

THE BIRDS OF THE ISLAND OF ARRAN

By

J. A. GIBSON

Buteshire Natural History Society



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AUTHOR'S NOTE

This account of the birds of Arran is based, with slight modifications, on a paper which appeared in the Transactions of the Buteshire Natural History Society, Volume XIV, 1955. It was felt that interest in the birds of Arran was so widespread that the paper should be reissued in booklet form, which would make it readily accessible to all those who regularly visit the island, and I am grateful to the Buteshire Natural History Society for allowing the original paper to be reprinted.

I am endeavouring to keep the check-list of Arran birds up-to-date, so if any observers make interesting notes on the birds of the island I shall be extremely grateful if they will communicate with me at the undernoted address:

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INTRODUCTION

The Island of Arran is one of the great glibries of the Clyde area, and the lack of an up-to-date account of its birds is a most serious gap in our present knowledge of Clyde ornithology.

It is a remarkable fact that although Arran offers attractions to the bird-watcher not found elsewhere in the Clyde, previous accounts of the birds are few and inadequate. This can be explained partly by the relative inaccessibility of the island — travelling to Arran was a chancy business not so very long ago — and partly by the fact that there never seems to have been an ornithologist resident on the island; certainly not one who has been prepared to write about the birds. Almost all the published notes on the birds have therefore been contributed by visitors, whose observations often covered very brief periods.

The earliest notice of Arran birds that I have been able to trace is that by Martin Martin (1703), who visited the island before 1700 and wrote, "This isle affords the common sea and land fowls that are to be had in the Western Isles." He also mentioned the protection of the blackcock. Next, Pennant, in his *Voyage to the Hebrides*, written in 1774, said, "The birds are eagles, hooded crows, wild pigeons, stares, black game, grouse, ptarmigans, daws, green plovers and curlews." To these he added the partridge as a proof of the advancement of agriculture. In the *Old Statistical Account*, Kilmory parish (1793), the Rev. John Hamilton mentioned wild swans and fieldfares in winter and the lapwing in summer. The Rev. James Headrick, in 1807, has a chapter on "Game" in which he records the following: "Among the feathered tribes, the capercaillie formerly abounded, but seems now to be extirpated. The blackcock and grouse swarm in the most unbounded profusion; and I suspect their further multiplication is prevented by no having a sufficient proportion annually destroyed. Among thes

a few quails occur. On the granite mountains the ptarmigan has chosen his residence. The birds of prey are eagles, kites, hawks of various species, and carrion crows. The premiums given by the late Duke for the preservation of game have nearly effected their extirpation." He also mentions partridges, starlings, plovers and "small migratory birds."

The next account of Arran birds appears in the *New Statistical Account of Scotland* by the Rev. Dr. McNaughton, minister of Kilbride parish. His list (1840) shows some evidence of original observation and includes about seventy species. Red and black grouse were abundant, the latter becoming a nuisance to farmers. Ptarmigan were still present, and pheasants had been introduced a few years previously. Eagles, falcons, hawks, hooded and carrion crows, ravens, owls and magpies were being rapidly reduced in numbers, owing to premiums given for their destruction by the Duke of Hamilton. In consequence of this, small birds had greatly increased, to the prejudice of garden-fruits, and "the most pestilent and numerous of the whole" was the moor-blackbird (presumably ring-ouzel). McNaughton also said that the bittern was met with occasionally.

A short paper by Alston (1866) does not include much of interest and then we come to the paper by Robert Gray, in Bryce's *Geology of Arran* (fourth edition, 1872), the first account of any significance. Gray's paper has a charm of writing typical of all his works, but it is difficult to know just how much reliance to place upon it. It does not seem that Gray himself resided on Arran for any length of time, and he tended to bolster his list with references to the other Clyde islands. This frequently confuses the picture, for it is not always possible to know which island Gray had in mind. Sometimes his notes have obviously nothing to do with Arran at all, and sometimes there are frankly ambiguous statements which I think may have been an attempt to conceal gaps in his knowledge. It was this aspect of Gray's list that so puzzled and irritated John Paterson. Despite these shortcomings, however, Gray's account was that of a pioneer, and should be respected as such. A synopsis of his list, with a few additions, appeared in 1875.

After Gray we have some brief notes by Craig (1900), a valuable paper by Mackeith (1909), who made several additions to the Arran list, and from 1895 to 1907, and again from 1915 to 1921,

the Reports on Scottish Ornithology contain many useful migration notes from Pladda and Holy Island. There are many references to Arran in McWilliam's two books (1928 and 1936), and from then until the present day a fair number of short papers and notes have appeared. A full list of all past publications is given in the bibliography at the end of the paper.

There is one important source of unpublished information that must be considered — John Paterson's notebooks. Paterson, a fine and painstaking ornithologist and an authority on Clyde bird records, paid several visits to Arran between 1890 and 1911 and kept careful notes of his observations. He also noted down many observations made by his friend Dr. Neil Fullerton, of Lamlash, whom Paterson rated highly as an ornithologist. These collected observations have proved to be extremely valuable, and are referred to frequently in the following list. I am grateful to the Rev. J. M. McWilliam for passing on Paterson's notebooks to me.

I have been visiting Arran steadily for sixteen years, and during this time have wandered extensively over the island. I have been there every month of the year, and recently have been fortunate in being able to spend a considerable amount of time on the island in autumn and mid-winter. This account of the birds is based on my own notes and on what I have been able to discover from a search of the previous literature. For many valuable notes on the birds I am extremely grateful to the late Mr. Alex. Fraser and his son Mr. Tom Fraser, Sannox, Mr. Peter Helm, Douglie, Mr. George McAlpine, Brodick, Mr. Peter Mackenzie, Lamlash, Mr. Dugald McKillop, Blackwaterfoot, Mr. Alex. Henderson, formerly Principal Lightkeeper, Pladda lighthouse, and Mr. Angus Macaulay, formerly Principal Lightkeeper, Holy Island lighthouse. My best thanks are due to Her Grace the Duchess of Montrose for giving me an extended loan of her game-books, and for graciously allowing me to publish the game-list, and Mr. C. F. Swain and Mr. J. A. Newlands, successively factors of the Arran estates, have kindly assisted me in many ways. Without the help of all these people this paper could not have been written.

In this short paper an account of the topography of Arran is quite out of place; there are many excellent guide-books

available for reference. Attention should be drawn, however, to the fact that a surprising amount of migration is recorded at Pladda, and to a lesser extent at Holy Island, in spring and autumn, and I have made many visits to these islands. Over 100 species of birds have been recorded on Pladda, or have been killed at the light there.

No account of the birds of Arran can be considered complete without discussing Dr. Martin Barry's *List of the Birds that have been observed to breed in the Island of Arran, Scotland, since the year 1835*. This is a fairly well-known freak publication, of which only six copies are known to exist, and I am extremely grateful to the Rev. J. M. McWilliam for giving me a loan of his copy. The work, which extends to only three pages, is undated and bears the name of neither printer nor publisher; it first turned up in the year 1863.

In 1861, and again in 1863, several lots of eggs, some of which were probably stolen from other collections, purporting to come from the collection of a "late celebrated physician," Dr. Martin Barry, were sold in Mr. J. C. Stevens' sale-rooms in London. The catalogues which accompanied the sales were weird and wonderful, containing many references to birds supposed to have bred in Arran. A century ago Arran no doubt seemed so remote to the compiler of these catalogues that *anything* might be found breeding there. These catalogues raised a hue and cry amongst ornithologists at the time, and shortly afterwards a copy of Dr. Barry's *List* turned up, giving his authority for most of these records.

That there was, in fact, a Dr. Martin Barry resident on Arran there is no doubt; and that he was something of an ornithologist, and had made an extensive collection of eggs, is also not in dispute. What is very much in doubt, however, is whether he was actually the author of the book concerned. My own feeling, and that expressed by many ornithologists at the time, is that the book is a forgery, manufactured for the purpose of selling Dr. Martin Barry's eggs to better advantage. The list of birds is certainly not to be taken seriously. An account of this book and the sale catalogues appeared in the *Ibis*, 1863: 370-376, 477-478; the three pages of the book have been copied and are reproduced on pages 31, 32 and 33.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

In the following list the arrangement and nomenclature follows the B.O.U. *Check-List of the Birds of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1952.

