isle of May 2017, Lothian 2014, 2015 & 2016, North-East Scotland 2016, Outer Hebrides 2014-16, and Shetland 2016.

The main work in producing the Arran Bird Report is in the accumulation, verification and collation of records on an annual basis. The format of the report, whether print or digital or whatever, will continue to be influenced by factors like cost and accessibility. The value of the annual report as a historical record of bird life on this special island will remain. Personally I will continue to strive for the continuation of the Arran Bird Report whatever the format but you would have expected me to say that!

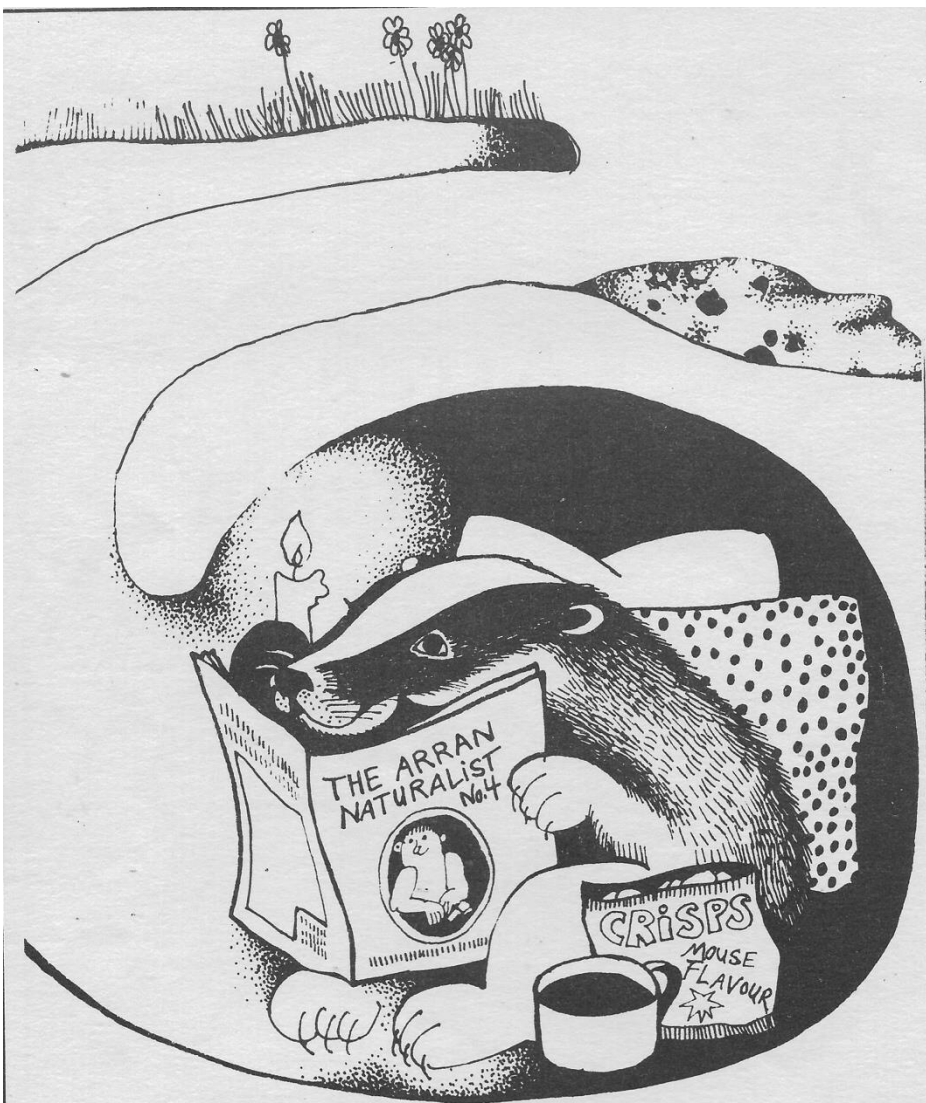
Part 2



Arran Bird Report 1980



25p



THE ARRAN NATURALIST

PRICE : 65p

Published annually to raise funds for the Isle of Arran Natural History Society. Its seventy pages contain much to delight anyone curious about the island's wildlife, folklore and ancient history. Your interest and support would be most welcomed.



ARRAN BIRD REPORT 1980

1

Compiled by Margaret H. Dunn.

RED-THROATED DIVER: Breeding success of pairs at usual sites not known except 2 young at one site 11 June; 4 Machrie 4 August; Peak 7 Largybeg 20-21 December.

BLACK-THROATED DIVER: Pair North Sannox 5 June.

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER: Winter-Spring. 2 Whiting Bay 26 January; 1 Corrie 23 April; 1 Lochranza, 3 Machrie 26 April; 2 Largybeg 27 April; 1 Kilpatrick 4 May; 1 Whiting Bay 15 December.

LITTLE GREBE: 1 Brodick 22 January; 3 wintered Lochranza.

BLACK-NECKED GREBE: 3 possibles Pirnmill 2 September.

FULMAR: New colony Holy Isle about 20 pairs; but small numbers young reared usual nests.

MANX SHEARWATER: 3 between Arran and Ailsa Craig 8 July.

STORM PETREL: 1 between Arran and Ailsa Craig 8 July.

GANNET: Usual numbers round Arran seen most months, although more in summer.

CORMORANT: 3 pairs possibly nested Holy Isle.

SHAG: 10 pairs possibly nested Holy Isle. With young 8 July.

GREY HERON: Nested Brodick, Lamlash, Whiting Bay, Lagg, Merkland. Good success Lamlash, but fewer nests overall.

MUTE SWAN: Lochranza pair reared no young. Moved round island autumn and winter. 2 immature wintered Brodick.

GREYLAG GOOSE: 250 Blanacoole 9 November, 200 on 22 March 50 → W Cleiteadh, 16 → W Ross 7 December; 1 Wineport 16 April: Last 44 → N Corrie 24 April.

SHELDUCK: 4 pairs, 14 fledged young. Smaller number of pairs reared young, but success comparatively good.

WIGEON: 20 Machrie 27 January; 12 Cleiteadh 2 November; 12 Lamlash 16 March. Peak 30 Lamlash 17 February.

TEAL: 15 Machrie 2 March, 7 on 28 September; 18 Cleiteadh 2 December; Peak 51 Cleiteadh 7 December.

MALLARD: Sample female with 10 young; female with 11 young 4 May Machrie reared only 1 young 12 June. Predators Mink, Heron, Gulls. Peak 26 Cleiteadh 2 November.

EIDER: good numbers with young. Peak 200, Newton 16 Laggan 26 April.

KING EIDER: Attempted breeding with female Eider Lochranza 5-26 April. (stayed longer in 1979 and mating seen with female eider).

GOLDENEYE: 7 sub adult Merkland 10 January, 9 on 23 January; 5 Kerr's Port 10 February; 7 Lochranza 2 March; Peak 10 Merkland 12 February.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER: Increase. 4 pairs, 22 young. Peak 60 Whiting Bay. 13-14 September.

GOOSANDER: None seen, but 9 Lochranza 26 June 1979 and 2 Brodick 10 Oct.

HEN HARRIER: 9 known pairs. Male dead Lamlash 21 February. Winter: Female Machrie, Female Blackwaterfoot 27 January; Male Corriegills 31 January.

SPARROWHAWK: Fairly good numbers. 7 known pairs. Winter: Female Kings Cross 20-21 December; Glen Cloy December; Glenashdale 19 March.

BUZZARD: Most common bird of prey. Many sightings. 30 pairs with 9 young.

GOLDEN EAGLE: Pair reared 2 young N.Arran. 2 immature Central Arran did not breed.

OSPREY: 1 Glen Scorrodale 17-18 May.

KESTREL: Good numbers.

RED-FOOTED FALCON: Female Boguillie 2 November. 1st record for Arran (Subject to acceptance by rarities committee).

MERLIN: 2 pairs did not appear to breed. Several winter records. Male dead Blackwaterfoot 30 October, ringed Iceland as young 11.7.77.

PEREGRINE: 5 pairs reared 11 young.

RED GROUSE: Rather scarce Brodick to Lochranza but good clutches 8 to 9 eggs. 4 pairs Glen Catacol, 30 Beinn Bhreac 17 February.

PTARMIGAN: 2 Goatfell 21 May; Female 5 young Beinn Bharrain 10 July; 2 North Goatfell 3 November.

PHEASANT: Good numbers with young.

CORNCRAKE: No reports 1980, but 1 calling Brodick 17 May - 30 June, 1979 until crop cut; 1 calling Torbeg 1-8 June 1979 until crop cut.

MOORHEN: Not common. 1 Brodick 25 January; a few Lamlash 3 May.

OYSTERCATCHER: Many nests with eggs. Peak 150 Machrie 29 July.

RINGED PLOVER: Fewer nests. Fewer wintered. Peak 57 Whiting Bay 20 January and 21 December.

GOLDEN PLOVER: 12 Glen Catacol 17 February; 4 Loch Tanna 8 July; Peak 36 Cleiteadh 7 December.

LAPWING: Low numbers nested. Peak 100 Shiskine 2 March.

SANDERLING: 2 Blackwaterfoot 18 September.

CURLEW SANDPIPER: None 1980, but 1 Lamlash 18 September 1979.

PURPLE SANDPIPER: 6 Blackwaterfoot 27 January; 3 on 22 March.

DUNLIN: 3 Machrie 4 May and 8 September; 2 Lamlash 17 May; 1 Brodick 18 September; 1 Blackwaterfoot 28 September. 1 wintered Whiting Bay.

JACK SNIPE: 1 Clauchlands hills 16 March.

SNIPE: Fair numbers.

WOODCOCK: Roding Kingscross, Glen Catacol, Glen Cloy, Glen Rosa, Glen Sherraig. Nest, 4 eggs, deserted Dippen.

WHIMBREL: None seen 1980. 3 Cleiteadh 20 May 1979.

CURLEW: A few pairs nested. Peak 130 Machrie 29 July. Winter total for island 1000+.

REDSHANK: Summer 1 Blackwaterfoot 6 July; Peak 20 Cordon 22-26 August.

GREENSHANK: None seen 1980, yet many singles 1979, also 2 Whiting Bay 30 July and probably same 2 Lamlash 23 August.

GREEN SANDPIPER: None seen 1980 but 1 Blackwaterfoot 1-3 September is first record for island.

COMMON SANDPIPER: Many pairs with nests and young.

TURNSTONE: Peak. 15 Whiting Bay 20 January; Last 15 in summer plumage Machrie 4 May.

ARCTIC SKUA: None seen 1980 but 2 half mile off Arran 20 May 1979 harrying gulls behind boat.

GREAT SKUA: 1 Brodick/Ardrossan crossing 12 August; 1 Drumadoon → N 10 July.

BLACK-HEADED GULL: Usual small numbers. Peak 80 Blackwaterfoot 2 March.

COMMON GULL: Good numbers nested. Peak 300 Cleiteadh 7 December.

- LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL:** Hundreds nested Holy Isle, some Pladda, and many parts island.
- HERRING GULL:** Most common gull. Hundreds nested Pladda, Holy Isle and many parts island. Peak 700 Cleiteadh 7 December.
- GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL:** Approximately 30 pairs nested Holy Isle.
- KITTIWAKE:** Passage 500 Whiting Bay 7-30 September; 200 Machrie 28 September; Peak 1000 Brodick 17 September.
- SANDWICH TERN:** Passage. 1st Machrie 4 May. 7 immature with adults 5 August - 18 September, Whiting Bay, Brodick and Lamlash.
- ROSEATE TERN:** 1 Sannox 19 September. Very scarce passage migrant.
- COMMON TERN:** 16 'Comic' Terns Machrie 14 May; 3 Catacol 18 May.
- ARCTIC TERN:** 16 'Comic' Terns Machrie 14 May; 5 Pladda 17 May did not stay to breed. 20 bred Machrie, feeding young 10 July; None left 29 July.
- GUILLEMOT:** Occasionally seen on Brodick/Ardrossan crossing, also on journey to Ailsa Craig. 1 oiled Kingscross 4 January.
- RAZORBILL:** Occasionally seen round island.
- BLACK GUILLEMOT:** Breeding. 4 pairs Pladda 17 May; 1 Catacol, 1 Newton 22 May. Usually nest Dippen and Blackwaterfoot. Possibly 8 pairs. A few seen in winter Pirate's Cove, Wineport and Whiting Bay.
- ROCK DOVE:** Numbers possibly down.
- WOODPIGEON:** Quite common. Peak 200 Kingscross 24 January.
- COLLARED DOVE:** Several Auchencairn, Cleates farm, Lamlash, Brodick, Shiskine, Whiting Bay. No change.
- †**TURTLE DOVE:** None 1980. 1 Lamlash 17-24 May 1979 is 1st Arran record!
- CUCKOO:** Late arrival. 1st Glen Shurig 21 April. Minimum 11 heard.
- BARN OWL:** Few sightings. Only 3 seen.
- SHORT-EARED OWL:** 1 Glen Cloy 23 April; Pair Lamlash 7 & 8 July. Very few.
- NIGHTJAR:** 9 churring Brodick June, July.
- SWIFT:** Passage. 2 → N Boguillie 23rd June; 2 Holy Isle summit 9th July; 1 Kingscross 24 July-28 September; 1 Brodick → S 8 September.
- SKYLARK:** 3 with 1 young Loch Nuis 10 July; Singing in May Loch Garbad, Kingscross, Machrie, Torbeg, and Ross. Peak 60 Machrie 27 January.
- SAND MARTIN:** 28 occupied nests Auchareoch, Dougarie and Sannox.
- SWALLOW:** Good numbers nested. Arrived 1st Corrie 15 April; more by 5 May; Peak 50 Largybeg 31 August (Mixed House Martins) Last 2 Brodick 7 October.
- HOUSE MARTIN:** Good numbers nests. Late arrival 1st Kildonan 1 May; 25 Kingscross 30 & 31 August; Peak 50 Largybeg (mixed Swallows) 31 August; Last 2 Lamlash 7 November.
- TREE PIPIT:** Pair Ross 20 April. Total 7 seen - Lamlash, Glen Rosa, Glen Cloy, Corrie, Machrie.
- MEADOW PIPIT:** Plenty seen. Pair Loch Garbad reared 2 young 11 May; 6 North Glen Sannox 2 July; Several Holy Isle and Pladda. Peak 64 Kingscross 16 February.
- ROCK PIPIT:** Plenty round shores with young.
- GREY WAGTAIL:** Only 2 breeding pairs. 8 winter sightings.
- PIED/WHITE WAGTAIL:** *Motacilla alba yarrelli*. Common breeding bird including Holy Isle and Pladda. Peak 24 Cleiteadh 2 November. *M.a.alba*. Passage 4 Lamlash 16 September.
- DIPPER:** Scarce. 1 Glenashdale 18 May; 1 Clauchan Glen 26 October; 1 Cnocan burn 23 January and 27 October. Total 3 seen.

WREN: Recovering!

DUNNOCK: Fair numbers. Several Winter seashore.

ROBIN: Very common. Pair nested in polythene coal bag Glen Cloy. 6 eggs 25 April.

BLACK REDSTART: Male Brodick golf course 27 October.

REDSTART: None seen this year.

WHINCHAT: 3 singing Ross 4 May; 1 Bennan 5 May; Pair Torbeg carrying nest material 14 May; Pair and 1 young Machrie 29 July. Possibly 9+ pairs.

STONECHAT: 7 pairs breeding is same as 1979. Very scarce winter. Male Machrie 27 January.

WHEATEAR: 1st 2 Ross 20 April; 14 pairs in breeding territory. Autumn: 6 Whiting Bay 14 September; 7 Lamlash 16-18 September. Peak 12 Clauchlands 17 September. Last 3 Machrie and 2 Blackwaterfoot 28 September.

RING OUZEL: 1 A'Chir Ridge in May.

BLACKBIRD: Many with young. No change.

FIELDFARE: 75 Shannochie 2 November; 100 Torbeg 9 November.

SONG THRUSH: Sample. 3 singing Kingscross 5 June. Fairly common.

REDWING: More than Fieldfares. 90 Kingscross 29 October; 125 Shannochie 2 November.

MISTLE THRUSH: Pairs Auchareoch, Kingscross, Lamlash; 4 Glen Cloy singing 25 April; Peak 25 Kingscross 7 September.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER: 1 singing Torbeg 14 May.

SEDGE WARBLER: Only 11 singing compared with 26 pairs 1979.

WHITETHROAT: Arrived 1st Kingscross 10 May; 22 pairs in breeding territory is slightly down on 32 pairs 1979.

GARDEN WARBLER: Good year with 9 singing in broadleaved woodland or gardens. Arrived 1st Kingscross 17 May.

BLACKCAP: Singing Brodick 19 May; Monamore Forestry 21 May; Merkland 23 May. Winter Male Kingscross 6 November; Female Lamlash 8 November.

WOOD WARBLER: A few heard Brodick and Merkland Wood.

CHIFFCHAFF: Arrived 1st Whiting Bay 7 April; Fair numbers in wooded areas. last Kingscross 9 September.

WILLOW WARBLER: Arrived 1st Lamlash 13 April; Very common. Many nests and pairs with young. Last Lamlash 16 September.

GOLDCREST: Slight increase. Most in forestry.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER: Arrived 1st Brodick 19 May; 6 pairs and 5 young seen Kingscross and Sannox. Last 19 September.

PIED

†**RED FLYCATCHER:** Male singing Merkland 25 April-27 May, 1980. Male singing Merkland 1979, 8-15 June is 1st Arran record.

LONG-TAILED TIT: Several family parties of approximately 12.

†**WILLOW TIT:** None seen 1980 but 1 singing Kingscross 12 May 1979 is 1st Arran record.

COAL TIT: Good breeding success. Most common in forestry.

BLUE TIT: With young Kingscross 22 May is sample. Fairly common.

GREAT TIT: Not so common.

TREE CREEPER: 1 wintered Kingscross. Pair Merkland 25 April. 1 Clauchlands 5 May are only records.

GOLDEN ORIOLE: None 1980 but female or immature. Lochranza 7 June 1979.

†**RED-BACKED SHRIKE:** 1 Corloch 26 April is 1st Arran record.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE: Pair seen 8 June in same place and same date as in 1979. (Location withheld).

JACKDAW: Good numbers nested. Total wintered 2000.

CARRION CROW: Usual numbers.

HOODED CROW: Usual numbers. Peak 60 Glenree 27 January (Mixed Carrion, Hooded and Hybrids).

RAVEN: Nest, 3 young Holy Isle; 3 Ross 20 April; pair Bennan 11 July; 2 Glen Ormidale 25 October; 2 Boguillie 19 March.

STARLING: No change. Groups of 50 in winter.

HOUSE SPARROW: Very local.

CHAFFINCH: Good breeding success. Peak 200 Machrie 27 January.

BRAMBLING: 1 or 2 with chaffinches Machrie 27 January.

GREENFINCH: Pair with 1 young Torbeg 12 June is only breeding observed. Singles and pairs seen Brodick, Whiting Bay, Kingscross. Peak 45 Glen Cloy 3 November.

GOLDFINCH: Below average numbers. Heard Lamlash May; pair The Guerry 5 May; 1 singing Kingscross 16 July; Winter: 12, Kingscross 31 March.

SISKIN: Increasing in afforested areas. Winter peak: 30 Merkland 3 November.

LINNET: Good numbers with young. Peak 100 Kingscross 30 September; 50 Cleiteadh 7 September.

TWITE: 1 Blackwaterfoot 10 July.

REDPOLL: Breeding in good numbers Glen Rosa, Auchencairn, Kingscross, Auchareoch to Glenashdale forestry, Sannox, Brodick, Peak 20 Kingscross 26 August.

CROSSBILL: 1 Glenashdale 22 March; 12 between Kilmory and Glenashdale, in 2 families 21 May is 1st breeding record.

BULLFINCH: More seen and heard. Peak 14 Merkland 3 November.

SNOW BUNTING: 1 Male Ben Bhreac 24 November only one seen. 20 Benlister 3 February 1979.

YELLOWHAMMER: Breeding 10 pairs all in southend island. 7 Kilmory 9 November.

1980 ADDENDA (by W. Anderson)

WHITE-FRONTED GEESE: 8 end November

CORNCRAKE: Calling Shiskine end June.

Note:  direction of flight.

†Since there was no Arran Bird Report published in 1979 a few interesting records have been included. A total 131 species were seen in 1980.

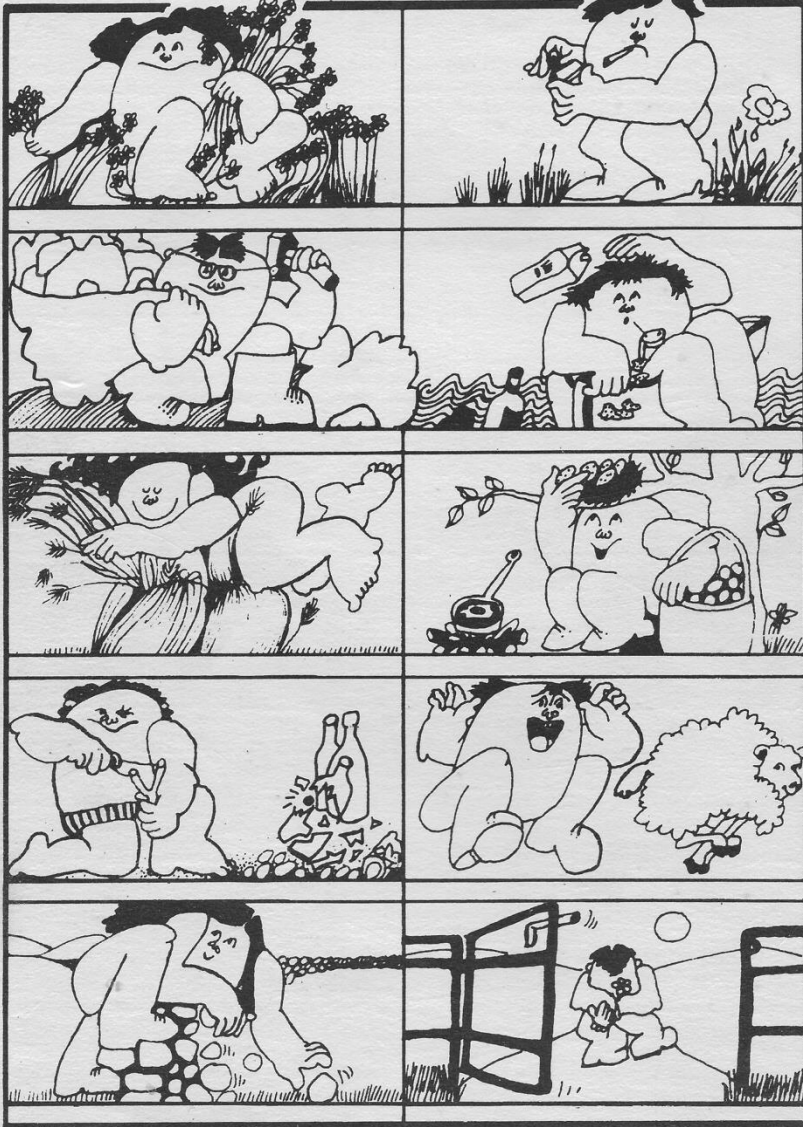
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the 1980 report with special thanks to Ian Puckrin and Angus Maciver who sent detailed reports. Apologies to anyone omitted.

