

Rare Breeding Birds in Ireland in 2013

The Annual Report of the Irish Rare Breeding Birds Panel (IRBBP)

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Review of the year 2013

This report, covering the 2013 breeding season, shows a picture of mixed fortunes for our rarest breeding birds with the consolidation of recent arrivals; Whooper Swan (scientific names are given in the 'Species accounts' section), Little Egret, Great Skua, Mediterranean Gull, Great Spotted Woodpecker and Bearded Tit, but offset by the continued decline of such specialised upland species as Red-throated Diver, Hen Harrier and Ring Ouzel.

Red-necked Phalarope and White Wagtail were exciting recent breeders, whilst the fortunes of once widespread

species like the Lapwing and Curlew continue to falter, and only a few pairs of Corncrakes nested in the Shannon Callows. Three pairs of White-tailed Eagles and two pairs of Golden Eagles, all from the Golden Eagle Trust re-introduction projects, successfully bred with one pair of White-tailed Eagles rearing two chicks, and two pairs of Golden Eagles rearing one chick each.

The low density of Ireland's rarer breeding species, coupled with a similarly low density of observers, continues to

Plate 23. Red Kite (Michael O'Clery).

present a considerable challenge in recording their status and distribution. Consequently, the information reported here relies heavily upon a small number of committed fieldworkers who track down these rarer breeding species and faithfully submit their observations to the Irish Rare Breeding Birds Panel (IRBBP) each year. Nevertheless, as will become clear from reading this report, the record is far from complete. Many skilful birders still forget to submit their sightings by the end of each breeding season, thus hindering our ability to report back as soon as possible to the conservation bodies and wider birdwatching community. However, any late submissions and updates to published records are still most welcome. All rare breeding bird information, both recent and historic, is regarded by the panel as being strictly confidential. It is stored in a secure environment and is used solely for the benefit of conservation. To help us continue and maintain the definitive archive of rare breeding bird records in Ireland, please send any you think may be valuable to: secretary.irbbp@gmail.com.

Membership of IRBBP changed again during 2013 when James Robinson (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Northern Ireland) left Belfast to take up a senior role at RSPB Sandy, Bedfordshire, and in his place Stephen Newton (BirdWatch Ireland) was appointed as IRBBP Chairman. David Tierney (National Parks and Wildlife Service), Neil McCulloch (Northern Ireland Environment Agency), Chris Murphy (Northern Ireland Birdwatchers' Association), Paul Hillis and Ken Perry (Honorary Secretary) continue to serve on the panel.

Species accounts

The following data covers observations of both confirmed rare breeding birds, and those species recorded present during the 2013 breeding season, but not known to have bred. We also report on several species which have never bred in Ireland but have the potential to do so in the future. These include Osprey and Hobby, for which there are regular breeding season observations. For the purposes of this, we limit consideration of observations to the period May to July (inclusive) to exclude non-breeding migrants, except where earlier or later records might prove breeding.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Antrim One, Portmore Lough, 16 June.

A scattering of single birds continue to summer each year, and breeding is understood to have taken place at Inch Lake (Donegal), Fermanagh, and at sites in Londonderry (Lough Beg).

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus* [Non-native]

Donegal Two adults bred at Inch Lake and were observed through May and June and seen to have successfully fledged three cygnets. The origin of these non-native resident birds is unknown.

Common Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Wexford Up to four pairs, Tacumshin Lake, 12 May.

Wicklow Pair, Kilcoole, 3 May (no evidence of breeding).

No evidence of breeding at Tacumshin Lake, but with four males and four females present this observation was interesting.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Antrim One pair, Portmore Lough, 4 May, female with five ducklings Lough Neagh, 5 July and another with seven, 15 July.

Armagh One pair, Oxford Island, 1 May, four females, Lough Neagh, with 8,6,2 and 1 duckling, 3 July and one elsewhere with six ducklings, 15 July.

Down Male, Portavoe Reservoir, Bangor, 27 April; pair, RSPB Belfast Lough, 18 April.

Lough Neagh Female with six ducklings, Blackers Rock, 11 June.

Wexford Seven pairs, Inish, Lady's Island Lake, mid-May; three pairs, Tacumshin Lake, 2 June; a female with seven ducklings, Lady's Island Lake, 1 July.

Wicklow Two males and one female, Kilcoole, various dates throughout May (no evidence of breeding).

Away from the two strongholds of Lady's Island (Wexford) and Lough Neagh, the only records indicating actual breeding were from Antrim.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Antrim One pair, Portmore Lough RSPB reserve, 12 May.

Dublin Male, North Bull Island, 22 May.

Limerick Male, Coonagh, 5 May.

Tipperary Male, near Nenagh, 13 June.

Wexford Two males, Tacumshin Lake, 6 May, another male, 11 May.

No females reported from these locations or any subsequent signs of breeding.

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Antrim One pair, Portmore Lough RSPB reserve, mid-May.

Down Two males, RSPB Belfast Lough, 18 April.

Offaly One pair, possibly breeding, Drinagh Wetlands, Boora, 17 June.

Wexford Up to two males, Tacumshin, 6–25 May; three pairs, Inish, Lady's Island Lake, mid-May.

Wicklow Two males and one female at Kilcoole on various dates throughout May (no evidence of breeding).

2012: Wicklow One pair made two breeding attempts at Webb's field, Kilcoole: both male and female seen throughout May; female seen entering nest site in May 2012 but this attempt is presumed to have ended in failure. This was followed by a sighting of a female with two ducklings on 24 July 2012 believed to be from a second nesting attempt. Always an elusive, though widespread, species when breeding, and probably only a small proportion of those nesting are detected.

Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Armagh 13-16 females with 35-42 ducklings, 16 June, 3 and 15 July.

Armagh/Down Three-five females with 19-22 ducklings, 3 and 15 July. All at Lough Neagh with maximum numbers comprising all observations and minima are corrected for possible double-counting.

Greater Scaup *Aythya marila*

No reports were received from observers for the 2013 breeding season.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

No reports were received from observers for the 2013 breeding season.

Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Tyrone Lough Neagh: Flock of five, Reedy Flat, 31 July.

Though a few birds are known to summer, breeding is still extremely infrequent.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Armagh A redhead, probable eclipse male, Lough Neagh, 3 July.

Wicklow Two males, Vartry Reservoir, 13 January–20 May. Five males and one redhead, Glendalough upper lake, 25 May.

Goosanders breeding in Ireland have been largely confined to the Avonmore River in Co. Wicklow since 1994 where nestbox occupancy and productivity continued to be studied in 2013, and where breeding performance appeared low due, in part, to egg predation by Pine Martens *Martes martes*.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Shannon Callows A calling bird in typical habitat, May.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Offaly 130 pairs recorded in spring at the Grey Partridge Conservation Project area, Boora; chick survival up to six weeks old was good (44.7%) and autumn covey size of 7.75 was high (Buckley 2014).

The population in this intensively managed area is thriving and predator control clearly benefits other priority species [see Lapwing account].

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Donegal Four pairs recorded at 'traditional' breeding loughs; two of these successfully reared young (Hamilton 2013).

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

Donegal One, Porthall, 5–8 July.

Down One, Hillsborough Lake, 23 May.

Although there was no nesting attempt in 2013, observations during the 2008 and 2009 breeding seasons, and more recently, point to possible future breeding.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Down Three pairs nested successfully at Carlingford Lough and three also at Strangford Lough.

Mayo Two birds observed, Achill Island, 3 June.

Wexford Two nests, western shore of Lady's Island Lake, April–May. Numbers are now getting so large that it is well beyond the

scope of Ireland's small band of ornithologists to count the breeding pairs accurately each year. Of note was the second confirmed nesting in Northern Ireland, some 16 years after Ireland's first in Co. Waterford in 1997.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Breeding occurred at an undisclosed site in 2011 and 2012, but no observations were reported during 2013.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Down Eight pairs nested successfully, and produced sixteen chicks.

Dublin Five pairs, North Co. Dublin, mid-May, but none bred successfully.

Wicklow Fourteen breeding pairs produced twenty-nine young; nest histories of a further 15 pairs were not followed in detail.

Breeding by reintroduced birds continues in Counties Down, Dublin and Wicklow. Prior to any releases a pair had nested, unsuccessfully, in Co. Antrim in 2002. In Northern Ireland, since reintroductions began in 2008, the success of the first Irish-born chicks in July 2010 has been offset by at least five killed as a result of poisoning. In the Republic of Ireland there were thirty-four territorial pairs and twenty-three pairs nested producing twenty-nine chicks.

White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*

Antrim One tagged bird, Mullaghsandal, 29 May.

Clare One pair bred successfully, Lough Derg, 8 May.

Waterford One, Knockmealdown Mountains, 16–23 May.

White-tailed Eagles bred successfully in Ireland in 2013 for the first time in over 100 years. Ten pairs held territory in 2013 in Counties Clare, Galway and Kerry from which at least five pairs built nests and three pairs laid eggs, but it was a pair which nested in Co. Clare that successfully fledged two chicks. There had been an unsuccessful first nesting attempt in 2012, but Allan Mee of the Golden Eagle Trust reports that with 100 eagles released over the five-year release phase of the programme (2007–11), and allowing for 27 eagles recovered dead (2007–13), there is a strong indication that Ireland now has the basis for a viable self-sustaining breeding population.

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Antrim Adult hunting, Portmores Lough, 11–15 May.

Limerick One, Lough Gur, 20 May.

Wexford One male, Tacumshin Lake, 3 May; one, Tacumshin Lake, 13–15 May; two adults, Tacumshin Lake, 19 May.

Wicklow Four different female/immature birds seen at Kilcoole and Newcastle during 10–12 May (all thought to be migrants); one, Five Mile Point, 26 May.

Despite the triumph in 2011 when three young fledged in Co. Down, it was disappointing to note that there was no breeding attempt in 2012 or 2013, but with the frequency of birds across at least four counties it is unlikely to be too long before another breeding event.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Derry Female hunting, Lough Beg, 9 May.

Monaghan Two breeding pairs fledged two young at an undisclosed site, May.

The Golden Eagle Trust (funded by NPWS) was involved in Hen Harrier uplands habitat research as there has been significant reductions over the past decade in breeding success by harriers and other species (Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*, Curlew) on six SPA's designated as such for their breeding Hen Harriers.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

Antrim One adult, Antrim Plateau, 20–21 June.

Down One adult, near Lough Cowey, 21 June.

Wexford One, Tacumshin, 8 June.

This species, which last bred in 1971, remains a scarce and irregular passage migrant and summer visitor.

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

Donegal Three territorial pairs were located in 2013. Two pairs bred successfully, rearing one chick each.

In total, ten wild bred chicks have fledged in Co. Donegal during 2007–2013. It is hoped that the wild bred young will start breeding in the coming years. The Golden Eagle Trust have successfully released 61 birds (2001–2012), but sadly, between a quarter and a half of these have died of rodenticide poisoning or from persecution, but despite these set-backs the future looks optimistic.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Down One, Dundrum Bay, 19 May.

Kerry One, Waterville, 19 May.

Wexford One, South Slob, 18–19 May; one Tacumshin, 18 June.

The indications provided by the Irish Birding and Northern Ireland Birdwatchers' Association (NIBA) websites all refer to occurrences of singles on migration, but unfortunately does not suggest any likelihood of imminent breeding.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Armagh One, Brackagh Moss, 31 July.

Derry Adult male, Coleraine, 3 July.

Wexford One, Tacumshin Lake, 24 May; two, 17–18 June; one, Scarawalsh Bridge, near Enniscorthy, 14 June; one, Tacumshin, 15 June.

Wicklow One unaged bird, Kilcoole, 5 June (migrant or summering bird).

The indications provided by the Irish Birding and NIBA websites from April to November, mostly of singles, suggest passage only, with no evidence of attempts to breed.

Corncrake *Crex crex*

Derry One calling, near Coleraine, 21 May.

Donegal Three calling, near Malin Head, late May.

Shannon Callows One calling bird returned to a former favoured breeding area in May.

The monitored core breeding areas of Donegal and West Connaught continued to hold a small but stable population in 2013 reversing a perceived indication of a population decline in 2012, but few observations were reported outside the core breeding areas, and some reports of calling birds may be regarded as probable migrants.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Antrim Thirty-four pairs bred successfully, Portmore Lough RSPB reserve, mid-May.

Mayo A total of 29 apparently occupied territories (probable nesting pairs), Inishkea Islands.

Offaly Sixty five nests recorded in the Grey Partridge Conservation Project area at Boora.

Wexford Four breeding pairs, Churchtown, Carnsore, 2 May.

Wicklow Twenty incubating birds, Webb's field, Kilcoole, 3 May. High chick mortality resulted in a maximum of eight fledglings confirmed in June.

The decline continues but numbers are still widely scattered and coverage of the population is very incomplete.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Wicklow One, Kilcoole, 1 June.

A pair was suspected to have bred in 2004 and 2007 (Brown 2007), and was proved in 2008 (Collins 2008), 2010 and 2011. No attempted breeding was reported in 2013.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Antrim Four pairs, Mullaghsandall area, 29 May; holding territory, Portmore Lough RSPB reserve, mid-May.

Cork One confirmed pair.

Donegal Seven confirmed pairs.

Galway Fifteen confirmed pairs.

Kerry Seven confirmed pairs.

Laos Three confirmed pairs.

Leitrim Six confirmed pairs.

Limerick One confirmed pair.

Monaghan One confirmed pair.

Offaly Four confirmed pairs.

Increased effort by BirdWatch Ireland, through the HELP Project, NPWS and RSPB suggests a minimal Irish population estimate of 50 pairs for this Red-listed species. This indicates a continued decline in breeding numbers in the uplands and bogs and justifies the need for urgent conservation action.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

No reports were received from observers for the 2013 breeding season.

Red-necked Phalarope

Phalaropus lobatus

Mayo Breeding pair at undisclosed coastal site A, 22 June; bred successfully and an adult and one juvenile were observed on 25 July.



Plate 24. Roseate Tern (Ita Martin).

Breeding also recorded at a second site.

Wexford Two, both probably male, Tacumshin, 10 June.

Breeding in 2013 was a follow up to confirmed breeding by at least one pair in 2012.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Antrim Three adults, off Rathlin Island, 19 June; one, Rathlin Island, 25 July.

Donegal One, Tory Island, 5 June.

Galway Three pairs, Inishshark Island, 6 June.

Mayo In the south, two pairs, Caher Island, 5 June; one pair nesting, Inishturk, 31 May. In the northwest part of the county, pairs nested successfully on Erris Head and Kid Island, and the definite attempt on Illanmaster was not followed to fledging; a further two territorial pairs were reported.

Annual coverage of all islands where breeding has occurred in recent years is not feasible, but the size of the Irish breeding population is presently thought to be 15–25 pairs.

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*

Dublin One pair probably nested at a North Co. Dublin estuary, and may have been successful; a pair were feeding an unringed fledgling (therefore not from Kilcoole or Baltray) on 30 July.

Louth A minimum of 102 pairs nested at Baltray rearing 193 young.

Mayo A total of 67 apparently incubating adults on the Inishkea Islands.

Wexford An estimated 215–220 nesting pairs at various sites in Wexford Harbour on 26 June.

Wicklow At least forty-five pairs bred, Kilcoole shingle beach, 30 May, and produced at least seventy-four chicks.

Similar to other tern species, the rains during the breeding season affected most breeding locations (Suddaby 2013). Survey teams in Counties Wicklow and Louth continue to do an excellent job in protecting the species (Doyle *et al.* 2013, Keogh *et al.* 2013).

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

Antrim One pair, Blue Circle Island, 30 April; confirmed breeding and present on 1 July.

Dublin A total of 1,213 pairs, Rockabill Island, nesting commenced 29 May. There was no attempt to nest at Dalkey Island in 2013, the first non-appearance since 2002.

Wexford A total of 155 breeding pairs recorded at Inish on Lady's Island Lake, mid-May. (Daly *et al.* 2013).

Mediterranean Gull

Larus melanocephalus

Antrim One adult, Larne Lough, 13 June; one, Ballygally, 16 July. Three pairs bred successfully, Blue Circle Island, 30 April–1 July.

Dublin One, Dun Laoghaire, 5 July.

Kerry Two, Ballinskelligs, 9 July.

Mayo Pair, Lough Mask, 13 June.

Midlands At least three pairs with a minimum of seven chicks at an undisclosed site, March–May.

Wexford Sixteen pairs, Inish, Lady's Island Lake, mid-May.

The breeding numbers of this species continues to increase.



Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis*

Cork One, Castletownbere, 25 May.

Kerry One, Black Rock, 17 June.

Meath One, Gormanston, 25 July.

Midlands One adult, hybridising with Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* at an undisclosed location, 3 March–3 July.

Wexford One, Tacumshin Lake, 20–23 July.

This species appears to be gaining a foothold in Ireland, having hybridised in a number of cases with Lesser Black-backed Gull.

Turtle Dove *Streptopella turtur*

No reports were received from observers for the 2013 breeding season.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Although traditional nest sites are lost each year, the overall number of registered Barn Owl sites continues to rise annually, largely due to increased survey effort and reports submitted to BirdWatch Ireland. Due to the large number of registered sites, it was not possible to visit all known sites in 2013 to assess occupancy. There were an estimated 136 active sites in 2013 recorded throughout the country based on recent evidence of occupation and through monitoring of breeding, with the majority of sites in Munster. The number of registered sites represents a portion of the actual population, which is estimated at between 400 and 500 pairs nationally. It was a poor breeding season in 2013, of 90 active sites where breeding success was accurately monitored, 61% of sites failed to breed, with 35 nests successfully fledging young and an average fledging success of 2.2 young (n = 26).

Plate 25. Barn Owl (Michael O'Clery).

Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus*

Donegal One adult, Aranmore Island, 29 May; 9 June–18 July.

In 2012, island residents reported the presence of two birds observed over the previous winter, but searches for resident birds during the period 2012–2013 have not yet been confirmed.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Down One, Castle Ward National Trust, Strangford Lough, 14–30 May and 10–18 June.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Wicklow One frequenting the Kilcoole, Newcastle and Blackditch East Coast Nature Reserve area from 10–19 May (migrant or summering bird; no evidence of breeding).

European Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

No reports were received from observers for the 2013 breeding season.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Dendrocopos major

Carlow One or possibly two birds present near Kildavin; old or trial nest holes found.

Down Two, Belvoir Forest, 7 May; one, Clandeboye, 18 May; one, Castlewelan, 30 May; two, Cnocnafeola Wood, Attical, 12 June; one, Annalong Valley, 22 June; pair nesting, Killyleagh, mid-June.

Dublin One, Newbridge Demesne, Donabate, 17 May; two adults with recently fledged juvenile at Kilternan, south Co. Dublin, June.

Fermanagh Two, Colebrooke, 25 May.

Kilkenny At least one bird present, close to site of occupied nest in 2012 (the 2012 tree had been cut down).

Louth One pair present at Barmeath; almost certainly bred.

Monaghan One, undisclosed site, May.

Tyrone Two, Drum Manor Forest, 20 May.

Wexford One nest found at Rathnure; a new site. No activity recorded at the site where nesting occurred in 2012, near Camolin. A single bird was present at another site in north Co. Wexford.

Wicklow 27 nests found, mainly in the eastern half of Wicklow. Also, recently fledged juveniles at two other sites, bringing the total number of pairs known to have bred in Co. Wicklow to 29. During the breeding season birds were present at twelve other locations and nesting was suspected at several of these.

Colonisation continues, especially in well-wooded core breeding woodlands in County Wicklow and in Northern Ireland in County Down, but distributional range is thought to have extended also to Armagh, Fermanagh and Tyrone. BirdWatch Ireland (Dick Coombes) has noted that the density of nests increased in some of the core areas, but expansion into other counties appears to be happening very slowly. They continue to monitor this growing population and their seasonal summary of over thirty breeding pairs is a minimum assessment. They have recorded breeding in a diversity of deciduous habitats with a preference for Oak woodland (22 nests) in 2013; other host tree species recorded were: Beech 1, Birch 1, Spanish Chestnut 1 and Scot's Pine 2.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*

Waterford One male, near Tramore, early April into June.

Wexford Displaying pair, Great Saltee Island, 9 March.

With the extension of species moving westwards from Britain into Ireland (e.g. Great Spotted Woodpecker, Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* and Common Redstart), perhaps it is possible that Firecrest will settle here at some future date. The Tramore sighting in April was one of an influx of three birds present in the county since March.

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

Wexford At least ten, Tacumshin, 27 April–13 July; and present at Ring Marsh, 21 June.

This is the third year of breeding in Ireland in 28 years. In previous invasions, the species was present in Louth briefly in 1966, and Wicklow from 1974–1981, with breeding proved in 1976 and 1982–1985, and occurrences (without proof of breeding) in Wexford in 1979 and Cork from 1979–1981 (Hutchinson 1989).

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Wicklow One present but not singing, Lough Dan, 5–11 June.

No breeding reports received in 2013.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Wicklow One male, Kilcoole, 18–30 June.

An unpaired male singing in stand of Sea Buckthorn *Hippophae rhamnoides* at Kilcoole is not thought to have found a mate.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Fermanagh Five singing, Lower Lough Erne Islands RSPB reserve, 7 June.

Kerry Singing male, Killarney, 17 and 31 May.

Monaghan Two singing males in an undisclosed location, May.

Savi's Warbler *Locustella luscinioides*

No reports were received from observers for the 2013 breeding season.

Common Reed Warbler

Acrocephalus scirpaceus

Armagh Six singing, Oxford Island, 30 May; five singing, Kinnego Bay, 30 June.

Down Two, Kinnegar Pond, Belfast Harbour Estate, 31 May; two, Lough Cowey, 31 May; one singing, Ballyherly Lough, Portaferry, 28 April; four singing, Ballyherly Lough, 26 May.

Tyrone One, Blacker's Rock, 11 June.

Wexford Three singing birds, Cahore Marsh, 18 May–5 June; two, Tacumshin Lake, 19 May.

Wicklow Three singing males, Ballygannon, 28 April, increased to at least five, 19 May; one singing male at Webb's field, Kilcoole, 8–25 June. Population expansion continues with migrants arriving back at their breeding sites in late April. Reports of observations are now numerous within a widespread breeding range which includes the East Coast Nature Reserve in Wicklow and Ballinafagh in Kildare where individuals are caught and ringed annually during the Constant Effort Scheme.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Donegal Male holding territory, near Aghla Beg.

Kerry A number of occupied territories in the MacGillicuddy's Reeks, May.

Reports of observations of breeding birds continue to decline, with no reports from outside Counties Donegal and Kerry. Since 1972 (Sharrock 1976) it appears to have disappeared from all other former haunts, but due to the remoteness of its preferred habitat, it is more often encountered by hill walkers and mountaineers, and there may yet be a breeding presence in some other remote mountainous areas.

Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

No reports were received from observers for the 2013 breeding season.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Antrim Three males in typical habitat, Glenwhirry, 17 May; one pair, Altnahinch, 19 May; one pair, Antrim Hills, 30 June.

Galway Singing Male, Inishee Island, 20 May; ten birds, six territories, Bishop's Island, 21 June.

Kildare Singing male, Timahoe East, 22 May.

Offaly Pair, Shannonbridge, 21 May; pair, Banagher, 3-9 June.

Shannon Callows At least eighteen breeding pairs were monitored in the callows during May. These probably include birds mentioned above in Galway and Offaly.

Wexford One, Ballycrystal, 12 May; two males in typical habitat, Mount Leinster, 15 June. No reports from several regions where in the past it had been a regular breeder.

Wicklow Pair, Coronation Plantation, 19 May-13 July; two males and one female agitated and alarm calling at same site 25 May.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Armagh One, Tandragee, 21 June.

Dublin One, North Bull Island, 8 May.

Wexford One, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve, 2 May.

Wicklow One male *flavissima*, Blackditch East Coast Nature Reserve, 26 April (migrant); one male *flavissima*, at Webb's field, Kilcoole, 3 May (migrant) with no sightings at this once traditional breeding location thereafter.

No breeding record in 2013. Formerly a regular breeder up to 1944 (Benington 1945, in Smith 1950), and irregular up to 2003 (Hillis 2005), and might just possibly breed again.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

Kerry One, Black Rock, 9 May.

No breeding reports recorded despite a first breeding record of the nominate race for Northern Ireland in 2012.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

No reports were received from observers for the 2013 breeding season.

Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Cork Two, Glengarriff, 5 July.

Meath One, at a regular breeding site near Athboy, 9 April.

Wexford Up to 30 birds, Raven Wood, 1 December 2013 to 23 February 2014; four, Rosslare Back Strand, 30 November.

There was failure by many spruce, larch and pine trees to produce crops of cones across Ireland in 2010–13 resulting in the annual irruption in autumn 2011 of Crossbills finding that there was an inadequate supply of cones to feed them through the winter months and into March (their normal breeding season). This significantly reduced the population distribution.