BLACK-THROATED DIVER *Colymbus arcticus* L.

Not uncommon winter visitor to surrounding sea and has occasionally been seen in summer. Miss E. V. Baxter and Miss L. J. Rintoul saw two off Catacol in June, 1938. In May, 1951, I saw two black-throated divers at a hill-loch in Arran and later found a nest with two eggs; I visited this loch again at the end of July and saw one adult and one young bird. This was the first breeding record for Arran and represented a definite extension of range within the Clyde area. I have no later personal records of black-throats on Arran, but I was told that divers (? species) were present at this same loch in 1953.

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Colymbus immer* Brunn.

Not uncommon winter visitor to surrounding sea, occasionally lingering into early summer. McWilliam saw one in full plumage off the shores of Pladda in May, 1920; it remained several days.

RED-THROATED DIVER *Colymbus stellatus* Pontopp.

Gray recorded a nest and two eggs found in July, 1873 as the first breeding record for Arran, and the red-throat has nested ever since. At present a few pairs breed regularly around some of the small hill-lochs. Fairly common winter visitor to the surrounding sea.

RED-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps griseigena* (Bodd.)

Gray said "Uncommon." This is far too vague. I can trace no definite record.

SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus* (L.)

Gray (1872) said that he had "seen pairs of this bird in calm days off Arran in the beginning of summer." No later record known to me.

LITTLE GREBE *Podiceps ruficollis* (Pall.)

A few pairs nest; not common. Has been seen at Pladda on migration.

LEACH'S PETREL *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* (Vieill.)

After the gales at the end of October, 1952, when there was the remarkable "wreck" of petrels all over the West of Scotland, six Leach's petrels were found on the shore at Sannox by Mr. Tom Fraser. I found a partly decomposed Leach's at Sannox on 15th December, 1952. There are probably other records, not reported.

STORM-PETREL *Hydrobates pelagicus* (L.)

McCrindle said he frequently saw these birds between Arran and the Ayrshire coast in the 1920s. I do not think they are so common now. One was killed at the Pladda light on 3rd September, 1921. One storm-petrel was driven ashore at Sannox at the same time as the Leach's petrels, noted above.

MANX SHEARWATER *Procellaria puffinus* Brunn.

Fairly regular visitor to the surrounding seas, often in small flocks.

SOOTY SHEARWATER *Procellaria grisea* Gm.

The *Birds of Scotland* records one seen near Pladda on 25th August, 1936.

FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis* (L.)

Fulmars began nesting at Drumadoon cliff in 1948, where they had been prospecting for some years, and about four pairs now nest there. Fulmars have been prospecting the east cliffs of Holy Island since 1951, and have been occasionally seen off Pladda, but as yet there is no evidence of breeding on either of these islands.

GANNET *Sula bassana* (L.)

Commonly seen fishing off-shore during summer; I have seen birds every month of the year. Gannets frequented the east cliffs of Holy Island from 1946 onwards and by 1950 seemed about to establish a new breeding colony; unfortunately this did not happen (*Scot. Nat.*, 64: 178). Gannets have been killed at Pladda lighthouse, and have smashed the plate-glass of the lantern. Over 10,000 pairs now nest on Ailsa Craig.

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo* (L.)

A few birds can be seen off-shore at all seasons of the year. No evidence of nesting. Not nearly so common as the shag.

SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* (L.)

Very common off-shore. A few pairs have nested from time to time on Holy Island, and they may also do so at the north and west of Arran, although I have no proof of breeding. Extremely common off-shore in winter and very large flocks are sometimes seen. On 1st January, 1954, my wife and I counted over 500 in a flock off Machrie, and there must have been many more. This is by far the largest flock of shags I have ever seen in the Clyde (*Glasgow & W. Scot. Bird Bull.*, 3: 41-42).

HERON *Ardea cinerea* L.

Commonly seen all round the shore. At least fourteen pairs nest in the woods at Brodick Castle, and two or three pairs nest near Kilmory, at the south of the island. In 1884 herons were said to nest on rocks on Holy Island; they certainly do not nest there now, although birds visit the island frequently.

BITTERN *Botaurus stellaris* (L.)

A century ago the bittern occurred occasionally in Arran. One was shot near Whitehouse around 1835 (see *New Statistical Account*, Kilbride parish).

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos* L.

The commonest nesting duck. Large flocks off-shore in winter. A few pairs nest on Holy Island and Pladda.

TEAL *Anas crecca* L.

Fairly common nesting species; mainly behind Machrie and Black-waterfoot. Often noted at Pladda on migration.

WIGEON *Anas penelope* L.

Regular winter visitor. Large flocks off-shore.

SHOVELER *Spatula clypeata* (L.)

This duck has been seen a few times, and may well nest. Further information on its status is desirable.

SCAUP *Aythya marila* (L.)

Small flocks are regularly seen off-shore in winter.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula* (L.)

Regularly seen off-shore in winter in small numbers. I have never seen it in summer, although Thornton Mackenzie, writing of summer 1909 at Shiskin, said "seen several times."

POCHARD *Aythya ferina* (L.)

Fairly regular winter visitor; small flocks off-shore.

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula* (L.)

A few seen off-shore during most winters.

VELVET SCOTER *Melanitta fusca* (L.)

Gray said "very rarely seen." This is rather vague. The only definite record I can trace is that of two birds seen off-shore in June, 1945 (*Birds of Scotland*).

COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra* (L.)

Occasionally seen off-shore in winter.

EIDER *Somateria mollissima* (L.)

Gray (1872) said "Rare; occasionally finds its way into Kilbrannon Sound," but within the last few decades the eider has become a fairly common Clyde bird. Three pairs were seen in Lamlash Bay on 16th April, 1933 (Watson and Watson, 1933), and since then it has been found nesting at several places round the shore of the island. It is now probably a not uncommon nesting species, and females with young are often seen off-shore during summer. The first breeding record for Holy Island and Pladda was in 1951 and a few pairs now nest on both these islands. Small parties are very common off-shore in winter, and I have seen flocks of around fifty several times.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator* L.

This duck nests at many places around the shore, especially in the north of the island, and is common off-shore in winter. Flocks of sixty have been seen (Baxter, 1954). One or two pairs nest on Holy Island.

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser* L.

I saw two birds in Sannox bay in December, 1951. This is, in fact, the only record I can trace, but the goosander is possibly more common than this isolated record would suggest.

SMEW *Mergus albellus* L.

Mr. R. F. Graham saw a smew on the Kilbrannon Sound at Skipness, Kintyre, on 10th December, 1922. This is worth recording, although it is probably just outside the limits of our area.

SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna* (L.)

Fairly common nesting species. Mackeith (1909) called it an abundant species along the shore, and McWilliam (1936) wrote "I have never seen it so numerous in the nesting season as on part of the west coast of Arran." It occasionally nests on Holy Island and two pairs nest regularly on Pladda. Small parties are common off-shore in autumn and winter. The shelduck is one of the more unusual birds that has been killed at Pladda light.

GREY LAG-GOOSE *Anser anser* (L.)

The grey lag has increased in numbers considerably within recent years, and a flock of about 200 birds now winters regularly in one locality on the west of the island. Flighting occurs to Loch Nuis and, if disturbed, to Loch Tanna.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons* (Scop.)

Not common, but a few winter on the island most years.

MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor* (Gm.)

A few pairs nest.

WHOOPEE-SWAN *Cygnus cygnus* (L.)

Fairly regular winter visitor in small numbers, especially to the lochs in the north of the island. A few can be seen on Loch Tanna nearly every winter. On 4th January, 1954, I saw a flock of nine whooper-swans flying over Kildonan. They passed over Pladda and continued in the direction of Ireland.

GOLDEN EAGLE *Aquila chrysaetos* (L.)