LIST OF OBSERVERS: M. Bailey, J. Basford, F. Chorley, J. Clerk, Mrs. S. Docker, A. Dunn, M. Dunn, D. J. Ellis, J. Gibson, R. H. Hogg, I. Hopkins, Mrs. J. Howe, S. Lambie, Miss S. Lansdale, J. Lough, A. Maciver, N. Marshall, D. McNicol, Mrs. I. McNicol, D. Morgan, A. Nicol, M. Nind, R. Nisbet, P. Ormerod, Mrs. J. Ormerod, Miss S. Paul, J. Phillips, I. Puckrin, D. Robertson, Mrs. C. Robertson, A. Ross, Mrs. P. Sillars, Miss S. Sillars, Mrs. G. Small, V. Small, B. Spence, D. Tapson, H. Walker, Mrs. R. Walker, G. Watson, J. Williams, I. C. Bailey, I. & S. Martin, S. King.

"Maggie" Dunn may be reached by telephoning Whiting Bay 323.

IN THE COUNTRY PLEASE DON'T ...



THE ISLE OF ARRAN
NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
THANKS YOU FOR YOUR
KIND SUPPORT

Part 3

Arran Bird Report 2019



Compiled by
Dr Jim Cassels for the Arran Natural History Society

Published by



The Arran Natural History Society

Arran Natural History Society

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

One of the publications of the society is the *Arran Bird Report*. This annual report was first published as a separate publication in 1980. There has been a report every year since. This is the fortieth consecutive annual bird report. These reports provide a unique record of the bird life of this special island over the last forty years.

Other publications include *Where can I see...?* a guide to wildlife on the island, *Arran Bird Atlas 2007-2012*, *Arran Naturalist commemorative edition* celebrating forty years of the Arran Natural History Society and *Arran's Flora* a fully revised checklist 2019.

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

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

For more information on the Arran Natural History Society visit FaceBook and Twitter
Facebook <https://en-gb.facebook.com/arranwildlife/>
Twitter <https://twitter.com/ArranNatHis>

Members receive a copy of the annual *Arran Bird Report*.
Annual Subscription is £15 for adults, £25 for couples and £5 for junior members.
The subscription is payable to arrannaturalhistorysociety@gmail.com

Jim Cassels,
Bird Recorder,
Kilpatrick Kennels,
Kilpatrick,
Blackwaterfoot,
Isle of Arran,
KA27 8EY.
jim@arranbirding.co.uk

© Arran Natural History Society publisher of the *Arran Bird Report*

Printed by Ardrossan Printing Company Ltd.
Tel: 01294 603402 e:ardrossanprintco@hotmail.com

Arran Bird Report 2019

Contents	Page
Arran Natural History Society	46
List of Contributors	48
Introduction	49
Chronological Summary	50-60
Weather	61
Summer Migrant Arrival Dates	62
Winter Migrant Arrival and Departure Dates	62
Bird Surveys and Projects on Arran	63-67
Bird Atlas	63
Breeding Bird Survey	64
Garden BirdWatch	64
Heronries Census	64
Nest Record Scheme	64
Wetland Bird Survey	65
Eider Survey	66
Barn Owl Project	67
Black Grouse Project	67
Bird Ringing	68
Bird Ringing on Arran in 2019	69-72
Kingfisher on Arran	73
Water Pipit: February 2019	74
Black-headed Bunting: June 2019	75
Surf Scoter: November 2019	76
Arran Moors Special Protection Area	77
Systematic List	78-103
Gazetteer and Arran Birding Website	104
Species Requiring a Description	105
Birdwatchers Code	106
Index by Common Name	107-108

List of Contributors 2019

R. Adamson	T.K. Churchyard	S.D. Fletcher	W.&A. Hume	D. Mitchell	H. Sargent
D. Agombar	F. Clark	A. Ford	A.&C. Irving	S. Mitchell	P.D.Scott
K. Aherne	W. Clarke	N. Fordham	M.&V. Iutz	P.&G. Moon	I. Scott
D. Allan	S. Clay	D. Freeman	D.&P. Jack	G. Moore	S. Scott
R. Allen	C. Clough	N.&M. Frost	D.&J. Jardine	J. Morgan	J.&G. Sillars
S.&P. Archer	C. Cogley	A. Fyffe	L. Jarrett	A. Morris	J. Sloan
K.&C. Armour	L.&J. Coleman	G. Fyfe	M. Jarvis	I. Murchie	D. Smallwood
R. Armour	S. Collins	R.&A. Garratt	C.&L. Jenkinson	M. Murchie	E.&S. Smith
N. Arthur	M. Coombes	M.&N. Giles	D.&P. Johnston	M.&H. Murdo	J. Smith
J. Ash-Read	T. Cooper	S. Giles	E. Judge	B. Murray	P. Speake
N. Ashelby	G. Cotten	C. Goeckeritz	D. Kelso	J. Murray	T. Southall
D. Auld	L. Cotton	P. Gordon	J. Kemp	J. Newman	C.&D. Southall
T. Baboolal	D. Coulter	I. Graham	A.&D. Kilpatrick	A. Nicol	I. Struthers
J. Baines	B. Couper	J.&I. Grant	E. Kinnaird	M.&O. Oakes	A.&R. Thompson
R. Balmer	B.&J. Cowell	S.&K. Gribble	J. King	C. Oliver	S.&K. Thompson
G. Bannatyne	C. Cowley	L. Griffiths	J. Kurtzke	M. Palmer	J. Thomson
J. Baraclough	J. Crawford	T.&V. Gunton	F. Laing	P. Palmer	C.&J. Totty
R. Barnden	C. Crichton	K. Haggarty	M. Lammie	J. Parham	T. Townsend
M. Batey	D. Crichton	R. Halsey	I. Leitch	C. Park	P.&R. Trewby
R. Betley	G. Crooks	S. Halsey	F. Lerner	S. Peacham	C.&D. Turbett
Z. Bhatia	L. Dale	H. Hamilton	A.&M. Loessner	J. Pearce-Higgins	J. Turnbull
A. Binnie	A. D'Arcy	C.&S. Harding	G.&J. Logan	A. Penn	M. Tweeddale
B. Bishop	N.&H. Davidson	J. Harris	R. Logan	K. Penn	G. Uney
N. Borland	J. Davies	N. Harris	M.H. Lyth	J.W. Perkins	E. Urquhart
J. Bradbury	S. Davies	R.J. Harris	L. MacDonald	E. Pilgrim	C. Vella-Boyle
J. Broderick	W. Davies	F. Harris	R.&C. McDonald	V. Pisano	H. Vernon
C.&M. Brown	K.&P. Day	S. Harris	R. McDowall	G. Platt	A. Walker
G. Brown	M. Deighan	L. Hartley	J. McGovern	J.&D. Platt	G. Walker
H. Brown	T.W.P. Dennis	C. Hashmi	J. McGregor	J. Plenderleith	L. Walker
I.A. Brown	J. Dickson	R. Hatsell	C. McInerney	J.&R. Porter	J. Walsh
M. Bunyan	D. Dimmock	D. Hutton	J. McKenzie	V. Price	J.&A. Walsh
T. Burrin	B. Donaldson	A. Hawker	P. Macmillan	D. Putnam	K.&N. Wells
M. Burton	J. Dowens	P. Heintzen	E.&A. McNamara	C. Pyott	M.&C. Whitaker
T. Byars	R. Dowens	P. Heivers	D. McNeish	P/ Rawlinson	M. Whitmore
D. Callender	P. Downing	P. Hemming	A.&T. McNeish	T. Raymond	A.&J. Wilkinson
K. Calman	L. Drummond	A.&D. Henderson	F. Macpherson	S. Redmayne	J. Williams
J. Campbell	I.G. Duncan	N. Henderson	D. McQueen	T. ap Rheinallt	M. Williams
J. Carson	A. Binnie	J.&M. Hendrie	G. Malloch	A.&J. Rimmer	B. Williamson
N. Carter	M.H. Dunn	L. Hesp	R.&L. Marr	C.&A. Robinson	L. Wood
A.&J. Cassels	L.&M. Dunn	L. Hocking	L. Marshall	I.&S. Robinson	M. Wood
L.&S. Cassels	A.&J. Enticnap	A.&J. Hollick	J.H. Marshant	M.&P. Robinson	D. Wooll-Rivers
M. Cathrew	A. Fallows	M. Hollinsworth	A. Martin	E. Ross	M. Zabransky
P. Chandler	M. Farquhar	P. Holmes	N. May	D. Russell	B. Zonfrillo
R.&E. Cheshire	S. Ferguson	F.&L. Hopkins	N. Mencherova	K. Sampson	
T.&I. Church	J.&J Fitzpatrick	I.&J. Hopkins	C. Mills	S. Sangster	

In addition, permission to access the Arran records submitted to BirdTrack: www.bto.org/birdtrack and to BirdGuides www.birdguides.com has been granted.

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

Records were also received from North Ayrshire RSPB group who have a presence on some of the weekend ferries during the summertime. All bird records given to the National Trust rangers at Brodick Country Park and to the Brodick Tourist Information Centre were forwarded to me.

Introduction

Welcome to the *Arran Bird Report* for 2019. This is the fortieth consecutive annual bird report for the Isle of Arran and the fourteenth one compiled by me.

This report would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of a number of individuals whose input I would like to acknowledge publicly: Terry Southall and the team of local ringers plus John Calladine, Senior Research Ecologist BTO Scotland, Andy Walker and Malcolm Whitmore for their local knowledge of raptors, Robert Logan for his work on Barn Owls and Bernie Zonfrillo, the bird recorder for the Clyde Islands. The input of the local “volunteers” involved in various surveys including the Wetland Bird Survey, the Breeding Bird Survey and the Garden BirdWatch has been a valuable source of information. It has also been helpful to be given permission to access the Arran records submitted to both BirdTrack, and BirdGuides and the Arran data held in the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme. 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, Tony Church, Charlotte Clough, Brian Couper, Colin Cowley, Arthur Duncan, Nick Giles, Lee Hesp, Angus Hogg, John Marshall, Dennis Morrison, Isla Murchie, Alex Penn, Graham Ross and Joan Thompson.

Finally, my thanks to the contributors; there would be no report without their input. Some make a substantial contribution to the total number of records received. There is a core of regular contributors, locals and visitors, submitting regular sightings who provide the bedrock on which this annual report is based. In addition I have been encouraged by the number of people, locals and visitors, who have contacted me. All contacts have been welcome. I am not interested just in rare or unusual birds, but common birds, where there are significant numbers of common birds, which birds come to the garden at different times of the year, where breeding birds have been seen, when our summer or winter visitors have arrived or departed and what sightings have given individuals particular pleasure. I encourage everyone to share their bird sightings with me, so that the basis of our annual *Arran Bird Report* can be as comprehensive as possible.

In 2019, over three hundred contributors submitted almost twenty four thousand records on one hundred and sixty species. All these records have been distilled and I have tried to provide a readable chronological summary and a systematic list that should provide a useful record of the bird life on Arran in 2019.

The chronological summary gives the highlights for each month. The systematic list is in the order of the British list as published by the British Ornithologists' Union (2006). This is in line with the Clyde Report. For each species, as well as the common name, the (new) official name and its scientific name have been given. There is information on the number of records received for each species and the number of sites in which the bird was recorded. This is followed by a brief statement giving the status of each bird on Arran, which can be markedly different from the status of the same bird on the adjacent mainland.

For 2020, please send any bird notes with “what, when, where” to me before Monday 04 January 2021, at Kilpatrick Kennels, Kilpatrick, Blackwaterfoot, KA27 8EY, or telephone 01770 860316, or email me at jim@arranbirding.co.uk.

I look forward to hearing from you.

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

Chronological Summary

2019 was another fascinating birding year on Arran.

There were three new species added to the Arran list in 2019 making it an exceptional year in my time as bird recorder. A Water Pipit in February was followed by a Black-headed Bunting in June and in November not only was there a Surf Scoter but there was also a Chiffchaff showing characteristics of the Siberian sub species. As well as these firsts, in May there was only the third ever record of Marsh Harrier and in October only the third ever record of Velvet Scoter. In addition Pied Flycatcher a species last recorded on the island in 1998 made two appearances one in May and one in August. The total of one hundred and sixty species was the highest in recent years.

The number of species recorded each month in Arran in 2019 is shown in the table below.

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
In Month	92	96	104	119	122	108	113	105	100	113	104	98
Year Total	92	103	114	128	143	146	147	152	152	156	160	160

January

In comparison to last January, January 2019 was as cold but was considerably drier with almost a third of the rain of the previous January. With snow at times even to low levels, the weather was not conducive to being out of doors. Nevertheless over ninety species were reported.

Highlights included: eight Woodcock above Pirnmill on 16th and five Jack Snipe by Sliderry Shore on 23rd. Both are species which move out of the colder continent in the winter. Other highlights included four Goosander off Balliekie shore on 10th, a Moorhen on Mossend Pond on 22nd, a Little Grebe on Fisherman's walk on 27th and a Dipper at Glenashdalewaterfoot also on 27th. In addition there were reports of all three divers including: four Great Northern Diver off Pladda on 9th, four Black-throated Diver in Sannox Bay on 26th and two Red-throated Diver off Imachar on 28th.

Five species of geese were reported namely: two White-fronted Geese with four hundred and eighty Greylag Geese in the Shiskine Valley on 1st, twelve Canada Geese in Clachaig on 3rd, two Pale-breasted Brent Geese on Silver Sands on 6th and ninety-two Pink-footed Geese in Sliderry on 8th. A solitary Whooper Swan in the Shiskine Valley throughout the month was probably the same bird that has been reported all last year that did not appear to migrate north at the end of last winter. Other wintering wildfowl included: seventy-five Teal at Carlo on 4th, two Goldeneye on Coire Fhionn Lochan on 10th and forty-five Wigeon at Sliderry on 27th.

Wintering flocks included: seventeen Turnstone on Silver Sands on 2nd, one hundred and ten Curlew in Corriecravie on 4th, six Purple Sandpiper on Silver Sands on 6th, forty Jackdaw in Catacol on 14th, eighty Lapwing in Shiskine in 17th, twelve Golden Plover in Catacol Bay on 19th, a mixed flock of over one hundred Fieldfare and Redwing in Shiskine on 23rd and one hundred and eleven Common Gull at Clauchlands on 27th. There were no January reports of Waxwing or Brambling.

Interesting garden birds in January included: a Great Spotted Woodpecker in Lamlash on 25th, ten Long-tailed Tit in Torbeg also on 25th and on 28th two Bullfinch in Marganaheglish and a Goldcrest plus a Treecreeper in Corrie.

While there was only one record of returning Lesser Black-backed Gull, Catacol Bay on 24th, and only one record of returning Gannet, Lamlash Bay on 30th, Shelduck were on numerous coastal territories including Auchenhew, Clauchlands, Cosyden, Drumadoon, Fisherman's Walk, Kildonan, Kilpatrick, King's Cave and Pirnmill.

Other signs of approaching spring included: eighteen courting Eider in Whiting Bay on 17th, displaying Golden Eagle over Lochranza on 23rd, three Fulmar visiting nest sites in Catacol on 25th and a Blackbird singing in Lamblash on 28th.

February

The cold weather in January continued into February, but around 10 February the wind started to come from a southerly direction and the temperature rose. With the persistence of the southerly winds, temperatures continued to rise with double figures being reached on several days. The contrast with the freezing blast of last February was marked. While the rainfall in February this year and last year was similar, the mean temperature this February was more than three degrees higher than last February.

February's birding highlight was the first ever record of Water Pipit on Arran. (See note page 74)

In February reports of winter visitors included: eight Purple Sandpiper at Silver Sands on 1st, a Brambling in a garden in Kiscadale on 9th, twenty Redwing at Torr Righ Beag on 15th, two Rook at Corriecravie on 16th and, unusually, a solitary Rook in Lochranza from 16th to 24th. In contrast to last February when there were reports of both Iceland Gull and Glaucous Gull, species of uncommon white-winged gulls, none were reported this February. However a returning Lesser Black-backed Gull was reported from Torrylinnwaterfoot on 17th, an early sign of approaching spring.

Wintering wildfowl continued to be present including: one hundred Wigeon at Torbeg on 7th, sixty Teal at Cosyden also on 7th, nine Whooper Swan at Torrylinnwaterfoot on 16th, and over three hundred Greylag Geese with six Pink-footed Geese in the Shiskine Valley on 23rd. One of the Greylag Geese had an orange identifiable collar. When this data was passed onto EURING, the information came back that the collar had been fitted in Nordfjordur breeding grounds on the east coast of Iceland in July 2016 and while the bird had been reported again from there in the summer of 2018, the record from the Shiskine Valley was the first record from a wintering area.

Other wintering flocks included: one hundred and twenty Common Gull at Blackwaterfoot on 5th, thirty-one Woodpigeon at Glenkiln on 9th, twenty-five Lapwing on Cleats Shore on 11th, eighty Starling at Kilpatrick on 12th, twenty-four Turnstone at Drumadoon on 18th and fifty Curlew at Sandbraes on 20th. Some of these flocks may have included birds beginning to migrate north.

Calm days were ideal for sea watching. Reports included: six Great Northern Diver off Cleats Shore on 11th, five Black-throated Diver and one Red-throated Diver off Cosyden on 14th, two Gannet in Auchenhew Bay on 16th, sixty Guillemot off the Craw on 17th and a pair of Common Scoter at Machriewaterfoot on 27th. The last Arran record of this sea duck was four off Pirmill in September 2017.

Other sightings included: one Kingfisher at Fisherman's Walk on 2nd, one Little Grebe in Loch Ranza on 10th, twenty Greenfinch in Shiskine on 11th, one Dipper at the mouth of Glenashdale Water on 15th, one Moorhen on Brodick Golf Course on 24th and ten reports of Goosander, often in pairs, from various locations round the island.

There were some signs of approaching spring including: six Grey Heron nest building in Lochranza on 20th, Greenfinch, Song Thrush and Wren all singing in Kilpatrick on 21st, Great Spotted Woodpecker drumming in Stronach Wood on 27th, twenty-six Eider displaying at Machriewaterfoot also on 27th, eight Red-breasted Merganser courting in Auchenhew Bay on 28th and a pair of Starling nest building in Catacol also on 28th.

March

Spring is an exciting time of year, awaiting the arrival of our summer visitors and seeing the last of our winter visitors leaving. The timing of the northerly spring migration is dependent on the weather, not just locally, but throughout the whole length of the migration route. In comparison with February, March was wetter with seventy percent more rain. In comparison with March 2018, this March was warmer. The mean temperature was 2.6 degrees higher. The last week of March was dry and settled and it was during this spell that a few pioneer summer migrants did arrive, namely a Chiffchaff at Sandbraes on 14th, a Wheatear at Machrie on 18th and five Sand Martin in Catacol on 31st. These were all the summer visitors reported in March.

In March, our winter visitors were still to the fore including: a Brambling in a Lagg garden on 2nd, four hundred Greylag Geese and seventy Wigeon in the Shiskine Valley on 15th, fifty-two Teal on Cleats Shore on 23rd, a Purple Sandpiper in Whiting Bay on 24th, a Redwing in Auchenheew Bay on 28th, one hundred and thirty-five Pink-footed Geese in Slidderly on 29th and a male Goldeneye on Mossend Pond also on 29th. In contrast to last winter when there were reports of both Iceland Gull and Glaucous Gull, species of uncommon white-winged gulls, none were reported in March. However, causing some interest, a white-winged albinistic type Herring Gull was photographed in Shiskine on 28th. This bird had been ringed in Slidderly on 24 June 2018. Towards the end of the month there were some signs of wildfowl preparing to head north to their breeding grounds including forty-two calling Whooper Swan flying over Whiting Bay on 31st.

In March there were many signs of this ongoing migration including: nine Siskin in Torbeg on 1st, fourteen Golden Plover in Slidderly on 6th, eight Skylark in Tormore on 17th, twenty-seven Curlew and fifteen Redshank on Cleats Shore on 23rd, one hundred Starling in Blackwaterfoot on 27th, twenty-eight Turnstone on Dougarie shore on 28th, six Linnet on Silver Sands also on 28th, one hundred and thirty-four Common Gull at Clauchlands Point on 30th and on the 31st forty-five Great Northern Diver, twenty Black-throated Diver and ten Red-throated Diver were reported between Machriewaterfoot and Lochranza.

In a month in which records were received on over one hundred species, these are a small selection of other interesting records: two Common Scoter and two Slavonian Grebe off Cosyden on 25th, a Short-eared Owl at the top of the String on 26th, a Little Grebe and a Moorhen on Mossend Pond on 29th and over one hundred and forty Gannet in Auchenheew Bay on 30th. In addition the Water Pipit which was first reported on 23 February on the shore at Machrie, continued to show well throughout March in the area around Machrie Golf Course. Towards the end of the month the pink flush on the breast began to show as the bird moulted into breeding plumage.

Spring is a great time to be birding, as most birds are getting on with the business of breeding. This involves attracting a mate by song, courtship display and ritual, defining a territory, nest building, and generally establishing relationships. In March the signs were there, including: six Black Guillemot exploring nest sites in Corrie on 23rd, House Sparrow occupying four nest boxes in Kildonan on 24th, thirty Eider displaying off Cosyden on 25th, Grey Heron nest building in Lagg on 26th, Great Spotted Woodpecker drumming in Whitehouse Wood on 30th, fifteen Red-breasted Merganser displaying in Cleiteadh Buidhe on 31st and among many reports of birds singing, there was one of Yellowhammer in Slidderly on 25th. If it stays to breed it will be the first confirmed breeding of this once widespread familiar farmland bird on Arran since 1999.

April

April is the month when spring migration gets underway, with arrivals and departures of birds, all seeking their best breeding territories. This April was warmer and drier than last April. The mean temperature was 1.5 degrees higher with a temperature range of twenty degrees and the rainfall was about a fifth of the rainfall of last April. Like last April there was a lot of easterly winds. The impact on migrating birds of the weather here and throughout their route is difficult to assess but even by the end of the month the bulk of the migrants had still to arrive.