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Irish Rare Bird Report 2013

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Introduction

With the exception of 2011, when numbers were inflated by an incredible influx of Nearctic waders, perusal of Irish Rare Bird Reports since 2008 reveals a relative consistency in the yearly rarity total, with numbers varying little from the average. Nonetheless, each year develops a special character that is distinctly and uniquely different, and 2013 will be remembered as the year in which, after a period of relative quiet, Cork recovered the mantle of premier rarity county in Ireland. All three additions to the Irish List in 2013 were at classic birding locations in the county — Ballymacoda Bay struck first with a Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus* in July, and Cork's famous birding islands replied with a Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla* on Dursey Island in September and Ruby-

crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula* on Cape Clear Island in October. Two species occurred for the second time — Eastern Kingbird *Tyrannus tyrannus* (Galway) in September and Sykes's Warbler *Iduna rama* (Cork) in early October. The fifth record of both Booted Warbler *Iduna caligata* and Isabelline Shrike *Lanius isabellinus* were recorded in Wexford in September and November respectively. This report also contains details of the first Central Asian Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca balimodendri* (Louth) in 2011.

The year started with the usual scattering of wintering wildfowl, egrets and allies, and the regular Forster's Tern

Plate 26. Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla*, Dursey Island, Co. Cork, September 2013 (Richard Bonser).

Sterna forsteri in Galway. As always, this regular line-up was augmented by a few major rarities remaining from the previous year – in this case, the highlights were the American Coot *Fulica americana* in Galway and the Northern Harrier *Circus cyaneus hudsonius* at Tacumshin Lake (Wexford). Predictably, the year's first rarities were also water birds – the first new Forster's Tern for many years was seen in Wexford in January, but a Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans* in Waterford was probably the highlight in terms of rarity. Other gulls occurred in variable numbers – there was just a single American Herring Gull *Larus smithsonianus*, but a good influx of Kumlien's Gulls *Larus glaucooides kumlieni* occurred.

A February Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi* in Louth was a surprise, but less unusual was the occurrence later in the month of the first of a record number of Scandinavian Rock Pipits *Anthus petrosus littoralis*. As winter turned to spring, two wader species marked the turn of the season – a Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus* in Donegal represented the last gasp of winter while small numbers of Little Ringed Plovers *Charadrius dubius* at the end of March and start of April hinted at the long days to come. These were followed by the first Hobby *Falco subbuteo* of the year in mid-April and an early Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*.

Overall, numbers of rare spring passerines were lower than in recent years, with small numbers of Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator* and only one each of Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans* and Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*. Non-passerines were represented by an extremely photogenic summer-plumaged White-billed Diver *Gavia adamsii* in Galway in May and a large influx of Hobbys which began that month and continued strongly into June.

The summer months are always quieter for rarities but are a time when quality often replaces quantity. This year, the highlights came in the form of a Stone Curlew *Burbinus oedicephalus* in June (Cork), a Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus* and two Gull-billed Terns *Gelochelidon nilotica* at Tacumshin Lake (Wexford) in July, and a Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* in August (Wexford). Seawatching always provides great excitement and it arrived with a bang at the end of July with three Fea's/Zino's Petrels *Pterodroma feae/madeira* at Galley Head on the same date as a Wilson's Storm-petrel *Oceanites oceanicus* at Mizen Head. There were only a few more records of Wilson's Storm-petrel, in stark contrast to Fea's/Zino's Petrels which went on to have their best year ever, with seven more occurring during the classic period of the last two weeks of August and a further three on 15th September, although this time at different headlands!

The occurrence of two Greenish Warblers *Phylloscopus trochiloides* at the end of August and beginning of September signalled the start of a great run of rarities through September and into early October, mostly in Cork, which included three Nightingales *Luscinia megarhynchos*, a Bluethroat *Luscinia*

svecica, a Western Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus bonelli* and a Serin *Serinus serinus*. These headline rarities were backed up by a veritable explosion of Wrynecks *Jynx torquilla* and good numbers of Common Rosefinches *Carpodacus erythrinus* and Red-backed Shrikes *Lanius collurio*. However, some of the more regular rarities that were once a staple of autumn birding in the south-west continued runs of relatively poor years – there were only three Melodious Warblers *Hippolais polyglotta* and a single Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana*. For the third year in succession, no Icterine Warblers *Hippolais icterina* occurred – this is the first time they have missed three years in a row since they started being found regularly in 1955.

Not to be outdone, rarities originating from points west also arrived. There were good numbers of Baird's Sandpipers *Calidris bairdii*, Semipalmated Sandpipers *Calidris pusilla*, Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* and American Golden Plovers *Pluvialis dominica*, but numbers of White-rumped Sandpipers *Calidris fuscicollis* were down on recent years. In addition, yet another Northern Harrier arrived in south Wexford in October. However, most notable was the selection of Nearctic passerines that confirmed the year as one of the great years for that group. The Wilson's Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Eastern Kingbird already referred to were joined by two Red-eyed Vireos *Vireo olivaceus*, a Blackpoll Warbler *Setophaga striata*, a Yellow-rumped Warbler *Setophaga coronata* and a Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens* – giving a total of nine individuals of seven species.

The remainder of the year continued in fine vein, although, with the exception of a Thayer's Gull *Larus thayeri* in Donegal, not quite in the same class as earlier in the autumn. A small number of Siberian Chiffchaffs *Phylloscopus collybita tristis* were discovered, there was a significant influx of Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* and a very late Baird's Sandpiper in Kerry completed the line-up for the year.

The backbone of the IRBC's system for recording occurrences of rare birds in the Republic of Ireland is the Provisional List, published online at www.irbc.ie/provisional/provisional.php and updated on a monthly basis. Most of the data in this report were taken directly from the 2013 Provisional List. The IRBC expresses its sincere gratitude to all those who provided information during 2013, either directly or indirectly. Although there are no 2013 records from Northern Ireland in this report due to publication deadlines, we thank the members of the Northern Ireland Birdwatchers Association Rarities Committee (NIBARC) for the continued close working relationship between that body and the IRBC. The Committee also extends its thanks to Dr. Chris Gibbins, Joe Hobbs, Steve Howell, Bruce Mactavish, Killian Mullarney, Keith Naylor, Peter Pyle, David Sibley and Pat Smiddy for their invaluable assistance.

Records for 2014 (and previous years) should be sent to the following:

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Co. Down BT20 5RB

Website: www.nibirds.blogspot.ie/p/the-niba.html

Rarity Description forms may be downloaded from the IRBC website: www.irbc.ie/records/records.php.

Submission of photographs: We welcome photographs of rare and scarce birds, which can be sent to photoArchive@irbc.ie.

Rarities: The full list of taxa requiring substantiating documentation can be found at www.irbc.ie/records/deslist.php.

For a full explanation of the background and purpose of the list, see *Irish Birds* 7: 413 – 418 or online at www.irbc.ie/announcements/announce1.php.

2013 Systematic List

The sequence and scientific nomenclature largely follows British Ornithologists' Union (2013), but also incorporates recommendations of the Taxonomic Advisory Committee of the AERC (Crochet *et al.* 2010, Crochet *et al.* 2011, Crochet *et al.* 2012) and the Taxonomic Sub-committee of the British Ornithologists' Union (Sangster *et al.* 2013). Following the latest change, the most obvious difference to readers will be the new position of the falcons, now placed between the woodpeckers and passerines. Further details of taxonomic changes adopted by the IRBC can be viewed via the Announcements page on our website www.irbc.ie/announcements/announcements.php.

The three numbers in parentheses after rarer species refer respectively to (a) the total number of birds up to 31st

December 1949; (b) the total number of birds from 1st January 1950, up to, but not including, the current year; (c) the total number of new individuals for the current year. Some totals are minimum figures due to lack of precise numbers in historical texts – where this is the case, the total is succeeded by a '+'. In addition to the species totals, the total number of individuals being added to the species total is included immediately following the county name.

Tundra Bean Goose

Anser fabalis rossicus (0; 30; 0)

2012 Mayo Two: Two, Barranagh East, Mullet Peninsula, 18th January to 13th March, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*).

2012 Wicklow Two: Two, Kilcoole, 13th January to 14th February, photographed (R.H.Coomes *et al.*).

With the addition of these late records, including the first for Mayo, the total for winter 2011/2012 increases to 21, more than two-thirds of the overall total. Prior to that, multiple records had not occurred during the same winter. Since the first definitive record of this taxon in 1993, it has been significantly more frequent than Taiga Bean Goose *Anser fabalis fabalis*. In that time, there have been only five records of *A.f.fabalis*, involving eight birds, the most recent in 2005, compared to 14 records of 30 *A.f.rossicus*.

Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens* (58; 48; 1)

Donegal Zero: One, white morph, Sheskinmore Lake, from 7th November 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 579) remained to 29th March.

Kerry One: White morph adult, Carrahane and Black Rock Strands and Barrow Harbour, 16th September to 7th February 2014, photographed (D.A.O'Connor *et al.*).

Although there have been records from eleven counties since 1950, the vast majority of these have been in Wexford, with



Plate 27. Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens*, Black Rock Strand, Co. Kerry, September 2013 (David O'Connor).

only Kerry (now with eight) and Donegal (six) having had more than two. Indeed, the Kerry individual is the first there since two at Castlemaine in December 1989 and only the fifth Kerry record in total (albeit involving eight birds).

Cackling Goose *Branta hutchinsii* (0; 25; 0)

Mayo Zero: One, Termoncarragh, Mullet Peninsula, 16th February to 13th March, photographed (B.Howell, L.Howell *et al.*), presumed returning.

Sligo Zero: Up to three, Lissadell, from 16th October 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 579) remained to 24th February.

These records continue the strong pattern of occurrences in the north-west. While most early records were found in Wexford, there has been only one record there since 1978. Since 2000, all records have been in coastal counties between Clare and Down, with the majority of these in Mayo and Sligo. The reader's attention is directed to Appendix 6, which contains corrections to last year's Canada Goose review article (*Irish Birds* 9: 613–622).

Black Brant *Branta bernicla nigricans* (0; 38; 1)

Clare Zero: Adult, Newquay, 24th January to 14th February, photographed (D.Breen *et al.*), previously seen in Galway (*Irish Birds* 9: 580).

Dublin One: One, North Bull Island, 7th November (M.Silk).

Kerry Zero: Adult, Inch, 14th February (M.O'Connor) and, presumed same, Blennerville, 13th April (E.Carty), presumed returning; One, Barrow Harbour, 26th October to 12th November, photographed (G.Hunt) and, presumed same, Castlegregory and Scraggane, 17th November to 12th March 2014, photographed (M.O'Clery *et al.*), presumed returning.

Mayo Zero: One, Killala, 28th December (J.Donaldson), presumed returning.

Sligo Zero: Adult, Raghly, 8th November to 30th December, photographed (S.Feeney *et al.*), presumed returning.

Wexford Zero: Adult, Rosslare Back Strand, from 28th October 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 580) remained to 30th March; Adult, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve and Rosslare Back Strand, from 5th November 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 580) remained to 30th March; Adult, The Cull, 8th March (N.T.Keogh *et al.*) and, presumed same, Bannow Bay, 17th March (L.Ryan),

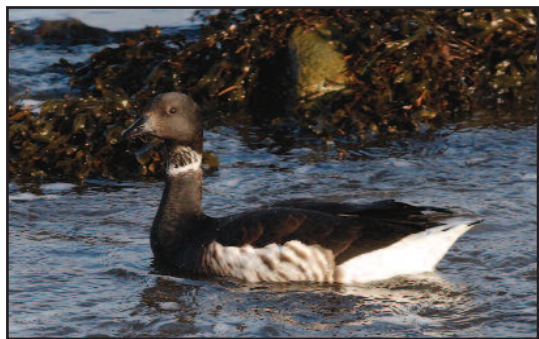


Plate 28. Black Brant *Branta bernicla nigricans*, Raghly, Co. Sligo, December 2013 (Seamus Feeney).

presumed returning; Adult, Rosslare Back Strand, 21st to 26th December, photographed (P.Kelly), presumed returning.

2012 Kerry One: One, Castlegregory, 6th January, photographed (D.A.O'Connor); The adult at Castlegregory from 22nd October to 16th November (*Irish Birds* 9: 580) remained until 17th November and was joined by a second adult, 5th to 17th November (M.O'Clery, D.A.O'Connor), this second individual also presumed returning.

The individual that added this taxon to the Galway list in 2012 wandered to Clare, where it became the first record for that county also! With that exception, and the first record in Dublin since 2001, occurrences for the year constitute the usual scattering of returning and wandering individuals. While recorded on the same day, the sightings in Kerry at Castlegregory (above) and Inch (*Irish Birds* 9: 580) in January 2012 are treated as referring to different birds notwithstanding that these locations are less than ten miles from each other as the goose flies!

Ruddy Shelduck

Tadorna ferruginea (74; 0; 0)

1871 Cork One: One, obtained, off Clonakilty, January (Harvey 1875).

This record is included following research by Pat Smiddy as it had not been published in the standard literature on Irish birds (Ussher & Warren 1900, Kennedy *et al.* 1954). Ruddy Shelduck is on the Irish list in Category B (see www.irbc.ie/topbar/categories.php) having occurred in numbers in 1886 and 1892, and singly on a number of other occasions, including one in March 1871. This occurrence coincides with that individual, obtained and verified, at Clonea Bog (Waterford) in March 1871 (Ussher & Warren 1900). Joshua Reuben Harvey (1804–1878) was a correspondent of William Thompson when the latter was writing his *Natural History of Ireland* (1849–51). He wrote a list of the birds of Cork for the British Association meeting in Cork in 1843, which was published in 1845 (Harvey 1845), with a revised edition published in 1875 (Harvey 1875). It seems likely that this record was simply overlooked because of the rather obscure nature of the place of publication. It is likely that the revised version of Harvey's paper was unknown to ornithologists at the time since it does not seem to be quoted in any source, although Ussher was aware of (or had access to) some 'notes' by Harvey (see under Common Crane in Ussher & Warren 1900).

American Wigeon

Anas americana (0; 131; 4)

Cork Two: Male, Cuskinny, 12th to 18th May, photographed (R.McLaughlin *et al.*); Male, The Gearagh, 29th September to 13th October, photographed (J.Lynch).

Donegal Two: Male, Drowes River, Tullaghan, 8th January to 24th February, photographed (B.Robson *et al.*), also seen in Leitrim; Male, Drowes River, Tullaghan, 31st October to 1st March 2014 (S.Feeney, D.Skehan), presumed returning, also seen in Leitrim; First-winter male,

Lagg, Malin Head, 23rd November to 21st February 2014 (T.Campbell, R.Murray, R.Smith).

Leitrim Zero: Male, Drowes River, Tullaghan, 8th January to 24th February, photographed (B.Robson *et al.*), also seen in Donegal; Male, Drowes River, Tullaghan, 31st October to 1st March 2014 (S.Feeney, D.Skehan), presumed returning, also seen in Donegal.

Wexford Zero: Male, Cahore Marsh, 9th to 23rd February (Sh.Farrell *et al.*), presumed returning.

The Drowes River in Tullaghan forms the border between Leitrim and Donegal and the individual there was seen on both sides of the river. Leitrim is a county that very rarely appears in these reports – this is only the fifth mention in 51 Irish Bird Reports since 1953.

American Black Duck

Anas rubripes (0; 17; 2)

Cork Two: Two males, Cockle Strand, Mizen Head and Crookhaven, 7th February to 9th March (D.Ballard *et al.*), photograph *Birdwatch* 250: 65.

Mayo Zero: Male, Sruhll Lough, Dooniver, Achill Island, from 13th September 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 581) remained to 4th April.

The Cork record is the first time that there have been two together in Ireland, although there were two in close proximity in Donegal in late 2007 (*Irish Birds* 8: 585 & 9: 79). There have now been six in Cork, which moves ahead of Wexford (four), and Kerry (three). Donegal and Mayo both have two, and Dublin and Kilkenny one each. Many of these have been returning birds and they have effectively been annual since 1993.

Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors* (3; 105; 4)

Cork One: Adult male, Ballycotton, 20th to 22nd October (D.O'Sullivan



Plate 29. Two American Black Ducks *Anas rubripes*, Crookhaven, Co. Cork, February 2013 (Sean Cronin).

et al.).

Dublin Zero: Adult female, North Bull Island, from 9th December 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 581) remained to 17th February.

Galway One: Eclipse male, Rahasane Turlough, 19th October (D.Breen).

Kerry One: Male, Ballylongford, 27th to 30th March (D.Farrar *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 69: 27.

Limerick One: Adult male, Coonagh, 3rd September, photographed (T.Tarpey).

While a low total in comparison to the previous three years (seven in both 2012 and 2011, and 19 in 2010), it is worth noting that, previous to those years, this total has only been exceeded twice – in 1995, when there were six, and 2005, when there were five. Although not returning for winter 2013/2014, the female in Dublin, first recorded in October 2005, has missed a winter before – she was absent in winter 2008/2009.

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis* (0; 26; 1)

Galway One: First-winter female, Murlach, Ballyconneely, 8th November to 5th December, photographed (D.Breen *et al.*).

This is only the second individual recorded in Galway, following a male that occurred at Loughrea in 2008 and 2009 (*Irish Birds* 9: 452 & 9: 681). There is a distinct northerly bias to records – there have been 17 in Ulster (having occurred in all Ulster counties except Monaghan) and a further three in Connaught (although there has yet to be a record in Mayo). By contrast, there have only been three in Munster and four in Leinster.

King Eider *Somateria spectabilis* (4; 17; 2)

Mayo Two: First-summer male, Inishkea Islands, 17th to 21st May, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*); Female, Blacksod Bay, Mullet Peninsula, 22nd November to 4th April 2014, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*).

This duo continues the recent increase in numbers. Following only two recorded each decade in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, twelve have occurred since the turn of the century. Although the increase has not been as steep, numbers in Britain have displayed a similar pattern, where ten-year totals from the 1970s of 26, 27 and 39 were followed by 51 in the 2000s (BBRC 2013).

Surf Scoter *Melanitta perspicillata* (6; 189; 18)

Cork Six: Male, Ballycotton, 16th June (O.Foley); Adult male, Sandy Cove, 27th October (K.Preston); First-winter male, Courtmacsherry, 3rd November to 6th April 2014, photographed (D.Rees, P.Wolstenholme *et al.*); Female, Coolbaun, Seven Heads, 10th November to 22nd January 2014 (P.Wolstenholme); Female or immature, Garrettstown, 17th November (R.O'Driscoll); One, Ballinwilling, 24th November to 1st December (A.Jeffery *et al.*).

Dublin One: Male, Balbriggan, 25th to 29th March (P.Kelly *et al.*).

Galway Two: Second calendar-year male, Manin Beg Strand, Ballyconneely, 2nd September, photographed (D.Breen); Female or immature, Kinvara, 19th November (P.Troake).

Kerry Three: Adult female, Brandon Bay, from 7th October 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 582) remained to 21st February; First-winter male, Reen Pier, Ballinskelligs, 6th January to 14th March (P.McDaid *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 69: 26; First-winter male, Rossbeigh and Inch, 24th April to 14th



Plate 30. Surf Scoter *Melanitta perspicillata* with Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*, Courtmacherry, Co. Cork, November 2013 (Richard T. Mills).

June, photographed (D.A.O'Connor *et al.*); Female, Inch Strand, 30th July (M.O'Clery); Female, Brandon Bay, 1st December (M.O'Clery), presumed returning.

Louth One: Male, Salterstown, 17th March (M.Carmody).

Meath Two: Male, Ben Head, 16th March to 6th April (A.G.Kelly *et al.*); A second male, Ben Head, 20th March (P.Phillips *et al.*).

Waterford One: First-winter male, The Cunnigar, Dungarvan, from 25th November (*Irish Birds* 9: 582) remained to 4th January; First-winter female, Dungarvan, 9th to 12th November (M.Cowming *et al.*).

Wexford Two: First-winter male, Rosslare, 16th March to 12th May (P.Kelly *et al.*); Adult male, Curracloe, 30th November (P.Kelly).

Totals for this species have been adjusted upwards by six, following a review of published records. Many earlier records were published without reference to whether a record referred to a new bird or a returning one. Underlying the statistics therefore are certain assumptions as to which records

refer to returning birds. Publishing these assumptions in this report would be unwieldy but a detailed spreadsheet is available on request from the Honorary Secretary.

White-billed Diver *Gavia adamsii* (0; 14; 2)

Galway One: Adult in summer plumage, Inishbofin, 18th to 23rd May (J.Brittain *et al.*), photograph *Birding World* 26: 179.

Kerry One: Adult, Castlegregory, 28th October to 3rd November, photographed (M.O'Clery *et al.*).

This is only the second year in which more than one has occurred, following two in 2011. Records show a westerly bias, with 11 on Atlantic coasts and only five in the Irish Sea. The Galway record increases to five the total for May, almost all on the West coast, mirroring a spring passage visible in western Scotland, particularly in the Outer Hebrides and Northern Isles (Hudson *et al.* 2009).

Fea's/Zino's Petrel

Pterodroma feae/madeira (0; 78; 13)

At Sea Zero: One, 100 nautical miles south of Fastnet, Western Approaches, 22nd August, photographed (R.McLaughlin).

Clare Four: One, Bridges of Ross, 16th August (K.Langdon); One, Bridges of Ross, 1025 hours, 17th August (V.Caschera *et al.*); Presumed same, Bridges of Ross, 1750 hours, 17th August (K.Langdon *et al.*); One, Fodry and Loop Head, 20th August (K.Langdon, K.de Rouck); One, Bridges of Ross, 15th September, photographed (V.Caschera *et al.*).

Cork Seven: Three, Galley Head, 31st July (C.Barton *et al.*); One, Galley Head, 17th August (P.Moore); One, Mizen Head, 22nd August (A.Duggan); One, Mizen Head, 15th September (O.Foley); One, Dursley Island, 23rd September (A.A.K.Lancaster).

Kerry One: One, Brandon Point, 15th September (S.Enright).

Wexford One: One, 12 miles off the Wexford coast, 21st September (B.Sheils).



Plate 31. White-billed Diver *Gavia adamsii*, Inishbofin, Co. Galway, May 2013 (John N. Murphy).



Plate 32. Continental Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*, Rosslare Harbour, Co. Wexford, December 2013 (Paul Kelly).

A record year, three higher than the total in 2007. Apart from the first record for Dursey Island, there is very little unusual about either the temporal or geographical pattern. Most were recorded in August, with smaller numbers in July and September and most occurred at well watched sea-watching sites on the west coast. The trio of birds at Galley Head were identified as separate individuals based on plumage differences.

Wilson's Storm-petrel

Oceanites oceanicus (2; 247; 5)

At Sea Zero: One, 100 nautical miles south of Fastnet, Western Approaches, 22nd August (R.McLaughlin).

Clare One: One, Bridges of Ross, 23rd August (N.T.Keogh *et al.*).

Cork Two: One, Mizen Head, 31st July (D.Ballard, P.Connaughton); One, Mizen Head, 15th September (O.Foley).

Kerry One: One, seven kilometres west of Inishtearaght, 7th August (E.Carty *et al.*).

Mayo One: One, Kilcummin Head, 18th September (R.Innes, C.Jones). In contrast with the preceding taxon, this is the lowest total since 2001 and well below the average of over 20 per year between 2003 and 2012.

Continental Cormorant

Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis (0; 26; 6)

Dublin Two: First-winter, Swords Estuary, 4th to 30th January, photographed (O.Foley *et al.*); First-winter, Swords Estuary, 28th January to 16th May, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*).

Wexford Four: Second calendar-year, Nethertown, from 6th September 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 582–583) remained to 1st January;

Second calendar-year and third calendar-year, Tacumshin Lake, 27th April to 5th May, photographed (P.Kelly); Second calendar-year, Lady's Island Lake, 12th May, photographed (P.Kelly); Adult, Rosslare Harbour, 27th December to 1st March 2014, photographed (P.Kelly).

2012 Cork One: One, Lough Aderra, 1st to 10th February, photographed (S.Ronayne *et al.*).

With recent multiple records from Dublin, Cork and Wexford, the northern bias referred to in the 2011 Irish Rare Bird Report (*Irish Birds* 9: 455) is very rapidly being eroded – northern records accounted for more than 90% of records up to 2011 but now account for less than 60%. Good photographs showing the gular pouch angle are crucial for acceptance, although even on this feature a small number of birds fall into the area of overlap between *P.c.carbo* and *P.c.sinensis* and cannot be safely identified.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* (161+; 42; 1)

Donegal Zero: One, Inch Island Lake, Lough Swilly, from 30th December 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 583) remained to 16th February.

Galway Zero: One, Clonboo, Muckrush and Curraghmore, from 22nd October 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 583) remained to 28th February.

Wexford One: Two, Tacumshin Lake, 24th February, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*), one presumed returning.