The golden eagle was resident on Arran from earliest times, but before 1800 a misguided Duke of Hamilton instituted a scale of payments for the destruction of Arran birds of prey and their eggs, and Headrick (1807) said that these had "nearly effected the eagle's extirpation." It was finally exterminated as a breeding species around 1850 and in Gray's time it was only a "rare and uncertain visitant." In 1857 Hugh Macdonald (writing in his book *Days at the Coast*, 1860) saw at Brodick a golden eagle that had been captive for twenty-nine years. It seems that the golden eagle also used to nest on Holy Island (*Glasgow Nat.*, 1: 55).

By about 1900, however, the golden eagle was again nesting on Arran and in 1924 McWilliam was informed by Alex. Fraser, gamekeeper on the island, that one pair, but no more, had nested every year for the previous twenty years. Mr. R. F. Graham of Skipness, in Kintyre, also told McWilliam that about 1925 one of his shepherds killed an eagle and found attached to it a trap stamped *Arran Estate*.

At present the golden eagle is carefully protected and at least two pairs now nest on Arran; there are occasional reports of a third pair

but I have not been able to confirm this. During winter 1950 a golden eagle landed on Pladda and remained there for the best part of a day (Alex. Henderson, *in lit.*). Arran was thickly covered with snow at the time.

BUZZARD *Buteo buteo* (L.)

The buzzard formerly nested commonly on Arran, but had become scarce by 1850 owing to incessant persecution. For the next seventy years it remained just a casual visitor, but a pair nested again in 1922, and since then it has steadily increased. The present population is at least a dozen pairs, nesting on both trees and cliffs.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD *Buteo lagopus* (Pontopp.)

McWilliam (1936) records that this bird "has occurred in Arran in recent years (Alex. Fraser, *in lit.*, 1935)."

SPARROW-HAWK *Accipiter nisus* (L.)

Resident and well-distributed throughout the island, although much persecuted. Seen fairly often at Pladda on passage.

KITE *Milvus milvus* (L.)

The kite formerly bred in Arran, but was virtually exterminated between 1850 and 1860. It seems also to have nested on Holy Island; there is a specimen in Kelvingrove Museum, Glasgow, labelled "Holy Island, Arran, 1829." For a photograph of this bird see McWilliam (1936).

WHITE-TAILED EAGLE *Haliaeetus albicilla* (L.)

The white-tailed eagle formerly nested on Arran and seemed to withstand the inevitable persecution better than the golden eagle. Gray (1872) records the following passage: "In Arran it continued to breed regularly in Catacol Glen until 1849, in which year Robert Mackay, keeper, took a young bird and reared it. Some time during the ensuing winter the ledge of rock on which the eyrie was placed gave way, and the eagles—probably viewing the mishap as a timeous warning—left the district. In the spring of 1870 a pair of these birds built a nest in the same glen, and the female sat for a time on two eggs, but afterwards deserted them. Mr. Mackenzie, one of the Duke of Hamilton's keepers, residing at Dougie Lodge, on the west coast of Arran, informs me that he saw two white-tailed eagles there in November 1871. I am happy to be able to add that strict orders have been given that eagles are not to be destroyed in any part of the island."

Unfortunately this belated protection was of no avail, and there seems to be no genuine record after 1871. There have been occasional reports of odd birds seen, but none of these records can be regarded as sufficiently well authenticated.

HEN-HARRIER *Circus cyaneus* (L.)

In the old days the hen-harrier was extremely common on Arran but it was virtually exterminated as a breeding-species about 1850. A few pairs seem to have lingered on, however, for Gray said "breeds

regularly" and in 1874 a breeding pair was shot (*Proc. Nat. Hist. Soc. Glasgow*, 2: 289). Mackeith recorded it as nesting regularly at Shiskin in 1909, and in 1917 a pair was said to have bred not long before (*Scot. Nat.*, 1917: 218). This is the last nesting record I can discover, although single birds were not infrequently seen in winter or on passage. Recently, however, harriers have again nested successfully, for in late summer 1953 I saw a male and two young birds on one particular moor on Arran. They do not seem to have nested since then, but I hope that the hen-harrier will soon re-establish itself as a regular Arran breeding bird.

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus* (L.)

There is an unreliable story of the osprey nesting in Arran in 1846 and 1847; it is almost certainly untrue (see Gray, 1872).

HOBBY *Falco subbuteo* L.

Robert Gray, in the *Birds of the West of Scotland* (1871), said that a beautiful male hobby was shot on Arran some years previously and examined by him. In Bryce's *Arran* (1872) he says he saw this specimen "freshly set up" in 1857. This record has been accepted without question by several later writers, but Gray also added "said to have been procured in Arran," so I wonder if he had some doubts in the matter.

Gray also recorded the following two passages: "I have been assured by Mr. Halliday, one of the Duke of Hamilton's keepers, that he has in several instances taken both the bird and its eggs in the island, when assisting the late Dr. Martin Barry to make his collection. Mr. Halliday appears to be well acquainted with the merlin, peregrine, and other hawks breeding in Arran, and has described to me the plumage of the hobby so correctly that I have little or no hesitation in recording its occurrence there as a native"; and "Mr. Mackay, resident at Loch Ranza, informs me that he has taken the nest of this bird in Arran in company with the late Dr. M. Barry. The bird has been accurately described to me, and I see no reason for rejecting the information."

These are remarkable statements, and although Gray seems quite definite, it is perhaps a little unfortunate that they are associated with the name of Dr. Barry. McWilliam (1936) said these records could "hardly be credited," and there are probably no present-day ornithologists who would accept them without reservations. It should be noted, however, that John Paterson, a careful and painstaking ornithologist, and the most careful of all men where the accuracy of Clyde bird records was concerned, said that these records "should not be hastily dismissed." Paterson was writing nearly sixty years ago, much nearer the time when these events took place, with a wide experience of Arran, and it may be that he had some reason of his own for believing in their authenticity.

PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus* Tunst.

The peregrine is an old-established resident on Arran. McWilliam (1936) estimated that there were about eight nests on the island and this is still the position at present. One pair nests fairly regularly on Holy Island.

MERLIN *Falco columbarius* L.

Resident but not common; a few pairs nest. One was seen at Pladda on 2nd October, 1918.

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus* L.

Fairly common and well distributed throughout the island. A pair probably nests on Holy Island.

RED GROUSE *Lagopus scoticus* (Lath.)

Very common and widespread; nests on almost all hills and moors. For nearly thirty years bags averaged over 5,000 birds a season, and the best year on record was 1912 when nearly 13,000 birds were shot. In 1944, however, grouse disease affected the stock on the island and the numbers dropped drastically, and from then until 1949 very few birds were shot. Fortunately they are now increasing again. Many nest on Holy Island, and on 24th October, 1920, seven were seen on Pladda (*Scot. Nat.*, 1921: 157).

PTARMIGAN *Lagopus mutus* Hart.

The ptarmigan formerly bred on Arran but in what numbers is not known. Possibly it was never very common. Headrick (1807) recorded it for the island and Gray (1872) said that it still existed there in his time but was on the decline, and that birds had been procured from Sutherland and Inverness to strengthen the breed. I can trace no records since 1900.

BLACK GROUSE *Lyrurus tetrix* (L.)

In olden times the black grouse received special protection, and Martin wrote in 1703 "The blackcock is not allowed to be killed here without a permit; the transgressors are liable to a fine." Until relatively recently it was a common breeding species and was well distributed throughout the island. For many years bags averaged over 200 birds a year, and even as recently as 1936, 283 birds were shot in a season. Since then its numbers have declined steadily, however, and it is now very nearly extinct.

CAPERCAILLIE *Tetrao urogallus* L.

The capercaillie was common in Arran in early times but had become extinct by 1807 (Headrick). It was re-introduced in 1843 and flourished for many years; the population was estimated to be about seventy birds in 1865. Before the 1914-18 war, however, it had died out again, apparently from disease, and the last definite record is of one bird shot by the Marquis of Graham on 29th November, 1910, in Brodick Castle coverts.

PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix* (L.)

Resident; introduced into Arran before 1750. Formerly very common but numbers have been steadily decreasing for many years and now there are only a few. A study of the gamebooks shows that the majority of the partridges shot on Arran have been in two main areas, in the south-east from Whitehouse to Dippin and on the west from Kilpatrick to Dougrie

QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix* (L.)