By the end of March the first Chiffchaff, Wheatear and Sand Martin had been reported. Here are April "firsts" with the 2018 arrival date in brackets for comparison: Sandwich Tern 2nd (31 March), White Wagtail 4th(7th), Manx Shearwater 4th(26 March), Swallow 6th(6th), Willow Warbler 10th(7th), House Martin 14th(15th), Common Sandpiper 14th(14th), Whinchat 18th(28th), Grasshopper Warbler 19th(19th), Cuckoo 19th(16th), Whitethroat 20th(27th), Sedge Warbler 20th(20th) and Tree Pipit 20th(24th).

In April some of our wintering birds were still around including fifty Greylag Geese in the Shiskine Valley on 7th, one of which had a coloured collar on. This had been fitted to the young bird in summer 2017 in north Iceland where it had hatched. Last winter it was reported on Fair Isle and this winter obviously decided to winter further south on Arran. Other wintering birds included: fifty Fieldfare at Shedog on 8th, two Redwing at Lagg on 9th, a Brambling at Sliderry on 18th, five Wigeon at Machriewaterfoot on 19th, one Rook on Sliderry shore on 27th and one Whooper Swan in the Rodden on 10th may have been the bird that over-summered last year. The last report of Pink-footed Geese was one hundred flying north over Silver Sands on migration on 18th.

April is an ideal time for watching migration. These are a few examples: a Ring Ouzel at North Sannox on 7th, an Osprey in Lamlash Bay on 7th and 8th, sixty Golden Plover at Torrylinnwaterfoot on 14th, six Common Scoter off Cosyden on 17th, fourteen Great Northern Diver off Dougarie Point on 19th, two Dunlin at Blackwaterfoot on 24th and a Bar-tailed Godwit on Sliderry Shore on 27th. In addition there was a much reported passage of Sandwich Tern, including twenty-four in Machrie Bay on 26th and Whimbrel, including twelve at Porta Buidhe also on 26th. One Whimbrel which had been ringed on a southern Arran shore two years ago was reported again almost on the same shore for the second year in a row having again spent the winter in Africa!

Migration was also in evidence from the widespread reports received of Goldfinch, Siskin and Lesser Redpoll moving through people's gardens throughout the month. Larger garden numbers reported included; eleven Goldfinch in Kildonan on 10th, six Siskin in Shiskine on 14th and six Lesser Redpoll in Torbeg on 25th. Tens of thousands of birds seem to be moving through the island at this time of year.

In April there were one hundred and nineteen species recorded on Arran. Here is a further small selection from this list: five Goosander at Machriewaterfoot on 6th, two Moorhen on Mossend Pond on 7th, a pair of Yellowhammer in Lochranza on 26th, a Dipper at Lagg also on 26th and the long-staying Water Pipit first reported in 23 February was last reported on 4 April. Finally it was good to see an increase in the reports of Greenfinch in April. They may be on the road to recovery.

May

In terms of weather May was almost a re-run of April with similar rainfall and temperature. In comparison to last May, this May was cooler, with a mean temperature 1.5 degrees lower, and drier with over 40% less rain this May, most of it falling in the last week. The wind direction this May was more often from a northerly direction whereas last May it was more from a southerly direction. There was a feeling that spring was arriving but a little delayed. Conditions were generally good for birds trying to get on with breeding but Swallow and House Martin seemed to be delaying nesting perhaps because of the dry conditions. In addition the absence of southerly winds seemed to be holding up northward migration with the result that many more species were seen on Arran this May than previous recent Mays.

It was an exceptional month with one hundred and twenty-two species recorded some of which had not been recorded on Arran for a number of years. These included the following uncommon passage migrants, irregular summer visitors and vagrants. (The last year recorded on Arran is shown in brackets): a male Pied Flycatcher(1998) in Corriecravie on 3 May; two Dotterel(2012) on the northern hills on 4th and 5th; a Green Sandpiper(2008) in Blackwaterfoot on 11th; an immature female type Marsh Harrier(2004) by Machrie Farm on 18th; and a Coot(2016) on Mossend Pond on 30th.

Throughout the month the numbers of familiar summer visitors like Swallow, House Martin, Sand Martin, Willow Warbler, Whitethroat, Sedge Warbler and Cuckoo continued to build up. In addition to the "firsts" reported in the April notes, here are some further "firsts" with the 2018 arrival dates in brackets for comparison, all later this year: Lesser Whitethroat at Fairhaven on 1st (30 April), two Swift over Glenscorrodale on 10th (5 May), a Spotted Flycatcher in Brodick Castle Gardens on 11th (30 April), four Arctic Tern on Pladda on 14th (20 April) and a Wood Warbler in Pirnmill on 17th. There were no records of Wood Warbler in 2018. To date there have been no reports this year of Garden Warbler, Common Redstart, Nightjar, Corncrake or Common Tern.

Species who breed further north continued to pass through including; twenty-five Whimbrel in Auchenhew Bay on 1st, eleven Turnstone in Catacol Bay on 2nd, a Greenshank at Porta Buidhe on 5th, twenty-two Sandwich Tern at Machriewaterfoot on 6th, two Bar-tailed Godwit and an Arctic Skua at Blackwaterfoot 11th, a White Wagtail at Porta Buidhe also on 11th, a Knot at Drumadoon Point on 13th, four Great Northern Diver and three Sanderling at Drumadoon Point on 15th and seventeen Dunlin on Silver Sands on 22nd.

In May, breeding was well underway for many species. Encouraging signs included reports of Golden Eagle, Golden Plover, Hen Harrier, Red-throated Diver and Short-eared Owl all holding breeding territories. Activity was reported from all the monitored heronries on the island and four areas held small numbers of breeding Lapwing. A number of coastal cliffs held single figure numbers of nesting Fulmar which seem to be in serious decline on Arran. I would be interested to receive any reports of young birds. None were reported in 2017 or 2018 from any colony. By contrast the Black Guillemot colonies seem to be thriving. Other breeding records included: seven Woodcock roding over Machrie Moor on 11th, a family of Dipper in Glenashdale on 13th, around twenty occupied Sand Martin nest holes in Glen Catacol on 16th, a pair of Canada Geese with five young in Auchenhew Bay on 16th, a pair of Shelduck with ten young at Kilpatrick Point on 24th and a pair of Mute Swan with six young at Clauchlands on 27th. In addition towards the end of the month, there were lots of reports of garden birds carrying food and feeding recently fledged young, including young Goldcrest in Lochranza on 29th.

Here are some other highlights: sixty Gannet off Sandbraes on 15th and after the reports in April, two further reports of Osprey one over Sannox Bay on 12th and another at the top of the String on 21st. Similarly there were further reports of Ring Ouzel on the northern hills on 17th and 18th. A Magpie, a vagrant on Arran not seen every year, was in Kildonan from 11th to the end of the month. Finally reports of a single Whooper Swan along the Kildonan shore from 11th to 21st and then at Sandbraes on 27th appears to be preparing to over-summer here rather than migrate to northerly breeding grounds like Iceland.

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

June

With a bit of heat at last, June was noticeably warmer than the cool May. The mean temperature was three degrees higher but June was wetter with three times as much rain as May. In comparison to last June this June had a similar mean temperature but had twice as much rain most of it falling in the first half of the month. The wind direction this June was more easterly than last June.

This easterly wind direction may have assisted the arrival of two unexpected species which winter in India and breed in easternmost Europe across temperate southern Asia. These birds overshot their breeding areas and arrived on Arran! On 4 June an adult Rose-coloured Starling was by the shore at Blackwaterfoot and on 6 June a male Black-headed Bunting was in a garden in Strathwillan. Both are rare birds in the UK. The bunting is the first ever record on Arran. (See note page 75)

The warmer spell of weather benefitted many breeding birds. There were many reports of fledged birds in gardens including unfamiliar looking young birds, like Goldfinch without the red face of the adult birds, spotty young Blackbirds and Robin with spots and no red breast. As well as the more familiar birds like Blackbird, Song Thrush, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Coal Tit and Chaffinch all with young, there were reports of a family of Grey Wagtail in a garden in Corrie on 6th, young Bullfinch being fed in Brodick on 20th, a family group of Long-tailed Tit in Alma park on 24th and young Great Spotted Woodpecker with its distinctive red cap in Auchagallon on 30th. Most prolific of all seemed to be House Sparrow with twenty in Lagg on 27th being one of the larger numbers and also lots of reports of numbers of Siskin and Goldfinch with young around homes across the island. Like last year it was again encouraging to get reports of young Greenfinch from widespread locations. This species had been decimated by the parasitic disease, trichomonas.

Away from gardens there were many signs of breeding including: two hundred Starling with many young birds in Glenkiln on 21st, a Sand Martin colony in Glen Catacol with one hundred and thirty-five nest holes on 23rd, two young Moorhen on Mossend Pond on 24th, a Woodcock with four young at Auchareoch on 26th and activity at the Grey Heron heronries in Stronach Wood, Brodick, Lagg and Whitehouse Wood, Lamlash by the end of the month. In addition the healthy vole population in many areas was beneficial to some breeding raptors. There was also encouraging reports of young Lapwing from four areas. This once widespread farmland breeder is just hanging on.

Around the coast there were further signs of breeding including: Shelduck with seven young and Mute Swan with eight young at Cosyden on 9th, thirty Black Guillemot by the King's Cave colony on 26th and with the strenuous efforts of local people keeping disturbance on the shore to a minimum, young Oystercatcher and young Ringed Plover were seen on the shore at Kildonan on 27th. In addition the Common Sandpiper, which having travelled from south of the Sahara to breed, had chosen to nest in a garden in Blackwaterfoot, presumably trying to avoid disturbance on the shore from human activity, successfully raised young this year.

Other highlights in a month with again over one hundred species reported included the following: two Sanderling at Blackwaterfoot on 3rd, a Great Northern Diver in Whiting Bay on 4th, two Puffin in Brodick Bay on 10th, a male Tufted Duck on Mossend Pond on 24th, two Swift over High Kildonan also on 24th and that Magpie first reported on 11 May was still in Kildonan on 28 June. Magpie is a vagrant on Arran.

Cuckoos, whose decreasing numbers are a cause for concern nationally, seem to be thriving on Arran. Throughout May and June there have been many widespread reports. Most adult Cuckoos, taking no part in rearing their young, leave around mid to late July. Juveniles leave breeding areas soon after they fledge, quickly becoming independent of their hosts before also migrating south, usually in late July and early August. These young Cuckoos have a white patch on the back of the head.

July

In July, look out for early signs of breeding being over for some birds this year. These could include the return of some Arctic breeding species to our shores. Remember July is the time when many birds, having raised their young, go about the process of renewing their feathers by moulting them. As birds are vulnerable when they are shedding flight feathers they literally make themselves scarce. On any birding walk you may see fewer birds but they are still around.

In comparison to June, the mean temperature of July was two degrees warmer. In comparison to last July the mean temperature was similar but the rainfall was fifty percent more. The rain this year was concentrated in fewer days and twenty days in July had less than 0.2mm of rain. Generally, the month was warm and settled. In the main this was conducive to birds raising young and many species had a good breeding season.

There were widespread reports of Swallow and House Martin with young and the Sand Martin colonies in Sannox, Glen Rosa and Glen Catacol were thriving. There were signs that these and other summer visitors like Willow Warbler, Whitethroat and Tree Pipit were raising second broods.

Some observers reported gardens "buzzing" with the activity of young birds including Blue Tit, Great Tit, Coal Tit, House Sparrow, Robin, Song Thrush, Starling, Blackbird, Chaffinch, Goldfinch, Siskin and encouragingly, Greenfinch.

Other signs of a successful breeding season included: a family of Dipper in Glenashdale on 5th, five young and two adult Kestrel over Cnocan Cuallaich on 6th, Arctic Tern with young at the colony on Pladda on 11th, a Red-breasted Merganser with eight young in Loch Ranza on 13th, a family of Spotted Flycatcher on the Holy Isle on 15th, a pair of Shelduck with five young on Cleats Shore on 18th, a family of Common Sandpiper on Sliderry Shore on 22nd, three active nests at the heronry at Lagg on 27th, more than twenty Black Guillemot at the colony by King's Cave on 28th and a pair of Mute Swan with six young at Clauchlands on 30th. In addition healthy vole populations in some areas sustained good breeding numbers of Hen Harrier and Short-eared Owl.

There was some concern expressed that increased human activity on the hills near lochans was adversely affecting breeding Red-throated Divers and diminishing records of breeding Curlew and Fulmar is a continuing cause for concern.

July marks the end of the breeding season for some birds. It can be an interesting time looking out for birds dispersing after breeding. None of the following species breed on Arran: an adult and a young Sandwich Tern at Machriewaterfoot on 8th, two Kingfisher on the Rosa Burn on 18th and three Rook in Sliderry on 30th.

A number of northern breeding species heading south from their breeding grounds, many still in their breeding plumage, were reported, including: a Greenshank at Machriewaterfoot on 24th, seventeen Golden Plover at Machriewaterfoot on 26th, three Whimbrel and seventeen Dunlin on Sliderry Shore on 27th and three Turnstone at Machriewaterfoot on 31st. A Whooper Swan was reported at Sandbraes on 31st. This bird over-summered.

One hundred and thirteen species were reported in July. Other highlights included: two Swift over Sliderry on 2nd, twenty Gannet and two Puffin in Brodick Bay on 5th, forty Shag in Auchenhew Bay on 7th, three Goosander off Rubha Glas on 15th, thirty Manx Shearwater in Brodick Bay on 16th, two Moorhen and one Little Grebe in Mossend Pond on 19th and that solitary long-staying Magpie first reported on 11 May continued to be reported and was seen in Porta Buidhe on 16 July.

August

In comparison to August last year, this August had a higher rainfall with 50% more rain. Most of this fell on a small number of days. Even in Kilpatrick, 25% of the month's rain fell on Friday 9 August. On the higher ground the rain was almost unprecedented, causing road closures and flooding. It was the wettest month of the year. Some Sand Martin colonies were washed away. Towards the end of the month there was more than a hint of the approach of autumn.

Having said that this, August was warmer than last August and summer visitors were still to the fore including: four Willow Warbler in Glen Rosa on 4th, six Sandwich Tern in Porta Buidhe on 6th, three Common Sandpiper and six Sedge Warbler at Port na Feannaiche on 8th, a Swift at Sliderry on 14th, a Tree Pipit also in Sliderry on 20th, six Whinchat at Shannochie on 24th, a Chiffchaff singing at Silver Sands on 25th, and the largest groups of Swallow and House Martin reported were fifty Swallow at Clachaig on 20th and one hundred and three House Martin at Bourtreehill on 25th.

Some signs of successful breeding this month included: a pair of Mute Swan with six young at Cordon on 2nd, two young Moorhen at Mossend pond on 3rd, young Great Spotted Woodpecker in a Brodick garden on 9th, a family group of six young Kestrel in Glenree on 10th, five young Barn Owl in Glenscorrodale also on 10th and eight Grey Heron with four young in Loch Ranza on 22nd. In addition there were widespread reports of young birds at garden feeders.

Flycatchers seemed to be thriving with August reports of Spotted Flycatcher from twelve locations including four at Shannochie on 25th. In addition there was a report of a male Pied Flycatcher in North Sannox on 21st. This is the second record this year of this irregular summer visitor. The first was on 3 May at Corriecravie. The previous record was more than twenty years ago in 1998. This bird may have been on its way south after breeding. It did not linger.

In August, breeding is coming to an end, and after breeding a number of species begin to flock together, some in preparation for migration. These included: fifty-three Red-breasted Merganser at Cosyden on 7th, ninety Curlew at Port na Feannaiche on 8th, thirty-three Golden Plover at Machriewaterfoot on 12th, five hundred Starling at Slidery on 20th, thirty Linnets on Cleats Shore also on 20th and twenty-three Goldfinch at Kingscross Point on 31st.

All around the island but particularly on the coast were signs of birds on migration, including: a Wigeon at Kilpatrick Point on 1st, a Merlin by Goatfell track also on 1st, eleven Sanderling and four Wheatear on Slidery Shore on 10th, two White Wagtail at Porta Buidhe on 12th, two Whimbrel and eight Dunlin at Machrie on 16th, two Knot at Porta Buidhe on 27th, fifteen Turnstone on Silver Sands on 29th and two Greenshank at Kingscross on 31st.

Among the one hundred and five species reported in August there were a number of other noteworthy ones. A sub-adult White-tailed Eagle was photographed over the distillery in Lochranza on 18th. That is the first record this year. There were four records last year. For the third year in a row Little Egret has been reported, first of all round Loch Ranza on 21st and then at Torrylinn on 25th. Kingfisher was reported from two areas in August one in Brodick around the Rosa Burn and the other in Lamlash around the Benlister Burn. Areas with upwelling of food off the coast prompted a number of feeding frenzies including over one hundred Shag with around ten Cormorant off Porta Buidhe on 19th and around sixty Gannet off Merkland Point on 28th. Finally that long staying Magpie first reported in Kildonan on 11 May was last reported on 24 August.

September

This September was drier and cooler than August but wetter and warmer than last September. September is the start of the peak migration season, when many birds are on the move. The weather was conducive to this, particularly the last week or so as the wind came more from a northerly direction. For example on 24 September over three hundred Skylark were counted passing over Slidery. There were similar numbers over the next few days dropping to around one hundred and fifty on 29th. The following day there were numerous reports of skeins of Pink-footed Geese passing over the south of the island. Two observers counted eight flocks with a total of over five hundred birds.

Other birds on migration included: a Whimbrel at Lenamhor on 1st, a Bar-tailed Godwit at Cosyden also on 1st, three Sanderling at Blackwaterfoot on 3rd, eight Knot at Drumadoon Point on 5th, five White Wagtail at Porta Buidhe on 6th, three Wheatear at Cnocan Biorach also on 6th, a Sandwich Tern at Porta Buidhe on 18th, two Dunlin at Drumadoon Point on 20th and six Twite at Dougarie on 23rd. Numbers of Twite on Arran seem to be decreasing.

At this time of year birds begin to flock together, often in preparation for migration. Reports included: one hundred and four Golden Plover at Machriewaterfoot on 9th, fifteen Redshank at Sandbraes on 14th, thirty-five Curlew at Kilpatrick Point on 21st, one hundred and fifty Linnets, one hundred and twelve Ringed Plover and fifty-one Turnstone at Machriewaterfoot on 26th, one hundred Kittiwake at Fisherman's Walk on 28th, sixty Teal at Cosyden on 29th, twenty-six Pied Wagtail at Silver Sands on 30th, one hundred and three Starling at Clachaig Farm also on 30th and one hundred and ninety-two Greylag Geese on Cleats Shore also on 30th. This gives an indication of the numbers of birds that are on the move at this time of year.

In September there were reports of returning winter visitors including a Wigeon at Kilpatrick Point on 21st and fifty Rook in Slidery on 30th.

A number of summer visitors were still around in September including: a Common Sandpiper at Machriewaterfoot on 2nd, two Whitethroat at Claulchlands Point on 13th, a Sand Martin in Sannox on 18th, twenty House Martin in Shiskine on 20th, two Swallow at Torbeg on 26th, a Willow Warbler at Claulchlands on 28th and a Chiffchaff at Clachaig Farm on 30th. October should see the last of the House Martins, Swallows and other summer visitors departing south.

There was a wide range of species recorded in September, exactly one hundred. Other interesting sightings this month included: two Great Spotted Woodpecker in a garden in Brodick on 5th, one hundred and fifty Gannet off the Cock of Arran on 7th, four Red-throated Diver off Largymore on 13th, one hundred and fifty Woodpigeon at Mossend Pond on 14th, three Golden Eagle over Torr Meadhonach on 16th, two Magpie together (an Arran first) on Lamlash Golf Course on 26th, three Moorhen at Mossend Pond on 28th, thirty-three Shag on Balliekin shore on 29th and six Black-throated Diver at Cosyden also on 29th. In addition, September was an outstanding month for Kingfisher. (See note page 73) There were eleven records from six wide-spread locations including areas where it has not been recorded regularly like Dhunan, Rodden and Sannox. Only one of the records was for more than one bird and that was a report of two on the Rosa Burn on 13th,

October

October was cooler and wetter than September. In comparison with October 2018 it was wetter with almost 60% more rain. The temperature range in 2019 was less and there were no major storm events. October is arguably the busiest birding month, as summer breeders depart, migrants pass through, winter visitors arrive and there is always a strong chance of something unusual. This October there were plenty of interesting birds to enjoy with one hundred and thirteen species recorded.

A particular highlight was Little Egret with records from a range of coastal areas throughout the month including Carlo, Cladach, Claulchlands, Corrie, Corriegills, Fisherman's Walk, Merkland Point, Rubha Salach and Strathwillan. This is the third year in a row that this colonising species has been reported on Arran and it is the first time that records have included more than one bird, with two at Rubha Salach on 12 October and two by the Fisherman's Walk on 28 October.

The build up of the number of winter thrushes, Fieldfare and Redwing, was a feature of the month. The first Redwing were reported on 4th and the first Fieldfare on 16th. Soon there were widespread reports of the birds feasting on the autumn berries, with flocks in the hundreds being reported from the north to the south of the island including mixed flocks with both species of over one thousand birds at Lenimore and at Lochranza on 22nd. Other thrushes featured as well, including twenty Mistle Thrush at Glenree on 7th and a Ring Ouzel at Newton North on 14th. Brambling, an irruptive species from northern Europe not recorded every winter, were reported from Pirmill on 9th and High Kildonan on 29th.

Other winter visitors included: three hundred and sixty-three Pink-footed Geese over Sliderry on 1st, sixty Teal at Cosyden on 2nd, a Yellowhammer at Sliderry on 20th, a Brent Goose on Cleats Shore on 21st, eleven Wigeon at Cosyden on 23rd, five Snow Bunting on Mullach Buidhe on 26th, two hundred and twenty Greylag Geese in Sliderry on 27th and fifty Rook also on Sliderry on 28th. In addition, flocks of migratory Whooper Swan filled the autumn skies with their honking and trumpeting calls, including ten over Clachaig on 14th and sixteen over Cleats Shore on 25th.

Migration was in full flow in October as birds were moving out of colder northern Europe to milder climes. These included: sixty Linnets on Cleats Shore on 2nd, one hundred and eighty-six Golden Plover at Machriewaterfoot on 20th, two hundred Common Gull at Cleats Shore on 21st, thirty-five Twite at Machriewaterfoot on 22nd, one hundred Starling in Lamlash on 26th, one Grey Plover on Cleats Shore on 27th, eleven Snipe and twenty Lapwing at Corriecravie on 28th, sixty Skylark at Sliderry also on 28th, thirty-four Turnstone at Silver Sands on 30th and one hundred Curlew on Sliderry Shore on 31st.