Wicklow Zero: One, Kilcoole, from 29th December 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 583) remained to 1st January.

Even allowing for presumed returning individuals, the occurrence of twelve since 2008 clearly suggests an upturn in fortunes for this species. This change reflects recent increases in the breeding population in Britain (Holling *et al.* 2013), which is the most likely source for Irish records.

Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* (27; 49; 1)

Cork One: First-summer, Cork City, 7th June (O.Foley).

More frequently encountered between March and May, this is only the seventh record for June, a month when spring records begin to tail off. Cork's 35 records account for approximately 45% of the total, with the remainder scattered through eighteen different counties, of which only Wexford manages to reach double figures.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* (0; 242; 8)

Donegal Zero: One, Tullyowen, St. Johnston, from 10th December 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 584) remained to 21st March, photographs *Birding World* 26: 3, *Birdwatch* 249: 69; Presumed same adult, Porthall, 4th to 8th July, photographed (B.Hegarty *et al.*).

Limerick Five: Five, Bruff, 15th February (D.McNamara).

Waterford Two: Up to two, Bunmahon, 21st December to 29th January 2014, photographed (M.Cowming Snr., D.Weldon *et al.*).

Wexford One: One, Fethard-on-Sea, 20th August (L.Ryan).

Excluding the years of the big influx from 2007 to 2009 when 223 occurred, eight is the highest annual total. The erratically fluctuating numbers for this species contrasts with the more steady increase in records of Great White Egret *Ardea alba*.

Great White Egret *Ardea alba* (0; 55; 4)

Donegal One: One, Blanket Nook, 10th October (D.McLaughlin, R.Wheeldon).

Dublin One: One, Dublin City Centre, 24th June (P.Kelly).

Galway One: One, Oranmore, 29th September (B.O'Donoghue).

Wicklow One: One, Blackditch ECNR, 30th April (E.Dempsey).

2012 Roscommon One: Adult, Shannon Callows, 18th to 20th April, photographed (M.Craven).

2000 Cork Zero: One, colour-ringed 28th May 2000 as a nestling in Loire-Atlantique (France), Barley Cove, 23rd August (Merne 2004), same as the individual reported later the same year in Wicklow and Cork in October and November respectively (*Irish Birds* 7: 85).

The Donegal record is the first for the county. Data brought to the attention of the committee by Pat Smiddy show that the 2000 Cork record was published in the 2002 Irish Ringing Report (Merne 2004) but not published in any Irish Rare Bird Report. Thus, the bird recorded in Wicklow in late October 2000 and subsequently in Cork in November was first seen in Ireland at Barley Cove in August. This prompts the obvious question – where was it between August and October? Movements of this bird perhaps support the suggestion made in *Irish Birds* 9: 584 that numbers may be overstated. However, it is likely that there has been a real increase here as European populations have increased dramatically since 1980, when the breeding range expanded north and west. There has also been a substantial increase in the wintering population in western and central Europe since 2000 (Ławicki 2014).

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* (103; 136; 34)

Cavan One: One, Lough Ramor, 21st December (P.Cullen).

Cork Four: Up to three, Timoleague, from 10th February 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 584) remained to 2nd February; One, Ballycotton, 7th December, photographed (O.Foley *et al.*); First-winter, Carrigrohane, Cork City, 26th December to 12th January 2014, photographed



Plate 33. Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*, St. Johnston, Co. Donegal, January 2013 (John N. Murphy).



Plate 34. Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*, Westport, Co. Mayo, January 2013 (Pat Lonergan).

(H.Hussey *et al.*); Two, Owenahincha Cross, 27th December to 12th January 2014 (J.Maguire *et al.*).

Donegal Three: Two, one of which had a yellow Darvic ring 05PA on the left leg, Dunfanaghy, 17th to 20th December, photographed (R.Sheppard *et al.*); One, Tory Island, 18th December (A.Meenan).

Galway Six: Maximum count of six, Renvyle, 14th to 15th December (P.Flaherty).

Kerry Three: One, Finian's Bay and Portmagee, 11th to 31st December, photographed (J.N.Murphy); One, Carrahan Strand, 12th December, photographed (D.A.O'Connor); Different individual, Akeragh Lough, 19th to 21st December (D.A.O'Connor *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 72: 26.

Mayo One: One, Kilmeena, 30th December to 2nd January 2014, photographed (D.McLoughlin *et al.*).

Waterford One: One, Tramore Back Strand, 10th November (D.McGrath).

Wexford Fifteen: Eleven, Killinick, 15th October (K.Furlong, J.Kelly, T.Murray, A.Walsh); Maximum count of eight, South Slob, early October (per J.Kelly) and three, Tagoat, for about two weeks until 11th October (per A.Walsh) and one, near Killinick, 9th November (K.Grace), all presumed to relate to the group at Killinick; One, North Slob NNR, 10th November (K.Grace); One, Tacumshin Lake, 22nd November to 14th December, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*); One, Tacumshin Lake, 13th to 14th December, photographed (P.Kelly); One, South Slob, 31st December to 9th February 2014 (T.Murray).

This series includes the first record for Cavan in yet another record year for this species – exceeding by two the previous record, set in 2009 and equalled in 2012. Since 2008, the annual average has been more than 25 and 152 individuals

have occurred (more than 55% of the total). Particularly noticeable is the arrival of 20 in December, a month that had previously only recorded three new birds. Additionally, this is the second winter in three years that has featured an arrival of similar scale, although the influx in 2011/2012 was in January 2012.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* (92; 139; 5)

Cork Two: One, Cork Opera House, Cork City, 14th February (O.Foley); One, Blarney, 14th to 28th November (D.Rees *et al.*).

Dublin One: Adult, North Bull Island, 10th to 11th March, photographed (P.McMahon *et al.*); Presumed same, over St. Anne's Park, 13th March (A.Power).

Kerry Zero: Adult, Cromane Harbour, from 16th November 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 585) remained to 17th February; Adult, Cromane Harbour, 1st October to 9th March 2014, photographed (F.King *et al.*), presumed returning.

Waterford Zero: Adult, The Cunnigar, Dungarvan, from 8th November 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 585) remained to 26th February; One, presumed same, Tramore Back Strand, 19th to 22nd July, photographed (D.Sinnott *et al.*); Adult, Dungarvan, 28th October to 15th February 2014, photographed (M.Cowming *et al.*), presumed returning.

Wexford Two: Up to two, Tacumshin Lake, 20th to 24th July, photographed (P.Kelly).

The adult in Kerry has now been recorded in ten calendar years, having first been recorded in November 2005. This species was conspicuous by its absence from P.G.Kennedy's

classic book, 'An Irish Sanctuary', the lovingly written treatise on the avifauna of the North Bull Island (Kennedy 1953). Since then, following its first in 1958, there have been five records there, involving six birds, most of which remained for many months.

Pied-billed Grebe

Podilymbus podiceps (0; 11; 1)

Mayo One: Adult in summer plumage, Sruhillbeg Lough, Achill Island, 14th May, photographed (M.O'Briain); Presumed same, Sruhillbeg Lough, Achill Island, 27th August to 15th November, photographed (J.Devlin *et al.*).

2012 Mayo Zero: One, Lough Baun, Louisburgh, 29th to 31st October (*Irish Birds* 9: 585) remained to 4th November.

The May record above is the first for the month since the species was added to the Irish list in Wexford in May 1987. As might be expected for a Nearctic vagrant, most records have been in western counties, although surprisingly there have been none in either Kerry or Galway.

Northern Harrier

Circus cyaneus hudsonius (0; 6; 1)

Wexford One: Juvenile female, Tacumshin Lake, also seen at Lady's Island Lake, Tacumshin Village and Ring Marsh, from 19th October 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 585) remained to 20th April, photograph *Birding World* 26: 93; Juvenile male, Tacumshin Lake, 15th October to 17th November (P.Kelly, J.M.Murphy *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 26: 401, *Birdwatch* 259: 12.

2012 Wexford One: Juvenile male, Churchtown and Tacumshin Lake, 6th to 20th October (N.Keogh, N.T.Keogh, T.Kilbane, K.Mullarney *et al.*), photograph *Birding World* 25: 467.

Tacumshin Lake continues its incredible run of records of this taxon – with the exception of one in Wicklow in 2010, all have occurred there and 2013 was the fourth year in succession



Plate 35. Northern Harrier *Circus cyaneus hudsonius*, Tacumshin Lake, Co. Wexford, October 2013 (Paul Kelly).

with records from this locality. The 2012 male showed only a faint fourth bar on P10. While a fourth bar on P10 of juvenile Northern Harrier is something that occurs in the majority of birds, a not insignificant number either lack, or show only a very faint, proximal fourth bar.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus* (23; 60; 3)

Dublin One: Adult male, Dublin Airport, 8th August (O.Foley).

Wexford Two: Second calendar-year female, Cahore Marsh, 22nd to 25th May (C.Foley, D.Foley *et al.*); One, Tacumshin Lake, 8th to 9th June (V.Caschera, J.F.Dowdall, K.Grace *et al.*).

There is a distinct easterly bias to records – 60 (almost three-quarters of the total) have occurred in east coast counties and, underlining its attraction to harriers, there have now been 20 recorded at Tacumshin Lake.

American Coot *Fulica americana* (0; 3; 0)

Mayo Zero: One, Murlach, Ballyconneely, from 28th November 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 588) remained to 13th April, photographs *Birding World* 26: 6, *Birdwatch* 249: 64.

Following the long gap after the first in 1981, this species has now been present for four consecutive calendar years (albeit involving two long staying birds) – one wonders how long it will be before the next record!

Crane *Grus grus* (29; 156; 4)

Dublin Two: One, Rogerstown, 6th April, photographed (L.Kane); Adult, Rogerstown, 9th to 27th September, photographed (H.Dawe, B.Sheils *et al.*).

Limerick One: One, Castleconnell, 20th September (P.Troake).

Wexford Zero: The group of five, mainly at Tacumshin Lake and South Slob, from 29th October 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 588) remained to 14th February.

Wicklow One: Adult, Newcastle and Kilcoole, 23rd November to 22nd March 2014, photographed (C.Cardiff, T.Cardiff *et al.*).

After two very good years during which 89 were recorded, numbers return to a more normal level – the average between 2000 and 2010 was just under three per year.

Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedipnemus* (15; 10; 1)

Cork One: One, Bantry, 3rd June (N.Leahy).

This is the sixth for Cork. All except one of that total have been on islands and this is the first on the Cork mainland in over a century, since an adult female was shot at Castletownshend in February 1913.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* (34; 116; 3)

Cork One: One, The Gearagh, 2nd to 5th October (A.Duggan *et al.*).

Meath Two: Two, Gormanston and Laytown, 22nd April, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*).

Records in October are unusual – the record at The Gearagh is only the ninth for October and only one of these was in the first half of the month. Indeed, there had previously been only three records between 7th August and 11th October.

American Golden Plover

Pluvialis dominica (1; 233; 26)

Clare One: Adult, Kilkee, 15th to 23rd September, photographed (J.F.Dowdall, K.Mullarney *et al.*).

Cork Three: One, Ballymaloe, 27th September (D.O'Sullivan); Adult, Dursey Island, 22nd October (K.Grace); One, Ballycotton, 2nd to 17th November (J.N.Murphy *et al.*).

Donegal One: Adult, Derrybeg, 20th September (C.Ingram, R.Sheppard).

Galway One: Juvenile, Rahasane Turlough, 20th September to 27th October (A.Ó'Dónaill *et al.*).

Kerry Two: One, Carrahane Strand, 24th September (E.Carty); One, Carrahane Strand, 25th October (E.Carty).

Louth One: Adult, The Hermitage, 15th September (B.Sheils).

Mayo Seven: Adult, Inishkeas, 17th May (D.Suddaby); Adult, Annagh Strand and Erris Head, 20th to 22nd August (M.Reilly *et al.*); Adult, Annagh Strand, 1st to 3rd September, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*); Adult, Tarmon Hill, Mullet Peninsula, 1st to 2nd September (D.Suddaby); Adult, Corragaun Lough, 14th September (P.Lonergan), photograph *Birding World* 26: 358; Adult, Annagh Strand, 4th to 10th October (D.Suddaby *et al.*); Juvenile, Leam Lough, Mullet Peninsula, 14th October (D.Suddaby).

Wexford Nine: One, Tacumshin Lake, 1st March (P.Kelly); Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 30th to 31st August, photographed (L.Feeney, P.Pycket *et al.*); Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 7th to 14th September, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*); Adult, Tacumshin Lake and Lady's Island Lake, 13th to 15th September, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*); Another adult, Lady's Island Lake, 15th to 29th September (K.Grace, P.Kelly *et al.*); Up to two adults, Tacumshin Lake, 21st to 29th September, photographed (S.Feeney, P.Kelly, S.Knott *et al.*); Adult, Rosslare, 29th September (P.Kelly); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 18th to 19th October (P.Kelly).

Wicklow One: One, Kilcoole, 28th April to 3rd May, photographed (N.Keogh, N.T.Keogh *et al.*).

This series includes the second record for Dursey Island (Cork). The recent upsurge in records has previously been commented on (*Irish Birds* 9: 589) and 26 in 2013 is the third highest annual total. This dramatic increase has also been apparent in Britain, where the period 2001 to 2010 accounted for 47% of the total between 1958 and 2010 (White & Kehoe 2014a). The equivalent figure for Ireland is more than 75%.

Little Ringed Plover

Charadrius dubius (0; 114; 15)

Cork Four: One, Kinsale, 2nd April (R.O'Driscoll); Adult, Dooniskey, 6th April, photographed (J.Lynch); One, Ballycotton, 9th April (D.O'Sullivan); One, Pilmore, 23rd August (D.O'Sullivan).

Wexford Seven: Two, Carnsore Point, 31st March (K.Grace); Adult male, Cahore Marsh, 7th to 8th April (Sh.Farrell *et al.*); One, Tacumshin Lake, 21st May, photographed (T.Moore); One, Churchtown, 30th June (T.Moore); One, Tacumshin Lake, 30th July (T.Moore); Presumed same, Tacumshin Lake, 3rd August (P.Kelly); One, Cahore Marsh, 28th September (Sh.Farrell, R.Vaughan).

Wicklow Four: Adult female, Kilcoole, 6th April (B.Haslam); One, Kilcoole, 1st June (N.T.Keogh); Juvenile, Poulaphuca Reservoir, 16th



Plate 36. American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica*, Corragaun Lough, Co. Mayo, September 2013 (Pat Lonergan).

September, photographed (S.Millar); Juvenile, Kilcoole, 27th September, photographed (N.T.Keogh).

The duo at Carnsore Point in March was seen to fly in off the sea and head northwards. The occurrence of four in Wicklow almost doubles the total for the county, where the previous five have all occurred since 1997. Additionally, the presence of two juveniles there, particularly the inland bird, seems suggestive of local breeding.

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus* (3; 18; 1)

Donegal One: One, Killybegs, 29th March (G.Thomas), photographs *Birding World* 26: 93, *Birdwatch* 251: 66 (Thomas 2013).

The lucky finder of this bird went on to find a Killdeer on his local patch in Lancashire (England) only ten days later (Thomas 2013) – clearly lightning can strike twice! Uniquely among vagrant waders from the Nearctic, Killdeer tend to be found through the winter, with this the third found in March. Indeed, they have never occurred in August, a month virtually synonymous with Nearctic waders, and only one has been found in September, the famous individual on North Bull Island (Dublin) in 1980.

Lesser Sand Plover

Charadrius mongolus (0; 0; 1)

Cork One: Adult, showing characteristics of *C.m.mongolus*, Ring Strand, Pilmore and Clonpriest (all in Ballymacoda Bay), 27th to 28th July (D.O'Sullivan *et al.*), photographs *Birdwatch* 255: 62, *Duch Birding* 35: 334, *Wings* 71: 27.



Plate 37. Lesser Sand Plover *Charadrius mongolus*, Ballymacoda, Co. Cork, July 2013 (Aidan G. Kelly).

One of the great finds of the year. While a Sand Plover had been expected for many years, it was somewhat surprising that it turned out to be a Lesser Sand Plover rather than a Greater Sand Plover *C.leschenaultii*. Five Lesser Sand Plovers have occurred in Britain since the first in 1991 (BBRC 2013),

whereas there have been 16 Greater Sand Plovers since the first in 1978 (Hudson *et al.* 2013). However, numbers have not been very different since 1990 with five of the former and only seven of the latter. It is interesting to note that the first accepted British record of both species occurred at Pagham Harbour, West Sussex – perhaps another reason for Dennis O’Sullivan to keep frequenting Ballymacoda!

Fortunately, this individual was in summer plumage, considerably simplifying the identification. The generally small size and proportionally short ‘nail’ fit Lesser Sand Plover better than even the shorter-billed *columbinus* race of Greater Sand Plover. In addition, the dark flank markings remove all doubt – on current knowledge, these are diagnostic for birds of the *mongolus* group of Lesser Sand Plover, sometimes suggested as a distinct species, Mongolian Plover. The thin black line separating the white throat from the reddish-orange breast is also a feature shown by *C.m.mongolus* and not by either *C.m.atrifrons* or *C.leschenaultii*. Identification of this species is well covered in Garner *et al.* (2003).

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus* (146; 150; 6)

Cork One: One, Ballycotton, 25th August (O.Foley).

Kerry Four: Up to four adults, Ballinskelligs, 23rd April to 1st May, photographed (P.McDaid *et al.*).

Wexford One: Female, Tacumshin Lake, 6th to 9th June (K.Mullarney *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 70: 26.

June records are unusual and the Wexford record is only the third for the month, following one at Slievenamon (Tipperary) in 1835 and one on Inishbofin (Galway) in 1992.



Plate 38. Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*, Tacumshin Lake, Co. Wexford, June 2013 (Victor Caschera).

Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii* (0; 136; 12)

Cork Two: Adult, Owenahincha, 26th August, photographed (C.Cronin); One, Ballycotton, 8th to 10th October (O.Foley *et al.*).

Donegal One: Juvenile, Fanad, 26th October (W.Farrelly).

Dublin One: One, Rogerstown, 13th September (Sh.Farrell).

Kerry Five: Juvenile, Ventry, 19th to 24th September, photographed (C.Foley *et al.*); Juvenile, Black Rock Strand, 24th September to 21st October (D.A.O'Connor *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 71: 26; Juvenile, Carrahane Strand, 27th to 30th September, photographed (E.Carty *et al.*); Juvenile, Derrymore Island, 28th September (K.Kelly); One, Blennerville, 28th December (M.Hanafin).

Mayo Two: Juvenile, Annagh Strand, 9th to 11th September, photographed (M.Reilly *et al.*); Juvenile, Ross Strand, Killala, 15th to 17th September (D.Charles *et al.*).

Wexford One: One, Tacumshin Lake, 30th to 31st August (L.Feeney, P.Pycket *et al.*).

An excellent year – only 2011 (14) and 2008 (12) had previously recorded more than ten in a year. Only eight records have occurred outside the classic autumn Nearctic wader window between August and October – three in July, two in November and one each in May, June and now December. The December record in Kerry is almost unprecedented – the previous latest was at nearby Black Rock Strand, from 30th November to 12th December 2012.

White-rumped Sandpiper

Calidris fuscicollis (0; 314; 10)

Cork One: Juvenile, Ballycotton, 31st October to 2nd November (D.O'Sullivan *et al.*).

Dublin One: Adult, Swords, 2nd to 4th September, photographed (P.J.O'Keefe *et al.*).

Galway One: Juvenile, Inishbofin, 8th to 9th October (A.McGeehan).

Kerry Two: Adult, Blennerville, 21st to 22nd July, photographed (D.A.O'Connor *et al.*); Juvenile, Blennerville, 3rd September (M.O'Clery).

Mayo One: Juvenile, Leam Lough, Mullet Peninsula, 14th October (D.Suddaby).

Wexford Four: Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 3rd June (K.Mullarney), photograph *Birding World* 26: 225; One, The Cull, 4th August (K.Grace); Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 6th to 11th August (J.M.Murphy *et al.*), photograph *Birding World* 26: 315; One, Tacumshin Lake, 21st August (P.Robinson, V.Tohill).

The worst year since 2009, when there were only four. As might be expected, the vast bulk of records are from coastal counties in the west and on the south coast as far as Wexford. Nonetheless, east coast records are far from unprecedented – the Dublin record is the 13th for Dublin and 46th for the east coast. The adult at Tacumshin Lake is the first to be found in June and the only months without records are March and April, although one in late February 1965 remained into March.

Semipalmated Sandpiper

Calidris pusilla (0; 177; 16)

Clare Two: One, Shannon Airport Lagoon, 30th August (O.Foley); Adult, Aughinish Island, 1st to 7th September, photographed (P.Troake).

Cork Two: Juvenile, Ring Strand and Pilmore Strand, 22nd September (D.O'Sullivan); Juvenile, Ballycotton, 26th October (O.Foley).

Donegal One: Juvenile, Derrybeg, 28th September to 5th October (D.Charles).

Kerry Two: Adult, Beale Strand, 11th to 17th September, photographed (D.Farrar *et al.*); One, Beale Strand, 13th September (I.Jones), in addition to the adult already present.

Mayo One: Juvenile, Bunlough Strand, Louisburgh, 7th September, photographed (D.Breen).

Wexford Seven: Three adults, Tacumshin Lake, 30th to 31st August, photographed (P.Kelly, K.Mullarney *et al.*); An additional adult, Tacumshin Lake, 31st August to 6th September, photographed (K.Mullarney *et al.*); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 1st to 14th September, photographed (A.G.Kelly *et al.*); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 13th to 23rd September, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 22nd to 27th September, photographed (P.Kelly, N.Keogh, N.T.Keogh *et al.*).

Wicklow One: Juvenile, Poulaphuca Reservoir, 9th to 10th September, photographed (S.Millar).

Another very good year for this species – third behind 2011 (63) and 1999 (18), and including the first record for Wicklow. The duo in Clare is also noteworthy as only four had previously occurred there. Timing of records in 2013 is normal – most records occur from the end of August through September. However, the late date of the Ballycotton bird on 26th October makes it the third latest ever; coincidentally both later records (29th October 2007 and 6th November 2010) were also at Ballycotton. This is one of the few species that has occurred more frequently in Ireland than in Britain, where there have been 115 records to the end of 2011 (BBRC 2013), compared to 173 in Ireland. Quite why this species more than



Plate 39. Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla*, Bunlough Strand, Co. Mayo, September 2013 (Dermod Breen).



Plate 40. Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*, Tory Island, Co. Donegal, October 2013 (Victor Caschera).

any other should be more common here is not immediately clear. Could it be that a higher proportion of those that arrive in Ireland are found? Perhaps this species gravitates more to well known, well-watched sites whereas others are distributed more widely?

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

Donegal One: Juvenile, Tory Island, 17th to 21st September, photographed (R.Rodgers).

Mayo Four: Two females, Inishkeas, 17th to 21st May, photographed (D.Suddaby); Two additional females, Inishkeas, 21st May, photographed (D.Suddaby).

Wexford Two: Female, Tacumshin Lake, 10th June, photographed (E.Dempsey et al.); Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 2nd August, photographed (P.Kelly et al.).

The Mayo records are the earliest ever recorded in Ireland – there had previously never been a record earlier than the last week of May. Most spring arrivals have been in June, while August records are also rare and the Wexford individual above is only the fourth for the month. Henceforth, these reports will only publish records of non-breeding birds and any breeding birds will be included in the Irish Rare Breeding Bird Report.

Terek Sandpiper

Xenus cinereus (0; 5; 1)

Wexford One: Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 9th July, photographed (K.Mullarney et al.).

The first for Ireland was as recently as 1996, also in Wexford, which now draws level with Kerry and Dublin on two each.



Plate 41. Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*, Murlach, Co. Galway, September 2013 (Dermot Breen).

This is the third in July, all of which have arrived between 9th and 11th. Five have been adults and the sole juvenile occurred in Kerry in 2004.

Spotted Sandpiper

Actitis macularius (1; 41; 2)

Donegal One: Juvenile, Tory Island, 5th to 6th October (V.Caschera, J.F.Dowdall, T.Murphy et al.), photograph *Wings* 72: 25.

Galway One: Juvenile, Inishmore, 7th October (P.Kelly).

2012 Clare One: Juvenile, Moyasta, 13th October to 3rd November, photographed (G.Butler, F.MacGabhann, T.Mee, J.N.Murphy, J.Tarpey et al.).

The tenth year in succession in which this species has occurred and this series includes the first for Donegal. Prior to 2004 it was genuinely rare here, with only 12 recorded. Since then, it has averaged over three per annum.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* (0; 138; 8)

Galway Two: Juvenile, Ballyconneely, 20th to 26th September (M.A.Harris, M.J.Harris et al.), photograph *Birdwatch* 257: 69; Juvenile, Muckrush, Lough Corrib, 4th to 5th October (A.Ó'Dónaill et al.).