Headrick, in 1807, said "a few quails occur," but Gray (1872) said it was almost unknown in his time. In July, 1905 Mr. T. Thornton Mackeith found a quail's nest with eight eggs at Knockinkelly, Whiting Bay (*Scot. Nat.*, 1914: 69). I know of no other record.

PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus* L.

Resident; common and widespread. A few pairs also nest on Holy Island. Pheasants were probably first introduced into Arran a little after 1830, and large numbers have been hand-reared since 1911.

WATER-RAIL *Rallus aquaticus* L.

A few pairs certainly nest on Arran; may be more common but because of its secretive habits must often pass unobserved. The water-rail occurs at Pladda on migration and birds have often been killed at the light.

SPOTTED CRAKE *Porzana porzana* (L.)

One was killed at Pladda lighthouse on 24th October, 1895 (*Ann. Scot. Nat. Hist.*, 1896: 144).

CORNCRAKE *Crex crex* (L.)

Summer visitor and thinly distributed throughout suitable parts of the island. No obvious change in population within recent years; it was never very common. Birds have been seen at Pladda on migration, and one was killed at the lantern on 11th May, 1920.

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus* (L.)

A few pairs nest on some of the smaller streams; not very common now, although Mackeith said "fairly common" at Shiskin in 1909. Birds have been killed at Pladda on migration.

COOT *Fulica atra* L.

Gray said "a few pairs in various localities." This may or may not have been true for Arran. I know of no other record for the island.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus* L.

Common nesting species all round the shore and often in fields. I have found it nesting far up Glen Sannox. Many nest on Holy Island and Pladda. Flocks of up to 100 often seen in winter.

LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus* (L.)

Common nesting species; also nests on Holy Island and Pladda. Large flocks common on Arran in autumn and winter. Common at Pladda and Holy Island on migration.

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula* L.

Common nesting species at suitable places all round the shore, including Holy Island and Pladda. Small flocks in winter. Often seen at Pladda and Holy Island on passage.

GREY PLOVER *Charadrius squatarola* (L.)

Gray said "occurs in small numbers in autumn only." This may or may not have been true. I have never seen the bird.

GOLDEN PLOVER *Charadrius apricarius* L.

Resident on the moors but not very common. Small flocks around the shore in winter, and fairly often seen at Pladda on passage.

DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus* L.

Long ago the dotterel was reported from Loch Ranza by Macgillivray.

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres* (L.)

Not uncommon along shore on spring and autumn passage, and in winter. Occasionally seen in summer.

SNIPE *Capella gallinago* (L.)

Common nesting species and widespread. Reported to nest on Holy Island. Often seen at Pladda on migration and occasionally killed at light.

JACK SNIPE *Lymnocyrtus minimus* (Brünn).

Uncommon winter visitor. Shot from time to time. One was killed at Pladda light on 20th November, 1895.

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola* L.

Resident. Common and widely distributed. A few pairs nest on Holy Island. Often seen at Pladda on migration and birds have been killed at the light.

CURLEW *Numenius arquata* (L.)

Common nesting species; a few pairs also nest on Holy Island. Large flocks common in winter. Often seen at Pladda on migration; one crashed right through the plate glass of the lantern on 10th March, 1897.

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus* (L.)

Occasionally seen on spring and autumn passage, and birds have been killed at Pladda light on several occasions. Also recorded from Holy Island.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa* (L.)

Fairly regular autumn and winter visitor, but not very common. Usually seen in ones and twos, but I saw a flock of twenty-five on the shore at Kildonan on 3rd January, 1954. Not infrequently seen at Pladda on migration and one was killed at the light on 12th April, 1922.

COMMON SANDPIPER *Tringa hypoleucos* L.

Common summer visitor. Nests plentifully at suitable places all round the shore, including Holy Island and Pladda. Often seen at Pladda and Holy Island on migration.

REDSHANK *Tringa totanus* (L.)

Resident; common and widely distributed. Possibly nests on Holy Island. Common at Pladda on migration and fairly frequently killed at the light. Both Mackeith and Paterson record finding redshank's nests on the shore, in open situations like oystercatcher's. Small flocks are common in winter, and some of these birds may belong to the so-called Iceland race *Tringa totanus robusta* (Schiöler).

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia* (Gunn.)

Occasionally seen along the shore in autumn, but not common.

KNOT *Calidris canutus* (L.)

Small flocks are occasionally seen along the shore in autumn and winter.

PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima* (Brünn.)

Occasionally seen on the shore in winter and on passage; usually single birds. Not infrequently seen at Pladda on passage.

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina* (L.)

Nests sparingly throughout the island. Small flocks seen on spring and autumn passage. Not nearly so common in mid-winter, but I saw a flock of thirty to forty on the Kildonan shore on 4th January, 1954. Some of these winter dunlins may well belong to the northern race *Calidris alpina alpina* (L.). Fairly common on passage at Pladda and Holy Island, and has been killed at Pladda light.

CURLEW-SANDPIPER *Calidris testacea* (Pall.)

Gray (1872) said "Rare. It arrives in August, but remains only a very short time, and unless carefully looked for it is apt to be missed." I doubt whether this statement really refers to Arran.

SANDERLING *Crocethia alba* (Pall.)

Seen from time to time on autumn passage. On 5th January, 1954, my wife and I saw a flock of twenty birds on the sandy shore at Sennox. This was a most unusual record. They remained a short time, then took off in a compact bunch and flew strongly along the shore. We did not see them again.

ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus* (L.)

Single birds are not uncommonly seen on autumn passage. I saw one about half-a-mile off Holy Island in late May 1951. It has often been seen around Pladda and has been killed at the light there.

POMATORHINE SKUA *Stercorarius pomarinus* (Temm.)

Robert Gray said he had recognised this bird off Brodick and in Kilbrannan Sound.

IVORY GULL *Pagophila eburnea* (Phipps)

One was shot near Lamlash in September 1866 (Gray, 1872), and another is said to have been shot on Arran in 1875 (Field, 20th February, 1875), but there are reasons for rejecting this second record.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus* L.

The great black-backed is a fairly common resident gull and can be seen along the shore at all seasons of the year. It nests at many of the small hill-lochs, especially in the north, and there is at least one colony of nearly thirty pairs. A few pairs also nest on Holy Island. This gull was nesting on Arran in Gray's time.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus* L.

Gray (1872) said "Very common. It breeds on various lochs in Arran." It seems to have decreased steadily as a breeding species, however, for Paterson did not include it for Arran in 1901. It was certainly not breeding there in the 1920s. The first breeding record

in recent times was apparently in 1944, and there are now at least two small colonies at hill-lochs. It has long nested on Holy Island and the present size of this colony is about 200 pairs. Lesser black-backed gulls are common all round the Arran shores in summer, and single birds have been seen now and again in winter. Some of these probably belong to the Scandinavian race *Larus fuscus fuscus* L., which has been definitely identified at least once.

HERRING-GULL *Larus argentatus* Pontopp.

Common all round the shore at all seasons of the year. About 300 pairs nest on Holy Island. This gull also nests at some of the small hill-lochs on Arran but is not very common. I found it nesting in 1944, which was apparently the first known record, although it had probably been nesting for several years before that; it does not seem to have been recorded nesting on Arran in olden times. One pair has nested on Pladda since 1950; one of these was an injured bird (see Gibson, 1954).

COMMON GULL *Larus canus* L.

This is the commonest gull on Arran. It nests at many of the hill-lochs, sometimes in fairly large colonies; nearly every small hill-loch in the north has common gulls nesting close by. It is very common along the shore at all seasons of the year. It apparently no longer nests on Holy Island or Pladda.

GLAUCCUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus* Gunn.

I have seen this bird several times in mid-winter. It is possibly a fairly regular winter visitor in small numbers.

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucoideus* Meyer

William Thompson (in the *Birds of Ireland*, 1853) records that some years before 1840 six or eight Iceland gulls had been seen at Brodick at very close range "stationed on a manure heap before a still," a very curious spot; they were extremely tame. This seems a somewhat doubtful record. There are other records, all unsatisfactory.

LITTLE GULL *Larus minutus* Pall.