There were some "last sightings" of summer visitors also moving south including: a Lesser Black-backed Gull and two Wheatear on Cleats Shore on 2nd, two House Martin in Alma Park on 6th, one Swallow in Sliderry on 15th, one thousand Manx Shearwater off King's Cave on 18th, a Chiffchaff in Lochranza on 22nd and three Gannet off Silver Sands on 25th.

Other interesting records from a month with a plethora of birds included: the long staying Magpie in Kildonan now entering its sixth month, a Velvet Scoter off Cosyden on 14th (first Arran record since 1998), five Black-throated Diver in Auchenhew Bay on 16th, a Common Scoter at Machriewaterfoot on 17th, three Red-throated Diver off Pirnmill on 18th, after the annual moult the first returning Shelduck at Cleats Shore on 21st, three Little Grebe at Mossend Pond on 22nd, two Red Kite over Invercloy on 25th and two Water Rail at Corriecravie on 28th. In addition, October like September was an outstanding month for Kingfisher. There were fourteen records from five locations.

November

November this year was colder and drier than November last year. The mean temperature was two degrees lower and there was forty percent less rain. The weather on the colder continent may have had a bearing on the outstanding number of species recorded in November. Last November ninety-four species were recorded while this year it was one hundred and four. Among these were two firsts for Arran, having never been recorded here before. On 24 November a female type Surf Scoter, a North American species, was photographed in Catacol Bay. (See note on page 76) A few days later on 28 November a Chiffchaff was photographed at Claulands showing characteristics of the sub species "tristis", commonly called Siberian Chiffchaff. This sub-species breeds east of the Urals and normally winters in India but does turn up in the UK most autumns/winters. (See note on page 108).

Not surprisingly in November, winter visitors were to the fore. Throughout the month there were widespread reports of foraging Fieldfare and Redwing, sometimes in mixed flocks. The largest groups were four hundred Fieldfare at High Kildonan on 2nd and two hundred and fifty Redwing at Sliderry on 16th. There were fourteen reports of Snow Bunting from three locations including two on Cleats Shore on 17th. Another Snow Bunting by the shore by the Fisherman's Walk from 15th to 19th was particularly confiding, giving excellent views.

Other records of wintering birds included: one hundred and fifty Golden Plover at Machriewaterfoot on 3rd; thirty Twite also at Machriewaterfoot on 6th; eight Lapwing Kilpatrick Point on 14th; one hundred Rook on Sliderry Shore also on 14th; four records of Merlin included one at Levencorrah on 16th; two hundred Starling at Sliderry also on 16th; four Yellowhammer at Sliderry on 17th; two Purple Sandpiper at Silver Sands on 18th; a Greenshank at Kingscross also on 18th; three Jack Snipe on Sliderry Shore on 22nd; twenty-seven Turnstone at Silver Sands on 23rd; a first winter Iceland Gull in Catacol Bay on 24th and 25th and over three hundred Common Gull at Mossend Pond on 29th.

Reports of wintering wildfowl included: eighty-three Teal at Kilpatrick Point on 14th, a male Goldeneye at Mossend Pond on 15th, two hundred and fifty Greylag Geese on Cleats Shore on 17th, a Whooper Swan flying up the Ross also on 17th, fifty Wigeon at Kilpatrick Point on 18th and a Common Scoter off Dougarie on 30th.

Gardens are safe refuges during the winter months with many people providing regular food and water for their feathered friends. These are a small selection from the many reports from gardens round the island in November: ten Long-tailed Tit in Newton on 2nd; a Great Spotted Woodpecker in Invercloy on 3rd; seven Blackbird in Lagg on 8th; a male Blackcap feeding on crab apples in Sliderry on 14th; four Goldcrest in Brodick on 24th; four Greenfinch in Torbeg on 25th and a Treecreeper in Lamlash on 29th. In addition from 21st to 23rd a male Black Redstart was in a garden in Kildonan. The last Arran record of this scarce passage migrant was at Cordon on 24 June 2017. Perhaps less welcome were the reports of Magpie. As well as the now long-staying one in Kildonan there were four reports from Sannox between 8th and 10th and six reports from the Alma Park area between 16th and 30th. The Sannox and Brodick records could be down to one bird. Magpie is a vagrant to Arran.

Finally here is a further selection of highlights from what has been an exceptional month for bird-watching on Arran. After the dearth of Eider round Arran in September for the annual Clyde Eider census, in November there were widespread reports including seventy-seven off Pirmill on 2nd, one hundred and seventeen in Lamlash Bay on 18th and seventy-five in Whiting Bay on 24th. Little Egret reports, all of a single bird, continued throughout the month from 4th to 29th with reports from eight coastal locations on the east of the island from Carlo to Cordon. In addition there were two Long-eared Owl in Glenscorrodale on 8th, two Black Grouse in Kilmory on 10th, six Great Northern Diver off Cnoc Buidhe also on 10th, two White-tailed Eagle seen from North Sannox car park on 14th, twelve Black-throated Diver off Aird nan Ron on 16th and a Sparrowhawk was harassing nineteen Common Crossbill at Cnocan Biorach on 23rd.

December

The mild weather of November continued into December. The month was however notable for some very wet weather with rainfall totals double those of December 2018

Following on from Arran's first ever report of a Surf Scoter in Catacol Bay on 24 November, this North American species of duck continued to be reported in December from 21st to 30th between Whitefarland, Pirmill and Catacol Bay.

Other visitors in December included: four Purple Sandpiper at Silver Sands on 6th, two Snow Bunting at Glen Chalmadale on 10th, a Merlin at Machriewaterfoot on 11th, forty Redwing at Kilpatrick Farm also on 11th, twenty-two Rook at Sliderry on 13th and one hundred and sixty Fieldfare and seven Yellowhammer at Sliderry on 14th.

Wintering wildfowl were to the fore including: a male Goldeneye in Loch Ranza on 9th, two hundred and forty Greylag Geese in Feorline on 13th, one hundred Teal on Cleats Shore also on 13th, seventy Pink-footed Geese at Torbeg on 15th, forty-two Wigeon at Kilpatrick Point also on 15th and six Whooper Swan flying over High Kildonan on 21st.

Groups of wintering birds included: sixty Curlew at Claulchlands Point on 1st, three hundred Common Gull at Strabane also on 1st, thirty-two Goldfinch in Sannox also on 1st, one hundred Linnet in Carlo on 8th, forty Twite at Machriewaterfoot on 9th, one hundred Turnstone at Machriewaterfoot on 11th, twenty-four Lapwing on Cleats Shore on 13th, sixty Starling at Silver Sands also on 13th, three hundred Jackdaw at Machriewaterfoot on 14th, seven Woodcock at East Bennan on 19th and five hundred Kittiwake at Pirmill on 20th.

Other interesting records this month included: a White-tailed Eagle over Thunderguy on 9th, three Moorhen at Mossend Pond on 12th, three Goosander at Pirmill on 20th, a Kingfisher in Corrie also on 20th, a Long-eared Owl in Glenree on 22nd and that long-staying Magpie, first reported on 11 May, still in Kildonan on 31 December. Magpie is a vagrant to Arran. In addition, all three divers were around the coast including seven Black-throated Diver off Kilpatrick Point on 15th, two Great Northern Diver off Drumadon also on 15th and four Red-throated Diver off Pirmill on 22nd.

Gardens provide a safe refuge for some birds in winter. Among the more unusual records received were: three Goldcrest in Pirmill on 9th, a Brambling in Newton on 14th, a Great Spotted Woodpecker in Lamlash on 21st and six Long-tailed Tit in Whiting Bay on 25th.

Although still in the depth of winter there were some signs of approaching spring with Great Spotted Woodpecker reported drumming in Brodick Country Park on 21st and male Red-breasted Mergansers displaying in Pirmill on 22nd.

From the above summary it has been an outstanding year on Arran, a fitting year celebrating forty years of annual Arran bir report. 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

The weather influences the timing of bird migration.

For example in March/April 2018 there was an extended cold spell with strong easterly winds blowing in from the continent. The impact on migrating birds heading north seemed to be to hold them up.

The weather influences the timing of breeding.

A cool spring delays the timing of the breeding of some of our summer visitors.

The weather influences the success of breeding.

When May and June are warm and dry, these are ideal conditions for raising young and this can result in a good breeding season for many species. This summer was close to these ideal conditions and many passerines thrived.

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. After some milder winters there are 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. Below is a summary of weather data for 2018 from our weather station at Kilpatrick on the west of the island.

	Temperature (degrees C)			Rainfall (mm)	Wind Speed (mph) and Direction		
	Mean	High	Low		Average	High	Dom. Dir.
January	5.0	11.4	-2.8	170.8	6.7	42	WSW
February	3.9	9.5	-3.6	73.2	5.6	36	SSE
March	4.4	10.7	-3.1	125.7	5.9	34	ENE
April	7.5	15.8	-1.1	115.7	5.5	35	SSE
May	11.5	24.1	2.5	41.2	4.1	29	SSE
June	14.3	27.0	5.1	33.6	3.0	42	WSW
July	15.6	25.7	6.6	70.6	2.7	31	SSE
August	13.8	20.3	7.0	80.8	3.3	25	SSE
September	11.8	18.1	3.4	60.6	5.1	52	WSW
October	9.9	20.2	-0.3	79.2	4.8	33	SE
November	8.4	12.9	1.1	106.2	6.2	39	ENE
December	7.2	11.7	-0.7	113.1	5.5	40	SSE

Dom.Dir. – dominant direction

The topography of the island results in a variation in weather. For example here are the 2018 annual rainfall figures from various areas: Clauchlands 1927mm, Kilpatrick 1070mm, Margnaheglish 1966mm, Pirmill 1628mm and Sandbraes 1293mm.

For the most comprehensive and up to date information on the weather on Arran refer to this excellent website run by Glen Sloss of Sannox <http://www.arranweather.com/>

Summer Migrant Arrival Dates

	"Earliest" Recorded Date	Arrival Date 2019
Chiffchaff	11-Mar-17	14 March
Wheatear	13-Mar-05	18 March
Sand Martin	18-Mar-09	31 March
Willow Warbler	14-Mar-19	14 March
Swallow	18-Mar-19	18 March
White Wagtail	24-Mar-08	04 April
Manx Shearwater	26-Mar-18	15 April
House Martin	12-Mar-17	18 March
Common Sandpiper	22-Mar-19	22 March
Sandwich Tern	23-Mar-19	23 March
Whinchat	01-Apr-88	18 April
Tree Pipit	07-Apr-90	20 April
Redstart	08-Apr-11	None recorded in 2019
Cuckoo	08-Apr-17	19 April
Grasshopper Warbler	12-Apr-11	19 April
Garden Warbler	12-Apr-95	24 May
Whitethroat	13-Apr-16	20 April
Sedge Warbler	14-Apr-11	20 April
Arctic Tern	14-Apr-13	14 May
Corncrake	20-Apr-90	None recorded in 2019
Common Tern	21-Apr-93	None recorded in 2019
Spotted Flycatcher	21-Apr-11	11 May
Wood Warbler	25-Apr-09	17 May
Lesser Whitethroat	27-Apr-10	11 May
Pied Flycatcher	28-Apr-98	03 May
Swift	01-May-09	10 May
Nightjar	17-May-13	None recorded in 2019

Regular Winter Migrant Arrival and Departure Dates

	"earliest" Arrival date	"latest" Departure date	2019 Arrival date	2019 Departure date
Whooper Swan	18-Sep-11	21-May-14	12 October	31 March
Pink-footed Goose	28-Sep-19	30-Apr-18	28 September	18 April
Greylag Goose	31-Aug-18	12-May-18	26 September	07 April
Wigeon	11-Jul-11	16-May-17	01 August	19 April
Goldeneye	12-Oct-09	04-May-06	31 October	29 March
Purple Sandpiper	07-Nov-16	20-May-16	18 November	01 February
Waxwing	21-Oct-10	15-Apr-09	None recorded	None recorded
Fieldfare	02-Sep-13	24-Apr-18	15 October	08 April
Redwing	30-Sep-17	13-Apr-16	04 October	09 April
Rook	03-Jul-07	28-Apr-19	30 July	28 April
Brambling	09-Oct-07	25-Apr-08	09 October	18 April

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.

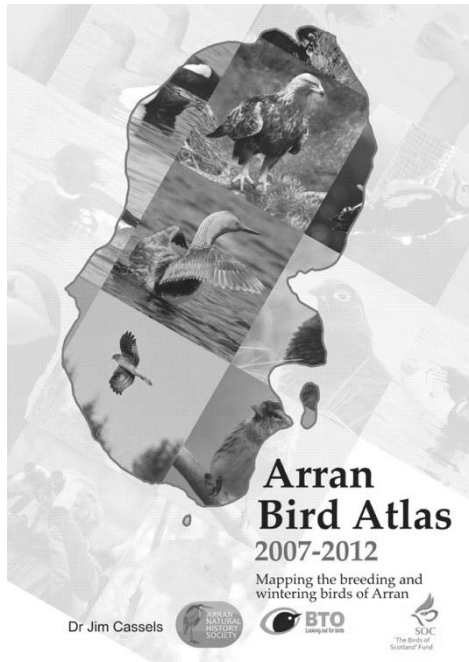
Note: there is also a naturalised population of Greylag Geese which is frequently seen in the summer in Clachlands.

Bird Surveys and Projects on Arran

Bird Atlas

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

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



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

British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) surveys

Through the efforts of volunteers participating in British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) surveys, the bird populations of the British Isles have been monitored more effectively and for longer than those of most other parts of the world. This has produced a uniquely rich and detailed body of scientific work. This will help us to understand the complex challenges facing wild birds at a time of great change in the environment.

On Arran volunteers are taking part in all of the following core BTO surveys.

Breeding Bird Survey

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

Garden BirdWatch

In the last weekend in January 2018 around thirty households on Arran took part in the RSPB Big Garden Bird Watch and shared their results with me. A report on the Arran results is available here <http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/top-ten-garden-birds-2018.html>

Garden BirdWatch is a national survey run by the BTO that monitors the changing fortunes of birds and other garden wildlife through its network of volunteers. There were nine volunteers on Arran in 2015. Observations collected by BTO Garden BirdWatchers from each week during the year are analysed by BTO researchers.

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

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

Heronries Census

On Arran five heronries are currently monitored as part of this BTO census. These are at Lochranza, Brodick, Lamlash, Lagg and Whiting Bay. Find out more at http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/arran_heronries.html

Nest Record Scheme

The Nest Record Scheme (NRS) gathers vital information on the breeding success of Britain's birds by asking volunteers to find and follow the progress of individual birds' nests. Anyone can be a nest recorder. Some people watch a single nest box in their back garden while others find and monitor nests of a whole range of species. Registering to take part is easy and there are lots of resources to help you get started. More information here <https://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/nrs/taking-part>

In addition to these core surveys the BTO has an extensive range of other species specific surveys including House Martin Survey, Project Owl and Woodcock Survey. For the complete list of BTO volunteer surveys use this link <https://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys>

Wetland Bird Survey - Arran Summary for 2018-2019

Data was supplied by the Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS), a partnership jointly funded by the British Trust for Ornithology, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Joint Nature Conservation Committee, in association with The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, with fieldwork conducted by volunteers. Although WeBS data are presented within this report, in some cases the figures may not have been fully checked and validated. Therefore, for any detailed analyses of WeBS data, enquiries should be directed to the WeBS team at the British Trust for Ornithology, The Nunnery, Theford, IP24 2PU (webs@bto.org). The survey is dependent on volunteers. Eight of the survey sites are on Arran, the coastlines at Brodick, Lamash, Whiting Bay, Kildonan, Blackwaterfoot, Machrie, Pirnmill and Lochranza. These are counted one Sunday each month with total results on Arran as below. The national survey provides information on the size of waterbird populations, the trends in numbers and the importance of individual sites.

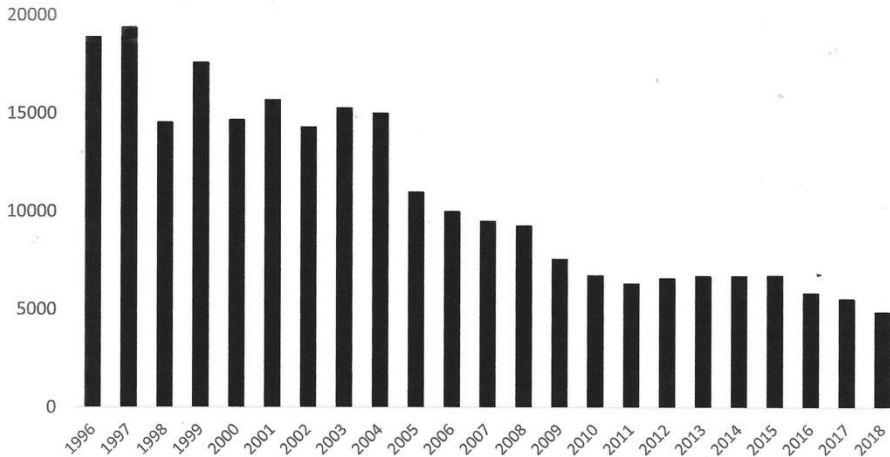
The collated data in the table below has been prepared with the assistance of Gill Birtles, WeBS Counter Network Organiser at the BTO and her staff.

Species	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Bar-tailed Godwit											2		2
Black-throated Diver	2		4		4	18		5	5	7	3		48
Canada Goose									1	2	3		6
Common Sandpiper	24	12	12							24	25	31	128
Common Scoter									2	6			8
Cormorant	8	10	11	33	25	8	8	15	8	8		2	136
Curlew	92	167	296	176	159	124	242	119	45	28	1	6	1455
Dunlin	6	14	9		1					2	20	3	55
Eider	14	8	10	5	9	66	54	43	137	47	11	6	410
Golden Plover		104	188		124	96	32						544
Goosander		2	2				1						5
Great Northern Diver					6	7	7	2	5	6	8	1	42
Greenshank		2											2
Grey Heron	22	17	18	23	24	22	14	7	10	7	5	9	178
Greylag Goose	18	65	2	2	21	97	182	280	71	4	5		747
Lapwing					30		10						40
Little Egret				1									1
Little Grebe						1	1	1					3
Mallard	52	259	177	242	402	428	171	148	81	29	66	89	2144
Moorhen	10								1	2		1	14
Mute Swan	41	32	43	32	43	39	24	15	28	27	23	54	401
Oystercatcher	266	209	222	226	397	275	269	245	216	143	148	132	2748
Red-breasted Merg.	13	73	45	31	21	47	28	12	34	4	25	25	395
Redshank	19	20	27	41	102	49	48	33	20	2	2	1	364
Red-throated Diver	4	14	6	1		4		1	3	3			36
Ringed Plover	119	240	177	115	345	186	88	74	51	26	51	41	1513
Sanderling		6											6
Shag	29	67	165	179	99	94	112	29	60	49	49	26	958
Shelduck	14					2	3	9	21	27	12	14	102
Slavonian Grebe									2				2
Snipe				1									1
Teal		2	46	64	346	228	88	49	28	4			855
Turnstone	11	30	52	76	106	124	71	51	33		2	4	560
Whimbrel			2							12	7	1	22
Whooper Swan												1	1
Wigeon				42	94	112	83	59	20	8			418
Grand Total	793	1353	1874	1290	2359	2027	1536	1197	882	530	479	449	14769

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.

Eider counts in the Firth of Clyde 1996-2018



Chris Waltho, a past president of the Scottish Ornithologists Club, has organised September surveys in the Clyde for over twenty years. Chris's data above shows that the post breeding population of Eiders in the Firth of Clyde is in decline. For example the 5500 birds counted in 2017 is only 28.5% of those counted in 1997. This represents a 71.5% decline. Similar declines have been widely reported across much of Europe, from Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and the White Sea in Russia. The causes of declines across these areas are currently under investigation.

While the Arran trend reflects the overall figures, there has been considerable variation on the Arran September survey figures from over six hundred in 1999 to six in 2008. This year volunteers from the Arran Natural History Society covered the coastline by foot and in some cases by boat and by kayak to try and achieve the most accurate count of Eider round our coast in September. Total number of birds recorded round Arran in September 2019 was forty-seven. In September 2018 the total was thirty-three. Five previous September counts had been consistently over one hundred.

In the Victorian era, there was a major expansion of Eiders in western Scotland and this led to the colonisation of the Firth of Clyde, which began at the beginning of the twentieth century. With an annual population growth of around ten percent by the late 1990s, the Firth of Clyde held around 25-30% of the Scottish population. The reason for the marked decline in recent years is not clear. The Clyde Ringing Group and Glasgow University have ringed approximately 1500 females over the last decade. These results suggest some decline in annual survival rate, but there is little evidence of mass mortality events or of any major displacement within or without 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.

Barn Owl Nest Box Project: Forestry Commission Report

For thirty years, Barn Owl nest boxes have been put up and monitored on Arran by Rab Logan, Wildlife Ranger of the Forestry Commission (Scotland). This is his report from the twenty-seven nest boxes checked on Forestry Commission (Scotland) land on Arran,



This year's breeding success was affected by the previous two years poor weather and vole decline that caused a heavy death toll in the adult breeding population. Only 16 of the 27 nest boxes were occupied this year but that is where the bad news ends!

Nature is very resilient and although we started with the lowest breeding population the Barn Owls managed to gain the highest breeding success with some pairs rearing 7 chicks which all combined to give a total of 75 fledged young. The hope is these birds will come through the winter and start to reoccupy the vacant nest boxes and bring the resident population back to and even exceed the level of the past.

Black Grouse Project; Arran Black Grouse Group Report

Following a feasibility study in 2005, the Arran Black Grouse was set up with the intention of trying to re-establish this species on Arran. The species is in decline in almost all western and central European countries. Several Black Grouse recovery projects have been initiated in the UK. The Arran Black Grouse Group is one of them. The group is very much a local group with a wide range of representation including: conservationists, estate managers, farmers, foresters, and gamekeepers. This almost unique partnership of local people with the support of Scottish National Heritage, the National Trust for Scotland and Forestry Commission (Scotland) is committed to Black Grouse reintroduction.

In the autumn of 2007, three pairs of Black Grouse were bought to start the breeding stock. In autumn 2009 the first captive bred birds were released. In April 2010, the first lekking of Black Grouse on Arran was reported in over thirty years. The annual release of captive bred birds continued until autumn 2017.

If you see a Black Grouse on Arran it would be helpful if you could report your sighting directly to Kate Sampson, Head Ranger Brodick Country Park ksampson@nts.org.uk. Any sightings will help the group assess the success of the project. If possible, take a photograph to confirm the sighting.

Bird Ringing

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

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

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

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

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

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

Code	Explanation
M, F, J	Male, female and juvenile
1	Pullie - young bird in nest
3J	Bird in juvenile plumage hatched in current calendar year
3	Bird in full-grown plumage hatched in current calendar year.
4	Hatched before current calendar year.
5	Hatched in previous calendar year.
6	Hatched before last calendar year - exact year unknown.
8	Hatched 3 or more years ago – exact year unknown.
10	Hatched 4 or more years ago – exact year unknown.
12	Hatched 5 or more years ago – exact year unknown.