Louth One: Adult, Dundalk, 29th April to 2nd May, photographed (E.Larrisey et al.).

Mayo One: First-summer, Inishkeas, 7th May, photographed (D.Suddaby).

Wexford Four: Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 27th April to 2nd May, photographed (P.Kelly et al.); One, Rosslare Back Strand, 16th July, photographed (K.Mullarney); Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 20th to 26th August, photographed (J.Cassidy, J.M.Murphy, J.Sheehan et al.); Juvenile, North Slob NNR, 15th to 25th September, photographed (B.Burke, A.Butler, T.Murray et al.).



Plate 42. Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*, Lady's Island Lake, Co. Wexford, February 2013 (John N. Murphy).

Along with 2006, the joint second best year ever – just three behind the total set in 2005. There is a history of spring records and the April and May birds neatly fit the pattern of a small peak in numbers around that time. The continued regularity of this species flags the extreme rarity of Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*, which has only occurred twice since 1983, despite the fact that up to the mid 1960s they occurred at roughly the same rate.

Long-billed Dowitcher

Limnodromus scolopaceus (2; 120; 1)

Wexford One: Adult winter, Lady's Island Lake and Tacumshin Lake, 14th January to 9th March (K.Mullarney *et al.*), photograph *Dutch Birding* 35: 48.

Winter records and long stays are relatively common – the average stay is almost 40 days and more than one-third of records are of birds staying for more than a week.

Little Auk *Alle alle* (90; 1807; -)

2008 Louth One: One, at sea, approximately 1.5 kilometres north of the Dunany Buoy, 4th September (D.Branagh).

This species was removed from consideration by the IRBC from 1st January 2012 (see www.irbc.ie/announcements/announce60.php). However, for completeness, records prior to that date will continue to be published, and species statistics will only reflect occurrences up to 31st December 2011. Although very unusual at this time of year, this record is not without precedent as one was collected after it hit the Arranmore Lighthouse (Donegal) in late August 1913 (Barrington 1913). This individual was



Plate 43. Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*, Tacumshin Lake, Co. Wexford, August 2013 (Paul Kelly).

watched at close quarters and all of the diagnostic features were noted.

Gull-billed Tern

Gelochelidon nilotica (0; 17; 2)

Wexford Two: Two adults, Tacumshin Lake, 3rd to 20th July, (K.Mullarney *et al.*), photograph *Birding World* 26: 272; One of this duo, Lady's Island Lake, 4th to 11th August, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*).

A classic mid-summer bird – twelve of the total have occurred in either June or July. This is the second time that two have occurred together – the previous occasion, in 2000, was also at Tacumshin Lake. The length of stay of these birds is noteworthy as they tend not to stay long. Eleven visits have been three days or less and only two others have stayed more than seven days – one at Tacumshin Lake in 1996 stayed for 15 days and one was seen for up to 14 days in the Courtmacsherry area of Cork in 1998.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* (0; 10; 1)

Wexford One: Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 23rd August (P.Kelly *et al.*), photograph *Birding World* 26: 317.

This is a big bird in more ways than one – it is both the largest tern on the planet and a very difficult bird to see in Ireland. With more than half of the total occurring in August, this is clearly the best month to see them. However, like this individual (the first for Wexford), many have only put in brief occurrences, often only a few hours. Only twice, and not since 1998, has one stayed for more than a day.

White-winged Black Tern

Chlidonias leucopterus (9; 86; 4)

Louth One: Juvenile, Cruisetown, 24th to 29th August, photographed (B.McCloskey *et al.*).

Meath One: Juvenile, Gormanston, 5th September (P.Kelly).

Wexford Two: Adult, Lady's Island Lake, 23rd to 26th May (D.Daly *et al.*); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 18th to 24th September, photographed (R.H.Coombes, D.Murphy *et al.*).

Occurrences of this species seem to be increasing – there were 12 in the 1980s, 15 in the 1990s, 25 in the 2000s and there have already been 10 in only four years since 2010. In common with seasonal patterns in Britain (White & Kehoe 2014a), there is a relatively small spring peak between mid-May and mid-June. Autumn numbers are higher and the season is more protracted – from mid-July through to a single November record with the vast majority in August and September.



Plate 44. White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*, Tacumshin Lake, Co. Wexford, September 2013 (Killian Mullarney).

Forster's Tern *Sterna forsteri* (0; 35; 2)

Cork One: First-winter, Garretstown, 14th December (O.Foley).

Dublin Zero: Adult winter, Rogerstown, Rush and Portrane, 29th September to 22nd October, photographed (P.J.O'Keeffe *et al.*), presumed same as Louth bird from previous years.

Galway Zero: Adult, Nimmo's Pier, Kinvara and Newtownlynch Pier, from 29th October 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 594) remained to 28th March; Adult, Galway Bay, 4th November to 4th December, photographed (T.Cuffe *et al.*), presumed returning.

Wexford One: First-winter, Lady's Island Lake, 20th January (K.Mullarney), photograph *Dutch Birding* 35: 50.

The first-winter individuals are the first new birds since 2008. It is interesting to note the absence of the adult that had

frequented Tacumshin Lake since 2008, thought by some to be the same as the returning Galway individual but treated as different in the statistics (see *Irish Birds* 9: 474–475).

Bonaparte's Gull

Chroicocephalus philadelphia (1; 66; 4)

Dublin One: Adult winter, Skerries, 2nd to 18th March, photographed (A.G.Kelly *et al.*); Adult winter, Rush, 17th October (M.Stewart), presumed returning.

Kerry One: Adult summer, Castlegregory, 13th to 14th May (M.O'Clery *et al.*), photographs *Birdwatch* 253: 66, *Wings* 70: 27.

Waterford One: Adult summer, between Ardmore and Whiting Bay, 9th July (S.Cronin).

Wexford One: Adult summer, Tacumshin Lake, 2nd to 13th May, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*).

Formerly a very rare bird, with only two records until 1980, each decade since has seen increasing numbers – there were eight in the 1980s, followed by 12 in the 1990s, but numbers exploded in the 2000s to 38. In the twenty years between 1994 and 2013, only 1994 and 2001 were without records.



Plate 45. Bonaparte's Gull *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*, Castlegregory, Co. Kerry, May 2013 (David O'Connor).

Atlantic Gull

Larus michahellis atlantis (0; 11; 0)

Birds showing characters of the Atlantic island form, in particular, the somewhat more distinctive Azorean population.

2012 Cork One: Third calendar-year, Muckross, Clonakilty, 9th to 17th September, photographed (M.O'Keeffe).

2004 Dublin Zero: Adult, Sandymount Strand, 9th October (N.T.Keogh).

The 2004 Dublin record is presumed to be the first sighting of the adult subsequently seen intermittently at the same location between 2005 and 2007 (*Irish Birds* 8: 385, 8: 404 & 8: 597). With the recent increase in records of this taxon one wonders whether they might be a precursor to Ireland's first Audouin's Gull *Larus audouinii*, which has occurred recently in north-western Europe in Germany (Flore 1997), Holland (Wolf 2003) and Britain (Walker 2004).

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans* (0; 12; 1)

Waterford One: First-winter, probably a female, Dunmore East, 24th January to 9th February, photographed (P.Archer *et al.*).

Based on its small size, this individual was almost certainly a female. The finder initially expressed some concern that the scapulars were slightly dark for a classic Caspian Gull of this age. However, subsequent research and expert opinion indicated that the colour was within the normal variation of the species. Photographs (plate 42) show the classic features – thin-looking legs, a narrow, dark bill, clean white head and isolated dark eye, solid, un-notched tertials, clean underparts and a solidly dark tail-band, contrasting with a very clean upper-tail.



Plate 46. Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans*, Dunmore East, Co. Waterford, January 2013 (Paul Archer).

American Herring Gull

Larus smithsonianus (0; 91; 1)

Cork One: First-winter, Baltimore, 2nd to 9th February (O.Foley *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 26: 52.

A classic date, location and age for a species that has become strangely scarce recently – this is the fourth year in succession in which only one individual has occurred.

Kumlien's Gull

Larus glaucooides kumlieni (0; 190; 23)

Cork Six: Fourth-winter, Cobh, from 26th December 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 595) remained to 3rd April; First-winter, Eyerics, West Beara, 3rd February, photographed (F.Moore); Two first-winters, Castletown Bearhaven, 9th February to 31st March, photographed (O.Foley, H.Hyvonen *et al.*); First-winter, Timoleague, 7th March to 29th April (R.Mundy *et al.*); First-winter, Dinish Island, 9th March, photographed (F.Moore); First-winter, Kilkerran Lake, 17th April (C.Barton).

Donegal Ten: Eight at Killybegs as follows: First-winter, 12th January to 23rd February, photographed (D.Charles *et al.*); Third-winter, 2nd February, photographed (D.Charles); Three first-winters, 23rd February to 29th March (D.Charles *et al.*); Adult, 16th March (D.Charles); Fourth-winter, 16th March (D.Charles); First-winter, 23rd November, photographed (D.Charles); Two at locations other than Killybegs, as follows: First-winter, Tory Island, 30th March (M.Boyle, A.McMillan); First-winter, Magheraroarty, 9th April, photographed (G.Murray, P.Phillips).

Galway Three: First-winter, Rossaveal, 30th January to 24th March, photographed (D.Breen *et al.*); Second-winter, Nimmo's Pier and Rossaveal, 22nd October to 8th March 2014, photographed (H.Delaney *et al.*); Adult winter, Ross Beach, 13th November, photographed (D.Breen).

Kerry Two: First-winter, Cromane Harbour, 31st January to 15th February, photographed (S.Enright *et al.*); First-winter, Cromane Harbour, 10th March (S.Enright).

Louth One: Adult, Lurgangreen, 19th January, photographed (P.Kelly).

Wexford One: First-winter, Kilmore Quay, 29th December to 12th January 2014, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*).

2011 Donegal Zero: Adult, Killybegs, from 20th November 2011 to 28th February 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 473 & 9: 595) was still present 8th April 2012.

Another very good year, only 2012 (37) and 2007 (27) have had higher totals. Records in the early part of the winter are unusual – the Galway record for October is only the fourth for that month. In common with Ross's Gull *Rhodostethia rosea* and Ivory Gull *Pagophila eburnea*, also originating in the Arctic, most records occur between January and March.

Thayer's Gull *Larus thayeri* (0; 8; 1)

Donegal One: Adult, Killybegs, 16th December (D.Charles *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 26: 489, *Birdwatch* 260: 12 (Charles 2013). This is only the second adult to be found in Ireland – the previous record was found at the same location in 1998 (*Irish Birds* 7: 231). This individual shows a strong set of features consistent with Thayer's Gull, including a complete band on p5, a feature that was not present on the 1998 bird. Other features supporting the identification include a complete black sub-terminal band on p10 with a very small white tip, the fact that the white mirror on p9 does not extend onto the



Plate 47. Thayer's Gull *Larus thayeri*, Killybegs, Co. Donegal, December 2013 (Derek Charles).

outer web, dark heavily flecked irises and pink orbital ring, dark grey-blue upperparts (darker even than *argenteus* Herring Gull), raspberry pink legs, large white tertial crescents, slight greenish tones to the lower mandible and to the base of the upper mandible and a ring of heavy nicotine coloured staining around the neck and breast.

Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus* (55; 24; 0)

Donegal Zero: Adult male, Arranmore Island, 31st May to 6th September, photographed (M.Glynn), presumed returning; Presumed same, Ardara, 1st October, photographed (E.Ward).

Mayo Zero: One, feather found, Inishkea North, 21st May (D.Suddaby), presumed to relate to the female that has been seen around west Mayo since 2006.

2009 Mayo Zero: Adult female, Tarmon Hill, Mullet Peninsula, from 8th August to 10th October (*Irish Birds* 9: 270) was still present 14th October (D.G.McAdams).

There have been intermittent records from the Donegal mainland and islands since 2004. Based on differences in age and sex there are clearly four different individuals involved. A female or immature bird was on Arranmore Island in August 2004, a second calendar-year female at Dooey Point in October 2006, another second calendar-year female on Tory Island in 2009 and a male on Arranmore Island from July to September 2012.

Alpine Swift *Apus melba* (7; 69; 2)

Cork One: One, Old Head of Kinsale, 26th September (T.C.Kelly).

Dublin One: One, Glasnevin, 17th April (F.Buckley).

The Cork record is almost the latest on record – only one at Tacumshin Lake (Wexford) on 30th September 1979 is later, although a very late bird was at the Marathon Gas Platform on 9th November 1988 (treated as an 'at sea' record).

Roller *Coracias garrulus* (12; 7; 0)

1884 Cork Minus one: Immature male, obtained near Skibbereen, 29th October (Ussher & Warren 1900, Kennedy *et al.* 1954) was in 1883, see below.

1883 Cork One: Immature male, obtained near Skibbereen, 29th October (More 1890).

1851 Cork Zero: One, obtained near Dunmanway (Ussher & Warren 1900, Kennedy *et al.* 1954) was in September 1851 (Harvey 1875).

The year of occurrence for the Skibbereen record was published as 1884 in Ussher and Warren (1900), quoting from 'More's List'. However, More (1890) gives the year of the record as 1883. As there is no indication that Ussher & Warren were making a correction of More's work, it is assumed that the correct year is 1883. Both of these corrections are based on research provided to the committee by Pat Smiddy.



Plate 48. Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*, Great Saltee Island, Co. Wexford, September 2013 (Paul Archer).

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* (9; 262; 29)

Clare One: One, The Fodry, Loop Head, 30th September, photographed (J.Hayes).

Cork Eighteen: Up to two, Cape Clear Island, 24th to 25th September (G.Murray, P.Phillips, S.Wing, J.Wylie *et al.*); One, Firkeel, 24th September to 3rd October (A.A.K.Lancaster *et al.*); One, Mizen Head, 25th September (D.Ballard); Up to four, Galley Head, 26th to 30th September, one photographed (C.Barton, K.Cronin, R.Cronin *et al.*); One, Baltimore, 26th September (M.Mitchell); One, Ballycotton, 27th September (O.Foley); One, Power Head, 27th to 29th September, photographed (S.Ronayne *et al.*); One, Cape Clear Island, 5th to 8th October (P.Lynch *et al.*); One, Mizen Head, 5th to 11th October (P.Wolstenholme *et al.*); One, Ballymacrown, 6th October (M.O'Keefe); One, Ballycotton, 7th October (G.Walsh); One, Dursley Island, 11th October (A.A.K.Lancaster); One, Mizen Head, 28th October, photographed (F.Hillig, M.Reimann *et al.*); One, Dursley Island, 1st to 3rd November (D.Cooke, P.Rowe *et al.*).

Donegal Two: One, Tory Island, 27th September (A.Meenan); One, Arranmore Island, 3rd to 4th October, photographed (R.Vaughan *et al.*).

Galway Two: Two, Inishbofin, 25th to 26th September (C.Batty *et al.*).

Kerry One: One, Dunquin, 1st October (D.Farrar).

Mayo Two: One, Tarmon Hill, Mullet Peninsula, 23rd September, photographed (D.Suddaby); One, Glenlara, Mullet Peninsula, 27th to 29th September, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*).

Waterford One: One, Brownstown Head, 27th September (P.M.Walsh).

Wexford Two: One, Carnsore Point, 27th September, photographed (A.Walsh); One, Great Saltee Island, 28th to 29th September, photographed (K.Grace, A.Walsh *et al.*).

2004 Antrim One: One, found dead, Portrush, 17th August (*NIBR* 16: 118).

Almost annual in occurrence, numbers have increased considerably since 2000 and this is the second highest total of all time, seven fewer than in 2010. Given that Wryneck numbers have been stable in Britain, and that the European breeding population has undergone a moderate decline since the 1980s (White & Kehoe 2014a), it seems likely that the increase here may reflect increased observer coverage and the removal of the requirement by IRBC for substantiating documentation since 2005 (see www.irbc.ie/announcements/announce1.php), rather than any real increase. The occurrence of eight on the west coast between Kerry and Donegal is particularly noteworthy as there had previously been only 12 recorded there – the Clare record is only the second for the county, and the first since October 1931. The two records for Galway are only the third and fourth records for the county, and the first in over 100 years – the previous two were found dead at the North Aran Lighthouse in 1886 and 1912 and constituted the third and seventh records for Ireland. The Antrim record in 2004 was published in the *Northern Ireland Bird Report* but was not previously published in an *Irish Bird Report*.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo* (14; 288; 31)

At Sea Zero: Second calendar-year, 100 nautical miles south of Fastnet Rock, Western Approaches, 22nd August, photographed (R.McLaughlin).

Clare Two: One, Lickeen Lake, 11th July (D.McNamara); One, Lissycasey, 21st July (P.Troake).

Cork Nine: One, Ballycotton, 14th April (O.Foley, H.Hyvφnen); One, Copperingstown, 11th May (P.Moore); One, Shanagarry, 21st May (D.O'Sullivan); Second calendar-year, Connonagh, 27th May (C.Jones); One, Rostellan, 23rd June (O.Foley); Adult, Midleton, 21st July (F.O'Connell); One, Mizen Head, 25th August (D.Ballard, P.Connaughton); Juvenile, Mizen Head, 12th to 15th October (O.Foley *et al.*); One, Ballycotton, 20th October (C.Foley, D.Foley).

Dublin Three: One, Chapelizod, 7th June (J.Geraty); One, Skerries, 24th June (J.Hayes); Immature, Knock Lake, 19th September (S.Pierce).

Galway One: Juvenile, Rahasane Turlough, 10th September (P.Capsey).

Kerry One: Adult, Castleisland, 18th May (E.Carty).

Waterford Two: One, Carriganvantry, 5th June (A.Jacques); One, Carriganvantry, 11th July (A.Jacques).

Wexford Nine: Second calendar-year, Tacumshin Lake, 10th to 24th May (P.Kelly *et al.*); Second calendar-year, Tacumshin Lake, 24th May to 19th June, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*); One, Scarawalsh, Enniscorthy, 14th June (K.Grace); One, South Slob, 17th June (A.A.Kelly, P.Kelly); One, Tacumshin Lake, 9th August (P.Kelly); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 21st to 26th August (P.Phillips *et al.*); One, Cullenstown, 31st August (M.Wink); One, Carnsore Point, 26th September (S.Feeney); One, Cahore Marsh, 9th October (N.Veale).

Wicklow Four: Adult, Killoughter, 8th May (H.Delaney, P.King); One, Kilcoole, 5th June (N.T.Keogh); One, Newcastle, 15th June (M.Hogan, M.Jenkins); Second calendar-year, Newcastle, 6th to 8th October, photographed (C.Cardiff, T.Cardiff *et al.*).

Yet another excellent year – only 2010 (45) and 2012 (33) had higher totals than 2013. This upsurge in records is relatively recent – the annual average for the six years between 2008 and 2013 is 30, compared to an average of just over five for the previous six years. For the second year in succession, the number of records in June (ten) exceeds that for May (seven). While this may be a mere statistical blip, it could also perhaps be evidence of a small breeding population – only time will tell.

Gyr Falcon *Falco rusticolus* (87; 37; 1)

Kerry One: Juvenile white morph, Ferriter's Cove and Dunquin, 19th to 28th November, photographed (J.Crosher, M.Manning *et al.*).

As can be seen from the statistics, this species was reasonably regular before 1950. There were 38 in the nineteenth century and 49 in the first half of the twentieth century, but only 29 in the second half. The highest annual total was in 1905 when 12 occurred, including eight 'obtained' in western counties in March (Kennedy *et al.* 1954). This influx may well have been a result of inclement weather during the latter half of February that year, which was characterised by strong gales, mostly from a generally westerly direction, and both Malin Head and Blacksod Point recorded gale force winds on eleven days that month (Met Office 1905).

Eastern Kingbird *Tyrannus tyrannus* (0; 1; 1)

Galway One: Adult, Inishbofin, 24th September (A.McGeehan), photographs *Birding World* 26: 354, *Birdwatch* 257: 58, *Dutch Birding* 35: 398 (McGeehan 2013).

Hot on the heels of the first record for Ireland in 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 596) comes a repeat show, but on this occasion to an even smaller audience! The considered view of expert opinion canvassed is that this individual can be aged based primarily on the state of moult and feather wear. The apparent differences in the state of moult, between the fresher and darker back feathers and the more-worn wing coverts, are very typical of an adult after the pre-alternate moult and would not be found on September juveniles. In addition, the sixth secondary on the right wing and one of the rectrices on the right side have been replaced accidentally sometime during the previous few months. A juvenile would not show such contrasts in wear between these replaced feathers and the older adjacent feathers, and would probably not have had time to grow these new feathers in the first place. The shape of the newer and older rectrices are similar – in a juvenile, the shape of the replaced rectrix would be noticeably broader and squarer than that of the retained juvenile rectrices. The head plumage, with a very black and clean-edged cap is crisper than is found in juveniles. In addition, the tip to the outer primary, although difficult to be definitive based on the photograph, seems pointed and more like an adult (P.Pyle, D.Sibley pers. comm.). As an adult, there is a possibility that this may actually be a return visit from the 2012 Inishmore bird. However, there is no strong evidence to conclude this to be the case and it is treated as a different individual in the statistics.

Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus* (0; 56; 2)

Cork One: One, Inch Strand, 26th September (P.Moore).

Kerry One: One, Dunquin, 1st to 2nd October (D.Farrar *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 72: 26.

Although it has averaged almost one a year since the first in 1951, this species is far from annual – it has occurred at a rate of one year in three. It is often the precursor to a good year for Nearctic land-birds and is associated particularly with the 'great years' when it is often accompanied by a panoply of colourful Nearctic warblers – in particular, 1985, 1990 and 2008 – to which list 2013 must surely be added!

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus* (62; 149; 5)

Cork One: Female or first-summer male, Dursey Island, 4th June (J.A.Wolstencroft *et al.*).

Galway One: Adult male, Inishbofin, 22nd April to 1st May, found dead on the last date (A.Herlihy).

Wexford Three: Female or first-summer male, Hook Head, 8th May (J.K.Lovatt); Two males, Hook Head, 14th May (T.Murray).

April records are not uncommon, accounting for just over one-eighth of all records. However, only six have been earlier than the Galway individual.



Plate 49. Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus*, Dunquin, Co. Kerry, October 2013 (David O'Connor).

Isabelline Shrike *Lanius isabellinus* (0; 4; 1)

Wexford One: First-winter, showing characteristics of *L.i.isabellinus*, Rostoonstown, 24th to 25th November, photographed (N.Keogh *et al.*).

Although this is the latest arrival on record, the previous individual in Wexford (which was found on 20th November 2000) stayed until 9th December. This is the fourth individual showing characteristics of 'Daurian Shrike' *L.i.isabellinus*, often considered to be a species in its own right. The remaining record, in Mayo in 2009, was considered indeterminate at sub-specific level and there are no accepted records of 'Turkestan Shrike' *L.i.phoenicuroides*.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* (7; 165; 8)

Cork Four: First-winter, Galley Head, 26th to 28th September, photographed (C.Barton); First-winter, Mizen Head, 1st to 7th October (D.Ballard, P.Wolstenholme *et al.*); First-winter, Long Strand, 2nd October, photographed (C.Barton *et al.*); First-winter, Dursey Island, 2nd October, photographed (K.Grace *et al.*).

Louth One: First-winter, Cooley Point, 10th to 12th October, photographed (B.Martin *et al.*).

Wexford Three: Adult male, Tacumshin Lake, 19th June, photographed (M.McLoughlin, M.Power *et al.*); First-winter, Hook Head, 24th to 30th September, photographed (H.Gallagher, K.Mullarney *et al.*); First-winter, Carne, 6th to 9th October (S.Collins *et al.*).

1981 Down One: Male, trapped, Copeland Bird Observatory, 31st May (NIBR 1981: 38).



Plate 50. Isabelline Shrike *Lanius isabellinus*, Rostoonstown, Co. Wexford, November 2013 (Tom Shevlin).



Plate 51. Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*, Hook Head, Co. Wexford, September 2013 (Aidan G. Kelly).

For the second year in succession a near record eight were recorded, and on this occasion including the first record for Louth. The June record at Tacumshin Lake is only the fourth for the month, following two in the first week of June 1960, in Wexford and Antrim, and one near Glencree in Wicklow in 1986. The latter record, on the 28th, is the latest spring record and is one of only two inland spring records – the other was at Portadown, Co. Armagh in May 1953. See also Appendix 5 for details of corrections to the statistics.

Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator* (2; 94; 4)

Cork One: First-summer male, Courtmacsherry, 27th April, photographed (N.Mitchell, P.Wolstenholme *et al.*).

Galway One: First-winter, Inishbofin, 26th September, photographed (A.McGeehan *et al.*).

Wexford Two: One, Ring Marsh, 2nd to 6th May, photographed (T.Murray *et al.*); One, Hook Head, 14th May, photographed (T.Murray, A.Walsh *et al.*).