The *Birds of Scotland* records that Mrs. Winifred Boyd Watt saw a little gull on a sandbank at the mouth of the River Rosa in 1933.

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus* L.

There is one small colony of black-headed gulls on Arran, at a small hill-loch near the centre of the island. They began to nest there about ten years ago. Birds are often seen along the shore in summer and in winter this gull is relatively common.

SABINE'S GULL *Xema sabini* (Sabine)

The one certain record of a Sabine's gull in the Clyde area comes from Arran. On 24th September, 1897, John Paterson received a specimen sent to him by Dr. Neil Fullarton, of Lamlash. It was an immature bird, and was captured in an exhausted state at Slidderly. It was exhibited on 26th October at the Natural History Society of Glasgow, and was later presented to the Royal Scottish Museum (*Proc. N.H.S. Glasgow*, 5NS: 289; *Ann. Scot. Nat. Hist.*, 1898: 52-53).

KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla* (L.)

The kittiwake is a common visitor offshore in summer, but I know of no nesting record for Arran. The nearest nesting site is Ailsa Craig, where over 7,500 pairs nest. It occurs occasionally in the Clyde in winter but is not very common. I saw four immature birds on Lochranza pier on 31st December, 1953, and there are other records. A pair, one of which has a damaged wing, has nested on Pladda since 1950 (see Gibson, 1954).

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo* L.

Common off-shore in summer. A few pairs nest on Holy Island and there is a large colony on Pladda. I have not yet found them nesting on Arran itself, although they may do so, and further information on this point would be welcome.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna macrura* Naumann.

A small colony nests on Pladda, and birds are fairly often seen off the Arran shores in summer. I have no knowledge of them nesting on Arran itself.

ROSEATE TERN *Sterna dougalli* Mont.

Occasionally seen off-shore during summer. This bird is increasing as a Clyde breeding species.

LITTLE TERN *Sterna albifrons* Pall.

Gray (1872) said "occasionally met with," but it is doubtful whether this actually refers to Arran. I can trace no other record.

SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis* Lath.

Gray (1872) said "I have seen this bird passing Lamlash on one or two occasions," and two were seen near Merkland Point on 10th August, 1933, by Mrs. Winifred Boyd Watt (*Scot. Nat.*, 1934: 8). These are the only records I can trace, but the sandwich tern now nests in increasing numbers in the Clyde area, so it may well be seen fairly often off the Arran shores.

RAZORBILL *Alca torda* L.

Fairly common visitor off-shore in summer; occasionally in winter. About 2,500 pairs nest on Ailsa.

GREAT AUK *Alca impennis* L.

A specimen obtained at St. Kilda was being brought up the Clyde in a yacht in 1821, but escaped off the island of Pladda while being allowed to bathe with a string attached to its leg (Gray, 1871).

LITTLE AUK *Plautus alle* (L.)

There seems to be one definite record; one on 10th January, 1874 (Gray, 1875). Gray also said "I have seen but two or three specimens taken in the district." This may or may not refer to Arran.

GUILLEMOT *Uria aalge* (Pontopp.)

Fairly common visitor off-shore in summer; occasionally in winter. Over 5,000 pairs nest on Ailsa.

BLACK GUILLEMOT *Uria grylle* (L.)

Occasionally seen off-shore. Gray (1872) reported it as "tolerably common, especially in Kilbrannon Sound. A few pairs nest on the west side of Arran (Kildonan), where I have seen them in full breeding dress." Whatever it may have done then I do not think it nests there now, since McWilliam (1936) and I have both searched for it without success. One or two pairs could easily be missed, however, and Mr. Archie Girvan told McWilliam in 1934 that he had seen birds fly out from Dippin Head. Definite information about the breeding of the black guillemot on Arran would be very welcome. Two pairs nested on Pladda in 1946 and 1947. This was the first breeding record and they have nested occasionally since then.

PUFFIN *Fratercula arctica* (L.)

Occasionally seen off-shore in summer. Not very common now but must have been a common visitor until about a quarter of a century ago, when the colony on Ailsa was still huge. There are now only about 300 pairs on Ailsa.

STOCK-DOVE *Columba oenas* L.

Thinly distributed as a breeding species throughout the island. In 1909 Thornton Mackeith found thirty pairs nesting in the ivy-covered cliffs between Kilpatrick Point and Corriecraive (*Glasgow Nat.*, 2: 23).

ROCK-DOVE *Columba livia* Gm.

Resident and not uncommon on the wilder parts of the Arran coast. A few pairs nest on Holy Island.

WOOD-PIGEON *Columba palumbus* L.

Common and widespread nesting species. Fairly large flocks in winter. Often seen at Pladda and has been killed at the light.

CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus* L.

Fairly common nesting species. Also nests at Holy Island and Pladda. Dr. Fullarton told John Paterson that at Dippin, on a 10th of April, he saw a flock of cuckoos arriving from the sea. One detached itself and sat on a tree; the others passed on. Cuckoos are commonly seen at Pladda on migration, and one was found dead on the island on 20th May, 1920.

BARN-OWL *Tyto alba* (Scop.)

A few pairs nest. Not common.

TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco* L.

Fairly common breeding species. Well distributed throughout the island.

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus* (L.)

Resident but not common. One was seen at Pladda light on 22nd February, 1919.

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus* (Pontopp.)

Resident and not uncommon. Well distributed throughout the island and often seen hunting on the moors. Birds often cross to Holy Island

and may nest there; one once passed a few feet above my rowing-boat. One was seen flying round the Holy Island light on night of 19th December, 1897.

NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus europaeus* L.

Summer visitor but not common. A few pairs nest on the moors. Has decreased greatly within the last fifty years. Birds have been seen occasionally on Holy Island.

SWIFT *Apus apus* (L.)

Small parties of birds are often seen flying high in summer. A few pairs nest, and it may be more common as a breeding species. Birds have occasionally been killed at Pladda light.

KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis* (L.)

Several pairs of kingfishers formerly nested regularly on Arran. They apparently became extinct, or very nearly so, but by 1934 they were reported as nesting again near Brodick and Machrie (*Glasgow Herald*, 8th September, 1934), and at the present time there is certainly one pair nesting near Brodick. There are occasional reports of birds seen elsewhere on the island and these are probably correct.

HOOPOE *Upupa epops* L.

On 23rd May, 1877, a hoopoe was shot at Douglie. It had been observed for several days frequenting a sand-bank where some starlings had their nests, or running about among the rushes in a marshy field close by. The bird appeared strong on the wing, and was very wild (*Proc. Nat. Hist. Soc. Glasgow*, 3: 255-256).

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major* (L.)

The great spotted woodpecker now nests not uncommonly in the woods around Brodick. Local opinion says they arrived there fifteen to twenty years ago. Birds are not infrequently reported from elsewhere on the island and they probably nest.

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis* L.

Common nesting species throughout the island; also nests on Holy Island and Pladda. Flocks often seen at Pladda lighthouse on migration, and in winter fairly large flocks are occasionally seen on Arran.

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica* L.

Common summer visitor. Nests at suitable sites throughout the island. Common at Pladda and Holy Island lights on migration. In olden times the swallow was a subject for legend and one of the old stories of hibernation concerns Arran. Edward Stanley in *A Familiar History of Birds* (1865 edition) wrote: "On the 2nd of November 1829, at Loch Ranza in the Island of Arran, a man, while digging in a place where a pond had been lately drawn off, discovered two swallows in a state of torpor; on placing them near the fire they recovered. One, unfortunately, escaped, but the other was kept by the man for the purpose of showing it to some scientific persons (How did he feed it?)."

HOUSE-MARTIN *Delichon urbica* (L.)

Common summer visitor. Nests at suitable sites throughout the island, including a fairly large colony on the Bennane Head cliffs at the south. Nested on Holy Island in 1955.

SAND-MARTIN *Riparia riparia* (L.)

Summer visitor; local and not so common as the house-martin. I know of one small colony in the south of Arran, one on the west side, and a few also nest on Holy Island. Occasionally seen at Pladda and Holy Island on migration.

GOLDEN ORIOLE *Oriolus oriolus* (L.)