Some interesting facts discovered from ringing data....

Oldest bird – Manx shearwater, 50 yrs 11 months

Furthest travelled – Arctic Tern from Wales to Australia 18,000 km

Strangest recovery – Osprey ring found in stomach of a crocodile in The Gambia!

If you come across any birds with rings, please pass on the information.

In particular, groups of gulls are worth an extra look to see if you can spot and read a colour ringed bird. All sightings of colour ringed gulls are welcome even of birds that seem to be resident in an area.

Terry Southall.

Email address terrysouthall789@btinternet.com

Bird ringing on Arran in 2019

Report by Terry Southall

A much reduced number of birds were ringed this year because of the targeting of specific species namely Short-eared Owls. A lot of time was afforded to this project by Chris Southall who helped John Calladine and the British Trust for Ornithology field scientists locate and catch Short-eared Owls so that satellite trackers could be fitted. The results are included in this report.

The first Arctic Tern and Twite were colour ringed in the year and it is hoped that this will allow us to identify more of these birds without the need to catch them. A selection of observations of colour ringed Whimbrel, Curlew and Lesser Black-backed Gull and are included in this report.

Selected list of recoveries of birds ringed on Arran

Species	Age & Sex	Date ringed	Date recovered	Lapsed days	Where recovered	Distance moved
Willow Warbler	3	11/08/18	29/04/19	261	Calf of Man, Isle of Man	159km
Common Gull	1	26/06/16	05/03/19	982	Antrim, Northern Ireland	81km
Twite	3 M	18/10/18	02/12/19	410	The Oa, Islay, Argyle & Bute	69km
Short-eared Owl	1	18/06/19	17/08/19	91	Torbeg, Isle of Arran	6km
Blackbird	4 F	22/08/12	19/02/19	2372	Kildonan, Isle of Arran	0km

Codes for age and sex are given on page 68.

A Willow Warbler caught by bird ringers on the Calf of Man was a bird on its spring migration northwards possibly back to Scotland.

Not the first Common Gull to Northern Ireland but a bird that was hatched on Arran, seems to move west for the winter.

Our first ever Twite recovery this time caught by ringers on Islay during the winter.

The Short-eared Owl was a chick ringed on Arran that was taken in to care having been found with a broken wing and electrocution burns, sadly it could not be saved.

The Blackbird was caught at Kildonan as an adult breeding female and re-caught in February 2019 over six years later, showing that some birds are truly sedentary.

Selected list of birds recovered on Arran but ringed elsewhere

Species	Age & Sex	Date ringed	Where ringed	Date recovered	Lapse days	Distance moved
Lesser Redpoll	3	22/10/16	Kessingland, Suffolk	05/06/19	956	560km
Lesser Redpoll	4 M	08/11/16	Sandwich Bay, Kent	09/06/19	943	638km
Siskin	6 M	24/06/18	Darris, Aberdeenshire	06/06/19	347	245km
Siskin	5 M	17/02/16	Brandon, Suffolk	09/06/19	943	633km
Siskin	4 F	04/02/18	Oxwich Marsh, Swansea	25/03/19	414	435km
Barn Owl	1	22/05/17	Grassfields, Mull of Kintyre	24/11/18	551	44km

Both Lesser Redpolls were caught in southern England showing their wintering grounds. Birds do also cross the channel and winter in the low countries as well as northern France as shown in past reports.

The two Siskins in the south were wintering at different sides of the country, the bird from Aberdeenshire was possible breeding further south in Scotland this year or was a late bird still heading north.

The Barn Owl is our first on Arran having been ringed elsewhere. Interestingly an Arran chick was found breeding on the Mull of Kintyre in the past.

Colour ringed reports

Lesser Black-backed Gull 5W1:C

Ringed as a chick on Pladda on the 30/06/14.

Sighted Agadir Morocco on the 06/03/15, 19/03/15, 17 & 19 & 21/01/16 and 04 & 07 & 08/01/20

Lesser Black-backed Gull 4M8:C

Ringed as an adult at Kildonan 24/06/14.

Sighted Pinto Landfill, Madrid Spain 21/11/14, 12/01/15 then Kildonan, Arran 19/07/18 16/07/19 and back at Pinto Landfill, Madrid 06/01/20.

Both of these gulls show their fidelity to different wintering areas, one in Spain and the other coastal Africa. Although we have many reports of Lesser Black-backed Gulls in coastal Spain and also Portugal, a bird wintering inland is unusual as is the case with 4M8:C

Whimbrel A2

Ringed as an adult at Kildonan in 2017.

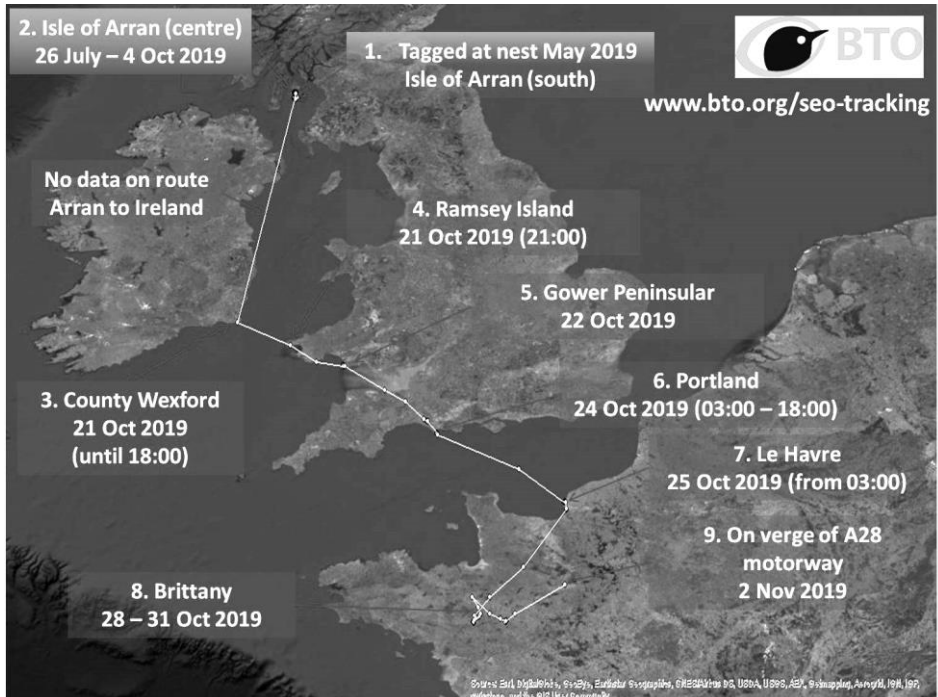
Sighted at Kildonan in April 2018 and 2019 on numerous occasions (see photo section).

Curlew

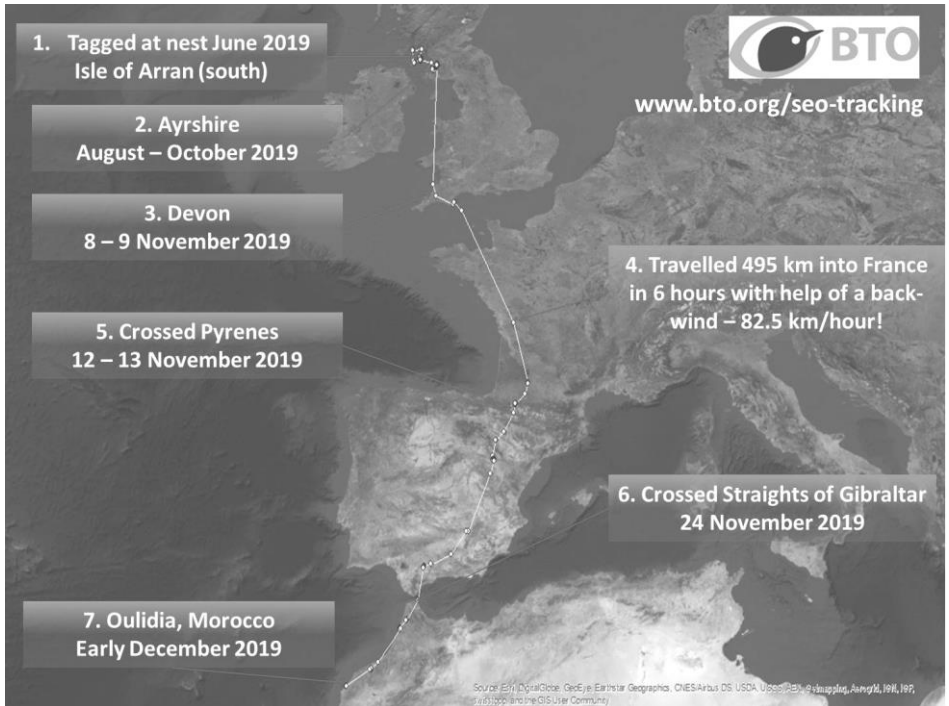
Numerous birds have been colour ringed but only one sighting from anyone out of the project (see photo section).

Satellite tagged Short-eared Owls

A Short-eared Owl, fitted with a satellite tag on Arran this year, has been tracked to France but may have been killed by the side of a motorway!



A second Short-eared Owl, fitted with a satellite tag whilst breeding on Arran, has been tracked to Morocco.



A breeding female, tagged at her nest site by local ringers on Arran on 11 June this year, wintered near Oualidia in Morocco. The bird left Arran to visit Bute and Kintyre from 15 – 17 July, returning to Arran for 10 days and then moving to mainland Ayrshire on 27 July. She remained here (near Dalmellington) until the end of October.

She then moved to Devon, where she was present on 8 November, leaving the following evening to head south. With the help of a strong tail wind, she travelled 495 km into France in just six hours – that's an average of 82.5 km/h!

She then continued south, crossing the Pyrenees on 13 November and the Strait of Gibraltar on 24 November to reach Morocco.

We are waiting for the trackers to come back on after their shutdown period to verify the outcome of both birds.

To find out more about the British Trust for Ornithology Short-eared Owl Tracking Project use this link <https://www.bto.org/our-science/research-topics/tracking/tracking-studies/short-eared-owl-tracking>.

Even though only a handful of birds have been fitted with tracking devices so far, the BTO have already seen some amazing movements, as can be seen from this report.

Ringling Totals for 2019

This table gives the ringling totals for the year.

Species	FG	Pulli	Total	Species	FG	Pulli	Total
Cormorant	0	3	3	Grasshopper Warbler	1	0	1
Shag	0	10	10	Sedge Warbler	1	0	1
White-fronted Goose	1	0	1	Whitethroat	1	0	1
Eurasian Teal	10	0	10	Wood Warbler	1	0	1
Oystercatcher	38	5	43	Chiffchaff	1	0	1
Ringed Plover	17	3	20	Willow Warbler	37	0	37
Golden Plover	15	0	15	Goldcrest	6	0	6
Lapwing	1	0	1	Spotted Flycatcher	1	0	1
Dunlin	3	0	3	Coal Tit	24	0	24
Jack Snipe	8	0	8	Blue Tit	28	0	28
Snipe	21	0	21	Great Tit	9	0	9
Woodcock	100	0	100	Jackdaw	3	0	3
Curlew	28	0	28	Raven	5	2	7
Redshank	6	0	6	Starling	4	5	9
Common Sandpiper	6	5	11	House Sparrow	8	0	8
Turnstone	5	0	5	Chaffinch	96	0	96
Common Gull	1	2	3	Greenfinch	1	0	1
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1	1	2	Goldfinch	84	0	84
Herring Gull	0	1	1	Siskin	148	0	148
Great Black-backed Gull	0	6	6	Linnet	32	0	32
Arctic Tern	0	7	7	Twite	7	0	7
Black Guillemot	2	0	2	Lesser Redpoll	11	0	11
Rock Dove	1	0	1	Snow Bunting	1	0	1
Cuckoo	2	0	2	Yellow Hammer	1	0	1
Barn Owl	24	0	24				
Long-eared Owl	6	0	6				
Short-eared Owl	4	17	21				
Skylark	10	0	10				
Sand Martin	4	0	4				
Swallow	1	60	61				
House Martin	5	0	5				
Meadow Pipit	4	0	4				
Rock Pipit	11	0	11				
Water Pipit	1	0	1				
Grey Wagtail	2	0	2				
Pied/White Wagtail	9	0	9				
Wren	7	0	7				
Duncock	12	0	12				
Robin	12	0	12				
Whinchat	1	27	28				
Stonechat	3	0	3				
Wheatear	1	0	1				
Blackbird	6	3	9				
Fieldfare	12	0	12				
Songthrush	2	0	2				
Redwing	1	0	1				
Mistle Thrush	3	0	3				
				Total	918	157	1075

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

Terry Southall.

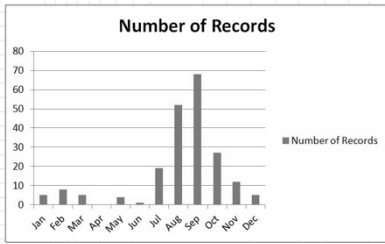
Email address terrysouthall789@btinternet.com

Kingfisher on Arran

September 2019 was an outstanding month for Kingfisher. There were eleven records from six widespread locations including areas where it is not normally recorded. Only one of the records was for more than one bird and that was a report of two on the Rosa Burn on 13th. This encouraged me to look at the Arran Kingfisher records over the last ten years to see if I could get some insights into when and where Kingfisher are seen on Arran.

Over the last ten years there have been two hundred and six records of Kingfisher on Arran. One hundred and ninety-eight of these were of single birds and only on eight occasions were two birds seen. The chart below shows all the records plotted against month of the year. With more than

Month	Number of Records
Jan	5
Feb	8
Mar	5
Apr	0
May	4
Jun	1
Jul	19
Aug	52
Sep	68
Oct	27
Nov	12
Dec	5

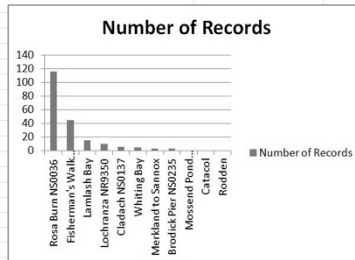


seventy percent of the records in August/September/October and virtually none in the breeding season, this would suggest that the sightings on Arran are birds dispersing from elsewhere after the breeding season. There have been no confirmed records of Kingfisher breeding on Arran. Looking at the number of sightings each year, there is no obvious pattern. For

example while there were no records from 2016, there were eighty-two for 2017. The number of sightings each year may reflect the success or otherwise of breeding elsewhere. The better the breeding season, the more birds there are dispersing and the more sightings there are on Arran.

Location	Number of Records
Rosa Burn NS0036	116
Fisherman's Walk NS0136	45
Lamlash Bay	15
Lochranza NR9350	10
Cladach NS0137	6
Whiting Bay	5
Merkland to Sannox	3
Brodick Pier NS0235	3
Mossend Pond NS0037	1
Catacol	1
Rodden	1

Lamlash: thirteen Cordon, two council offices
 Whiting Bay: three Kingscross, one Sandraes, one Glenashdale
 Merkland to Sannox: one each Carlo, Rubha Salach and Sannox



The second chart plots the records from the last ten years against locations on Arran. While the records are widespread, the vast majority of the records, over eighty percent, are from the north end of

Brodick Bay around the Rosa and Cloy Burns, Fisherman's Walk and Cladach.

This starling sized bird is often unobtrusive despite its bright colours, and often all that is seen is a glimpse of a bright blue back flying off over water. On the other hand this shy bird can allow really close clear views, if you are patient.

In Scotland, the Kingfisher is a localised breeder found mostly in the south and west mainland. The range of this species is from the British Isles and Scandinavia east across central Europe to the Urals and the Caspian Sea. Populations in the north and east undertake long distance migrations to winter in southern Europe and North Africa, but birds further west and south are either sedentary or short distance migrants. The nearest breeding population to Arran is to the east in North Ayrshire.

Wherever the birds on Arran come from their presence brightens any day.

Water Pipit: February 2019

In February the birding highlight was the first ever record of Water Pipit on Arran.

Water Pipit breeds in the mountains of Southern Europe and Southern Asia eastwards to China. It is a short-distance migrant; many birds move to lower altitudes or wet open lowlands in winter and a few have been turning up in Scotland. In recent years one to three records in winter has been the norm, but this year there have been over thirty, mainly on the coasts of Lothian and Ayrshire with eight this winter in Ayrshire. The first official record for Scotland was in 1968. At that time it was considered a sub-species in the Rock Pipit family but in 1987 it became a full species.

On Saturday 23 February around noon, a Water Pipit was seen on the shore at Machrie by two experienced birdwatchers from Pirnmill, Alex Penn and Georgia Platt. Pipits are notoriously one of the most difficult groups to identify, and the various forms of Water and Rock Pipit are possibly the hardest by reputation. Water Pipit is a smart and relatively clearly marked bird in all plumages. It has grey-brown upperparts with a shadow of streaking on the mantle, a warm brown rump and prominently white supercilia (line above the eye), double wing-bars and white outer tail feathers. The underparts are whitish. To help confirm identification the bird was then legally trapped, ringed, photographed and released. The photographs taken together with the appropriate form were promptly submitted by the observers to the Clyde Bird Rarities Panel where there was no hesitation in accepting the record.

The bird remained faithful to a relatively small area, close to where it was first seen, for six weeks. Initially the wet seaweed tide-lines on the shore were favoured but wet areas on the adjacent golf course and fields were also used. For a time the fairway in front of the tearoom was a reliable area for watching the bird, offering good views without disturbance. At all times it vigorously defended its feeding patch against Rock Pipits, often flying quite a distance to chase off intruders.

The long-staying bird was last reported on Friday 5 April. Towards the end of its stay in Machrie the pink flush on the breast was beginning to show as the bird moulted into its breeding plumage. Having travelled north to spend the winter on the coast by Machrie Bay, the bird would have headed south perhaps to the mountains of the Pyrenees or the Alps where in its summer finery, the breast suffused a delicate shade of pink, and the head appearing almost blue, it would attempt to breed.

I wonder if it will return to Arran next winter. I know a few people who will be looking out for it.

Black-headed Bunting: June 2019

On the evening of Saturday 8 June during the interval at the Arran Folk Festival Concert, I received an email "*Identify this bird, please*" with a photo attached. The email finished "*It has certainly got me flummoxed*". When I looked at her photos with the House Sparrows there for comparison of size, I felt that this finch like bird with the black hood and the unstreaked red brown upperparts could only be a male Black-headed Bunting. It was unmistakable. A bit of a heart stopping moment because this is a rare bird here. In recent years there have only been around five records a year in the UK and Ireland and never before on Arran. Black-headed Bunting winter in India and in the spring move to breeding grounds in Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Israel and south-eastern Europe from Italy and the Balkans east to the Black and Caspian Seas. Perhaps assisted by the weather conditions this bird had over-shot and finished up in a garden in Strathwillan!

Later when I contacted, Isla Murchie, the person who had sent the original email she gave me this account. "*On Thursday 6 June I was in my kitchen looking out at the bird feeders I saw this strange bird feeding on the ground with the House Sparrows. My kitchen window is very close to my outside area so I had a really good view of the bird. I thought WOW, who are you? I had never seen a bird like this before and felt quite excited. It was just so different, so yellow and bright. I reached in my bag for my phone hoping it would not disappear before I could get a photo or two which I managed to do. I noticed that on its back the colour was tan. Maybe it belonged to the finch family. A car passed and suddenly all the birds were gone. But my luck was in and it reappeared with the others and continued feeding on the ground. I managed to take a video then. I knew I must find out what bird it was so I emailed Jim Cassels on the evening of Saturday 8 June. I had not seen it since Thursday.*"

When I received the email on the Saturday at the concert I forwarded it to the Assistant Clyde Recorder who has even more experience than me with my addition "*Looks like a Black-headed Bunting. What do you think?*" Her prompt response indicated that it was a Black-headed Bunting. She added "*Apparently one on Gigha today (Saturday) which might be the same bird?*" No point in leaving the concert then if the bird had moved on!

With the permission of Isla, the original observer, I shared her photos and video on social media. Very quickly almost 1400 people viewed the video such was the interest in this bird. The "reward" for finding this rare bird is to complete a form for the British Birds Rarities Committee. A record of a rarity will not be accepted unless the form is completed and the data looked at by the BBRC. It is their decision but with the description including photos and video it should be accepted as the first Black-headed Bunting on Arran. (See note page 108)

What about the bird? It is lost. There it is in its breeding plumage but it has over-shot its breeding areas and is unlikely to get back. Sad in some ways....

Surf Scoter: November 2019

In November the birding highlight was the first ever record of Surf Scoter on Arran.

Surf Scoter is one of the family of black sea ducks called scoters. The Surf Scoter is a North American species breeding in the sub-arctic from western Alaska east into northern Canada and wintering along both the Pacific and Atlantic coasts of North America with some on the Great Lakes. It is a vagrant on this side of the Atlantic with the first British record in the Firth of Forth in 1837. The British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) indicates that there are around fifteen records a year in the UK mostly in the north and east of Scotland. A search of the Scottish Ornithologists' Club (SOC) records indicates that in the west of Scotland covering Argyll, Clyde, Clyde islands, Ayrshire and Dumfries and Galloway in the last ten years there have been only seven Argyll records and two Dumfries and Galloway records, almost all of single birds. The November Surf Scoter on Arran is the first ever record for Arran and for the Clyde and the Clyde Islands.

On Sunday 24 November, in the morning, a female type Surf Scoter was seen and identified by two experienced birdwatchers from Pirnmill, Alex Penn and Georgia Platt. This is their story.

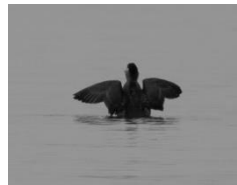


Having stopped at Catacol to see what was around at the river mouth, we were immediately distracted by a 1st-winter Iceland Gull flying south into the mouth to wash. While then watching this gull, we became aware of a single dark duck behind the group of gulls. It turned, showing the distinctive double white face patch of what we initially assumed would be a Velvet Scoter, after a Velvet had been reported relatively recently further south in the Sound at Machrie.

However, as we watched the bird it did not seem to add up to being a Velvet Scoter. The structure and head shape did not seem right, it

was rather small, and when the bird flapped soon after, we did not see the white flash we would have expected to see from the secondary flight feathers.

This rang alarm bells and we examined the bird more closely. The stocky neck and large head, with a slightly 'swollen' bill shape, rather than the smooth concave bill of a Velvet, seemed to confirm that this was in fact a Surf Scoter. As we watched it over the next hour, the bird fed continuously, diving and re-appearing, resting for around 30 seconds between dives. Each time it dived, it opened its wings, revealing all-dark flight feathers.