In a bizarre coincidence, the fortunes of this species in Galway parallels no less a rarity than Eastern Kingbird – both were added to the Galway list on Inishmore in autumn 2012 and both had their second occurrence on Inishbofin in autumn 2013!

Ruby-crowned Kinglet

Regulus calendula (0; 0; 1)

Cork One: First-winter female, Cape Clear Island, 27th October, trapped and ringed (E.O'Donnell *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 26: 425 & 426, *Birdwatch* 258: 7, *Dutch Birding* 35: 398, *Wings* 72: 24 (O'Donnell 2013a, O'Donnell 2013b).

This, the Nearctic counterpart of Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*, is very rare on this side of the Atlantic. There are only two accepted Western Palearctic records – on 23rd November 1987 and 10th to 11th October 1998, both on Heimaey, Vestmannaeyjar, Iceland. One, said to have been shot at Loch Lomond, Strathclyde, Scotland in the summer of 1852, and reviewed on multiple occasions, is not regarded as acceptable by the BOURC due to confusion over the provenance of the specimen (Mitchell 1992, Knox 1994). As the bird on Cape Clear Island was a first-year, occurring during the appropriate season for Nearctic passerines and following the arrival of a fast-moving Atlantic depression with strong winds and rain, there is no hesitation in adding the species to Category A of the Irish List (see www.irbc.ie/topbar/categories.php for details of the various categories used).



Plate 52. Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula*, Cape Clear Island, Co. Cork, October 2013 (Kerri Gorentz).

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus* (0; 88; 29)

Wexford Twenty-nine: The group of up to 24 at Tacumshin Lake, from 3rd July 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 478 & 9: 598) remained to at least 31st March 2014, with a peak count of 27 on 18th June 2013 (N.Keogh, N.T.Keogh *et al.*); Three males and three females, Ring Marsh, from 19th February 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 598) remained to 12th April 2014, peaking at 22 on 10th November 2013 (A.A.Kelly, P.Kelly), photograph *Wings* 70: 27, presumed to include the six from February 2012; Ten, including both males and females, South Slob, 17th November, photographed (P.Kelly).

2012 Wexford Five: Male and four juveniles, Cahore Marsh, 10th June to 12th April 2013 (Sh.Farrell *et al.*).

Although present in south Wexford since November 2010, there is no sign of any occurrences farther afield – unlike the 1970s and 1980s when they were regular in both Wicklow and Cork. Surprisingly, given the available habitat, a party of three at Ring Marsh in September 1979 was the only record in Wexford during those two decades.

Short-toed Lark

Calandrella brachydactyla (1; 73; 2)

Cork Two: One, Ballycotton, 7th to 21st October, photographed (P.Moore *et al.*); One, Cape Clear Island, 9th October (M.Cowming).

Twenty-one, more than a quarter of records, have been found in the first two weeks of October, and between them, Ballycotton and Cape Clear Island have a similar total.

Red-rumped Swallow

Cecropis daurica (0; 47; 1)

Wexford One: One, Great Saltee Island, 6th May, photographed (J.Adamson *et al.*).

Traditionally considered an early migrant, with occurrences from mid-February, this is the fifth May record in two years. As a result of these two years, May has superseded April as the peak month for occurrences.

Greenish Warbler

Phylloscopus trochiloides (0; 37; 2)

Cork One: One, Baltimore, 1st September (J.Wylie).

Wexford One: One, Great Saltee Island, 30th August (K.Grace).

With the exception of three spring records, all have occurred between 25th August and 19th October. September is the peak month and records are evenly distributed across the three ten-day periods of the month. As might be expected, these records are among the earliest autumn occurrences – there had previously been only three August records.

Western Bonelli's Warbler

Phylloscopus bonelli (0; 13; 1)

Cork One: One, Garinish, 27th September to 4th October, photographed (A.A.K.Lancaster, P.Troake *et al.*).

This, the first for the Beara Peninsula, is at the later end of the normal arrival period – there have been four in August, eight in September (of which this individual is the latest) and two records from the last week in October. We still await Ireland's first record of Eastern Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus orientalis* which has occurred at the rate of roughly one for every thirteen *P.bonelli* in Britain since the first *orientalis* there in 1987 (BBRC 2013) – on this basis, we should be due one soon!

Siberian Chiffchaff

Phylloscopus collybita tristis (2; 30; 4)

Galway One: One, Slyne Head, 29th October, photographed (D.Breen).

Kerry One: One, Tralee, 7th December, photographed (D.A.O'Connor).

Waterford One: One, Dunhill, 29th March, photographed and sound recorded (M.Cowming).

Wexford One: One, Tacumshin Lake, 17th November, photographed (K.Mullarney).

2007 Cork One: One, Lee Road, Cork City, 13th to 27th March, photographed and sound recorded (H.Hussey *et al.*).

Four in a year is as good as we have had in recent times – only 1975 (when there were eleven) has had more.

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria* (6; 174; 10)

Cork Four: One, Mizen Head, 14th September (D.Ballard); One, Mizen Head, 3rd October (D.Ballard); First-winter, Garinish, 5th October (K.Grace, A.A.K.Lancaster); First-winter, Firkeel, 10th October (K.Grace).

Galway One: First-winter, Inishbofin, 24th September (A.McGeehan *et al.*).

Mayo One: First-winter, Tarmon Hill, Mullet Peninsula, 20th October, photographed (D.Suddaby).

Wexford Four: First-winter, Hook Head, 26th September to 2nd October, photographed (G.Lyons *et al.*); One, Churchtown, 5th October (B.Haslam); First-winter, Churchtown, 4th November (K.Fahy); First-winter, Fethard-on-Sea, 8th to 15th November, photographed (L.Ryan *et al.*).

2010 Kerry Zero: First calendar-year, Mwееvoo, 17th October (*Irish Birds* 9: 306) had been present since 16th October (Carty 2014).

Barred Warbler is exclusively an autumn passage migrant in Ireland with records from the last third of August through to the end of November. White and Kehoe (2014b) comment on a similar extreme scarcity of spring records in Britain where there have only been 18, of a total for Britain of 6,488 between 1968 and 2010. They postulate that perhaps autumn numbers might represent a migration strategy to allow young birds to take advantage of a glut of autumn fruits in northern Europe prior to a more concerted migration to winter quarters.

Central Asian Lesser Whitethroat

Sylvia curruca halimodendri (0; 1; 0)

2011 Louth One: One, Westcourt, Drogheda, 13th January to 31st March, photographed, trapped and ringed (C.Honan, K.McGuigan, K.Mullarney, A.Walsh *et al.*).

This individual, the first for Ireland, provided a very instructive lesson! Field identification of out-of-range Lesser Whitethroats to a particular taxon is effectively impossible, though there are several characters that may be used to separate Asian forms, in a broad sense, from the familiar nominate form that breeds throughout Western Europe. Biometrics offer further clues, but DNA may ultimately be required to assign birds to a definite taxon with a high degree of confidence. In this bird, the wing formula, very extensive clean white in the outer tail



Plate 53. Central Asian Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca halimodendri*, Drogheda, Co. Louth, January 2011 (Aidan G. Kelly).

feathers and distinctive call all pointed strongly to one of the Asian forms.

DNA sequencing on a feather taken when the bird was trapped was carried out by Professor Peter de Knijff in The Netherlands. The analysis confirmed that it is a somewhat atypical *balimodendri*, identical to birds previously found wintering in The Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden and Scotland. The precise area of origin of these birds remains a mystery. So far, in spite of numerous samples from the Middle East and Central Asia having been sequenced, an exact match has not been found, other than in these few wintering birds in north-west Europe. No doubt an answer to this puzzle will emerge as work continues.

Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans* (2; 49; 1)

Cork One: First-summer male, Inch Strand, 7th to 8th May, photographed (B.Lynch *et al.*).

This record continues the distinctly southerly bias to records – only five have occurred away from the south coast, with two in Down and one each in Antrim, Kerry and Mayo.

Booted Warbler *Iduna caligata* (0; 4; 1)

Wexford One: Juvenile, Hook Head, 24th to 27th September, photographed, trapped and ringed (H.Gallagher, K.Mullamey, A.Walsh *et al.*).

The first record for Wexford and the first for Ireland since 2006. All five have occurred between 26th August and 27th September. The arrival of the first four between 2003 and 2006 led to the hope that perhaps this species would become a regular, if scarce, visitor to our shores. This has not so far transpired to be the case, notwithstanding that British sightings have continued to occur at a fairly constant rate (Hudson *et al.* 2013).

Sykes's Warbler *Iduna rama* (0; 1; 1)

Cork One: One, Garinish, 2nd October, photographed (K.Grace, A.A.K.Lancaster).

This record shows many similarities to the only other Irish record, in 1990 – both were in October, in west Cork and neither stayed long. However, in 1990 this taxon was almost unknown among European birders and its true identification, while suspected soon after its occurrence, was only confirmed many years later (McGeehan 1990, IRBC 2003). In contrast, the identification of this individual, while subtle and requiring careful attention to detail was more straightforward, with the observers forearmed by knowledge of both this species and its confusion species.

Melodious Warbler

Hippolais polyglotta (2; 197; 3)

Cork Two: One, Mizen Head, 3rd September (D.Ballard); One, Cape Clear Island, 8th October (M.Cowming).



Plate 54. Booted Warbler *Iduna caligata*, Hook Head, Co. Wexford, September 2013 (Hugh Gallagher).



Plate 55. Sykes's Warbler *Iduna rama*, Garinish, Co. Cork, October 2013 (Tony Lancaster).

Wexford One: One, Cahore Marsh, 28th September (R.Vaughan). In the half century between 1964 and 2013 this species averages about three a year, although numbers have been as high as 15 (1983) and there have been a number of years in which there were none.

Rose-coloured Starling

Pastor roseus (41; 101; 1)

Donegal One: Juvenile, Tory Island, 3rd October to 1st November, photographed (T.Murphy *et al.*).

A very quiet year by recent standards. Since the turn of the century, the annual average has been more than five and only 2009, when none occurred, had fewer records than 2013. See also Appendix 5 for details of a correction to the statistics.

Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* (0; 29; 3)

Cork Two: One, Mizen Head, 4th September (J.N.Murphy *et al.*); One, Garinish, 21st September (O.Foley).

Wexford One: One, Hook Head, 13th September (K.Grace).

This equals 1955 and 2010 as the highest annual total, although in 1955 all occurred in spring. Prior to 1970, records were far more common in spring (ten records) than in autumn (two records). Since 1970, the temporal distribution has shifted towards autumn, with 14 recorded, and only six in spring. With eight spring records on Great Saltee Island (Wexford) from 1953 to 1963, one wonders whether the demise of the observatory there in 1963 has resulted in fewer Nightingales being found due to a reduction in observer coverage.

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica* (0; 41; 1)

Cork One: One, Mizen Head, 3rd October (D.Ballard).

2005 Cork One: One, Cape Clear Island, 5th October (T.Murray).

With the addition of the sole record for 2005, Cape Clear Island, with 14, now accounts for one-third of the national total.

Blue-headed Wagtail

Motacilla flava flava (0; 62; 1)

Wexford One: Male, Tacumshin Lake, 19th July to 10th August, photographed (K.Mullarney *et al.*).

Surprisingly, this is only the third record for Tacumshin Lake, with the first as recently as 2006.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi* (2; 103; 2)

Donegal One: One, Tory Island, 20th October (A.G.Kelly); Presumed same, Tory Island, 24th October (S.Feeney).

Louth One: One, Cooley Point, 2nd to 24th February, photographed (B.Martin *et al.*).

With only three Dublin records and one in Wicklow, this species is very rare on the east coast and the Louth record is the first for the county. While unusual, this February record is not unprecedented as one was found in Wexford in the same month in 1989.

Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus* (0; 51; 1)

Cork One: One, Mizen Head, 12th October (O.Foley).

Numbers of this species have increased recently, although this

may be a function of the change in documentation requirements for Appendix 2 species since 2005 (see www.irbc.ie/announcements/announce1.php). This is the eighth year in succession in which they have occurred, at an average of three per year. Previous to this, there were records in only ten of twenty years between 1986 and 2005, at an average of less than one per year.

Scandinavian Rock Pipit

Anthus petrosus littoralis (0; 54; 16)

Cork Five: One, Ballymacoda, 21st February (P.Connaughton); One, Knockadoon Head, 6th March (P.Connaughton); One, Sherkin Island, 16th to 18th March (J.Wylie); One, Castletown Bearhaven, 17th March, photographed (F.Moore); One, Eyeries, West Beara, 24th March, photographed (F.Moore).

Donegal One: One, Magheraroarty, 30th March (M.Boyle, A.McMillan).

Dublin Two: One, North Bull Island, 20th March, photographed (J.Hayes); One, Howth Head, 10th December, photographed (J.Hayes).

Kerry Four: One, Black Rock Strand, 7th to 25th March, photographed (E.Carty *et al.*); One, Castlegregory, 4th April (S.Enright); Two, Waterville, 12th April, photographed (R.Surgenor).

Wexford Three: One, Kilmore Quay, 13th to 20th March (K.Mullarney *et al.*); Two, Nethertown, 14th March (K.Mullarney).

Wicklow One: One, Greystones, 5th March, photographed (S.Lawlor).

The best year on record, easily eclipsing the total of ten in 2009, and including the first record for Wicklow. As usual, most records occurred during March and April when they are readily identifiable as they moult to summer plumage. The December record in Dublin is only the second record outside the period from February to May, following a Norwegian ringed bird that was controlled in Groomsport (Down) in October 1996.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta* (2; 137; 6)

Cork One: One, Shanagarry, 16th January to 2nd March (P.Connaughton *et al.*).

Wexford Four: One, Tacumshin Lake, from 3rd November 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 606) remained to 23rd February; One, Kilmore Quay, 4th February (T.Moore); One, Ring Marsh, 10th November (P.Kelly); One, Carne, 9th December (T.Moore); One, Tacumshin Lake, 29th December (P.Kelly *et al.*).

Wicklow One: One, Broad Lough, 9th to 23rd November (E.Dempsey *et al.*).

With 100 between them, the three counties above account for just over two-thirds of the total. Wexford, with 64 since the first there in 1985, is probably best considered as hosting a small regular winter population.

Buff-bellied Pipit

Anthus rubescens (0; 18; 1)

Galway One: One, Inishmore, Galway, 5th to 8th October (D.Breen *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 26: 408, *Birdwatch* 258: 13.

1967 Wicklow Minus one: One, Newcastle, 19th October (*IBR* 15: 40) is no longer considered proven after review.



Plate 56. Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens*, Inishmore, Co. Galway, October 2013 (Paul Kelly).

1951 Wexford Zero: One, Great Saltee Island, 8th to 16th October (IBR 1: 27, Kennedy *et al.* 1954) is still considered proven after review. Details of the review of older records of this species are available at *Irish Birds* 10: 103–104. All Irish records refer to the North American subspecies *rubescens*. The eastern race, *japonicus*, which breeds in east Asia and winters in Japan and south-east Asia, is a scarce but regular passage migrant and winter visitor to the Middle East and could, theoretically, occur in north-west Europe. For those lucky enough to find a vagrant Buff-bellied Pipit in autumn or winter, a positive subspecific identification should be possible in the majority of cases. The base colour of the upperparts of *japonicus* is darker than *rubescens* and *japonicus* tends to show a much whiter supercillium and eye ring than *rubescens*. The wing-bars in *rubescens* are usually buff and diffusely demarcated, staying so throughout the winter – in *japonicus*, they quickly fade to whitish or even white, and are generally more clear-cut and well defined. On *japonicus* the streaks on the underparts are dark brown, or even blackish and are generally thicker, better defined and often even spot-like – on *rubescens*, these are generally mid brown to dark brown, short and often slightly blurred, or diffuse. Additionally, while not diagnostic, leg colour differences are a strong supporting feature. The

legs of *rubescens* are generally blackish, greyish or at least red-brown, although on occasion, they are paler – *japonicus* have pink or pale brown legs and may approach Meadow Pipit in colouration.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* (Unknown; 199; 11)

Cork One: Female, Dursey Island, 30th March to 3rd April, photographed (D.Cooke, P.Rowe *et al.*).

Limerick Four: Two males and two females, Curraghchase Forest Park, 22nd January to 2nd April (J.N.Murphy *et al.*), photograph *Wings* 69: 28.

Wexford Six: Six, Ballinaboola, 13th to 14th March (D.Clarke).

Hawfinch is a very rare bird in Wexford and this record almost doubles the county total – three were ‘obtained’ in 1897 and one was found dead in June 1975 (one of only two June records for Ireland, the other being in St. Stephen’s Green, Dublin in 1945). During the more recent influxes, two were found in 1988 and one in 2005. In contrast, the total for Limerick moves to 118, all at Curraghchase Forest Park. The vast majority of this total is accounted for by the flock of 95 there in winter 1988/1989, the first time it was recorded there. This site accounts for more than half of the national total since 1950.

Common Rosefinch

Carpodacus erythrinus (0; 206; 14)

Cork Eight: Juvenile, Mizen Head, 4th September (J.N.Murphy *et al.*); Juvenile, Mizen Head, 15th September (O.Foley); Juvenile, Knockadoon Head, 24th September, photographed (S.Cronin); Juvenile, Cape Clear Island, 25th September (P.Phillips, S.Wing); Juvenile, Mizen Head, 4th October (D.Ballard, C.O'Sullivan); Juvenile, Cape Clear Island, Cork, 7th to 9th October, photographed (D.A.O'Connor); Juvenile, Dursey Island, 10th to 12th October (K.Grace, A.A.K.Lancaster); Juvenile, Mizen Head, 29th October (D.Ballard).

Donegal Four: Juvenile, Tory Island, 9th September, photographed (C.Ingram *et al.*); Up to two, Tory Island, 22nd to 25th September (D.Hunter); Juvenile, Arranmore Island, 3rd October (R.Vaughan).

Galway One: Juvenile, Inishbofin, 25th September, photographed (L.Gregory *et al.*).

Wexford One: One, Great Saltee Island, 19th June (A.Walsh).

The second best year of all time, although still less than half the record total (29) set in 2011. A fairly typical distribution of records, with the majority in Cork and smaller numbers elsewhere. Although predominantly an autumn vagrant, there is a clear spring peak in the first three weeks of June and the Wexford record fits neatly with the pattern.

Serin *Serinus serinus* (3; 7; 1)

Cork One: One, Mizen Head, 4th October, photographed (D.Ballard, C.O'Sullivan *et al.*).

Despite a recent increase, this is still an incredibly rare species here. There have been four since 2000, although this is the first since 2005. Prior to that, there was a record in 1988, three records in the 1970s, and one each in 1947, 1907 and 1893. All six autumn records have been in Cork, with four in October and two more in the first half of November. There have been three records in May – one each in Cork, Louth and Dublin. The remaining two are mid-winter records – caught in Dublin in January 1893 and February 1907.

Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana* (0; 120; 1)

Cork One: One, Dursey Island, 2nd October (D.A.Scott).

Despite an increase in the number of records since 2000, the best decade on record is still the 1960s, when there were 28. Numbers in the west have remained reasonably constant – with the exception of the 1980s (when there were only nine), ten-year totals have been between 17 and 20. This contrasts sharply with numbers in the east of the country – there were seven in the 1950s and eight in the 1960s (mostly at Great



Plate 57. Blackpoll Warbler *Setophaga striata*, Inishbofin, Co. Galway, September 2013 (John N. Murphy).

Saltee Island, Wexford) but there have only been five since 1970. Once again (see comments for Nightingale), the demise of the observatory on Great Saltee Island seems to be implicated, although there has also been a moderate long-term decline in numbers in Britain (White & Kehoe 2014b).

Blackpoll Warbler *Setophaga striata* (0; 9; 1)

Galway One: First-winter, Inishbofin, 25th September (A.Webb *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 26: 370, *Birdwatch* 257: 64, *Dutch Birding* 35: 398.

This is the first record for September and the second for Galway, following one on Inishmore in October 2000. As might be expected, the majority have been in the west – there are records from Cork, Galway and Mayo. Only two of the total have been away from the west coast – on Hook Head (Wexford) in October 1985 and Brownstown Head (Waterford) in October 1993.

Yellow-rumped Warbler

Setophaga coronata (0; 15; 1)

Galway One: One, Inishmore, 29th October, photographed (M.Boyle *et al.*).

Galway is fast building a reputation for Nearctic land-birds with 12 individuals of 7 species occurring since 2007. In particular, Inishmore has made serious inroads on the virtual monopoly that Cape Clear Island (Cork) had for this species. Until 2012, Cape Clear (with ten) was the only location to have had more than one – there have now been four on Inishmore. The remaining two records were at Loop Head (Clare) in 1986 and Great Blasket Island (Kerry) in 2001.

Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla* (0; 0; 1)

Cork One: First-winter male, Dursey Island, 18th to 21st September (D.A.Scott *et al.*), photographs *Birding World* 26: 379, *Birdwatch* 257: 59 (Anon 2013, Scott 2013).

The first Irish record and only the second for the Western Palearctic, following one on Rame Head, Cornwall in October 1985. This individual was very elusive for the first three days of its stay, resulting in very brief, inconclusive views. While the identification was suspected from a brief view on the 19th, it was only clinched on the 20th, when it finally gave good views. Wilson's Warbler is an early migrant, with most leaving northern breeding areas in mid-August (Cramp & Perrins 1994). This was one of the reasons that the analysis of Robbins (1980) suggested that Wilson's Warbler was one of the less likely trans-Atlantic vagrant land-birds to occur in Europe. Fortunately birds are not aware of statistical imperatives and Wilson's Warbler is added to the Irish list to join other species that Robbins' analysis also deemed long-shots such as White-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia leucophrys*, Mourning Dove *Zenaidura macroura* and Indigo Bunting *Passerina cyanea*.

Appendix 1: Category D records

Category D1 records

Species that would otherwise appear in Categories A or B, except that there is a reasonable doubt that they have ever occurred in a natural state.

Falcated Duck *Anas falcata* (0; 0; 0)

2012 Mayo Zero: Adult male, Cross Lough, Mullet Peninsula, 2nd to 13th April, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*).

Unfortunately, the spectre of captive origin always hangs over extralimital records of wildfowl. Unlike Baikal Teal *Anas formosa* (see *Irish Birds* 9: 286), there is no strong evidence that Falcated Duck has ever occurred naturally in the Western Palearctic. Had there been such evidence, this individual, arriving and departing with migrating Wigeon *Anas penelope*, would have been a very strong candidate for addition to Category A. If any evidence of natural occurrence (such as stable isotope analysis or ringing recovery) is forthcoming then this record will be reviewed.

Appendix 2: Contributors

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Irish Rare Breeding Birds Panel (IRBBP)

BirdWatch Ireland (BWI)

Cape Clear Bird Observatory (CCBO)

Copeland Bird Observatory (CBO)

Northern Ireland Birdwatchers' Association (NIBA)

Appendix 3: List of records not proven

This list includes all records of taxa set out in *Irish Birds* 7: 416–418 (and subsequent updates online at www.irbc.ie/records/desclist.php and www.irbc.ie/records/desclist1.php) which, after circulation to the Irish Rare Birds Committee or the Northern Ireland Birdwatchers' Association Rarities Committee as appropriate, were considered to be not proven. Records of birds not attributed to any definite species by the observers are not included, nor are birds considered to have been escapes from captivity.

2013 records not proven

Continental Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*

First-winter, Cuskinny, Cork, 30th March.

White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*

Juvenile, Inch Island Lake, Lough Swilly, Donegal, 4th September.

Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla*

One, Bloody Foreland, Donegal, 31st August.

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinmans*

Third-winter, Killybegs, Donegal, 5th April.

Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug*

One, Carnowen, Donegal, 17th January.

Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*

One, Skibbereen, Cork, 28th February to 7th March.

Supplemental 2012 records not proven

Atlantic Gull *Larus michabellus atlantis*

Adult, Black Rock Strand, Kerry, 19th September.

Thayer's Gull *Larus thayeri*

First-winter, Killala, Mayo, 19th January.

Supplemental 2011 records not proven

Thayer's Gull *Larus thayeri*

Second-winter, Liscannor, Clare, 1st February.

Gyr Falcon *Falco rusticolus*

One, Power Head, Cork, 14th November.

Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*

Two, Mizen Head, Cork, 19th to 25th October.

Scandinavian Rock Pipit *Arctopus petrosus littoralis*

One, Old Head of Kinsale, Cork, 7th May.

Supplemental 2010 records not proven

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*

First calendar-year, Ballygawley Lake, Sligo, 3rd to 7th November.

South Polar Skua *Stercorarius macconnicki*

One, two kilometres south of Baltimore, Cork, 18th September.

Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla*

Juvenile, Blennerville, Kerry, 4th to 5th September.

Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*

One, Cloonfadda, Clare, 3rd December.

American Robin *Turdus migratorius*

One, Enniscrone, Sligo, 18th to 19th December.