In the spring of 1807 a golden oriole was killed at Lochranza (Fleming, *A History of British Animals*).

RAVEN *Corvus corax* L.

Eight or ten pairs nest throughout Arran, and two pairs nest pretty regularly on Holy Island.

CARRION-CROW *Corvus corone* L.

Not uncommon breeding species. Frequently interbreeds with hooded crow and hybrids now more common than pure-bred birds.

HOODED CROW *Corvus cornix* L.

Common breeding species, although much persecuted. Occasionally nests on Holy Island.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus* L.

There used to be three or four rookeries on Arran, but the bird was much persecuted and was finally exterminated as a breeding species many years ago; I do not think it has nested in any numbers since 1900. Rooks still visit the island and odd birds are occasionally seen on the shore, especially in winter.

JACKDAW *Corvus monedula* L.

Resident; common and widespread. Large flocks often seen in winter. A few pairs nest on Holy Island.

MAGPIE *Pica pica* (L.)

The magpie formerly nested in Arran but was exterminated as a breeding species many years ago, apparently during the 1870s. Stragglers visit the island from time to time.

JAY *Garrulus glandarius* (L.)

Formerly nested but has been extinct for over a century.

CHOUGH *Coracia pyrrhocorax* (L.)

The chough formerly nested in Arran but was probably never numerous. Gray (1872) recorded that a pair was shot in 1863 at Kilpatrick and that no choughs had been seen since then in any part of the island. I can trace no later record.

GREAT TIT *Parus major* L.

Resident. Common and widespread.

BLUE TIT *Parus caeruleus* L.

Resident. Common and widespread.

COAL-TIT *Parus ater* L.

Resident. Fairly common and widespread.

LONG-TAILED TIT *Aegithalos caudatus* (L.)

Resident and thinly distributed throughout the island. Troops of thirty or more occasionally seen in winter.

TREE-CREEPER *Certhia familiaris* L.

Resident. Fairly common in all wooded districts.

WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes* (L.)

Common nesting species throughout the island. One or two pairs nest on Holy Island. Often seen at Pladda on migration, and in severe winters.

DIPPER *Cinclus cinclus* (L.)

Fairly common and generally distributed on all suitable streams. Birds from Arran have been definitely assigned to the Irish race *Cinclus cinclus hibernicus* Hart. (*Ibis*, 1934: 58), and all the Arran dippers probably belong to this race.

MISTLE-THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus* L.

Common nesting species in all suitable localities throughout the island. Flocking is common in winter. Fairly often seen at Pladda.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris* L.

Common winter visitor, usually in small flocks. Often seen at Pladda lighthouse on migration.

SONG-THRUSH *Turdus ericetorum* Turton.

Common nesting species and widely distributed throughout the island; a few pairs nest on Holy Island and one pair nests on Pladda. Some of the small flocks seen on Arran in winter possibly contain birds of the so-called continental race *Turdus ericetorum philomelus* Brehm, which has been recorded from the neighbouring island of Butc. Flocks are often seen at Pladda on migration, and the Hebridean song-thrush *Turdus ericetorum hebridensis* Clarke has been killed at Pladda on both spring and autumn passage (*British Birds*, 32: 369).

REDWING *Turdus musicus* L.

Regular winter visitor, but not so common as the fieldfare. This is the bird most often killed at Pladda light on migration.

RING-OUZEL *Turdus torquatus* L.

In Gray's time the ring-ouzel was very numerous on Arran. Two remained on the island all winter in 1904-5 (*Ann. Scot. Nat. Hist.*, 1906: 142). Its numbers have declined very much since then but a few pairs still nest. It is seen from time to time on Pladda and has been killed at the light there; it has also been recorded from Holy Island.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula* L.

Very common and widely distributed; also nests on Holy Island and Pladda. Common at Pladda on migration.

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe* (L.)

Common summer visitor and widely distributed as a nesting species throughout the island; many nest on Holy Island and Pladda. Common at Pladda on migration, and birds belonging to the Greenland race *Oenanthe oenanthe leucorrhoa* (Gm.) have been killed at Pladda light.

STONECHAT *Saxicola torquata* (L.)

Gray (1872) recorded the stonechat as "abundant," and the whinchat as "very common," so presumably he regarded the stonechat as the commoner bird. At any rate, the reverse is true at the present time. The stonechat is thinly distributed as a breeding species throughout Arran, and on the Holy Island, where there is an abundance of suitable nesting sites, it nests fairly commonly. In 1948, a year when stonechats were reported as becoming scarce in the rest of the country, I found stonechats in seemingly incredible numbers on Holy Island. During the last week in March I combed the island thoroughly and estimated that well over fifty pairs were present. The island was literally alive with the birds; never in my life have I seen so many stonechats. Presumably migration accounted for most of these birds, but the lightkeeper told me that "large numbers" remained until May, and in the middle of June, on a visit made specially to see the stonechats, I estimated that over twenty pairs were nesting. I found three nests, and at one time seven cocks could be seen within a short distance from the lighthouse. That was a most exceptional year, although around eight or ten pairs usually nest on the island.

The stonechats occurring on Arran probably belong to the Hebridean race *Saxicola torquata theresae* Meinertz. They seemed to survive the severe winters of 1940-41 and 1946-47 very much better than the mainland birds.

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra* (L.)

Fairly common summer visitor and widely distributed as a nesting species. Much commoner than the stonechat on Arran, but the position is reversed on Holy Island. Often seen at Pladda on migration.

REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* (L.)

Summer visitor, not common, but a few pairs nest. Often seen at Pladda on migration, and occasionally killed at the light.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula* (L.)

Common nesting species and widely distributed, mainly near habitation. A pair nests near the lighthouse on Holy Island. Often seen at Pladda and Holy Island on migration.

GRASSHOPPER-WARBLER *Locustella naevia* (Bodd.)

Summer visitor; not uncommon breeding species, but local. In 1909 Mr. Thornton Mackeith found it extraordinarily common at Shiskin, by far the most abundant of all the warblers; "There must have been ten of these birds to one of any of the other warblers." That was an exceptional year.

SEDGE-WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* (L.)

Fairly common summer visitor and widely distributed as a nesting species. Often seen at Pladda and Holy Island on migration.

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla* (L.)

Gray (1872) said the blackcap was "sparingly distributed in cultivated districts." Whatever the position may have been in Gray's time I do not think the blackcap occurs on Arran now. I have never seen the bird. Single blackcaps were seen on Pladda on 12th and 13th October, 1920, and one bird, killed at the lantern on 15th October of the same year, was sent to the Rev. J. M. McWilliam.

GARDEN-WARBLER *Sylvia borin* (Bodd.)

Uncommon summer visitor and somewhat local.

WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis* Lath.

Summer visitor; common and widely distributed. Often seen at Pladda on migration.

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca* (L.)

Dr. Neil Fullarton recorded the lesser whitethroat for Arran, and John Paterson wrote in his diary for 1911 that "his description of its appearance and habits agree with classic and authoritative description." Paterson was extremely critical of all records of the lesser whitethroat in the Clyde area (see *Ann. Scot. Nat. Hist.*, 1899: 210-214), so it seems possible, from what he wrote in his diary, that he accepted Fullarton's record. The Report on Scottish Ornithology for 1920 recorded a few lesser whitethroats at Pladda on 12th May (*Scot. Nat.*, 1921: 143).

WILLOW-WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus* (L.)

Summer visitor; very common and widespread. Also nests on Holy Island. Common at Pladda on migration.

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita* (Vicill.)

Gray (1872) said that he "had not yet succeeded in getting specimens of the chiffchaff in Arran," but Dr. Fullarton told John Paterson in 1897 that he had noticed this bird in Arran for thirty years. Messrs. E. V. and A. D. Watson, in summer 1933, found the chiffchaff "present in fair numbers, especially round Brodick," and this remains roughly the position at present. The chiffchaff is a regular summer visitor to Arran in small numbers, nesting locally, and is not uncommon around Brodick, presumably attracted by the rhododendrons. For an interesting discussion of the relationship between the chiffchaff and rhododendron in Scotland see *Scot. Nat.*, 64: 114-116.

WOOD-WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* (Bechst.)