In the midst of this Alex realised that he did not have his camera with him so he drove from Catacol home to Pirnmill to collect it leaving Georgia to keep watch on the duck! Fortunately the bird remained, enabling these record shots of the bird to be taken, showing the head and bill structure, and one flapping that shows the all-dark flight feathers. These images, although distant, show all the key features well enough to confirm the identification as Surf Scoter.

The photographs taken together with the appropriate form were promptly submitted by the observers to the Clyde Bird Rarities Panel where there was no hesitation in accepting the record.

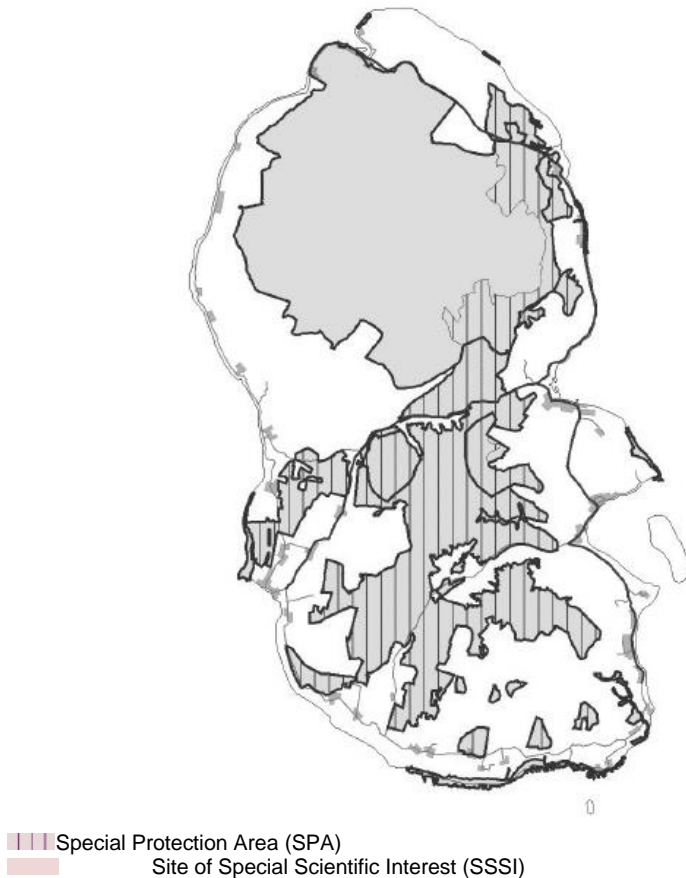
The identification of the first ever Surf Scoter on Arran had been a memorable day for Alex and Georgia

The Arran Moors Special Protection Area

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

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

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



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

Systematic List 2019

The systematic list is in the order of the British list as published by the British Ornithologists' Union (2006). This is in line with the Clyde Report. For each species, as well as the common name, the (new) official name and its scientific name have been given. In addition, for each species reported, there are two numbers, both taken from the annual data. The first is the number of records received for that species and the second is the number of sites in which the bird was recorded. A site is a one kilometre square. There are over four hundred on Arran. This is followed by a brief statement giving the status of each bird on Arran, which can be markedly different from the status of the same bird on the adjacent mainland.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor* 470,145

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Breeding included pair with six young Clachlands on 27 May, pair with eight young Cosyden on 9 June, pair with four young Port na Lochan on 21 June, pair with three young Glenashdale on 30 July and pair with five young Imachar on 1 August. Winter groups included 11 Sandbraes on 12 February, 14 Cleats Shore on 6 October and 9 Sliderry Shore on 14 November.

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

Rare winter visitor.

No records for 2019. Last record was one at Lagg 6 January 1991.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* 72,32

Regular winter visitor and passage migrant.

Groups included 42 Whiting Bay on 3 March, 13 Dougarie on 21 March, 10 Clachaig on 14 October, 16 Sliderry on 19 October and 10 Shannochie on 26 October. In addition there was a solitary Whooper Swan present on Arran throughout the year. More information on website <http://www.arranbirding.co.uk/whooper-swan--left-behind.html>

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus* 56,20

Regular winter visitor and passage migrant.

More than double the number of records from twice as many locations as last year. Groups included 85 Clachaig on 10 January, 109 Imachar on 8 April, 100 Silver Sands on 18 April, 539 flying over Sliderry on 30 September followed by 363 on 1 October and 70 in Torbeg on 15 December.

White-fronted Goose (Greater White-fronted Goose) *Anser albifrons* 10,3

Occasional winter visitor.

Sightings included 2 Shiskine on 1 January, one on Sliderry Shore from 15 January to 2 March and 2 flying with Greylags in Sliderry on 24 March. Only one record for 2018

Greylag Goose *Anser anser* 153,46

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

In Shiskine Valley up to 500 between January and April and up to 250 between November and end of year. In the Sliderry area taking in Clachaig and Cleats Shore up to 250 between January and April and up to 300 between November and end of year.

There is also a naturalised population of Greylag which is found mainly around Lamlash Bay throughout the year. Largest count of 217 at Clauchlands on 27 January may have included some wintering birds.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis* 26,19

Localised breeding and occasional visitor numbers increasing.

Pair with 5 young Auchenhew Bay on 16 May and pair with 5 young Pladda on 12 July. Other reports included 2 Imachar on 11 May, 6 Shannochie on 27 July, 17 Slidery on 29 September, 20 Clachaig on 5 October and 27 Cleats Shore on 13 September.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Occasional winter visitor.

No records for 2019. Last record 20 Slidery Shore on 26 October 2018.

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla* 5,3. **Occasional winter visitor.**

Two Silver Sands from 6 to 8 January, one Cleats Shore on 21 October and one Whiting Bay on 23 October were all the records for 2019.

Shelduck (Common Shelduck) *Tadorna tadorna* 200,71

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

Breeding included 10 young Kilpatrick Point on 24 May, 7 young Cosyden on 9 June, 4 young Kildonan on 2 July, 4 young Holy Isle on 15 July and 6 young Clauchlands on 16 July. Groups included 6 Silver Sands on 21 March, 14 Auchenhew Bay on 23 March, 10 Cleats Shore on 24 March and 10 Machriewaterfoot on 10 April.

Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata*

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

No records for 2019. Last record Rosa and Cloy Burns in Brodick on 27 March 2009.

Wigeon *Anas penelope* 71,25

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

Groups included 45 Slidery on 27 January, 100 Torbeg on 7 February, 22 Auchenhew Bay on 23 March, 22 Machrie Bay on 3 November and 50 Kilpatrick Point on 17 November.

Teal (Common Teal) *Anas crecca* 109,24

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

No confirmed breeding. Groups included 75 South Carlo on 4 January, 60 Cosyden on 7 February, 70 Torbeg on 15 March, 60 Machriewaterfoot on 6 November, 83 Kilpatrick Point on 14 November and 100 Cleats Shore on 13 December.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* 518,131

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Breeding included 6 young Rubha Salach on 19 May, 5 young Pirnmill on 9 June and 6 young Cosyden on 31 July. Groups included 54 Fisherman's Walk on 27 January, 40 Torbeg on 7 February, 63 Mossend Pond on 31 August, 63 Kilpatrick Point on 21 September and 40 Cosyden on 29 September.

Pintail (Northern Pintail) *Anas acuta*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record one male Machriewaterfoot on 19 May 2014.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Rare summer visitor.

No records for 2019. A pair on the pond at Torr Righ on 9 May 2012 is the only Arran record of this species.

Shoveler (Northern Shoveler) *Anas clypeata*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record one male by the Fisherman's Walk on 24 May 2015.

Pochard (Common Pochard) *Aythya ferina*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was a male at Port na Lochan from 15 to 18 September 2011.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* 2, 1

Occasional visitor.

A male Tufted Duck on Mossend Pond on 24 June and again on 26 June are all the records for 2019.

Scaup (Greater Scaup) *Aythya marila*

Occasional winter visitor.

No records for 2019. Last record was a female Sliderry Shore on 20 September 2018.

Eider (Common Eider) *Somateria mollissima* 185, 103

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Breeding included 8 young Blackwaterfoot on 20 June, 3 young Silver Sands on 23 June, 7 young Lochranza on 28 June and 5 young Cosyden on 9 July. Groups included 30 Cosyden on 25 March, 100 Pirnmill on 10 November, 117 Lamlash Bay on 18 November and 75 Whiting Bay on 24 November.

King Eider *Somateria spectabilis*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was a long staying drake in Lochranza in April 1980.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was a male off Kingscross between 7 and 9 December 2018.

Common Scoter (Black Scoter) *Melanitta nigra* 9, 6

Occasional visitor.

All records from the west coast including 2 Machriewaterfoot on 19 February, 2 Cosyden on 15 March, 6 Cosyden on 17 April, one Machriewaterfoot on 17 October and one Dougarie on 30 November.

Surf Scoter *Melanitta perspicillata* 8,3

North American Species. Rare

One immature/female type in Catacol Bay on 24 November (AP&GP) was first Arran record. See note page 76. Further records in Catacol Bay, Pirmill and Whitefarland between 21 December and 30 December.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca* 1,1

Rare vagrant.

One record for 2019. One male Cosyden on 14 October(JC). Previous record 2 off Catacol on 5 April 1998.

Goldeneye (Common Goldeneye) *Bucephala clangula* 17,5

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

In 2017 there were 28 records. This year fewer and all except one were of single birds. Sightings included 2 Coire Fhionn Lochan on 1 January, male Mossend Pond on 29 March, male Mossend Pond on 31 October and male Loch Ranza on 9 December.

Smew *Mergellus albellus*

Occasional winter visitor.

No records for 2019. Last record a male with four redheads off the Fallen Rocks car park on 25 April 2016.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator* 377,140

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

Breeding included 8 young Machrie on 25 June, 5 young Corrie on 26 June and 8 young Loch Ranza on 25 July. Groups included 20 Catacol Bay on 20 March, 22 Dougarie on 21 April, 26 Pirmill on 24 April, 42 Cosyden on 31 July and 53 Cosyden on 7 August.

Goosander *Mergus merganser* 53,28

Breeding. Localised.

No confirmed breeding in 2019. Sightings included 4 Balliekin shore on 10 January, 5 Machriewaterfoot on 6 April, 3 Pirmill on 15 July, 4 Machrie Bay on 9 November and 5 Machriewaterfoot on 25 November.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Introduced species which first bred in Ayrshire in 2001.

No records for 2019. Male on Port na Lochan on 21 April 2007 is the only Arran record of this species.

Quail (Common Quail) *Coturnix coturnix*

Occasional summer visitor. Previously bred.

No records for 2019. Last record 2 calling birds in Glenscorrodale on 6 June 2012.

Red Grouse (Willow Ptarmigan) *Lagopus scoticus* 7,7

Resident. Breeding. Underreported.

Sightings included 2 Glen Iorsa on 19 January, 4 Garbh Allt on 30 January, 2 Coire na Ciche on 20 April, 2 Allt Ruadh on 1 June and 2 Leac a' Ghile on 29 July.

Ptarmigan *Lagopus mutus*

Very localised.

No records for 2019. Last record 6 Coire a' Bhradain on 21 January 2015.

Black Grouse *Tetrao tetrix* 1,1

Previously bred.

Reintroduction breeding programme. See page 67

One record for 2019. Two Kilmory Water 10 November(BC).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa* 29,11

Local introduced resident. Around 500 released in 2019.

4 Catacol on 6 January, 4 Dougarie on 8 August, 8 Balliekin on 11 November and 9 Imachar on 30 December.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Previously bred.

No records for 2019. Last record, excluding released birds in the 1990s, was 4 at Claulchlands on 15 November 1989.

Pheasant (Common Pheasant) *Phasianus colchicus* 377,92

Common introduced resident. Around 3,000 released in 2019.

Reports from all areas.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata* 80,45

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Poorer breeding season. Increased human activity near lochans may be a factor. Population remains healthy. Groups on sea included 8 Kildonan on 9 August, 4 Largymore on 13 September, 10 Whiting Bay on 30 September and 4 Pirnmill on 2 November.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica* 74,44

Regular passage migrant with records in every month of the year in 2019 except June and July. Arran is a site of national importance for birds in autumn.

Groups included 6 Catacol Bay on 10 November, 7 Cosyden on 13 November, 12 Aird nan Ron on 16 November and 7 Kilpatrick Point on 15 December.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer* 212,87

Regular passage migrant with records in every month of the year in 2019 except July and August.

Groups included 6 Cleats Shore on 11 February, 5 Porta Buidhe on 12 February, 17 Imachar on 10 April, 4 Auchenhew bay on 16 April and 14 Dougarie on 19 April.

Fulmar (Northern Fulmar) *Fulmarus glacialis* 34,22

Breeding. Round coast all year. In decline.

No young were reported from any nesting area in 2019. Largest groups at some nest areas; 4 Catacol on 19 April, 6 Drumadoon on 24 April and 4 Cleiteadh Buidhe on 3 July.

Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was one off Largymore on 22 July 2012.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was 7 in Machrie Bay on 6 September 2009.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus* 30,22

Regular passage migrant with records from 15 April to 19 October.

Groups included 40 Imachar on 24 April, 30 Whiting Bay on 26 June, 50 Cosyden on 7 August and 1,000 off King's Cave on 18 October.

Mediterranean Shearwater (Balearic Shearwater) *Puffinus mauretanicus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was one off Corriecravie 14 October 1990.

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

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was one off Pirnmill 24 September 1991.

Storm Petrel (European Storm Petrel) *Hydrobates pelagicus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record two Brodick Bay on 12 July 2013.

Gannet (Northern Gannet) *Morus bassanus* 464,163

Nearest breeding colony Ailsa Craig. Records every month except November and December in 2019.

Groups included 140 Auchenhew Bay on 30 March, 80 Thunderguy on 3 May, 60 Whiting Bay on 15 May, 30 Sannox Bay on 24 August, 150 off the Cock of Arran on 7 September and 110 off Newton Point on 20 September.

Cormorant (Great Cormorant) *Phalacrocorax carbo* 224,94

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

Around twenty nests on Pladda. Groups included 10 Blackwaterfoot on 2 May, 16 Pladda on 7 July, 10 Pirnmill on 26 July, 10 Porta Buidhe on 19 August and 7 Dougarie on 23 October.

Shag (European Shag) *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* 492,138

Common round coast all year. Breeding Pladda.

Around thirty nests on Pladda. Groups included 75 Pladda on 24 January, 108 Porta Buidhe on 19 August, 114 Claulands Point on 28 September, 44 Cleats Shore on 30 September, 100 Porta Buidhe on 1 October and 96 Claulands Point on 25 October.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was a dead one found in Shiskine on 10 March 1996.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*

One record of this American species.

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

Little Egret *Egretta gargetta* 28,17

Rare vagrant. Records increasing, 14 in 2018 compared to 28 in 2019

Sightings included 2 Rubha Salach on 12 October and 2 Fisherman's Walk on 28 October. All other records were of a single bird between 21 August and 29 November. Most frequently seen in coastal areas on the east of the island. This is the fourth year in which this species has been recorded. The first record was in 2013.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* 440,130

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Reports of activity at all known heronries namely Stronach Wood, Lagg, Lochranza, Whitehouse Woods and Whiting Bay. Groups included 8 Cordon on 7 January, 8 Balliequine on 10 January, 6 Lagg on 31 March, 6 Stronach Wood on 3 April, 8 Lochranza on 22 August and 5 Mossend Pond on 19 October.

Spoonbill (Eurasian Spoonbill) *Platalea leucorodia*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was one at Corrie on 13 October 1978.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* 52,14

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor. One breeding record in 2019.

Pair with young at Mossend Pond. Sightings included 6 Loch Ranza on 13 January, 2 Holy Isle on 5 April, 3 Mossend Pond on 22 October, one Catacol Bay on 22 December and 4 Loch Ranza on 30 December.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

No records in 2019. Last record one off Laggan on 1 April 2018.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

No records for 2019. Last record one Catacol Bay on 6 March 2016.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus* 1,1

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

One record for 2019. Two Cosyden on 25 March (JC).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Occasional winter and passage migrant.

No records for 2019. Last record one Whiting Bay on 14 February 2014.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus* 2,2

Occasional visitor from British reintroduction projects.

One Rubha Airigh Dhughail by a road kill on 17 October and two over Invercloy on 25 October are all the records for 2019. Last year there were twelve records.

Marsh Harrier (Eurasian Marsh Harrier) *Circus aeruginosus* 1,1

Rare vagrant.

One record for 2019. One female type/juvenile Machrie farm on 15 May (ZB). Last record was a juvenile in Lamlash 19 August 2004.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* 149,100

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

A very good season. Vole numbers continued to recover from the low of 2015 and the weather was benign at crucial times. In recent years the number of young fledged has varied depending on factors like food availability and weather. In 2018 a minimum of fifty-two young fledged. Numerous widespread sightings mainly within the Special Protection Area. See page 77.

Goshawk (Northern Goshawk) *Accipiter gentilis*

Irregular sightings. No confirmed breeding.

No records for 2019. Last record one Slidery on 31 January 2017.

Sparrowhawk (Eurasian Sparrowhawk) *Accipiter nisus* 143,75

Resident. Breeding widespread.

From fifteen sample nest sites that were checked, occupied nests were found in seven of them. A minimum of fifteen young were fledged from these nests. This is a better sample breeding outcome than 2018. There were numerous widespread sightings throughout the year.

Buzzard (Common Buzzard) *Buteo buteo* 410,216

Resident. Breeding widespread.

From the nine nest sites that were checked four were successful. Five young fledged. This is a better sample breeding outcome than 2018. There were numerous widespread sightings throughout the year including 5 Kingscross on 31 March, 6 Glen Iorsa on 14 April, 4 Larybeg on 27 September and 4 Pirmill on 31 December.

Rough-legged buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was one at Cleats Shore on 10 November 1974.

White-tailed eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla* 4,4.

Vagrant.

Sub adult Lochranza on 18 August, two North Sannox on 14 November, adult Pirmill on 21 November and sub adult Thunderguy on 9 December are all the records for 2019.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* 91,63

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

Most territories occupied. Poor season perhaps because of increasing human activity in territories. There is a healthy breeding population and at least three young fledged. Numerous sightings throughout the year mainly to the north of the String.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* 4,3

Occasional passage migrant.

One Lamlash Bay 7-8 April, one Sannox on 12 May and one top of the String on 21 May are all the records for 2019.

Kestrel (Common Kestrel) *Falco tinnunculus* 90,65

Resident. Breeding widespread.

Numerous widespread sightings throughout the year but with around half the records of last year. These included fledged young at Moss Farm on 25 June, Glaister also on 25 June, Cnocan Cuallaich on 6 July, Glenscorrodale on 10 August and Glen Rosa on 12 August.

Merlin *Falco columbarius* 15,12

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

Same number of reports as 2018. Sightings included male Slidery on 1 October, one Narachan on 4 October, female Machrie on 3 November and on 12 December.

Hobby (Eurasian Hobby) *Falco subbuteo*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was an adult bird by the Ross Road on 22 June 2011.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus* 33,27

Resident. Breeding widespread at inland and coastal sites.

Pairs present at four of the seven sites checked. A minimum of nine young fledged. There is a healthy breeding population. Numerous sightings throughout the year.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus* 2,1

Localised breeding resident and passage migrant.

Fewer records than 2018 when there were 8 records from 4 locations. Both records from Slidery/Corriecravie area were of two birds, on 20 August and again on 28 October.

Spotted Crake *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 2019. Last record one calling at Port na Lochan from 7 to 9 May 2008.

Moorhen (Common Moorhen) *Gallinula chloropus* 66,9

Scarce localised breeding resident.

More sightings from more locations than 2018. Sightings included one Brodick Golf Course on 24 February, 2 Machriewaterfoot on 17 April, 5 Mossend Pond on 4 June and 2 Port na Lochan on 20 September.

Coot (Common Coot) *Fulica atra* 2,1

Occasional visitor.

One Mossend Pond on 30 May and on 4 June are all the records for 2019.

Crane (*Grus grus*)

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record two over Dougarie on Wednesday 22 April 2015.

Oystercatcher (Eurasian Oystercatcher) *Haematopus ostralegus* 868,202

Resident. Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Nests recorded included Clachlands, Cleats Shore, Dougarie, Machrie, Kilpatrick, Sandbraes, Shannochie, Thunderguy and Kildonan. Groups included 36 Silver Sands on 18 January, 42 Drumadon on 13 October and 62 Machrie on 14 October

Golden Plover (European Golden Plover) *Pluvialis apricaria* 52,19

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 110 Clachaig Farm on 12 April, 60 Torrylinn on 14 April, 50 Shiskine on 10 October, 186 Machriewaterfoot on 20 October and 150 Machrie on 3 November.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* 2,1

Uncommon passage migrant.

One Cleats Shore 26-27 April are all the records for 2019.

Lapwing (Northern Lapwing) *Vanellus vanellus* 54,22

Increasingly localised breeding and regular winter visitor.

Five areas of confirmed breeding in Kilmory and in the Shiskine Valley. Groups included 46 Corriecravie on 4 January, 80 Shiskine on 17 January, 70 Slidderly Shore on 2 February, 20 Kilpatrick Farm on 28 November and 24 Cleats Shore on 13 December.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* 355,106

Resident. Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Nests recorded Clauchlands, Cleats Shore, Dougarie, Kilmory, Kilpatrick, Machrie, Sandbraes and Kildonan. Groups included 40 Cleats Shore on 1 January, 96 Machrie on 8 September, 87 Dougarie on 24 September, 112 Machriewaterfoot on 26 September, 70 Sandbraes on 7 October and 62 Cleats Shore on 30 October.

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus* 2,1

Uncommon passage migrant.

Two Caisteal Abhail on 4&5 May are all the records for 2019. Last record June 2012.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* 64,38

Regular passage migrant and occasional winter visitor.

Groups included 7 Slidderly Shore on 27 April, 15 Porta Buidhe on 29 April, 25 Auchenhew Bay on 1 May, 10 Machrie and 10 Blackwaterfoot both on 11 May.

Curlew (Eurasian Curlew) *Numenius arquata* 549,138

Resident but underreported breeder.

Signs of breeding were reported from Balnacoole, Bennecarrigan, Burrican, Croctubha, Kilbride Hill, Machrie Moor, Penrioch and Torr Beag. Groups included 110 Corriecravie on 4 January, 50 Sandbraes on 20 February, 90 Port na Feannaiche on 8 August, 100 Slidderly Shore on 31 October and 59 Clauchlands Point on 1 December.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2019. Last record one Porta Buidhe on 13 August 2018.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* 18,11

Uncommon passage migrant.