Supplemental 2009 records not proven

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*

Female, Ballindoon, Lough Arrow, Sligo, 11th February.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

One, Ennis, Clare, 10th March.

Supplemental 2008 record not proven

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

One, Three Castles Head, Cork, 17th October.

Supplemental 1967 review record not proven

Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens*

One, Newcastle, Wicklow, 19th October.

Appendix 4: List of anonymous records not accepted

The following reports concern Appendix 2 rarities that were entered in the Provisional List of Rare Bird Sightings during 2013 but where the observers have to date remained unknown. Some or all of these reports may yet qualify for publication in a future IRBR, should the observers become known to the IRBC and be prepared to validate the claim.

Surf Scoter *Melanitta perspicillata*

Female, Clare, 18th February.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

One, Gorey, Wexford, 21st December.

Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus*

One, Pettigo Plateau, Donegal, 10th February.

Adult female, Ballycastle, Mayo, 18th July.

Supplemental anonymous records for 2005

Wilson's Storm-petrel *Oceanites oceanicus*

One, Bridges of Ross, Clare, 29th August.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

One, near Tramore Back Strand, Waterford, unknown date.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

One, Bridges of Ross, Clare, 23rd September.

Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus*

One, Arranmore Island, Donegal, early June.

One, Inishkeeragh Islands, Donegal, mid July.

Appendix 5: Corrigenda to previous reports

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis* – The record of one at Lurgangreen, Louth, 9th January to 25th February 1996 (*Irish Birds* 6: 68) should read as follows: “**Louth** One, Braganstown, 9th January (K.W.S.Kane) and, presumed same, Lurgangreen, 28th January to 25th February (D.Hodgers *et al.*)”.

Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla* – Plate 267 in the 2012 Irish Rare Bird Report (*Irish Birds* 9: 591) refers to the individual seen at the same location in 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 465) and the date in the caption should read 27th September 2011.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* – A record from Cape Clear in October 1970 (*IBR* 18: 50) had been counted as a single bird. However, the record on 16th and 17th October was referred to only as possibly the same as the record on 12th October. In keeping with practice, the phrase ‘probably the same’ is counted as the same individual, whereas ‘possibly the same’ is counted as referring to multiple individuals. In addition, a correction to the 1982 record (*Irish Birds* 3: 332) increasing the number of individuals involved from two to three was overlooked. Totals in the current report have been increased by two to reflect these corrections.

Rose-coloured Starling *Pastor roseus* – Recent totals for this species (e.g. *Irish Birds* 9: 603) erroneously included a June 1996 record from the Marathon Gas Platform (*Irish Birds* 6: 86), which is 49 kilometres (26 nautical miles) from land. Records that occur more than 30 kilometres from land are considered ‘At sea’, and should be excluded from the total. Totals in the current report have been reduced by one to reflect this correction.

Appendix 6: Corrigenda to the IRBC review of Canada Goose records (*Irish Birds* 9: 613–622)

Plate 291 (*Irish Birds* 9: 613) – Credit for the artwork in this plate was inadvertently omitted and should have been credited to Michael O’Keeffe.

Correction to Appendix 3 of the article (*Irish Birds* 9: 622) – the 1996 Louth record should read as follows:

“**1996 Louth** One, Braganstown, 9th January and, presumed same, Lurgangreen, 28th January to 25th February, photographed (*Irish Birds* 6: 68). This individual appears to be of the subspecies *minima* (Plate 293). If so, this would constitute the only confirmed record of *minima* for Ireland. Given the eastern location of this sighting in Ireland (perhaps further supporting European origin) the IRBC has taken the view that this bird was almost certainly of captive or feral origin.”

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Abbreviations used

- AERC: Association of European Rarities Committees.
BOURC: British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee.
IBR: *Irish Bird Report* – annual from 1953 to 1975.
IN: *Irish Naturalist* – monthly journal between 1892 and 1924.
INJ: *Irish Naturalists' Journal* – monthly journal from 1925.
NIBARC: Northern Ireland Birdwatchers' Association Rarities Committee.
NIBR: *Northern Ireland Bird Report* – periodically from 1980 onwards.

Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens*: review of 20th century records

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records review

Buff-bellied Pipits *Anthus rubescens* of the North American *rubescens* group have recently become a more common sight in Western Europe in autumn, and have been recorded annually in Ireland since 2007. Nineteen individuals have been accepted as having occurred in Ireland to the end of 2013 (Fahy 2014). In addition to the autumn records, one bird successfully over-wintered at Redbarn Strand, Co. Cork from 25th November 2007 to 21st March 2008, and one discovered at Dungarvan, Co. Waterford on 22nd November remained to 20th December 2011. To what extent this increase is real, or

how much is due to increased observer awareness of the species, is unclear, but with records now annual in Britain and with a number of other western European records in recent years, it must be assumed that at least some of the increase is real.

The recent run of occurrences in Ireland contrasts markedly with the status prior to 2007, with only two records accepted before then; singles at Great Saltee Island, Co. Wexford from 8th to 16th October 1951 and at Newcastle, Co. Wicklow on 19th October 1967 (Hutchinson 1989). Given advances in the field identification of these birds, formerly treated as conspecific with Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus* and Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta* and often referred to as American Water Pipit, the Irish Rare Birds Committee decided to review the Great Saltee Island and Newcastle records.

Plate 58. Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens*, Baile an Reannaigh, Smerwick Harbour, Co. Kerry, 29th September 2012 (David O'Connor).

Great Saltee Island record: This bird, found by P.W.P. Browne, was trapped on two occasions, and observed at length in the field by him and later by J. Weaving and R.F. Rutledge. Despite the absence of in-hand photographs, let alone any photographs or sketches of it in the field, the features described accord well with those still used today to identify this species. The pattern of the tail feathers, with, in particular, a 20mm white wedge on the inner web of the penultimate pair (T5), is highly suggestive of *rubescens*. The underparts were described as buff, with finer, more defined streaking below than on nearby Rock Pipits, and the upperparts were browner and less streaked than those of Rock Pipit. The bill length (11.7mm) was shorter than that of *spinoletta* Water Pipit (12.8–14.3mm, based on four specimens checked at the National Museum, Dublin), but fell within the range of variation of *rubescens* (11.2–12.5mm based on four specimens checked at the National Museum), and the lores were pale. Field observations noted the bird's habit of almost constantly pumping its rear end, something which has been very obvious on many Buff-bellied Pipits found in Ireland in recent years, and the call, as transcribed, fits well with this species and clearly differs from the calls of either Rock or Water Pipits.

Due to the strong case set forward, it was decided by the Committee to retain the Great Saltee Island record as the first for Ireland. A more detailed description of the occurrence has already been published (Browne 1952).

Newcastle record: Although the original description of this bird is not available to the Committee, this record was reviewed using the detail published in the *1967 Irish Bird Report* (Rutledge 1968). It was seen in good light at ranges down to 10 yards, but was not trapped, photographed or sketched. The description available to the Committee was, understandably under the circumstances, less detailed than that obtained of the Great Saltee Island bird, and many details recorded for that individual were not noted here, including the precise extent of white on the tail feathers and any vocalisations. While the buff underparts and dark legs may indeed have suggested a Buff-bellied Pipit, reference to “striking buff lines on (the) back” gives cause for alarm. In addition, while the underparts were described as being “very buff”, there was also a “pinkish tinge at times”, and the breast was heavily streaked. It is possible that some of these features could have been described ambiguously; for example, the “striking buff lines on (the) back” could have referred to the wingbars, and not barring on the mantle.

However, it was felt by the Committee that retention of the Newcastle record was unsafe. Accordingly, and with some regret, this occurrence is now considered not proven.

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Irish Ringing Report for 2013

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Keywords: Bird ringing, ring recoveries

This report summarises the number of birds ringed in Ireland in 2013 in the context of previous years. The data are presented separately for the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, and further broken down according to whether the birds were ringed as pulli (nestlings) or as fledged birds (adults or juveniles). The grand total of all birds ringed in Ireland since 1975, when this annual reporting began, is presented, again, broken down by the numbers ringed as pulli and as fledged birds. A selection of recoveries, re-sightings or retraps, which are noteworthy on the basis of distance or direction travelled or the longevity of the birds, is presented. These recoveries include both those ringed abroad and recovered or re-sighted here and those ringed here and recovered or re-sighted abroad.

The total number of birds ringed in Ireland in 2013 was 28,265, of which 20,301 were ringed as fledged birds and 7,964 were pulli (Table 1). This represents an 18% increase on 2012 and a 9% increase on the average number of birds ringed per year for the preceding five-year period (2008–12). Of the 131 species ringed, the top three were Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus* (2,882), Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* (2,039) and Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* (1,530).

The recent reduction in the number of wildfowl ringed has continued (Tierney 2013), with numbers down 69% on the five-year mean. The numbers ringed for several species groups: tubenoses, birds of prey, waders, terns and auks, have remained relatively stable, showing changes of less than 10% compared to the five-year mean. The number of passerines and near passerines ringed increased by 17%, while the number of Gannet *Morus bassanus*, Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* and Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* ringed declined by 35%, and the number of gulls ringed declined by 35%. These changes are most likely a result of ringing effort: certain species being targeted for projects, or the completion of such projects, rather than changes at a



population level. However, it is also possible that some species may have been more available for catching due to large-scale cold weather movements or that the unprecedented wet breeding season in 2012 resulted in reduced abundance of some species in 2013.

The large decrease for wildfowl can be attributed to a considerable reduction in the number of Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*, Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*, Teal *Anas crecca*, Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* and Eider *Somateria mollissima* ringed compared to previous years. More Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis* were ringed than in any of the preceding five years, and the numbers of Storm Petrel and Leach's Petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* ringed was higher than the preceding four years. A reduction in the number of Red Kite *Milvus milvus* and Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus* ringed was balanced by a substantial increase in the number of Merlin *Falco columbarius* and Peregrine *Falco peregrinus* ringed in the Republic of Ireland, the latter two species being ringed in their highest numbers compared to the previous five years.

While there were considerable decreases in the number of Redshank *Tringa totanus* and Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* ringed, more Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*, Ringed Plover *Charadrius biaticula*, Dunlin *Calidris alpina* and Curlew *Numenius arquata* were ringed than in any of the previous five years.

The most striking changes in the number of gulls ringed involve Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* and Common Gull *Larus canus*, which were down by 75% and 69% compared to the five-year mean. Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*, Common Tern and Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii* continue to be among the most ringed species in Ireland. This year, more Little Terns *Sternula albifrons* were ringed than in any of the

Plate 59. Little Egret nestlings (David McNicholas).

preceding five years. The number of Common Guillemot *Uria aalge* and Razorbill *Alca torda* ringed represents a decline of 92% and 69% of the five-year mean respectively, but Black Guillemot *Cepphus grylle* were ringed in higher numbers than in any of the previous five years.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*, Linnet *Carduelis cannabina* and Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret* were ringed in lower numbers compared to any of the previous five years, and the numbers ringed declined by 27%, 81% and 34% of the respective five-year means. The numbers of Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*, Siskin *Carduelis spinus* and Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella* ringed were considerably higher than the five-year mean, each showing increases in excess of 200%. Jay *Garrulus glandarius*, Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*, Rook *Corvus frugilegus* and Raven *Corvus corax* were ringed in higher numbers than in any of the preceding five years.

The 2013 ringing effort has brought the grand total of birds ringed in Ireland since 1975 to 1,189,846, and a total of 20,061 recoveries have been generated to date (Table 2). The number of ringers in Ireland has increased slightly compared to 2012, with 57 ringers in Northern Ireland and 72 in the Republic of Ireland compared to 56 and 65, respectively, in 2012. There were five Constant Effort Sites (CES) in operation in 2013, one each in Antrim, Tipperary, Louth, Wicklow and Kildare. The Louth project ended in 2013. There were six Retrapping Adults for Survival (RAS) projects, two at the same site in Derry (Great Tit *Parus major* and Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*), two in Offaly (Barn Swallow and Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*), one in Kildare (Yellowhammer) and one in Tipperary (House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*).

Recoveries of ringed birds

A total of 572 recoveries were retrieved from the BTO's Online Ringing Report (Robinson & Clark 2014) for this report, and an additional 19 records from eleven species were collated after a data request to the coordinators of colour-ringing projects in Ireland. The recoveries are birds ringed in Ireland or Britain and recovered in Ireland, Irish-ringed birds recovered elsewhere, or birds ringed outside Britain and Ireland and recovered or re-sighted here.

Of the 101 recoveries or re-sightings listed in this report, 22 are of passerines, 20 of wildfowl, 21 of waders, 10 of seabirds, 13 of gulls, 10 of terns, 3 of Little Egrets *Egretta garzetta* and 2 birds of prey and owls.

Selected recoveries

For each recovery listed below, the ringing details are given in the first two lines (ring number (or colour-ring inscription/permutation), age (and sex, if known), date and place of ringing and coordinates of the ringing location)

followed by details of the re-sightings or recovery (circumstances, date and place of re-sighting/recovery, coordinates of the re-sighting/recovery location, straight-line distance from ringing site and direction of movement). In cases where a bird has been re-sighted numerous times, only selected re-sightings are listed.

Key to abbreviations used:-

Pull. = Pullus (unfledged chick)

1yr. = First year

2yr. = Second year

Fg. = Fully grown of any age

Ad. = Adult

M = Male

F = Female

Wint. = Winter

The term "controlled" indicates the bird was caught and released by another ringer. The term "field record" indicates that the ring (or rings) was read in the field without capturing the bird.

Greater White-fronted Goose

Anser albifrons

1347940	1yr.F	31-03-1999	North Slob, Wexford 52°21'N 6°25'W
Field record		24-09-2013	Hvanneyri, Andakill, Borgarfjardar Iceland 64°34'N 21°46'W 1,619 km NNW
1347963	1yr.F	30-03-2000	North Slob, Wexford 52°21'N 6°25'W
Field record		24-09-2013	Hvanneyri, Andakill, Borgarfjardar Iceland 64°34'N 21°46'W 1,619 km NNW
4HK	Ad.	Wint. 2012/13	Islay, Scotland 55° 44'N 6° 10'W
Field record		Wint. 2013/14	Lough Swilly, Donegal 55° 3'N 7° 30'W 113 km SW
V7A	1yr.M	Wint. 2008/09	Loch Ken, Dumfries, Scotland 55° 0'N 4° 2'W
Field record		Wint. 2009/10	Glenamaddy, Galway
Field record		Wint. 2013/14	Glenamaddy, Galway 53° 36'N 8° 33'W 332 km SW
V8D	Ad.M	Wint. 2010/11	Loch Ken, Dumfries, Scotland 55° 0'N 4° 2'W
Field record		Wint. 2011/12	Loch Ken, Dumfries, Scotland
Field record		Wint. 2012/13	Lough Swilly, Donegal
Field record		Wint. 2013/14	Lough Swilly, Donegal 55° 3'N 7° 30'W 221 km W

The longevity record for this species is 18 years 9 months 22 days, so 1347940 and 1347963 represent relatively old birds. V7A was observed at Glenamaddy, Galway, every winter from 2009/10 to 2013/14, and it and V8D show what appears to be permanent emigration from Scotland to different Irish flocks, for which we have not had evidence before (Anthony David Fox, pers comm.).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

5169458	1yr.F	21-11-2012	Inch Island, Donegal 55°3'N 7°27'W
Field record		01-05-2013	Belgsholt, Melasveit, Borgarfjardar Iceland 64°26'N 22°1'W 1,320 km NW
5169460	1yr.F	06-02-2013	Inch Island, Donegal 55°3'N 7°27'W
Shot		08-09-2013	Geiradalssveit, Austur-Bandastrandar, Iceland 65°29'N 21°55'W 1,403 km NNW
5191304	Ad.M	06-02-2013	Inch Island, Donegal 55°3'N 7°27'W
Field record		11-05-2013	Kaldakinn, Sudur-Thingeyjar, Iceland 65°49'N 17°33'W 1,317 km NNW
5191308	1yr.M	06-02-2013	Inch Island, Donegal 55°3'N 7°27'W
Field record		25-04-2013	Hvanneyri, Andakil, Borgarfjardar, Iceland 64°33'N 21°42'W 1,319 km NW
5191313	Ad.F	06-02-2013	Inch Island, Donegal 55°3'N 7°27'W
Field record		15-05-2013	Kviabol, Kaldakinn, Sudur-Thingeyjar, Iceland 65°49'N 17°33'W 1,317 km NNW
5191314	1yr.F	06-02-2013	Inch Island, Donegal 55°3'N 7°27'W
Field record		17-05-2013	Borgames, Myra, Iceland 64°32'N 21°55'W 1,325 km NW
5191315	Ad.M	06-02-2013	Inch Island, Donegal 55°3'N 7°27'W
Field record		01-05-2013	Hofgardar, Stadarveit, Snaefellsnes, Iceland 64°48'N 23°6'W 1,386km NW
5191317	1yr.F	06-02-2013	Inch Island, Donegal 55°3'N 7°27'W
Field record		25-04-2013	Reykir, Hrutafjordur,vestur- Hunavatns, Iceland 65°11'N 21°3'W 1,352 km NNW

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

120227	1yr.M	12-05-2009	Hausastadir, Alftanes, Iceland 64°5'N 22°0'W
Dead		03-01-2013	River Boyne Estuary, Louth 53°43'N 6°15'W 1,458 km SE
GF79550	Ad.	13-01-2012	Nairn, Moray Firth, Scotland 57° 35'N 3° 59'W
Field record		28-04-2013	Tralee Bay, Kerry 52° 15'N 9° 43'W 698 km SW
BHYY	Ad.	2001	Alftanes, Reyjavik, Iceland
Field record			Castle Espie, Strangford Lough, Down 54° 31'N 5° 41'W 1,403 km SE

GF79550 appears to have abmigrated to the East Canadian High Arctic flyway. It is the seventh bird ringed in the East Atlantic flyway known to have moved west to Ireland (P. Clausen, pers. comm.). BHYY and mate, BIYY, are regulars at Castle Espie and have been recorded there every autumn (except for two years) between 2001 and 2013.

Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

GC64496	Ad.M	26-02-2012	Seaton Marshes, Devon, England 50°42'N 3°4'W
Field record		26-11-2013	North Bull Island, Dublin 53°21'N 6°10'W 363 km NW

Common Wigeon *Anas penelope*

FH10513	1yr.M	10-12-2008	Mahee Island, Strangford Lough, Down 54°30'N 5°38'W
Shot		23-04-2013	Alatyrskij, Chuvash, Russia 54°48'N 46°38'E 3,360 km E

Common Teal *Anas crecca*

EW37268	1yr.M	15-10-2007	Mahee Island, Strangford Lough, Down 54°30'N 5°38'W
Shot		03-05-2013	Nalyuchi, Parfinskiy, Novgorod, Russia 57°50'N 31°52'E 2,348 km E
PS11811	Ad.M	22-07-2013	Lesnichestvo, Lodeynny Murmansk, Russia 67°2'N 32°55'E
Shot		30-11-2013	Toome, Antrim 54°44'N 6°27'W 2,502 km WSW

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

EX97501	Pull.	31-08-2013	Copeland Bird Observatory, Down 54°41'N 5°32'W
Dead		31-10-2013	Barra de Valizas, Rocha, Uruguay 34°20'S 53°47'W 10,937 km SSW
EB53941	Pull.	31-08-1978	Copeland Bird Observatory, Down 54°41'N 5°31'W
Dead (storm)		28-04-2013	Haverigg Point, Cumbria, England 54°11'N 3°20'W 152 km ESE

The longevity record for this species is 50 years 11 months 21 days, so at 34 years 7 months 28 days, EB53941 is an old bird.

European Storm Petrel*Hydrobates pelagicus*

2557508	Ad.	18-08-2001	Copeland Bird Observatory, Down 54°41'N 5°32'W
Controlled		13-06-2013	Banneg, Le Conque, Finistere, France 48°25'N 5°0'W 698 km S
2541975	Ad.	20-07-2002	Bridges of Ross, Loop Head, Clare 52°35'N 9°52'W
Controlled		17-06-2013	Ponta de Almadena, Faro, Algarve, Portugal 37°4'N 8°47'W 1,726 km S
2555805	Ad.	04-08-2002	Portacloy, Mayo 54°20'N 9°47'W
Controlled		16-06-2013	Priest Island, Highland Region, Scotland 57°57'N 5°31'W 481 km NE

2555805 has been controlled 9 times at the same location since being ringed in 2002.

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

1305446	Pull.	12-06-1992	Great Saltee, Wexford 52°7'N 6°37'W
Alive (in net or cage)		05-05-2013	At Sea, near Dunmore East, Waterford 51°57'N 6°56'W 29 km SW

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

5272222	Pull.	27-06-2013	Little Saltee Island, Wexford 52°8'N 6°35'W
Dead		15-11-2013	St Ouen's Bay, Jersey, Channel Islands 49°12'N 2°13'W 448 km SE

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelus*

1304991	Pull.	06-05-1992	Great Saltee, Wexford 52°7'N 6°37'W
Controlled		02-05-2013	Great Saltee, Wexford 52°6'N 6°38'W 3 km

The longevity record for this species is 29 years 10 months 25 days, so at 20 years 11 months 26 days, this is a relatively old bird.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

GR00540	Pull.	04-06-2013	Ardfray, Oranmore, Galway 53°14'N 8°59'W
Field record		16-10-2013	Myrdalur, Austur-Skaftafells, Iceland 63°26'N 18°53'W 1,270 km NNW
GR47632	Pull.	05-06-2012	Bangor, Gwynedd, Wales 53°13'N 4°6'W
Field record		05-07-2013	Lady's Island, Wexford 52°12'N 6°23'W 191 km SW
GR00542	Pull.	04-06-2013	Ardfray, Oranmore, Galway 53°14'N 8°59'W
Field record		27-08-2013	North Bull Island, Dublin 53°22'N 6°9'W 189 km E

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

GH03218	Pull.	13-06-2005	Slemish, Antrim 54°52'N 6°5'W
Field record		12-09-2013	La Gacconniere, Charente- Maritime, France 45°53'N 1°11'W 1,057 km SSE

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

FH74725	Ad.	26-02-2013	Boooterstown Strand, Dublin 53°19'N 6°13'W
Field record		31-03-2013	Stokkseyri, Arnes, Iceland 63°50'N 21°4'W 1,447 km NW
FP21703	Ad.	14-03-2003	Newtonmore, Highland Region, Scotland 57°4'N 4°6'W
Dead		06-09-2013	New Quay, Galway 53°9'N 9°6'W 539 km SW

FP40639	Pull.	19-06-2004	Berneray, North Uist, Scotland 57°43'N 7°12'W
Controlled		26-02-2013	Boosterstown Strand, Dublin 53°19'N 6°13'W 493 km S
FV95089	Pull.	05-06-2010	Wester Fodderletter, Highland Region, Scotland 57°16'N 3°32'W
Controlled		26-02-2013	Boosterstown Strand, Dublin 53°19'N 6°13'W 471 km SSW
FC19570	Pull.	16-06-2011	Lady's Island, Wexford 52°12'N 6°23'W
Field record		13-07-2013	Dawlish Warren, Devon, England 50°36'N 3°26'W 271 km SE
FH74745*	Ad.	26-02-2013	Boosterstown Strand, Dublin 53°19'N 6°13'W
Field record		02-04-2013	Stavasanden, Karmøy, Rogaland, Norway
Field record		03-08-2013	Stavasanden, Karmøy, Rogaland, Norway 50° 13'N 5° 10'E 959 km SW
FH74725*	Ad.	26-02-2013	Boosterstown Strand, Dublin 53°19'N 6°13'W
Field record		13-03-2013	Boosterstown Strand, Dublin
Field record		31-03-2013	Stokkseyri, Iceland 63° 47'N 21° 6'W
Field record		18-11-2013	Boosterstown Strand, Dublin 53°19'N 6°13'W 1,442 km
FH74758	Ad.	26-02-2013	Boosterstown Strand, Dublin 53°19'N 6°13'W
Field record		01-05-2013	Deerness, Orkney, Scotland 58°55'N 2°47'W 658 km SSW

* Only selected re-sightings shown.