Regular summer visitor but not numerous; nests locally.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus* (L.)

Resident. Not uncommon and widely distributed. Small flocks in winter. Often noted at Pladda and Holy Island on migration.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata* (Pall.)

Summer visitor. Fairly common and widespread. Often noted at Pladda on passage; birds have been killed at the light.

HEDGE-SPARROW *Prunella modularis* (L.)

Resident. Very common and widely distributed. The hedge-sparrows breeding on Arran no doubt belong to the Hebridean race *Prunella modularis hebridum* Meinert. Small flocks are often seen at Pladda on spring and autumn passage, and some of these very possibly contain birds of the continental race *Prunella modularis modularis* (L.). I am not able to confirm this, however, for I have not yet taken the opportunity of examining hedge-sparrows killed at the Pladda light.

MEADOW-PIBIT *Anthus pratensis* (L.)

Common nesting species on all the moors. Also nests on Holy Island and Pladda, and common there on migration.

TREE-PIBIT *Anthus trivialis* (L.)

Gray (1872) recorded the tree-pibit as a common summer visitor, Mackenzie (1909) said "fairly common," and John Paterson often records it in his diaries. I do not think it is so common now, although it probably nests. Further information on its present status would be very welcome.

ROCK-PIBIT *Anthus spinoletta* (L.)

Very common all round the shore; also nests on Holy Island and Pladda.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba* L.

Resident. Common and widespread. A few pairs nest on Holy Island. Small flocks are not uncommonly seen on migration at Pladda and on Arran, and some of these birds are obviously white wagtails *Motacilla alba alba* L.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea* Tunst.

Resident. Fairly common and widely distributed.

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava* L.

Gray (1872) recorded the yellow wagtail as a common summer visitor to Arran, a statement which John Paterson "utterly disbelieved." Dr. Fullerton, however, told Paterson in 1911 that yellow wagtails could be seen occasionally in "fields just behind Lamash, where there are little brooks." Paterson had a high opinion of Dr. Fullerton as an observer and apparently accepted this, although he wrote that it seemed "just a little puzzling." Paterson also noted, without comment, that Fullerton had recognized a pair of blue-headed wagtails *Motacilla flava flava* L. on Arran in the 1890s (all from John Paterson's M.S. diary).

I do not quite know what to make of all this. There is certainly not much territory in Arran suitable for yellow wagtails. I have only once seen yellow wagtails in Arran—a pair in a field at the foot of Glen Sannox in August 1944, and at the time I was sure they belonged to the blue-headed race. A yellow wagtail was seen on Pladda on 20th September, 1920 (*Scot. Nat.*, 1921: 139).

WAXWING *Bombicilla garrulus* (L.)

There are several records of single birds seen on Arran during the great "invasion" of winter 1921-22. Three were repeatedly seen in

Brodict woods during winter 1945-46. One was found wounded near Brodict on 27th April, 1951 (*Scot. Nat.*, 65: 2).

GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor* L.

A great grey shrike was obtained at Auchencairn on 8th April, 1908, and was later exhibited to the Natural History Society of Glasgow (*Proc. N.H.S. Glasgow*, 8NS: 300).

STARLING *Sternus vulgaris* L.

Resident. Very common and widely distributed. Nests on Holy Island and Pladda. Flocks common on Arran in winter, and common at Pladda and Holy Island lights on migration. Several pairs of starlings nested on Pladda in December 1922 and actually reared their young (*Scot. Nat.*, 1923: 46).

GREENFINCH *Chloris chloris* (L.)

Resident. Common and widely distributed. Often seen at Pladda on migration.

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis* (L.)

Gray (1872) described the goldfinch as not uncommon. At present it is thinly distributed as a breeding species, and is rather local.

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus* (L.)

Fairly regular winter visitor; flocks of up to a dozen birds sometimes seen.

LINNET *Carduelis cannabina* (L.)

Fairly common nesting species and well distributed throughout the island. Small flocks often seen in winter. Occasionally reported from Pladda on migration. Linnets resident in Scotland have been named *Carduelis cannabina autochthona* Clancey; the range of this bird is at present imperfectly known, but it is probable that the Arran birds belong to this race.

TWITE *Carduelis flavirostris* (L.)

Thinly distributed as a breeding species throughout the island. It has nested on Pladda, where it is commonly seen on passage. Small flocks are occasionally seen in winter.

REDPOLL *Carduelis flammea* (L.)

Gray regarded the lesser redpoll as rather scarce, but John Paterson found the lesser redpoll very numerous on Arran in June 1911; in his diary he recorded that he had "never seen it more common." I would not go so far as this, but at present it nests not uncommonly in most suitable parts of the island. Small flocks of redpolls occur on Arran in autumn and winter, and they are often reported from Pladda on migration.

There are several records of mealy redpolls on Arran during the great immigration of winter 1910, and it is probable that birds of this race occur occasionally in some of the winter redpoll flocks. Both the lesser redpoll *Carduelis flammea cabaret* (P.L.S. Müll.) and mealy redpoll *Carduelis flammea flammea* (L.) have been killed at Pladda light.

BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* (L.)

Thinly distributed as a breeding species throughout the island and small flocks often seen in winter. At least one pair has been known to nest near the lighthouse on Holy Island for many years.

CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra* L.

William Evans wrote: "This species breeds, I believe, in the island of Arran, where, in the woods at Brodick Castle, I saw a pair in April of the present year" (*Ann. Scot. Nat. Hist.*, 1895: 145). Paterson (1901) said "may nest in small numbers at present on Arran"; this was presumably quoted from Evans since a search of Paterson's notebooks reveals no evidence that he himself ever saw crossbills on Arran. Mr. Tom Fraser saw a flock of six crossbills at Sannox for several days at the beginning of October 1953 (*Glasgow & W. Scot. Bird Bull.*, 3: 30).

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs* L.

Very common and widely distributed as a breeding species; also nests on Holy Island. Common at Pladda, Holy Island and on Arran on migration, and large flocks are fairly often seen on Arran in winter. Some of these birds possibly belong to the continental race *Fringilla coelebs coelebs* L. Chaffinches ringed in Belgium and recovered in Arran have been assigned to the central European race *Fringilla coelebs hortensis* Brehm.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla* L.

Seen occasionally in winter, but not common. Usually in ones and twos; I have never seen a flock.

YELLOW BUNTING *Emberiza citrinella* L.

Resident. Common and widely distributed. Also nests on Holy Island. Often seen at Pladda on migration.

CORN-BUNTING *Emberiza calandra* L.

Local and not common, but a few pairs nest. It was probably much commoner in Gray's time.

REED-BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus* (L.)

Resident. Nests in small numbers in all suitable places.

SNOW-BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis* (L.)

Small flocks are not infrequently seen in winter. Occasionally noted at Pladda on migration, and birds have been killed at the light.

HOUSE-SPARROW *Passer domesticus* (L.)

Very common. Nests everywhere near habitation, including Holy Island and Pladda.

TREE-SPARROW *Passer montanus* (L.)

In 1909 Mr. T. Thornton Mackeith saw tree-sparrows nesting in ivy-covered cliffs south of Kilpatrick Point (*Glasgow Nat.*, 2: 22). I know of no other record.