Sightings this year included 2 Blackwaterfoot from 11to17 May. All other records were of single birds including Slidderly on 27 April, Machrie on 15 May and Cosyden on 1 September. Only one record in 2018.

Turnstone (Ruddy Turnstone) *Arenaria interpres* 171,39

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

Groups included 22 Blackwaterfoot on 24 March, 28 Dougarie on 28 March, 51 Machrie on 26 September, 43 Silver Sands on 30 September and 100 Machrie on 11 December.

Knot (Red Knot) *Calidris canutus* 14,7

Regular passage migrant.

Fourteen records this year included 2 Porta Buidhe on 27 August, one Kingscross on 31 August, 8 Drumadon on 9 September and 1 Kildonan on 11 October. Only one record for 2018.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was 2 at Kildonan on 26 August 1987.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was one on Kildonan shore on 27 August 2006.

Sanderling *Calidris alba* 17,12

Regular passage migrant.

Sightings included 3 Drumadoon Point on 15 May, 4 Torrylinwaterfoot on 21 May, 11 Sliderry Shore on 10 August and 3 Blackwaterfoot on 3 September.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina* 44,26

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

Groups included 13 Blackwaterfoot on 11 May, 17 Silver Sands on 22 May, 11 Machrie on 24 July, 12 Drumadoon Point on 25 July and 19 Sliderry Shore on 27 July.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima* 10,3

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

Most records were from Kildonan area in January/February and November/December. Largest group 8 Silver Sands on 1 February.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was 3 at Machriewaterfoot on 8 September 2002.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was a juvenile at Sliderry on 1 August 2016.

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was one Silver Sands on 6 December 2015.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* 251,118

Regular summer visitor with records from 22 March to 2 September. Breeding.

Nests recorded Claunchlands, Cleats Shore, Dougare, Kilmory, Kilpatrick, Machrie, Pirmill, Sandbraes, Sannox and Sliderry. Largest group 14 Sliderry Shore on 22 July.

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*

North American Species. Rare.

No records for 2019. One Claunchlands from 19 May to 21 May 2015 only Arran record.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* 1,1

Uncommon passage migrant.

One record for 2019. One Blackwaterfoot on 11 May (PGM).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was one at South Feorline shore on 5 August 2010.

Greenshank (Common Greenshank) *Tringa nebularia* 12,8

Uncommon passage migrant and occasional winter visitor.

More records than 2018. Sightings included one Pirnmill on 12 April, one Porta Buidhe on 5 May, one Lochranza on 8 August and 2 Kingscross South on 31 August.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Rare passage migrant.

No records 2019. One at Drumadoon Point on 22 May 2011 is the only Arran record of this species.

Redshank (Common Redshank) *Tringa totanus* 274,75

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

Groups included 10 Blackwaterfoot on 18 February, 15 Cleats Shore on 23 March, 20 Sandbraes on 7 October, 12 Cordon on 29 November and 9 Kilpatrick Point on 15 December.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus* 4,2

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

Five Slidderly Shore on 23 January, one Slidderly on 19 October, one Slidderly Shore on 31 October and 3 Slidderly Shore on 22 November are all the records for 2019.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

One record of this American species.

No records for 2019. One juvenile Slidderlywaterfoot from 15 to 17 September 1990.

Woodcock (Eurasian Woodcock) *Scolopax rusticola* 23,17

Resident but underreported breeder. Numbers increase in winter.

Pairs flying at dusk included Machrie Moor on 16 May, Glenscorrodale on 18 May, Auchareoch on 26 June, the Knowe on 1 July, Corriecravie Moor on 29 July. Winter groups included 8 Pirnmill on 16 January, 9 Slidderly on 22 February and 7 East Bennan on 19 December.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* 35,20

Passage migrant with records from most months of the year. Localised breeding.

Confirmed breeding on central high ground by the String on 29 July. Groups included 20 Slidderly Shore on 2 February, 6 Slidderly on 6 March, 11 Corriecravie on 28 October, 6 Cleats Shore on 16 November and 3 Clauchlands on 30 November.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Uncommon passage migrant. Underreported.

No records for 2019. Last record was 2 off Kildonan on 16 May 2009.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus* 1,1

Uncommon passage migrant. Underreported.

One record for 2019. One dark phase off Blackwaterfoot on 11 May (DaG)

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

Uncommon passage migrant. Underreported.

No records 2019. Two off Kildonan on 19 May 2011 is the only Arran record of this species.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Uncommon passage migrant. Underreported.

No records for 2019. Last record was one off Pirmill on 3 November 2018.

Puffin (Atlantic Puffin) *Fratercula arctica* 2,1

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

Both 2019 records were from Brodick Bay with 2 on 10 June and 2 on 5 July. In 2018 there were ten records.

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle* 187,96

Breeding. Round coast all year.

Breeding included Brodick Pier, Catacol, Corrie, Imachar, Kilpatrick, King's Cave, Thunderguy and Pladda. Numbers and sightings are increasing. Groups included 14 Imachar on 16 April, 14 Pladda on 27 April, 10 Catacol Bay on 2 May, 30 King's Cave on 26 June and 24 Clachlands Point on 20 September.

Razorbill *Alca torda* 18,15

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

Groups included 6 Whitefarland on 16 February, 40 the Craw on 17 February, 8 Brodick Bay on 10 April, 20 Cosyden on 14 October and 3 Pirmill on 31 December.

Little Auk *Alle alle*

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

No records for 2019. Last record one Holy Isle on 8 January in 2016.

Guillemot (Common Guillemot) *Uria aalge* 81,51

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

Groups included 250 Brodick Bay on 10 April, 70 Laggan on 7 September, 80 Cosyden on 14 October, 35 Pirmill on 9 December and 30 Drumadoon Point on 15 December.

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

Uncommon summer visitor.

No records for 2019. Last record one in Brodick Bay on 11 August in 2007.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2019. Last record one at Pirmill on 12 September 1992.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicencis* 116,62

Summer visitor. Non breeding. Records from 21 March to 18 September.

Groups included 8 Clachlands on 21 April, 10 Blackwaterfoot on 22 April, 24 Machriewaterfoot on 26 April, 17 Porta Buidhe also on 26 April and 14 Catacol Bay on 2 May.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Uncommon summer visitor.

No records for 2019. Last record was one Machriewaterfoot on 19 April 2013.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Rare summer visitor.

No records for 2019. Last record was 2 at Dougarie on 5 May 1984.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea* 4,1

Regular summer visitor. Breeding colony Pladda.

All records from Pladda. Ten breeding pairs monitored in July.

Ivory Gull *Pagophila eburnea*

One historical record. One shot in Lamlash Bay in 1895.

Sabine's Gull *Larus sabini*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2019. Last record one adult Brodick Bay on 3 September 2009.

Kittiwake (Black-legged Kittiwake) *Rissa tridactyla* 48,23

Nearest breeding colony Ailsa Craig. Round coast all year.

Numbers considerably less than recent years with few young reported. Groups reported included 37 Newton on 26 August, 87 Machriewaterfoot on 27 September (one young), 129 Fisherman's walk on 25 October and 500 Pirmill on 20 December.

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* 134,49

Non breeding. Present round coast all year in 2017. Usually absent in summer

Groups included 6 Pirmill on 7 April, 5 Brodick on 4 August, 7 Porta Buidhe on 6 August, 14 Machriewaterfoot on 13 November and 11 Dougarie on 17 November.

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

Uncommon irregular visitor.

No records for 2019. Last record 2 Whiting Bay on 2 September 2013.

Ross's Gull *Rhodostethia rosea*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record one at Kildonan on 21 November 1995.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Rare vagrant.

No records 2019. Last record one Slidery on 5 November 2018.

Common Gull (*Mew Gull*) *Larus canus* 697,179

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Better breeding season with reports of fledged young from coastal nesting areas including Machriewaterfoot, Dougarie, Holy Isle, Pladda, Sannox and Thunderguy. Groups included 111 Clauchlands on 27 January, 100 Torbeg on 23 February, 166 Blackwaterfoot on 27 September, 200 Cleats Shore on 21 October, 300 Mossend Pond on 29 November and 200 Fisherman's Walk also on 29 November.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* 148,84

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

No reports from previous colony by Cnoc na Croise. Groups away from colonies included 14 Blackwaterfoot on 14 May, 13 Sannox on 23 July, 12 Glenashdalewaterfoot on 27 July, 12 Machriewaterfoot on 31 July and 10 Lochranza on 26 July. In addition an adult hybrid considered most likely to be a hybrid with Herring Gull was at Whitefarland on 31 December.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* 834,197

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

No reports from previous colony by Cnoc na Croise. At least 75 pairs on Holy Isle. Groups away from colonies included 171 Dougarie on 6 May, 142 Clachlands Point on 24 May, 200 Macriewaterfoot on 17 November and 131 Clachaig on 12 December. The "albinistic" gull first reported and ringed in Sliderry on 24 June 2018 continued to be reported including Torbeg on 28 March, Kilpatrick on 4 April, Blackwaterfoot on 8 April and Clachaig on 15 April

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucooides* 2,1

Uncommon winter visitor.

In 2019 first winter gull in Catacol Bay on 24-25 November (AP). 2018 had 20 reports.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Uncommon winter visitor.

No records in 2019. Last record one first winter on Sliderry Shore on 3 March 2018.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus* 462,119

Breeding. Common round coast all year.

Colony on Pladda had 20 pairs in June. Other groups included 16 Dougarie on 7 February, 9 Cordon on 3 March, 19 Sannox on 18 September, 21 Catacol Bay on 23 October and 12 Cleats Shore on 26 October.

Pallas's Sandgrouse *Syrrhaptus 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* 83,42

Resident. Breeding. Localised round the coast.

Groups included 49 Sliderry on 27 January, 20 Machrie on 25 March, 10 Cleiteadh Buidhe on 13 May, 50 Lenamhor on 13 September and 65 Clachaig on 16 November.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Rare.

No records for 2019. Last record one on footpath to Fallen Rocks on 14 June 1989.

Woodpigeon (Common Woodpigeon) *Columba palumbus* 309,125

Resident. Breeding. Common.

Groups included 31 Glenkiln on 9 February, 15 Machrie on 24 May, 28 Sliderry on 20 August, 40 Clachaig on 21 August and 150 Mossend Pond on 14 September.

Collared Dove (Eurasian Collared Dove) *Streptopelia decaocto* 179,49

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

Present around all villages. Groups included 8 Whiting Bay on 31 January, 12 Corrie on 24 February, 28 Sliderry on 17 August, 13 Porta Buidhe on 16 September and 10 Dippen on 26 September.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Occasional passage migrant.

No records in 2019. Last record one Clachaig Farm on 30 September 2015.

Cuckoo(Common Cuckoo) *Cuculus canorus* 176,115

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread.

First one reported calling in Newton on 14 April. Later widespread reports from around the island. Population seems to be healthy. The last report was two juveniles by Goatfell track in Glen Sannox on 30 July.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba* 43,29

Resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Better breeding season than 2018. See report page 67. Sightings from Auchagallon, Auchencar, Balmichael, Carlo, Corrie, Brodick, Cladach, Dippen, Dougarie, Glenkiln, Kildonan, Kilmory, Kilpatrick, Lamdash, 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 2019

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus* 5,3

Resident. Underreported. Breeding.

Sightings included one Glenscorrodale on 16 April, one Machrie on 2 November, one Glenree on 5 November and two Glenscorrodale on 8 November.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus* 26,22

Resident. Underreported. Breeding.

Good breeding season. Sightings included one Loch na Learg on 2 February, one Torr Dubh on 31 March, one the String on 10 May, one Dereneneach on 1 June and one Glen Catacol on 25 December. (See tracking report page 70-71)

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Summer visitor. Previously bred.

No records for 2019. Last record one churring Dhunan from 16 June to 7 July 2017.

Swift (Common Swift) *Apus apus* 7,5

Summer visitor and passage migrant. No breeding records. Reports from 10 May to 14 August.

Sightings included one Glenscorrodale on 10 May, 2 High Kildonan on 24 June, one Balmichael on 8 July and one Garbh Allt on 8 August.

Kingfisher (Common Kingfisher) *Alcedo atthis* 60,12

No confirmed breeding. Most records dispersing birds in winter.

An increase from the 13 records of 2018. Most records were from the Fisherman's Walk area. See report page 73

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

Vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was one in Thunderguy on 25 June 2006.

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

Uncommon passage migrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was one in Sannox on 25 September 1997.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. One in a garden in Lamlash on 28 December 2014 is the first Arran record of this species.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major* 39,37

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 other sites including Lamlash on 4 June, Whiting Bay on 22 June, Auchagallon on 30 June, Corrie on 8 July, Gortonallister on 26 July and Strathwillan on 25 August.

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record a female in Lochranza on 7 June 1979.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record one Port na Lochan on 13 June 2018

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubiter*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was one in Fairy Glen, Lochranza on 24 October 2007.

Chough *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*

Rare vagrant. Previously bred.

No records for 2019. Last record one by Narachan track from 5 to 29 September 2011.

Magpie (Black-billed Magpie) *Pica pica* 28,7

Vagrant.

More sightings this year than previous years. There were three records in 2017, none in 2016, one in 2015, one in 2014, none in 2013 and one in 2012. Most of the records this year were from a single bird in the Kildonan area from 11 May to the end of the year. There was a report of two birds on Lamlash Golf Course on 26 September. In addition there were reports of a single bird in Sannox from 8-10 November and a single bird in Alma Park area from 16 November to 21 December.

Jay (Eurasian Jay) *Garrulus glandarius*

Rare vagrant. Before 2011 the last record was 1985.

No records for 2019. Last record one on road to Glen Rosa on 9 April 2012.

Jackdaw (Eurasian Jackdaw) *Corvus monedula* 327,101

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Groups included 150 Machrie on 10 February, 119, Corriecravie on 16 February, 150 Cosyden on 18 February, 100 Auchenhew Bay on 30 March, 100 Lochranza on 21 July, 100 Clachaig on 22 July, 100 Cleats Shore on 16 November and 300 Machriewaterfoot on 14 December.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus* 24,7

Regular winter visitor.

Most records from Sliderry area between February and April and between September and December, including 50 on 30 September and 100 on 14 October. In addition there was one Lochranza from 18-24 February and 2 Mossend Pond on 15 November.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone* **Hooded Crow** *Corvus cornix* 440,141 505,159

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

Groups included 46 Corriecravie on 16 February, 60 Kilpatrick Point on 21 September, 43 Claulchlands Point on 19 October, 57 Porta Buidhe on 11 November and 50 Mossend Pond on 15 December.

Raven (Common Raven) *Corvus corax* 256,136

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Breeding pairs included Beinn a Chliabhain, Bennan Head, Brown Head, Catacol and Imachar. Groups included 7 High Kildonan on 3 January, 15 Kilpatrick on 27 May, 15 Bannecarrigan on 13 July, 30 Glenree on 20 August and 7 Auchrannie on 25 December.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus* 80,45

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Regular passage migrant.

Records included 2 Newton on 3 March, 3 Fairy Dell on 12 May, 3 Lagg on 11 June, 3 North Sannox on 28 August, 3 Holy Isle on 27 October and 3 Pirnmill on 9 December.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

Very rare and irregular passage migrant.

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

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus* 371,108

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Regular passage migrant.

Reports from all villages of birds visiting garden feeders. Widespread confirmed breeding included reports from Marganaheglish on 12 May, Kildonan on 13 May, Whiting Bay on 19 May, Newton on 25 May, Merkland on 23 June and Pirnmill on 25 June. Largest group was 10 Porta Leacach on 28 February.

Great Tit *Parus major* 355,108

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Regular passage migrant.

Reports from all villages of birds visiting garden feeders. Widespread confirmed breeding included reports from Alma Park on 26 May, Corrie on 27 May, Strathwillan on 30 May, Marganaheglish on 21 June and Porta Leach on 23 June. Largest group was 10 Lagg on 27 July.

Coal Tit *Parus ater* 259,68

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Regular passage migrant.

Reports from all villages of birds visiting garden feeders. Confirmed breeding included reports from Lamlash on 5 June, Dhunan on 13 June, Clachaig on 15 June, Sannox on 18 June and Lagg on 27 June. Largest group was 10 Dyemill on 9 February.

Willow Tit *Parus montanus*

Rare vagrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was one in Lamlash from 16 to 18 May 2009.

Skylark (Sky Lark) *Alauda arvensis* 43,30

Breeding resident, Regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding territories occupied in Ard Bheinn, Corriecravie Moor, Drumadoon, Drumaghinier, Glen Cloy, Kilbride Hill, Kilpatrick, Leac a'Ghille, Machrie and Penrioch. Groups included 34 Sliderry on 21 February, 8 Tormore on 17 March, 300 passing Sliderry on 24 September followed by 150 the following day and 60 on 28 October.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia* 149,79

Summer visitor. Breeding. Localised.

First report Catacol 31 March. Poorer breeding season. Breeding colonies occupied in Auchencar, Clauchlands, Cosyden, Glen Catacol, Glen Rosa, Kilpatrick, Sannox and Whitefarland. Groups included 40 Strathwillan on 25 April, 70 Sannox on 18 May, 150 Fuar Achadh on 23 June and 60 Coire Fhraoich on 27 June. Last record was Sannox on 18 September.

Swallow (Barn Swallow) *Hirundo rustica* 407,149

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread.

First report Machrie 18 March. Widespread breeding with some failures and some double broods raised. Poorer breeding season. Groups included 40 Kilpatrick Farm on 14 July, 52 Silver Sands on 29 July, 50 Clachaig Farm on 20 August, 36 Imachar on 26 August and 50 Porta Buidhe on 7 September. Last record was Sliderry on 15 October.

House Martin *Delichon urbica* 307,137

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread.

First report Machrie 18 March. Widespread breeding with some failures and few double broods. Poorer breeding season. Groups included 74 High Kildonan on 11 July, 30 Glenscorrodale on 23 July, 40 Feorline on 18 August, 50 Sliderry on 20 August and 103 Clachaig on 25 August. Last record Alma Park on 6 October.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus* 94,58

Resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Groups included 20 Cordon on 22 June, 20 Marganaheglish on 19 September, 11 Cnocan Cuallaich on 2 October, 26 Lagg on 19 October, 11 Silver Sands on 1 November and 15 Clauchan Glen on 24 November.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Very rare and irregular passage migrant.

No records for 2019. Last record was one in Whiting Bay from 4 to 6 December 2007.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* 7,4

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

Seven records was encouraging (after recent years when there have been none). These included one Pirmill on 17 May, one Cnocan Wood also on 17 May, one Corrie Golf Course on 4 June and one Glen Rosa on 11 June.

Chiffchaff (Common Chiffchaff) *Phylloscopus collybita* 65,47

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread. Most records from March to September.

First report was from Sandbraes on 14 March. Good breeding season. Last record was Pirmill on 9 December. At Clauchlands on 28 November a wintering Chiffchaff showing characteristics of the Siberian race "tristis" was photographed at Clauchlands. This would have been a first Arran record of this sub-species (AD). (See note page 108)

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* 350,176

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

First report was Sandbraes on 14 March. Records included males singing at Clachaig, Glaister, Kingscross, Pirnmill and Whiting Bay all on 10 April. Good breeding season. Last record was Clauchlands on 28 September.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* 87,65

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

Records included singing males Pirnmill on 6 April, Knockenkelly also on 6 April, Silver Sands on 10 April, Corrie on 19 April and Invercloy and Cladach on 21 April. Winter records included two males in a Shiskine garden on 10 November and a male eating crab apples in Sliderry on 16 November

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin* 1,1

Scarce summer visitor. Breeding. Possibly underreported.

One record in 2019. One Auchencar on 24 May (AJR).

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca* 2,2

Scarce summer visitor. Breeding.

Male singing Fairhaven on 1 May and male singing Glenscorrodale on 10 May are all the records for 2019.

Whitethroat (Common Whitethroat) *Sylvia communis* 140,77

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

First report was from Kildonan on 20 April. Records included singing males Silver Sands on 20 April, Porta Buidhe on 1 May, Machrie on 13 May and Clauchlands Point on 14 May. Good breeding season. Last record was one Clauchlands Point on 13 September.

Grasshopper Warbler (Common Grasshopper Warbler) *Locustella naevia* 19,12

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

Reports of reeling birds Imachar on 19 April, Kildonan on 20 April, Corriecravie Moor on 21 April, Feorline on 23 April, Lakin on 9 May and Auchenhew Bay on 6 July.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* 51,29

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

First report was from Kildonan on 20 April. Records included singing males Silver Sands on 20 April, Holy Isle on 21 April, Porta Buidhe on 4 May, Imachar on 24 May and Bennecarrigan on 27 May. Last record was from Sliderry on 20 August.

Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus dumetorum*

Rare vagrant

No records in 2019. Male Dereneeach 19 June to 5 July 2014 is the only Arran record.

Waxwing (Bohemian Waxwing) *Bombycilla garrulus*

Irruptive late autumn and winter visitor.

No records in 2019. In 2017 there was one record of 20 Merkland Wood on 8 January. In 2016 there had been eight records.

Nuthatch (Wood Nuthatch) *Sitta europea*

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

No records in 2019. In 2017 there was one record of one at Strathwillan on 27 November. In 2016 there had been seven records.

Treecreeper (Eurasian Treecreeper) *Certhia familiaris* 21,19

Resident. Breeding. Widespread but underreported.

Sightings included one Corrie on 28 January, one Pirnmill on 12 May, 2 Merkland on 14 May, one Lagg on 13 September, one High Kildonan on 2 October and 2 Catacol on 2 October

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes* 307,149

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Records from varied habitats throughout the island from high tops to shore. Groups included 5 Allt Ruadh on 28 April, 11 Dereneneach on 1 June, 5 Glen Rosa on 29 June, 12 Glenashdale on 30 June and 10 Glen Iorsa on 1 July.

Starling (Common Starling) *Sturnus vulgaris* 332,104

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included reports Lochranza on 15 May, Lamlash on 17 May, Machrie on 18 May, Sandbraes on 26 May, Margnaheglish on 5 June and Kildonan on 27 June. Larger groups included 200 Glenkiln on 21 June, 500 Sliderry on 20 August, 100 Kildonan on 22 September, 103 Clachaig on 29 September and 100 Lamlash on 26 October.

Rose-coloured Starling *Sturnus roseus* 1,1

Rare vagrant.

One record for 2019. There was one adult in Blackwaterfoot on 4 June (ChJe).

Dipper (White-throated Dipper) *Cinclus cinclus* 44,26

Resident. Breeding. Widespread.

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

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus* 9,6

Scarce summer visitor, possibly underreported.

Sightings included a male North Sannox on 7 April, a male Coire Roinn on 8 April, a male North Goatfell on 22 April and a female North Newton on 14 October.