Common Ringed Plover

Charadrius hiaticula

897414	Pull.	16-07-2013	Breidafjörður, Austur- Bardastrandar, Iceland 65°22'N 22°55'W
Field record		25-08-2013	Quilty, Clare 52°48'N 9°30'W 1,588 km SSE
8A56453	1yr.	16-08-2013	Makkevika, Giske, More og Romsdal, Norway 62°30'N 6°2'E
Field record		24-08-2013	Tacumshin Lake, Wexford 52°11'N 6°27'W 1,366 km SSW

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

8E28885	1yr.	30-08-2013	Makkevika, Giske, More og Romsdal, Norway 62°30'N 6°2'E
Field record		16-09-2013	Rathlackan, Killala, Mayo 54°17'N 9°13'W 1,271 km SW

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

JT42681	1yr.	09-09-2012	Ujscie Wisly, Swibino, Slupsk, Poland 54°21'N 18°57'E
Controlled		14-01-2013	Harper's Island, Cork Harbour, Cork 51°54'N 8°18'W 1,837 km W
3580425	Ad.	16-07-2012	Nidingen, Halland, Sweden 57°18'N 11°54'E
Controlled		14-01-2013	Cork Harbour, Cork 51°53'N 8°19'W 1,431 km WSW

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

LC17055	Ad.	15-10-2011	Bellisland Lough, Milltown, Galway 53°38'N 8°56'W
Shot		06-01-2013	Grayan-Et-L'hospital, Gironde, France 45°26'N 1°5'W 1,072 km SSE

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

U443903	1yr.	18-10-2012	Vormsi Vald, Laanemaa, Estonia 58°59'N 23°11'E
Shot		12-01-2013	Currow, Castleisland, Kerry 52°10'N 9°31'W 2,184 km WSW
IA138656	Ad.	18-11-2010	Alt Buchhorst, Oder-Spree, Berlin, Germany 52°24'N 13°48'E
Predated (bird of prey)		11-01-2013	Mountjoy, Omagh, Tyrone 54°41'N 7°19'W 1,417 km WNW

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

631099	Pull.	22-06-2012	Kaldadarnes, Floi, Arnes, Iceland 63°56'N 21°10'W
Field record		14-12-2012	Wexford Wildfowl Reserve, Wexford 52°21'N 6°24'W 1,546 km SSE

Niall Tierney

590110	Pull.	17-07-2013	Nupasveit, Nordur-Thingeyjar, Iceland 66°17'N 16°25'W
Predated (wild mammal)		08-09-2013	Derrycannon, Derrylin, Enniskillen, Fermanagh 54°8'N 7°28'W 1,434 km SSE
R-OR/W* Ad.		12-08-2006	Wash estuary, Lincolnshire, England 52° 53'N 0° 10'E
Field record		02-10-2008	Clonakilty, Cork 51° 37'N 8° 52'W
Field record		07-03-2009	Clonakilty, Cork
Field record		27-09-2009	Clonakilty, Cork
Field record		22-04-2013	Wirral, Merseyside, England 53° 21'N 3° 9'W
Field record		23-08-2013	Wash estuary, Lincolnshire, England
Field record		29-10-2013	Clonakilty, Cork
Field record		17-12-2013	Clonakilty, Cork

* Only selected re-sightings shown.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

DB73993	1yr.	01-08-2009	The Lurgies, Tayside, Scotland 56°42'N 2°32'W
Field record		16-11-2013	Baldoyle, Dublin 53°24'N 6°8'W 433 km SSW

Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*

DE39527	Ad.	17-11-2012	Harper's Island, Cork Harbour, Cork 51°54'N 8°18'W
Field record		01-12-2013	Ortigueira Harbour, Ortigueira, Coruna, Spain 43°41'N 7°51'W 914 km

Black-headed Gull

Chriococephalus ridibundus

EY37312	Ad.M	21-12-2012	Antrim Forum, Antrim 54°43'N 6°15'W
Field record		12-03-2013	Antrim Marina, Antrim 54°43'N 6°15'W
Field record		05-04-2013	Gdansk-Kowale, Pomorskie, Gdansk, Poland 54°19'N 18°34'E 1,602 km E
Field record		11-04-2013	Hryniewiczze, Bialystok, Poland 53°3'N 23°9'E 1,934 km E
EX68966	Ad.	03-01-2011	Nimmo's Pier, Galway 53°16'N 9°4'W
Field record		21-03-2012	Utterslev Mose, Jylland, Denmark 55°42'N 12°30'E 1,418 km E

Field record		15-04-2013	Utterslev Mose II, Copenhagen Jylland, Denmark 55°43'N 12°30'E 1,418 km E
FN13744	1yr.	09-02-2012	Olsztyn-Kormoran, Olsztyn, Poland 53°45'N 20°29'E
Field record		29-10-2013	Lough Neagh, Antrim 54°42'N 6°13'W 1,739 km W
HA13308	Ad.M	02-04-2010	Dumpiu Savartynas, Klaipeda, Lithuania 55°38'N 21°15'E
Field record		23-01-2013	Bray Harbour, Wicklow 53°12'N 6°6'W 1,789 km W

Mediterranean Gull

Larus melanocephalus

EW48369	Pull.	13-06-2010	Hamford Water, Essex 51°53'N 1°13'E
Field record		10-12-2010	Ballycotton Bridge, Larne Lough, Antrim 54°47'N 5°43'W 562 km NW
Field record		10-04-2012	Minsmere, Suffolk 52°14'N 1°37'E 48 km NE
FS02002	Pull.	27-05-2012	Wojcice, Wroclaw, Poland
Field record		30-07-2013	Antrim Marina, Antrim 54°42'N 6°14'W 1,653 km WNW
EW66303	Pull.	02-06-2010	Lady's Island, Wexford 52°12'N 6°23'W
Field record		26-10-2011	Nare Point, Cornwall, England 50°5'N 5°5'W 253 km SSE
Field record		31-12-2013	Nare Point, Cornwall, England 50°5'N 5°5'W 253 km SSE

Common Gull *Larus canus*

5191025	1yr.	19-08-2013	Tveitevannet, Bergen, Norway 60°21'N 5°21'E
Field record		31-10-2013	Whitehead, Antrim 54°45'N 5°42'W 905 km SW
ET47509	Pull.	26-05-97	Fort Ugustus, Highland, Scotland
Field record		06-10-13	Sligo Harbour, Sligo Town 54° 16'N 8° 28'W 400 km SW

ET47509 has returned to the same location, indeed the same railing, nearly every winter since 2004 (C. Benson, pers. comm.).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

GA17769	Pull.	13-06-2013	Carrigeendauv, Mayo 53°39'N 9°20'W
Field record		23-11-2013	Anza Beach, Morocco 30°26'N 9°39'W 2,580 km S
GA17759	Pull.	13-06-2013	Carrigeendauv, Mayo 53°39'N 9°20'W
Field record		06-09-2013	Louros Lagoon, Coruna, Spain 42°45'N 9°5'W 1,212 km S
4L0307	Pull.	02-07-2009	Langli, Blavandshuk, Jylland, Denmark 55°30'N 8°19'E
Field record		21-12-2012	Duncannon Beach, Wexford 52°13'N 6°55'W 1,063 km WSW

Two more birds colour-ringed as nestlings in June 2013 in Carrigeendauv, Mayo were also re-sighted in Coruna, Spain.

Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans*

C525106	Pull.	18-06-2011	Selitba Lake, Penza, Russia 53°10'N 46°49'E
Field record		01-11-2012	Belfast, Antrim 54°35'N 5°55'W 3,458 km W

Little Tern *Sternunla albifrons*

NW38010	Pull.	14-06-2010	The Breaches, Kilcoole, Wicklow 53°5'N 6°3'W
Controlled		29-06-2013	Rue Point, Point of Ayre, Isle of Man 54°24'N 4°27'W 181 km NE

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

DD46352	Pull.	10-06-2005	Black Rock, Strangford Lough, Down 54°25'N 5°38'W
Field record		24-11-2012	Swakopmund, Namibia 22°35'S 14°32'E 8,775 km SSE
DE02262	Pull.	12-07-2013	Lady's Island, Wexford 52°12'N 6°23'W
Sick		09-11-2013	Monrovia, Liberia 6°20'N 10°48'W 5,113 km S
DD29092	Pull.	11-06-2003	Inch Island Lake, Speenoge, Donegal 55°3'N 7°28'W
Shot		02-01-2013	Site Confidential, Guinea 4,955 km S

DD56794	Pull.	12-06-2010	Lady's Island, Wexford 52°12'N 6°23'W
Field record		21-07-2013	Ujscie Wisly, Swibno, Gdansk, Poland 54°21'N 18°56'E 1,699 km E

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

SR91636	Pull.	19-07-2009	Rockabill, Dublin 53°35'N 6°0'W
Alive (in net or cage)		17-01-2013	Brufut, Gambia 13°22'N 16°47'W 4,570 km SSW
4564978	Pull.	04-06-2011	Glanas, Takern, Ostergotland, Sweden 58°20'N 14°51'E
Controlled		19-08-2013	Lough Beg, Ringaskiddy, Cork 51°49'N 8°20'W 1,640 km WSW

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

SR54607	Pull.	07-07-2008	Rockabill, Dublin 53°35'N 6°0'W
Dead (in net or cage)		15-09-2013	Gabuntula, Guinea Bissau 11°8'N 15°18'W 4,790 km SSW
ST04068	Pull.	13-07-2011	Rockabill, Dublin 53°35'N 6°0'W
Field record		09-07-2013	Country Island, Nova Scotia, Canada 45°6'N 61°32'W 4,116 km WSW
SR52019	Pull.	21-07-2006	Rockabill, Dublin 53°35'N 6°0'W
Controlled		16-05-2013	Yverdon, Vaud, Switzerland 46°47'N 6°38'E 1,173 km SE

Black Guillemot *Cephus grylle*

EP35361	Pull.	10-07-1989	Bangor Marina, Down 54°40'N 5°40'W
Dead (in building)		19-06-2013	Strangford, Down 54°22'N 5°34'W 34 km S
ER90918	Pull.	06-07-1991	Bangor, Down 54°40'N 5°40'W
Controlled		19-06-2012	Bangor, Down 54°40'N 5°40'W
Controlled		25-06-2013	Bangor Marina, Down 54°39'N 5°40'W

At 23 years 11 months 9 days old, EP35361 represents a new longevity record for Ireland and Britain. At 21 years 11 months 19 days, ER90918 is also an old bird.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

GR01477	Pull.F	09-08-2009	Site Confidential, Hawkins Point, Humber side ca. 53°37'N 0°4'W
Dead (in building)		18-04-2013	Tyrella, Down 54°15'N 5°47'W 381 km WNW

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

EW90680	Ad.	26-09-2013	Loughandy's, Kildare 53°10'N 6°56'W
Field record		25-11-2013	Omagh, Tyrone 54°33'N 7°24'W 157 km N

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

BAH401	1yr.F	30-10-2012	Kingsnorth Power Station, Kent 51°25'N 0°35'E
Controlled		28-04-2013	Copeland Bird Observatory, Down 54°41'N 5°32'W 547 km NW
EPY554	1yr.M	15-10-2012	Lundy Island, Devon 51°10'N 4°40'W
Dead		03-04-2013	Ardfert, Kerry 52°19'N 9°47'W 375 km WNW

Great Tit *Parus major*

R559809	Ad.F	11-01-2004	Dunmurry, Antrim 54°33'N 6°0'W
Controlled		26-01-2013	Dunmurry, Antrim 54°33'N 6°0'W

The longevity record for this species is 13 years 11 months 5 days, so at (at least) 9 years 15 days, this is a relatively old bird.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

5155033	1yr.F	01-09-2005	Plaisance, Saint-Froult, Charente-Maritime, France 45°54'N 1°4'W
Controlled		16-07-2006	Derryvilla, Offaly 53°10'N 7°12'W 920 km NNW
5286381	1yr.F	02-09-2006	Saint-Froult, Charente- Maritime, France 45°54'N 1°4'W
Controlled		08-07-2007	Dunmore West, Kilkenny 52°42'N 7°17'W 880 km NNW
5152753	Ad.	18-08-2005	Saint-Froult, Charente- Maritime, France 45°54'N 1°4'W
Controlled		07-06-2006	Fanisk, Killeagh, Cork 51°56'N 7°58'W 838 km NW

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

N794582	Ad.	21-09-2008	Ejea de Los Caballeros, Zaragoza, Spain 42°2'N 1°12'W
Dead (in building)		24-05-2010	Knockulcare, Mountcollins Cork 52°18'N 9°13'W 1,291 km NNW

Common Chiffchaff*Phylloscopus collybita*

DNN878	Ad.	28-07-2013	Edenderry, Offaly 53°20'N 7°5'W
Controlled		23-09-2013	Yves, Charente-Maritime, France 46°2'N 1°3'W 920 km SSE

Bohemian Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

8B63061	1yr.M	26-10-2012	Store Faerder, Tjome, Vestfold, Norway 59°4'N 10°31'E
Dead (hit by car)		25-01-2013	Limavady, Derry 55°4'N 6°56'W 1,143 km WSW
NW50165	1yr.F	29-11-2012	Rosemount, Aberdeen, Scotland 57°9'N 2°7'W
Predated (cat)		27-04-2013	Ballyclare, Antrim 54°45'N 6°0'W 360 km SW
NW31160	1yr.F	24-11-2012	Aboyne, Grampian Region, Scotland 57°4'N 2°47'W
Field record		24-03-2013	Carrickfergus, Antrim 54°42'N 5°48'W 324 km SW

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

RT99711	Pullus	30-04-2007	Cardtown Bridge, Laois 53°2'N 7°36'W
Controlled		05-12-2013	Anatrim Bridge, Laois 52°59'N 7°34'W 6 km SSE

The longevity record for this species is 8 years 4 months 11 days, so at 6 years 7 months 5 days, this bird is relatively old.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

L284978	1yr.M	31-10-2009	de Cocksdorp, Texel, The Netherlands 53°6'N 4°47'E
Dead (cold weather)		19-01-2013	Kiltycahill, Calry, Sligo 54°16'N 8°25'W 879 km W



Plate 60. Colour-ringed Redshank, Dublin Bay (John Fox).

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

T956883	Ad.M	09-04-2006	Knappaghmore, Mayo
Recaptured		03-11-2013	Knappaghmore, Mayo 53° 45'N 9° 33'W

The longevity record for this species is 12 years 12 days, so at (at least) 7 years 6 months 7 days, this is a relatively old bird.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

1EP02683	1yr.	15-07-2011	Handolsdeltat, Jamtland, Sweden 63°17'N 12°28'E
Controlled		14-03-2013	Stradbally, Loais 53°1'N 7°9'W 1,613 km SW

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

X008232	1yr.M	19-10-2011	Landguard Point, Felixstowe, Suffolk 51°56'N 1°19'E
Controlled		06-03-2013	Coolcush, Dungannon, Tyrone 54°29'N 6°45'W 607 km WNW
L132885	1yr.F	15-03-2010	Chesworth Farm, Horsham, Sussex 51°3'N 0°20'W
Controlled		24-04-2010	Strahack, Inch Island, Donegal
Controlled		30-06-2011	Strahack, Inch Island, Donegal
Controlled		31-03-2013	Strahack, Inch Island, Donegal 55°4'N 7°29'W 654 km NW

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

D276032	1yr.M	22-02-2013	Webbs Wood, Brinkworth, Wiltshire 51°34'N 1°56'W
Controlled		07-04-2013	Strahack, Inch Island, Donegal 55°4'N 7°29'W 536 km NW

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret*

Y515085	1yr.M	08-10-2012	Copeland Bird Observatory, Down 54°41'N 5°32'W
Alive (trapped)		30-11-2013	Vosselaar, Antwerpen, Belgium 51°19'N 5°42'E 839 km ESE
L916207	1yr.	14-10-2011	Warren Farm, Waxham, Norfolk 52°45'N 1°38'E
Controlled		13-03-2012	Weybourne, Norfolk 2°55'N 1°8'E 40 km WNW
Controlled		24-04-2013	Strahack, Inch Island, Donegal 55°4'N 7°29'W 650 km WNW

Redpoll (Common/Lesser)

Carduelis flammae/cabaret

R535957	1yr.F	13-11-2011	Dungeness, Kent 50°55'N 0°57'E
Controlled		12-04-2013	Dunmurry, Antrim
Controlled		13-04-2013	Dunmurry, Antrim
Controlled		15-04-2013	Dunmurry, Antrim 54°33'N 6°0'W 618 km NW

Table 1. Ringing totals for 2013 with the previous five-year mean for comparison.

Species	Juv/adult			Pullus			Total 2013	Five-year mean 2008–2012
	Northern Ireland	Rep. of Ireland	Sub- total	Northern Ireland	Rep. of Ireland	Sub- total		
Mute Swan	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	58.8
Whooper Swan	3	1	4	0	0	0	4	5.6
Greater White-fronted Goose	0	74	74	0	0	0	74	37.6
Greylag Goose	0	22	22	0	0	0	22	5.0
Barnacle Goose	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21.8
Light-bellied Brent Goose	0	162	162	0	0	0	162	218.0
Common Shelduck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.4
Mandarin Duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Common Wigeon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.0
Gadwall	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Common Teal	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	467.2
Mallard	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	57.8
Pintail	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.0
Common Pochard	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Tufted Duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.2
Common Eider	12	1	13	0	5	5	18	23.8
Red Grouse	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.8
Grey Partridge	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.4
Fulmar	1	46	47	0	13	13	60	22.2
Cory's Shearwater	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Manx Shearwater	288	5	293	295	0	295	588	995.0
European Storm Petrel	200	2,682	2,882	0	0	0	2,882	2,354.8
Leach's Storm Petrel	0	11	11	0	0	0	11	6.4
Gannet	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	28.6
Great Cormorant	0	0	0	24	227	251	251	423.4
Shag	2	9	11	81	66	147	158	175.6
Little Egret	0	1	1	0	23	23	24	12.6
Grey Heron	0	1	1	0	4	4	5	3.6
Little Grebe	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.2
Great Crested Grebe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Red Kite	0	0	0	14	0	14	14	51.4
White-tailed Eagle	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0.0
Hen Harrier	0	3	3	0	10	10	13	25.4
Sparrowhawk	3	7	10	1	12	13	23	20.6
Common Buzzard	0	1	1	11	30	41	42	32.6
Golden Eagle	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.4
Common Kestrel	0	2	2	0	92	92	94	76.4
Merlin	0	1	1	0	16	16	17	2.4
Peregrine	0	0	0	0	88	88	88	35.6
Water Rail	4	0	4	0	0	0	4	3.2
Spotted Crake	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Moorhen	4	3	7	0	0	0	7	2.0
Common Coot	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	1.6
Oystercatcher	0	117	117	1	34	35	152	30.8
Common Ringed Plover	0	2	2	2	45	47	49	16.0
European Golden Plover	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1.4
Northern Lapwing	0	0	0	0	19	19	19	57.0
Red Knot	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1.2
Sanderling	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15.4

Table 1 (continued). Ringing totals for 2013 with the previous five-year mean for comparison.

Species	Juv/adult			Pullus			Total 2013	Five-year mean 2008–2012
	Northern Ireland	Rep. of Ireland	Sub- total	Northern Ireland	Rep. of Ireland	Sub- total		
Little Stint	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Pectoral Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Curlew Sandpiper	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.2
Purple Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21.8
Dunlin	0	120	120	0	0	0	120	73.2
Ruff	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.0
Jack Snipe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Common Snipe	0	8	8	0	0	0	8	7.6
Woodcock	0	45	45	0	0	0	45	50.6
Black-tailed Godwit	0	14	14	0	0	0	14	18.2
Bar-tailed Godwit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.0
Whimbrel	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	2.8
Common Curlew	0	37	37	0	0	0	37	11.8
Common Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.6
Greenshank	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.0
Common Redshank	0	77	77	0	0	0	77	148.4
Turnstone	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	51.0
Kittiwake	42	1	43	31	72	103	146	112.0
Black-headed Gull	28	14	42	93	122	215	257	246.8
Mediterranean Gull	0	1	1	0	5	5	6	14.8
Common Gull	0	0	0	75	3	78	78	250.4
Lesser Black-backed Gull	2	0	2	23	39	62	64	40.8
Herring Gull	2	4	6	8	21	29	35	138.8
Great Black-backed Gull	0	1	1	8	82	90	91	121.4
Little Tern	0	0	0	0	244	244	244	104.4
Black Tern	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Sandwich Tern	0	5	5	262	739	1,001	1,006	997.6
Common Tern	0	17	17	75	1,947	2,022	2,039	1,919.2
Roseate Tern	0	0	0	0	1,283	1,283	1,283	1,325.6
Arctic Tern	0	0	0	267	62	329	329	142.4
Common Guillemot	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	24.8
Razorbill	7	0	7	0	0	0	7	22.6
Black Guillemot	9	1	10	50	106	156	166	136.2
Little Auk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Puffin	0	26	26	0	1	1	27	16.2
Stock Dove	1	0	1	2	2	4	5	3.4
Woodpigeon	6	17	23	0	0	0	23	15.4
Collared Dove	0	12	12	4	0	4	16	12.0
Common Cuckoo	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0.8
Barn Owl	0	14	14	0	47	47	61	100.2
Long-eared Owl	1	1	2	0	0	0	2	3.8
Common Swift	0	4	4	11	7	18	22	18.6
Kingfisher	2	2	4	0	0	0	4	3.4
Great Spotted Woodpecker	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.0
Chough	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	12.0
Magpie	8	12	20	0	7	7	27	16.0
Jay	6	9	15	0	0	0	15	6.0
Jackdaw	5	34	39	0	6	6	45	21.6
Rook	0	76	76	0	0	0	76	29.0

Table 1 (continued). Ringing totals for 2013 with the previous five-year mean for comparison.

Species	Juv/adult			Pullus			Total 2013	Five-year mean 2008–2012
	Northern Ireland	Rep. of Ireland	Sub- total	Northern Ireland	Rep. of Ireland	Sub- total		
Hooded Crow	2	0	2	0	6	6	8	8.4
Raven	0	0	0	0	125	125	125	45.6
Goldcrest	117	279	396	0	0	0	396	269.8
Firecrest	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Blue Tit	399	702	1,101	39	129	168	1,269	1,140.6
Great Tit	405	541	946	18	100	18	1,064	959.4
Coal Tit	281	348	629	10	5	15	644	650.8
Skylark	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7.6
Sand Martin	11	354	365	0	0	0	365	653.8
Barn Swallow	31	1,157	1,188	14	144	158	1,346	1,840.0
House Martin	7	4	11	0	4	4	15	21.2
Cetti's Warbler	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.2
Long-tailed Tit	132	179	311	0	0	0	311	197.0
Arctic Warbler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Pallas's Warbler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Yellow-browed Warbler	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	2.6
Western Bonelli's Warbler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Radde's Warbler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Common Chiffchaff	43	319	362	0	0	0	362	286.2
Willow Warbler	255	422	677	0	99	99	776	631.2
Blackcap	125	169	294	0	0	0	294	196.8
Garden Warbler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3.2
Barred Warbler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Lesser Whitethroat	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1.6
Common Whitethroat	8	44	52	0	13	13	65	37.0
Subalpine Warbler	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.2
Common Grasshopper Warbler	4	6	10	0	5	5	15	17.0
Booted Warbler	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.0
Melodious Warbler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Sedge Warbler	37	373	410	0	30	30	440	361.4
Common Reed Warbler	1	9	10	0	0	0	10	24.6
Bohemian Waxwing	0	7	7	0	0	0	7	1.0
Treecreeper	11	17	28	0	0	0	28	30.2
Wren	137	276	413	0	0	0	413	302.2
Common Starling	45	24	69	4	51	55	124	157.4
Dipper	6	110	116	4	202	206	322	208.0
White's Thrush	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.6
Blackbird	150	364	514	1	5	6	520	482.0
Fieldfare	1	1	2	0	0	0	2	11.4
Song Thrush	20	143	163	5	0	5	168	119.4
Redwing	3	46	49	0	0	0	49	79.2
Mistle Thrush	4	2	6	11	0	11	17	12.6
Spotted Flycatcher	1	10	11	4	0	4	15	28.4
European Robin	209	276	485	21	6	27	512	356.8
Bluethroat	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.4
Collared Flycatcher	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Pied Flycatcher	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.6
Black Redstart	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.4
Common Redstart	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1.2

Table 1 (continued). Ringing totals for 2013 with the previous five-year mean for comparison.