GAME LIST FOR ARRAN

YEAR	GROUSE	BLACK GROUSE	PHEASANT	PARTRIDGE	WOODCOCK	FLOWER	SNIFE	PIGEON	WILD FOWL
1906-1907	6,081	228	147	175	280	15	228	25	10
1907-1908	6,353	110	116	114	718	34	326	30	3
1908-1909	4,724	183	187	146	871	37	381	55	35
1909-1910	5,768	205	252	54	520	21	418	120	18
1910-1911	6,700	380	249	237	271	61	195	11	11
1911-1912	9,799	201	431	234	370	93	276	85	25
1912-1913	12,949	290	409	126	633	86	304	89	18
1913-1914	7,651	249	310	195	573	240	300	171	8
1914-1915	6,042	251	436	261	360	103	138	62	6
1915-1916	6,350	245	198	232	360	71	101	74	18
1916-1917	8,153	180	72	167	433	63	197	84	17
1917-1918	4,082	197	45	218	199	47	110	21	7
1918-1919	2,479	125	141	172	262	—	75	52	36
1919-1920	2,485	100	119	191	455	50	180	53	16
1920-1921	3,288	71	187	36	508	9	184	7	38
1921-1922	5,110	143	139	153	384	32	184	20	28
1922-1923	5,868	89	136	101	426	9	200	23	41
1923-1924	6,803	41	18	51	483	17	432	105	25
1924-1925	6,248	71	100	29	604	9	380	170	29
1925-1926	5,217	117	114	120	634	13	251	141	42
1926-1927	6,441	96	133	164	456	60	326	157	20
1927-1928	10,114	66	69	35	431	17	317	80	27
1928-1929	5,923	50	245	41	696	24	402	102	47
1929-1930	3,150	54	234	76	690	52	347	112	12
1930-1931	3,706	126	106	179	291	25	216	176	35
1931-1932	6,230	85	126	52	352	21	295	339	2
1932-1933	4,422	65	103	54	257	7	141	159	15
1933-1934	6,163	129	184	176	339	16	119	89	20
1934-1935	4,682	90	281	237	251	32	86	94	21
1935-1936	1,856	119	345	172	361	12	108	61	28
1936-1937	959	283	497	486	498	33	183	282	41
1937-1938	1,282	140	617	267	509	36	275	388	36
1938-1939	1,804	171	433	80	638	18	202	182	9
1939-1940	1,957	90	379	92	221	36	97	114	14
1940-1941	1,681	142	84	167	248	17	56	224	5
1941-1942	2,765	128	632	105	3	35	106	274	18
1942-1943	2,080	69	478	64	215	13	114	128	27
1943-1944	699	30	273	76	156	14	98	156	6
1944-1945	67	21	333	40	247	—	70	98	9
1945-1946	1	10	172	33	115	2	56	75	23
1946-1947	16	7	576	75	353	7	139	184	54
1947-1948	22	1	486	24	201	—	60	252	47
1948-1949	81	—	446	14	178	2	65	115	39
1949-1950	498	5	444	28	128	3	68	195	56
1950-1951	1,058	1	318	16	199	2	80	79	37
1951-1952	1,608	—	410	23	223	5	81	122	28
1952-1953	1,709	3	418	6	222	—	70	108	58
1953-1954	1,576	—	392	5	166	—	79	154	60
1954-1955	128	—	405	2	243	1	65	167	

A LIST OF THE BIRDS

THAT HAVE BEEN OBSERVED TO
BREED IN THE ISLAND OF ARRAN, SCOTLAND.

Since the year 1835, by

DR. MARTIN BARRY, M.D., F.R.S.

Falco chrpsætos

„ albicilla.

„ haliaëtus.

„ peregrinus.

„ subbuteo.

„ æsalon.

„ palumbarius.

„ nisus.

„ buteo.

„ lagopus.

„ gallicus.

„ cyaneus.

„ æruginosus.

Strix aluco.

„ flammea.

„ scop's.

„ passerina.

Lanius rufus.

Muscicapa atricapilla.

Cinclus aquaticus.

Turdus viscivorus.

„ musicus.

„ merula.

„ torquatus.

Accentor modularis.

Sylvia rubecula.

„ œnanthe.

„ atricapilla.

Sylvia cinerea.

„ trochilus.

Regulus cristatus.

„ ignicapillus.

Parus major.

„ œruleus.

„ cristatus.

„ caudatus.

Motacilla Yarrellii.

„ campestris.

Anthus arboreus.

„ pratensis.

„ Ricardi.

„ ruficularis.

„ obscurus.

Alauda arvensis.

„ alpestris.

Fringilla cœlebs.

„ montana.

„ domestica.

„ chloris.

„ spinus.

„ linaria.

Loxia curvirostra.

Sturnus vulgaris.

Pyrrhocorax graculus.

Corvus corax.

„ cornix.

<i>Corvus pica.</i>	<i>Scolopax gallinula.</i>
" <i>monedula.</i>	<i>Tringa pectoralis.</i>
<i>Picus viridis.</i>	" <i>variabilis.</i>
" <i>major.</i>	<i>Gallinula Pusilla.</i>
" <i>tridactylus.</i>	" <i>chloropus.</i>
<i>Troglodytes Europæus.</i>	<i>Anas boschas.</i>
<i>Cuculus canorus.</i>	" <i>dispar.</i>
<i>Hirundo rustica.</i>	<i>Mergus serrator.</i>
" <i>urbica.</i>	<i>Podiceps minor.</i>
<i>Cypselus apus.</i>	<i>Uria troile.</i>
<i>Columba livia.</i>	<i>Mormon fratercula.</i>
" <i>palumbus.</i>	<i>Alca torda.</i>
" <i>turtur.</i>	<i>Carbo cormoranus.</i>
<i>Phasianus colchicus.</i>	<i>Sula bassana.</i>
<i>Tetrao urogallus.</i>	<i>Sterna arctica.</i>
<i>Perdix cinerea.</i>	" <i>minuta.</i>
<i>Œdicnemus crepitans.</i>	" <i>tenuirostris.</i>
<i>Charadrius pluvialis.</i>	<i>Larus tridactylus.</i>
" <i>morinellus.</i>	" <i>fuscus.</i>
<i>Streptilas interpres.</i>	" <i>argentatus.</i>
<i>Hæmalopus ostralegus.</i>	" <i>ichthytaëos.</i>
<i>Scolopax rusticola.</i>	" <i>Richardsoni.</i>
" <i>major.</i>	<i>Puffinus anglorum.</i>

NOTE.—I believe that this is the first time that the Aigle Jean-le Blanc *Circæetus gallicus* (vieillot) has occurred in Scotland. I have several times seen specimens in Ireland; the last one was nailed up to warn the smaller fry not to steal poultry. Having met with this bird in the South of France, and considering its immense power of flight, I wonder at its not being more often found in these Isles; in hard times it frequently has to go 100 miles for a breakfast.

Dr. BRAUDT tells me that my red throated pipet is not a good species; I will allow that it comes very near *pratensis* or *cervinus*, and that is the reason it gets overlooked; but I am persuaded it is a distinct bird; I have received a nest with the old birds from Uist, taken May 4th.

I have just discovered my pair of Hybred Ducks, obtained by me in the Island of Arran, June 11th, 1847, to be Steller's

Western Duck, *Somateria dispar*, of some little rarity. In the Spring of 1845, I saw a pair frequenting the cliffs of the Isle of Islay, but my stay being short, I did not procure them. A severe winter often drives birds out of their usual routine, and a few odd pairs get located temporarily a long way from their breeding haunts, but seldom make it a permanency.

It is strange to find the slender billed tern *Anous tenuirostris* breeding so far north—(my pair of birds were shot on the Island of Arran, and three eggs obtained June 10th, 1844)—but I have a very fine specimen of *Anous stolidus*, the allied species from Dingle Bay.

The Great Black-headed Gull *Larus ichthyætos* was obtained by myself on the Island of Arran, June 5th, 1844, with the eggs, and is a splendid acquisition to my cabinet; I value it now much more than when I first obtained it. This bird is common in Norway, and I have seen it in various parts of the Baltic, but I never met with it in Scotland before or since.

My beautiful specimen of Macqueen's Bustard *Otis Macqueeni* obtained in company with the little Bustard near Harwich, 1823, since I have shown it to Dr. THIENEMAN, seems likely to run the risk of being re-christened; at any rate, I feel confident it is distinct from *Houbara*, which is a much larger bird.

I have just received an immature specimen, identical with my Chesnut-breasted Goose, which was shot in Kilkerrin Bay, Galway 1828, from my friend on the Gambia, his specimen is not so rich in color, but exhibits a greater development, approaching a spur on the wing. I am also informed that it is found in South America, I therefore set my Irish specimen down as a decided straggler.

My last oological curiosity is that wild bird, the Eider Duck, nesting in a washing bowl close to an inhabited hut; this is quite as quaint as Dr. BRAUDT'S large German pipe being taken possession of by a pair of Wrynecks.

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There are also many short notes, which are referred to throughout the paper under the species concerned.

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