Blackbird (Common Blackbird) *Turdus merula* 638,169

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Pairs reported from all villages. Good breeding season with reports of double and triple broods. Groups included 6 Shannochie on 26 January, 10 Brodick on 1 August, 7 Porta Buidhe on 8 November and 16 Sliderry on 17 November.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris* 70,40

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

Groups, sometimes with Redwings, 800 Lenimore on 22 October, 150 Cleats Shore on 25 October, 1000 Lochranza on 26 October, 400 High Kildonan on 2 November and 300 Hazelburn on 24 November.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos* 327,140

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Pairs reported from all villages. Good breeding season. Groups included 4 Lamlash Golf Course on 28 January, 8 Lochranza Golf Course on 5 April, 6 Holy Isle on 22 April, 6 Machrie on 19 May and 5 Whitefarland on 17 October.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus* 75,50

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

Groups, sometimes with Fieldfares, included 60 Shiskine on 23 January, 200 Cordon on 6 October, 300 Strathwillan on 15 October, 500 Lochranza on 22 October and 250 Sliderry on 16 November.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus* 79,54

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included Machrie on 16 May, Glenkiln on 17 May, Strathwillan on 7 July and Corriecravie on 29 July. Groups included 5 Merkland on 9 January, 6 Sannox on 11 August, 13 Auchencar on 2 October, 20 Glenree on 7 October and 20 Clauchlands on 22 October.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* 42,34

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

Confirmed breeding included Holy Isle on 15 June, Lagg on 17 July, Brodick Country Park on 1 August, Clachaig on 1 August and Glen Rosa on 4 August.

Robin (European Robin) *Erithacus rubecula* 672,185

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included Marganahegligh on 12 May, Newton on 18 June, Porta Leacach on 23 June, Dippen on 24 June, Alma Park on 25 June plus all villages. Other groups included 4 Auchenhew Bay on 30 January, 6 Holy Isle on 22 April, 6 Lochranza on 1 September and 10 Sliderry on 17 November.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* 2,2

Irregular summer visitor.

Male Corriecravie on 3 May and a male North Sannox on 21 August are all the records for 2019. The last record was over twenty years ago on 28 April 1998.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros* 4,2

Scarce passage migrant.

One record for 2019. A male in Porta Buidhe from 21 to 23 November (DaSm).

Redstart (Common Redstart) *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Scarce summer visitor. Possibly underreported. Previously bred.

No records for 2018. The last record was a juvenile in Sliderry on 7 July 2017.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* 49,35

Summer visitor. Breeding. Localised. Passage migrant.

Breeding territories included Boguille, Garbh Allt, Glen Catacol, Glen Chalmadale, Glen Iorsa, Glen Rosa, Machrie Moor, North Sannox and Ross Road. The breeding Whinchat study continued (see page 20, *Arran Bird Report 2011*) with birds now being colour ringed so that they can be more easily identified in the future. Please report all colour ringed birds to Terry Southall, bird ringer, terringsouthall789@btinternet.com.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata* 192,100

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Continuing signs of recovery after the two cold winters 2009-2011 with more records and more sites. Good breeding season. Fledged young reports included Glenscorrodale on 11 May, Glen Rosa on 15 May, Glen Sannox on 2 June, Glen Iorsa on 4 June, Auchenhew Bay on 12 June, Drumadoon Point on 16 June and King's Cave on 7 July.

Wheatear (Northern Wheatear) *Oenanthe oenanthe* 123,69

Summer visitor. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

First report was from Machrie on 18 March. Confirmed breeding included Cleats Shore 28 June, Kilpatrick on 4 July, Narachan on 10 July and Sliderry Shore on 22 July. Groups included 7 Machrie Golf Course, 4 Machriewaterfoot and 6 Sliderry Shore all on 27 March. Last record was one Sliderry Shore on 14 October.

Dunnoek (Hedge Accentor) *Prunella modularis* 314,114

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Fledged young included reports Newton on 18 June, Whiting Bay on 23 June, Porta Leacach on 23 June, Alma Park on 25 June, Pirnmill on 26 June and Lagg on 27 June. Other groups included 5 Auchenhew on 31 January, 5 Silver Sands on 1 February, 18 Glenashdale on 30 June, 8 Newton on 25 August and 6 Holy Isle on 27 October

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* 461,132

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread.

Pairs reported from all villages. Reports of double and triple broods. Larger groups included 40 Silver Sands on 12 February, 50 Claulands on 15 July, 50 Brodick on 1 August, 80 Sliderry on 17 August, 60 Dippen on 26 September and 50 Clachaig on 29 September.

Tree Sparrow (Eurasian Tree Sparrow) *Passer montanus*

Rare vagrant. Previously bred.

No records for 2019. Previous record was 2 in Brodick on 17 June 1997.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Scarce passage migrant.

One record for 2019. One on shore by Lenamhor Farm on 31 May (GaMa)

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea* 129,77

Resident. Breeding. Localised.

Breeding records included adults with fledged young Machrie on 19 May, Cordon on 31 May, Dougarie on 4 June, Kildonan on 15 June, Blackwaterfoot on 21 June, Dippen on 24 June, Brodick Country Park on 13 July and Glenashdalewaterfoot on 16 July.

White Wagtail *Montacilla alba* 20,10

Regular passage migrant.

First report was from Kilpatrick Point on 4 April. Other sightings included 3 Levencorrach on 19 April, 4 Sliderry Shore on 27 April, 7 Porta Buidhe on 29 April and 2 Blackwaterfoot on 13 May. Last report was from Sandbraes on 24 September.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii* 534,178

Breeding resident. Widespread. Passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding records included adults with fledged young Porta Buidhe on 25 May, Corrie 27 May, Clachaig on 5 June, Whiting Bay on 21 June, Dippen on 23 June and High Kildonan on 24 June. Other groups included 23 Blackwaterfoot on 6 January, 40 Braehead Farm on 30 July, 20 Whiting Bay on 27 September and 26 Kildonan on 30 September.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis* 17,13

Scarce summer visitor. Possibly underreported.

Sightings included one Corriecravie Moor on 20 April, one Glen Rosa on 2 May, one Creag Rosa on 4 May, one Imachar on 12 May and one Sliderry on 20 August.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis* 241,133

Breeding resident. Widespread. Passage migrant and winter visitor.

Numerous breeding records. Groups included 120 Sliderry on 1 April, 25 Lochranza Golf Course on 2 April, 150 Machrie Golf Course on 4 April, 20 North Feorline on 18 August and 50 Cnoc Biorach on 10 September.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus* 437,120

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

Numerous breeding records including pairs carrying food at Silver Sands on 30 May, Cosyden on 2 June, Shiskine Golf Course on 19 June, , Sannox Bay on 23 June, and Blackwaterfoot on 25 June. Groups included 12 Auchenhew on 30 January, 40 Silver Sands on 17 February, 24 Kilpatrick on 25 March and 40 Porta Buidhe on 25 October.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta* 27,3

Rare Vagrant.

One on shore Machrie Bay on 23 February (AP&GP) was first Arran record. See note page 74 It remained in the area on the shore and adjacent golf course until 5 April.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla* 13,6

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

Fewer records than 2018. Sightings included one North Kiscadele on 9 February, one Lagg on 2 March, one Sliderry on 14 April, 2 Pirmill on 9 October and 2 High Kildonan on 29 October.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* 551,171

Common resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included reports from all the settlements on the island including some double broods. Good breeding year. Groups included 40 North Newton on 24 March, 25 Sliderry on 14 April, 30 Lagg on 27 April, 26 Strathwillan on 16 June, 30 Dhunan on 7 July, 30 Porta Buidhe on 15 October and 50 Machrie Wood on 4 November.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Rare vagrant.

No records in 2019. Last record one Pirmill on 21 April and one Lochranza on 22 April, possibly the same bird, in 2016.

Scarlet Rosefinch (Common Rosefinch) *Carpodacus erythrinus*

Rare vagrant.

No records in 2019. The last record was a juvenile caught and ringed at High Kildonan on 24 October 2011.

Bullfinch (Common Bullfinch) *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* 49,36

Resident. Breeding. Localised.

Confirmed breeding included reports Newton on 18 May, Brodick on 20 May, Alma Park on 24 June and Cordon on 18 July 15. Groups included 7 Merkland Wood on 26 June, 6 Glen Rosa on 28 February and 10 Holy Isle on 17 July.

Greenfinch (European Greenfinch) *Carduelis chloris* 219,48

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

In 2019 there was a further increase in the number of records reflecting a good breeding season and continuing recovery from the impact of trichomonas. Confirmed breeding included reports from Marganaheglish on 5 June, Kilpatrick on 9 June, Blackwaterfoot on 12 June, Lagg on 27 June and Porta Buidhe on 28 June. Groups included 20 Shiskine on 11 February and 12 Slidery on 16 November.

Linnet (Common Linnet) *Carduelis cannabina* 133,61

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Most records between April and November.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Drumadoon on 16 June, Kildonan on 26 June, Kilpatrick on 29 June and Slidery on 30 June. Groups included 35 Corriecravie Moor on 18 April, 50 Cleats Shore on 30 August, 150 Machriewaterfoot on 20 September, 85 Clachaig on 30 September and 100 South Carlo on 8 December.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris* 33,20

Resident. Breeding. Localised. Passage migrant.

No confirmed breeding. Groups included 17 Machriewaterfoot on 17 October, 12 Clauchlands on 19 October, 10 Shannochie on 4 November, 40 Machriewaterfoot on 9 December, 18 Pirnmill on 10 December, 40 Cleiteadh Buidhe on 12 December and 27 Cleats Shore on 13 December.

Redpoll (Lesser Redpoll) *Carduelis cabaret* 87,35

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

Confirmed breeding included reports from Cordon on 18 May, Dyemill on 26 May, Kilpatrick on 28 May and Lochranza on 17 June. Groups included 6 Torbeg on 25 April, 4 Cordon on 7 June, 6 Fallen Rocks on 22 June, 6 Dougarie on 1 July, 6 Holy Isle on 17 July and 15 Machrie Moor on 2 November.

Crossbill (Common Crossbill) *Loxia curvirostra* 26,22

Resident. Breeding. Localised. Possibly underreported.

Groups included 5 Glen Rosa on 29 June, 4 Torr Righ Beag on 8 August, 4 High Kildonan on 30 October and 19 Cnochan Biorach on 23 November.

Goldfinch (European Goldfinch) *Carduelis carduelis* 440,123

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Good breeding season. Reports of young included Kilpatrick on 9 June, Lamlash on 17 June and Lochranza on 23 June. Groups included 28 Shiskine on 27 January, 90 Cleats Shore on 6 October, 50 Kildonan on 8 October, 30 Strabane on 25 October and 32 Sannox on 1 December.

Siskin (Eurasian Siskin) *Carduelis spinus* 217,56

Resident. Breeding. Widespread. Passage migrant.

Most records between January and June.

Confirmed breeding included reports from Kilpatrick on 3 June, Lamlash on 12 May, Cordon on 14 June, Auchenhew Hill on 17 June, Alma Park on 20 June and Shiskine on 30 June. Groups included 15 Lagg on 29 May, 50 Whiting Bay on 21 June, 10 Margnaheglish on 31 July, 20 Machrie Moor on 2 November and 15 Aucheleffan on 19 November.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis* 20,12

Varying numbers on passage and in winter.

There were twenty records in 2019, following no records in 2018, including 2 Caisteal Abhail on 12 October, 2 A'Chir on 20 October, 5 Mullach Buidhe on 26 October and 2 Goatfell on 5 November. In addition there was one on the shore by Fisherman's Walk from 15-19 November and one on Cleats Shore from 16 November to 13 December with two reported there on 17 November. The final record was 2 in Glen Chalmadale on 10 December.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella* 19,5

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

No records between 26 April and 20 October. In 2019 there were fewer records from fewer sites. Most records from Sliderry including 18 on 20 February, 7 on 6 March, 7 on 8 April and 7 on 14 December. Records from other areas included Newton one on 24 March and Lochranza Golf Course 2 on 26 April.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus* 53,27

Resident. Breeding. Localised. Passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding included Machrie Moor on 26 July, Corriecravie Moor on 29 July and Teanga Burican also on 29 July. Groups included 2 Clachaig on 17 January, 2 Shiskine on 21 February, 2 Newton on 26 April, 2 Holy Isle on 15 June, 2 Imachar on 26 July, 2 Sliderry on 16 November and 2 Newton on 30 December.

Black-headed Bunting *Emberiza melanocephala*

Rare Vagrant

One Strathwillan on 6 June was first Arran record (IMu). See note page 75

Corn bunting *Miliaria calandra*

Rare vagrant. Previously bred.

No records for 2019. Last record was 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>

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



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

Previous Annual Reports

There is a facility to download previous annual reports.

Bird Notes

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

Photo Gallery

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

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

Finding Birds

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

Bird Sightings

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

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

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

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

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

Black-throated Diver

White-billed Diver

Black-necked Grebe

Cory's Shearwater

Great Shearwater

Sooty Shearwater

Balearic Shearwater

Wilson's Petrel

Storm Petrel

Leach's Petrel

Night Heron

Cattle Egret

Little Egret

Great White Egret

Purple Heron

White Stork

Spoonbill

Bean Goose

American Wigeon

Green-winged Teal

Ring-necked Duck

Ferruginous Duck

Surf Scoter

Honey Buzzard

Black Kite

Red Kite

Montagu's Harrier

Rough-legged Buzzard

Goshawk

Red-footed Falcon

Hobby

Crane

Stone Curlew

Little Ringed Plover

Kentish Plover

American Golden Plover

Temminck's Stint

White-rumped Sandpiper

Pectoral Sandpiper

Buff-breasted Sandpiper

Red-necked Phalarope

Grey Phalarope

Pomarine Skua (immature)

Long-tailed Skua

Mediterranean Gull (except adult)

Sabine's Gull

Ring-billed Gull

Yellow-legged Gull

Caspian Gull

Iceland Gull - form *L g kumlieni*

known as 'Kumlien's Gull'

White-winged Black Tern

Roseate Tern

Little Owl

Nightjar

Alpine Swift

Bee-eater

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker

Short-toed Lark

Woodlark

Red-rumped Swallow

Richard's Pipit

Tawny Pipit

Red-throated Pipit

Rock Pipit (Scandinavian race)

Water Pipit

Yellow Wagtail (continental races)

Nightingale

Bluethroat

Cetti's Warbler

Aquatic Warbler

Marsh Warbler

Melodious Warbler

Reed Warbler

Icterine Warbler

Barred Warbler

Dartford Warbler

Subalpine Warbler

Greenish Warbler

Pallas's Warbler

Yellow-browed Warbler

Radde's Warbler

Dusky Warbler

Firecrest

Red-breasted Flycatcher

Bearded Tit

Willow Tit

Marsh Tit

Nuthatch

Golden Oriole

Woodchat Shrike

Chough

Rose-coloured Starling

Serin

Common (Mealy) Redpoll

Arctic Redpoll

Scarlet Rosefinch

Bullfinch (Northern)

Hawfinch

Parrot Crossbill

Girl Bunting

Ortolan Bunting

Rustic Bunting

Little Bunting

Corn Bunting

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

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

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

How to be a good birdwatcher

Some points to bear in mind.

- 1. Welfare of birds must come first.** Whether your particular interest is photography, ringing, sound recording, scientific study or just birdwatching, remember that the welfare of the bird must always come first.
- 2. Habitat protection.** Its habitat is vital to a bird and therefore we must ensure that our activities do not cause damage.
- 3. Keep disturbance to a minimum.** Birds' tolerance of disturbance varies between species and seasons. Therefore, it is safer to keep all disturbance to a minimum, particularly in the breeding season. No birds should be disturbed from the nest in case opportunities for predators to take eggs or young are increased. In very cold weather disturbance to birds may cause them to use vital energy at a time when food is difficult to find.
- 4. Rare breeding birds.** If you discover a rare bird breeding and feel that protection is necessary, inform the local wildlife crime officer, Constable Phil Adams, 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 jim@arranbirding.co.uk

Index by Common Name

Common Name	Page	Common Name	Page	Common Name	Page
Auk, Little	90	Eagle, White-tailed	85	Guillemot, Black	90
Bittern	83	Egret, Little	83	Gull, Black-headed	91
Blackbird	98	Egret, Snowy	83	Gull, Common	91
Blackcap	97	Eider	80	Gull, Glaucous	92
Brambling	101	Eider, King	80	Gull, Great Black-backed	92
Bunting, Black-headed	103	Falcon, Peregrine	86	Gull, Herring	92
Bunting, Corn	103	Fieldfare	98	Gull, Iceland	92
Bunting, Reed	103	Finch, Bullfinch	102	Gull, Ivory	91
Bunting, Snow	103	Finch, Chaffinch	101	Gull, Lesser Black-backed	91
Buzzard	85	Finch, Goldfinch	103	Gull, Little	91
Buzzard, Rough-legged	85	Finch, Greenfinch	102	Gull, Mediterranean	91
Chiffchaff	96	Finch, Hawfinch	101	Gull, Ross's	91
Chough	94	Finch, Scarlet Rosefinch	102	Gull, Sabine's	91
Coot	86	Firecrest	95	Harrier, Hen	84
Cormorant	83	Flycatcher, Pied	99	Harrier, Marsh	84
Crake, Corn	86	Flycatcher, Spotted	99	Heron, Grey	84
Crake, Spotted	86	Fulmar	82	Hobby	86
Crane	86	Gannet	83	Hoopoe	93
Crossbill	102	Garganey	80	Jackdaw	94
Crow, Carrion	95	Godwit, Bar-tailed	87	Jay	94
Crow, Hooded	95	Godwit, Black-tailed	87	Kestrel	85
Cuckoo	93	Goldcrest	95	Kingfisher	93
Curlew	87	Goldeneye	81	Kite, Red	84
Dipper	98	Goosander	81	Kittiwake	91
Diver, Black-throated	82	Goose, Barnacle	79	Knot	87
Diver, Great Northern	82	Goose, Brent	79	Lapwing	87
Diver, Red-throated	82	Goose, Canada	79	Linnet	102
Dotterel	87	Goose, Greylag	78	Maggie	94
Dove, Collared	92	Goose, Pink-footed	78	Mallard	79
Dove, Rock	92	Goose, White-fronted	78	Martin, House	96
Dove, Stock	92	Goshawk	85	Martin, Sand	96
Dove, Turtle	92	Grebe, Black-necked	84	Merganser, Red-breasted	81
Dowitcher, Long-billed	89	Grebe, Great Crested	84	Merlin	85
Duck, Long-tailed	80	Grebe, Little	84	Moorhen	86
Duck, Mandarin	79	Grebe, Red-necked	84	Nightjar	93
Duck, Ruddy	81	Grebe, Slavonian	84	Nuthatch	98
Duck, Tufted	80	Greenshank	89	Oriole, Golden	94
Dunlin	88	Grouse, Black	82	Osprey	85
Duncock	100	Grouse, Red	81	Owl, Barn	93
Eagle, Golden	85	Guillemot	90	Owl, Long-eared	93

Common Name	Page	Common Name	Page	Common Name	Page
Owl, Short-eared	93	Sandpiper, Purple	88	Tern, Black	90
Owl, Tawny	93	Sandpiper, Spotted	88	Tern, Common	90
Oystercatcher	86	Sandpiper, Wood	89	Tern, Little	90
Partridge, Grey	82	Scaup	80	Tern, Roseate	90
Partridge, Red-Legged	82	Scoter, Common	80	Tern, Sandwich	90
Petrel, Leach's	83	Scoter, Surf	81	Thrush, Mistle	99
Petrel, Storm	83	Scoter, Velvet	81	Thrush, Song	99
Phalarope, Grey	88	Shag	83	Tit, Blue	95
Phalarope, Red-necked	88	Shearwater, Cory's	82	Tit, Coal	95
Pheasant	82	Shearwater, Manx	83	Tit, Great	95
Pintail	80	Shearwater, Mediterranean	83	Tit, Long-tailed	96
Pipit, Meadow	101	Shearwater, Sooty	82	Tit, Willow	95
Pipit, Rock	101	Shelduck	79	Treecreeper	98
Pipit, Tree	101	Shoveler	80	Turnstone	87
Water, Pipit	101	Shrike, Great Grey	94	Twite	102
Plover, Golden	86	Shrike, Red-backed	94	Wagtail, Grey	100
Plover, Grey	86	Siskin	103	Wagtail, Pied	101
Plover, Ringed	87	Skua, Arctic	89	Wagtail, White	100
Pochard	80	Skua, Great	90	Wagtail, Yellow	100
Ptarmigan	81	Skua, Long-tailed	89	Warbler, Blyth's Reed	97
Puffin	90	Skua, Pomarine	89	Warbler, Garden	97
Quail	81	Skylark	96	Warbler, Grasshopper	97
Rail, Water	86	Smew	81	Warbler, Sedge	97
Raven	95	Snipe	89	Warbler, Willow	97
Razorbill	90	Snipe, Jack	89	Warbler, Wood	96
Redpoll Lesser	102	Sparrow, House	100	Warbler, Yellow-browed	96
Redshank	89	Sparrow, Tree	100	Waxwing	97
Redshank, Spotted	88	Sparrowhawk	85	Wheatear	100
Redstart	99	Spoonbill	84	Whimbrel	87
Redstart, Black	99	Starling	98	Whinchat	99
Redwing	99	Starling, Rose-coloured	98	Whitethroat	97
Ring Ouzel	98	Stint, Little	88	Whitethroat, Lesser	97
Robin	99	Stonechat	100	Wigeon	79
Rook	95	Swallow	96	Woodcock	89
Ruff	88	Swan, Bewick's	78	Woodpecker, Great Spotted	84
Sanderling	88	Swan, Mute	78	Woodpecker, Green	94
Sandgrouse, Pallas's	92	Swan, Whooper	78	Woodpigeon	92
Sandpiper, Common	88	Swift	93	Wren	98
Sandpiper, Curlew	88	Teal	79	Wryneck	93
Sandpiper, Green	88	Tern, Arctic	91	Yellowhammer	103

Notes:

Wintering Chiffchaff, Claulands, 28 November 2019

Showing characteristics of the Siberian race *tristis* the appropriate form accompanied by four photographs was submitted to Clyde Birds Rarities Committee for verification on 3 December. On 17 January the decision of the panel was that it was deemed to be **non-proven** by three votes to two. Although all agreed that the bird really looked good, two were not happy on photographic evidence alone. The bird had not called. With three possible wintering types of Chiffchaff including intergrades, the decision was not easy. Members of the panel gave very detailed reasons for their decision and indeed spent a great deal of time on the evidence submitted.

Black – headed Bunting, Strathwillan 6 June 2019

Form with photos and video submitted to British Birds Rarities Committee on 10 June. At the time of going to print waiting for decision, "In circulation".