Species	Juv/adult			Pullus			Total 2013	Five-year mean 2008–2012
	Northern Ireland	Rep. of Ireland	Sub- total	Northern Ireland	Rep. of Ireland	Sub- total		
Whinchat	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.4
European Stonechat	1	36	37	6	8	14	51	14.6
Northern Wheatear	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	19.4
Dunnock	97	192	289	0	5	5	294	217.0
House Sparrow	168	704	872	0	12	12	884	385.4
Tree Sparrow	85	39	124	4	0	4	128	84.8
Grey Wagtail	2	3	5	0	11	11	16	22.4
Pied/White Wagtail	9	16	25	5	0	5	30	63.2
Tree Pipit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Meadow Pipit	39	454	493	9	3	12	505	163.8
Rock Pipit	0	7	7	0	0	0	7	10.0
Chaffinch	363	856	1,219	14	0	14	1,233	1,119.6
Brambling	5	2	7	0	0	0	7	8.2
Greenfinch	76	409	485	0	0	0	485	475.8
Goldfinch	627	903	1,530	0	0	0	1,530	1,038.2
Siskin	674	331	1,005	0	0	0	1,005	320.6
Linnet	10	17	27	0	0	0	27	145.0
Twite	4	5	9	0	0	0	9	20.6
Lesser Redpoll	354	351	705	0	0	0	705	1,073.6
Common Redpoll	1	1	2	0	0	0	2	1.0
Redpoll (Common/Lesser)	19	23	42	0	0	0	42	58.6
Common Crossbill	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.2
Common Rosefinch	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Bullfinch	44	108	152	0	0	0	152	122.2
Yellowhammer	51	54	105	1	0	1	106	32.8
Reed Bunting	25	146	171	1	7	8	179	103.0
2013 Total	5,742	14,559	20,301	1,509	6,455	7,964	28,265	
5-year mean (2008–12)	5,775	11,872	17,647	1,742	6,056	7,799		25,446.8
Number of species							131	127

Table 2. Annual totals of birds ringed in Ireland and annual recovery totals.¹

Year	Ringed Juv/Adult	Ringed Pullus	Ringed Total	Recovered Total
1975	21,316	8,146	29,462	not known
1976	23,097	6,039	29,136	not known
1977	17,812	6,708	24,520	not known
1978	12,637	10,014	22,651	387
1979	15,495	11,052	26,547	455
1980	19,383	12,114	31,497	322
1981	21,536	10,139	31,675	424
1982	22,412	12,510	34,922	613
1983	23,588	12,807	36,395	617
1984	18,737	15,384	34,121	682
1985	21,223	15,904	37,127	634
1986	24,361	13,368	37,729	635
1987	20,657	15,185	35,842	471
1988	22,237	13,235	35,472	814
1989	26,860	14,659	41,519	615
1990	23,061	10,977	34,038	676
1991	19,517	10,674	30,191	677
1992	17,316	11,266	28,582	641
1993	15,733	10,564	26,297	456
1994	17,819	10,567	28,386	473
1995	22,875	11,961	34,836	482
1996	25,125	13,010	38,135	501
1997	20,037	11,067	31,104	1,226
1998	18,443	9,509	27,952	827
1999	19,119	12,273	31,392	437
2000	15,042	11,653	26,695	502
2001	16,630	12,237	28,867	501
2002	17,827	12,447	30,274	519
2003	16,487	13,860	30,347	532
2004	20,062	9,995	30,057	358
2005	18,777	10,126	28,903	462
2006	20,893	10,074	30,967	484
2007	18,493	5,844	24,337	576
2008	18,122	7,859	25,981	565
2009	18,624	9,058	27,682	523
2010	18,212	9,357	27,569	362
2011	17,637	9,575	27,212	690
2012	16,397	6,765	23,162	350
2013	20,301	7,964	28,265	572

Grand totals ringed
and recovered 1975–2013 1,189,846 20,061

Average number ringed
per year (1975–2013) 30,509

¹ Reproduced from Merne (2012) with data from 2006–2013 sourced from Robinson and Clark (2014)

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Ringers registered in 2013

Northern Ireland 57 ringers (27 A permit holders, 16 C permit holders and 14 trainees).

Chris Acheson, Pamela Allen, Hugh Bradley, Ryan Bradley, Anthony Caravaggi, Lorraine Chivers, Declan Clarke, John Clarke, Kendrew Colhoun, Aidan Crean, Richard Donaghey, Trevor Fisher, Ian Forsyth, David Galbraith, Philip Galbraith, Julian Greenwood, Philip Grosse, Richard Harkness, Owen Hegarty, George Henderson, Nicholas Hesford, Richard Holland, Richard Hoy, Ian Humphreys, George Hynes, Nigel Ireland, Dean Jones, Kerry Leonard, Kerry Mackie, Paddy Mackie, Seamus Magouran, Kathryn McBride, Peter McCarron, Adam McClure, Darryl McConnell, Craig McCoy, Edward McGuiggan, Neville McKee, Sandy McWilliams, Mary Mooney, Peter Munro, Tim Murphy, Samuel O'Hara, Gillian Parr, Michael Parr, Ken Perry, William Porter, Alex Portig, Sarah Rogers, Eimear Rooney, Marc Ruddock, Wesley Smyth, Brian Sutton, Hugh Thurgate, Irena Tománková, Niall Waterman and Shane Wolsey.

Republic of Ireland 72 ringers (24 A permit holders, 28 C permit holders and 20 trainees).

Adrian Allen, Chris Benson, Lorraine Benson, Mark Berney, Phil Brennan, Boyd Bryce, David Cabot, Michael Casey, Damian Clarke, Anna Collins, Richard Collins, Alex Copland, Maura Culligan, Sinéad Cummins, David Daly, Mary Duggan, Robert Fennelly, Ann Fitzpatrick, Chris Honan, Tom Kealy, Dave Kelly, Sean Kelly, Sean Kingston, Alan Lauder, Clare Lauder, John Lusby, Aine Lynch, Liam Lysaght, Declan Manley, Katie-Mai Manley, Patrick Manley, Nicola Marples, Rosemarie McDonald, Eoin McGreal, Derek McLoughlin, Keith McMahon, David McNicholas, Allan Mee, Sandra Molloy, Deirdre Moran, Gerry Murphy, Tony Murray, Tony Nagle, Tyrone Nelson, Stephen Newton, Gabriel Noonan, Irene O'Brien, Michael O'Clery, Darren O'Connell, Michael O'Donnell, Susan O'Donohoe, Barry O'Donoghue, Raymond O'Haire, John O'Halloran, Barry O'Mahony, William O'Shea, Lorcan O'Toole, Peter Phillips, James Power, John Quinn, Pat Smiddy, Andrew Speer, Wendy Stringer, David Suddaby, Laurence Taaffe, Niall Tierney, Alyn Walsh, Paul Walsh, Ricky Whelan, Howard Williams, Chris Wilson and Stephen Wing.

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Notes

Status of Whinchats *Saxicola rubetra* in Coronation Plantation, Co. Wicklow

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Keywords: Habitat, interspecific aggression, *Saxicola rubetra*, *Saxicola rubicola*, status, Stonechat, territories, Whinchat

Introduction

The three Breeding Atlases of Britain and Ireland (Sharrock 1976, Gibbons *et al.* 1993, Balmer *et al.* 2013) have recorded a marked decline in range of the Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* since 1968–72. The decline has been greater in Ireland (76%) than in Britain (47%) and has accelerated since 1988–91. Similarly, changes in relative abundance from the atlases have shown large decreases with Whinchats more restricted in their distribution in Ireland compared to Britain. Across Europe, as with many farmland bird species, the Whinchat has declined by 55% between 1980 and 2008 (Klvaňová *et al.* 2010). Occurring in open habitats, including arthropod-rich grasslands with high structural and species diversity, changing availability of grassland invertebrates has been linked with recent poor breeding productivity (Britschgi *et al.* 2006). Breeding habitat loss has been important, particularly in the lowlands of Britain, but factors on the wintering grounds (i.e. reduced overwinter survival) may now also be contributing to the decline (Ockendon *et al.* 2012). Changing grassland management practices, particularly earlier and more frequent mowing for the production of hay or silage, has been mooted as a causative factor in Ireland (Kenny 2014) and elsewhere in Europe (Muller *et al.* 2005). Whinchat breeding phenology is not changing in response to earlier mowing, with the proportion of successful broods reared being lower in areas which are mowed earlier (i.e. in lowland areas) and an additive factor of increased adult female mortality due to mowing (Muller *et al.* 2005).

In Ireland, there is a dearth of published information on Whinchat ecology, with no published surveys of local populations to date, although a recent study has taken place at the River Shannon Callows in the Irish Midlands (Kenny 2014). Most sites are likely to contain small numbers, as the only extensive areas of suitable semi-natural habitat that are favoured by Whinchats would appear to be on the mid-Shannon callows, parts of the Antrim plateau and the Coronation Plantation, Co. Wicklow (Balmer *et al.* 2013). Whinchats are also associated with raised bogs, breeding in wet meadows (Hutchinson 1989), young conifer plantations and abandoned hand-cut areas on their periphery (HJW, pers. obs.).

Methods and study area

We have been recording Whinchats and extending the area we searched in Coronation Plantation since 2007, and we report here on a survey of part of the site in 2011 and 2012. Territories were identified, particularly the borders between territories, using mapping technique conventions (International Bird Census Committee 1969). Most observations were made between late April and mid July.

Coronation Plantation (Figure 1) consists of open, mature woodland of Sessile Oak *Quercus petraea* and Scots Pine *Pinus sylvestris*, planted in 1831 along the upper stretches and side streams of the River Liffey, lining the valley sides between 280–340m above sea level for approximately 5km. Unusually, at these comparatively low elevations, the area is unenclosed. It is extensively grazed by deer and small numbers of sheep. Bog, wet heath and Purple Moor Grass *Molinia caerulea* dominate flat ground and gentle slopes, while mineral soils, with Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*, rushes *Juncus* species and gorse (both *Ulex europaeus* & *Ulex gallii*) are confined to steeper slopes and to the flood plain. Coronation Plantation itself lies within Wicklow Mountains National Park, but approximately half of the survey area, on the northern bank to the west of the Sraghoe Brook, is privately owned or on Coillte lands. Both the latter areas have been recently replanted with Sitka Spruce *Picea sitchensis* and Contorta Pine *Pinus contorta*, although the privately owned land has retained some strips of original Scots Pine plantation.

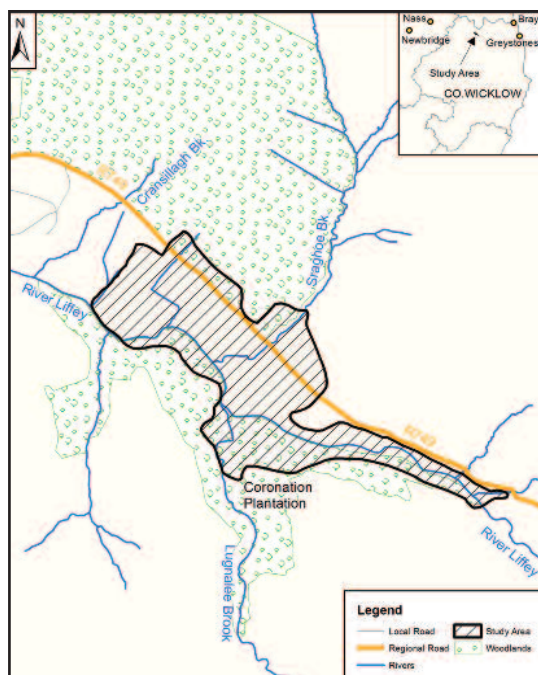


Figure 1. The Whinchat study area at Coronation Plantation, Co. Wicklow.

Results and discussion

Although territorial boundaries showed minor variations from year to year, territory distribution was stable over time, possibly because key habitat features were patchily distributed. For the most part territories were continuously distributed within the area searched; in one instance a gap in distribution coincided with an absence of Bracken, a plant known to be important to breeding Whinchat (Allen 1995). Stonechats *Saxicola rubicola* also bred in the same area, although at lower densities.

Twenty-seven Whinchat territories were located in the area surveyed between 2007 and 2012; a further four were found in 2013. One territory was used once only (in 2009) and no longer appears suitable because of habitat changes. Otherwise, habitat within territories appeared unchanged (apart from maturation of recently re-afforested areas). Those territories which were visited over a number of years were normally reoccupied annually (but see below). In terms of habitat, 15 territories were located in open, mature oak/Scots Pine wood and unplanted bog and heath, six in recently re-afforested conifer plantations and 10 in territories which straddled both habitats. Over the coming years', maturation of the young conifer crop in half of the territories surveyed will likely have a negative impact on the Whinchat population at Coronation Plantation, although at current densities sufficient

open habitat would remain for more than half of the present population.

Eighteen pairs were recorded in twenty-three territories visited in both 2011 and 2012. There were four Stonechat territories in the same area, three of which were occupied in both years. During interactions between the two species, Greig-Smith (1982) found Stonechats were typically the aggressors in conflicts with Whinchats and suggested the behaviour reduces overlap in the breeding ranges of the two species. In both 2011 and 2012, two Whinchat territories closest to each of two Stonechat pairs were unoccupied, while single Whinchat territories closest to a third pair of Stonechats were also unoccupied. The locations of Stonechat nests and unoccupied Whinchat territories differed in the two years. Furthermore, Whinchat territories, which were vacant in 2011 and 2012, had regularly been occupied in previous years when there were no adjacent Stonechat territories, consistent with the view of the authors that Stonechat aggression was responsible for all of the vacant Whinchat territories recorded. If this interpretation is correct, then all available Whinchat territories were occupied in both 2011 and 2012 and this small population at Coronation Plantation has not declined in recent years. Although the 2007–2011 Atlas reports a decrease in the proportion of tetrads with Whinchats since 1988–91 throughout most of the Irish range, the decrease recorded was minimal in more than 50% of squares (Balmer *et al.* 2013). Effective conservation will require a better understanding of other potential causes of the decline, besides changing habitat quality or habitat loss. It would be interesting to learn more about the status and trends of Whinchats in other 'hotspots' in Ireland in order to better understand what might be driving the decline of this newly Red-listed species (Colhoun & Cummins 2013).

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Large movements of Red-throated Divers *Gavia stellata* and Great Northern Divers *Gavia immer* at Hook Head, Co. Wexford and Waterford Harbour, and probable association with Sprats *Sprattus sprattus*

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Introduction

Winter and spring sea watching at Hook Head, Co. Wexford has historically been very limited and sporadic, with observations typically of 15–30 minutes duration taking place, usually about one hour after dawn. Late morning and afternoon watches were less frequent, but occasionally longer watches took place if there was evidence of a seabird movement. During the various watches numbers of Red-throated Divers *Gavia stellata* and Great Northern Divers *Gavia immer* recorded were mostly similar, usually in single figures, with never more than 25 birds recorded in a day (Lovatt 1984). On 22 March 2012, a sea watch from 1620–1800 hours produced 110 Red-throated Divers flying east. This was by far the largest number recorded at this location and it was considered that further observations were required to determine if there were any large annual movements or gatherings of divers here. Almost all the divers in the periods under discussion were flying very low over the sea or up to an estimated 5m above sea level.

Spring 2013

A number of sea watches took place between the end of February and late March 2013 (Table 1). The first watch took place on 28 February from 1605-1805 hours. A total of 332 Red-throated Divers passed east. Birds were coming in twos or threes and in loose groups of four to eight. All movements had stopped by the end of the watch at dusk. Three Great Northern Divers also passed east. A morning watch on 1 March from 0740–1000 hours produced just 14 Red-throated Divers flying west and four flying east. That evening a watch from 1500–1800 hours produced 456 Red-throated Diver again moving east, which is probably the largest number ever recorded for this species in Ireland. This included one exceptional movement of 139 divers passing in less than two minutes. It became clear a dawn watch was required and the next day, from 0700–0900 hours 370 Red-throated Divers passed west. Only three Great Northern Divers passed west. Also on this date (2 March) there were 320+ Red-throated Divers present between Mosney and Gormanstown, Co. Meath, but they were not present a week later (Aiden G. Kelly per. comm.). Lower numbers were recorded on 8–9 March with the same pattern of westerly movements in the morning and easterly movements in the evening.

Winter/Spring 2013–2014

A similar pattern of movements was observed from 19–21 November 2013 with lower numbers of Red-throated Divers (peak of 132) but an increase of Great Northern Divers (peak of 37). Significant diver movements continued to be recorded during observations between 9-10 January 2014, 16 February 2014 and 5 March 2014 (Table 1). Numbers of Red-throated Divers in spring 2014 were lower than in spring 2013. However, higher numbers of Great Northern Divers were recorded in spring 2014.

Table 1. Numbers of Red-throated and Great Northern Divers seen off Hook Head, County Wexford, 2012, 2013 and 2014.

Date	Time	Red-throated Diver	Great Northern Diver
21 March 2012	1720–1800	14 east; 1 west	Nil
22 March 2012	1620–1800	110 east	Nil
28 February 2013	1605–1805	332 east	3 east
1 March 2013	0740–1000	14 west; 4 east	1 west
1 March 2013	1500–1800	456 east	10 east
2 March 2013	0646–0900	371 west	3 west
8 March 2013	1500–1845	195 east	4 east
9 March 2013	0630–0930	191 west	2 east
24 March 2013	1500–1840	43 east	3 east
25 March 2013	0615–0815	25 west	Nil
19 November 2013	1500–1700	74 east; 1 west	17 east
20 November 2013	0730–0930	91 west	20 west
21 November 2013	0730–1030	132 west	37 west
9 January 2014	0800–1000	135 west	33 west
9 January 2014	1530–1700	19 east	3 east
10 January 2014	0800–1000	73 west	23 west
16 February 2014	0715–1015	24 west; 1 east	52 west
5 March 2014	0645–1015	97 west	31 west
5 March 2014	1500–1830	26 east	6 east

Discussion

In February and March 2013, almost all divers were passing within 500m of the lighthouse at the tip of the Hook peninsula. These birds were clearly observed flying into and out of Waterford Harbour. Gannets *Morus bassanus*, thousands of Kittiwakes *Rissa tridactyla*, gulls *Larus* species and auks (Alcidae) were feeding well inside Waterford Harbour from the open sea. These birds were present there from November 2012. From November 2012 to early 2013, enormous numbers of Sprats *Sprattus sprattus* occurred inside Waterford Harbour and at least 12 local fishing boats were actively fishing them day and night (pers. comm. with an observer). It is likely that the divers discovered the Sprats and were arriving daily in the morning from east of Hook Head and returning eastwards in the evening. Sprats are known to be an important food resource for Red-throated Divers. Their food is principally fish from marine areas with Cod *Gadus morhua*, Herring *Clupea harengus* and Sprat the most frequently recorded fish (Cramp & Simmons 1977). The *Winter Atlas* (Lack 1986) states numbers fluctuate widely in response to weather conditions and other factors which may affect the available food supply.

In winter 2013–2014 very few divers were observed flying into Waterford Harbour. There were no obvious shoals of Sprats and fishing was not taking place. In consequence, it appears the divers had changed their feeding patterns, confirming that they were attracted by the rich resource of

Sprats the previous year and that feeding was now taking place elsewhere. Red-throated Divers were scarcer, but Great Northern Divers were much more numerous. The same east-west dawn and west-east dusk movements took place, but birds were flying further out over the sea past the Hook peninsula. Some birds came down on the sea offshore, but most continued further west. There were many other seabirds at this time feeding offshore over a wide area. This indicated that there were feeding resources available over a more extensive area off the Hook peninsula. A sea watch was carried out at Dunmore East (Waterford) on the west side of the entrance to Waterford Harbour from Hook Head on 20 November 2013 between 1500–1630 hours. This proved to be negative for divers and other seabirds moving past. However, there were some 600 Herring Gulls *Larus argentatus* and a few each of other gull species around the fishing harbour.

Given the early morning arrival of divers passing Hook Head, it suggests the birds were spending the night close by and most likely in Ballyteigue Bay. When Sprats were present inside Waterford Harbour the divers did not spend the night there. Perhaps the strong tidal current made the area unsuitable, and the movement of fishing boats at night could also prove problematic. The divers were feeding well inside Waterford Harbour for many weeks after the fishing ceased, which suggests the tidal current was the main factor why the birds left in the evening. If future movements of divers are recorded inside Waterford Harbour from Hook Head, it might



Plate 61. Great Northern Diver (Michael O'Clery).

be useful to carry out sea watches from Dunmore East to monitor any movement on that side of the harbour.

The numbers recorded are of National (all-Ireland) importance and are an addition to the nine sites listed by Boland and Crowe (2012). In addition to the birds observed off Hook Head, both diver species were present in spring 2014 between the Keeragh Islands and Fethard-on Sea (Wexford) with at least 33 Red-throated Divers and 10 Great Northern Divers. These birds were observed during the middle of the day. Survey work carried out during the *Winter Atlas* (Lack 1986) showed that the largest numbers of Red-throated Divers wintered on the shallow sandy bays of Wexford (Hutchinson 1989).

The Irish government is obliged to designate marine Special Protection Areas (SPA) for Annex 1 species such as Red-throated Diver and Great Northern Diver under the European Union Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on the Conservation of Wild Birds (Birds Directive) (Crowe 2005).

Conclusion

This sea watching study has shown the presence of a large population of divers in the vicinity of Hook Head and Waterford Harbour in 2013-2014. It appears that such large numbers, which may be associated with large shoals of Sprats,

had not been previously recorded in south County Wexford. It is evident further sea watching is required to establish if divers are present in large numbers on a regular basis. The importance of early morning sea watching was critical in establishing the diver movements.

Acknowledgement

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Importance of Sandymount Strand in Dublin Bay as a post-breeding tern roost

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Sandymount Strand in Dublin Bay is known for its importance as a roosting area for post-breeding terns, with up to five species regularly recorded (Black Tern *Cblidonias niger*, Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*, Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*, Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii* and Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*). Merne *et al.* (2008) reported on the numbers of terns between July and October, and recorded peaks of 11,700 and 9,025 in 2006 and 2007, respectively. Due to the large number of terns roosting at Sandymount Strand each autumn, it is reasonable to assume that the numbers at the roost are supplemented by birds that have bred outside the Dublin colonies of Rockabill, Dublin Port and Dalkey Island. The presence of occasional Black Terns suggest that some of the roosting birds have come from colonies further afield than the Irish Sea, as the nearest Black Tern colony is in the Netherlands (BirdLife International 2004).

On 5 September 2014, a small group of ringers undertook a mist-netting session between 21.00 and 23.00 at the north end of Sandymount Strand. A total of 43 Common, Roseate and Arctic Terns from the roost were captured. These included controls of seven Common Terns and one Roseate Tern (a capture rate of ringed birds of 18.6%). Three of the Common Terns had been ringed at Rockabill earlier in 2014, two were ringed at Dublin Port in 2010, one was ringed in Norway and one is of (as yet) unconfirmed origin, but which was ringed elsewhere in Ireland or Britain. The Roseate Tern control had been ringed at Rockabill earlier in 2014.

This single ringing session produced valuable information on the origins of a very small subset of the total numbers of terns using Dublin Bay as a post-breeding roost. It indicates the importance of the site not just for birds breeding in Ireland, but also for those breeding elsewhere in northern Europe. The National Parks and Wildlife Service and BirdWatch Ireland are hoping to obtain information on the locations of other known tern roosts as part of the Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS), and the I-WeBS Office is appealing for information on sites that are regularly used by terns.

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(Editorial comment: Small catches of Sandwich and Common Terns have been taken at Cork Harbour in 2013 and 2014. Twelve of 29 captured in 2013 were already ringed (41.4%), and eight of 25 captured in 2014 were already ringed (32%). Ringed Sandwich Terns came from Lady's Island Lake (Wexford), while ringed Common Terns came from Dublin and Sweden, with others coming from the colony situated at Cork Harbour (Wilson *et al.* 2000) dating from 2000, 2002, 2006 and 2011. One Common Tern is of (as yet) unconfirmed origin, but which was ringed elsewhere in Ireland or Britain. Data from ringing terns at Cork Harbour has been supplied by Barry O'Mahony.)

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Gannet *Morus bassanus* choked by Lesser Spotted Dogfish *Scyliorhinus canicula*

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On 21 April 2014, EOF discovered an adult Gannet *Morus bassanus* with a large Lesser Spotted Dogfish *Scyliorhinus canicula* protruding from its gullet stranded near Baltray, Co. Louth (O150780). Although the Gannet and dogfish were both dead, they appeared to be relatively fresh. The Gannet had obviously choked whilst attempting to swallow the dogfish. On revisiting the same site on 13 May 2014, EOF noted that the Gannet was still there, albeit extensively

decomposed. However, the dogfish was gone, presumably having been devoured by an opportunistic scavenger. It is possible that the Gannet may have originated from a nearby recently established colony on a sea stack off Ireland's Eye, Co. Dublin (Dempsey & O'Clery 2002).

This dogfish (*Scyliorbinus canicula*) is a common bottom-dwelling animal which is usually found at depths of 3–110m, and less commonly down to 400m in northwest European waters (Wheeler 1978). According to Nelson (2002), Gannets probably do not penetrate more than 3.5m while diving in pursuit of prey, but can descend to 12–15m by swimming, using wings and feet underwater. Nelson (2002) was of the opinion that reports of Gannets diving to 30m were probably erroneous, and he specifically remarked that dogfish (*Squalus* spp.) are apparently not eaten. Since dogfish have not been previously reported in the diet of Gannets, it seems unlikely that *Scyliorbinus canicula* and *Morus bassanus* rarely, if ever, come into contact in the natural environment

other than opportunistically when dogfish are discarded by demersal trawlers.

Although the predominant natural prey of Gannets in northwest European waters includes near-surface pelagic fish species, particularly Herring *Clupea barengus*, Sprat *Sprattus sprattus*, Pollack *Pollachius pollachius*, Saithe *Pollachius virens*, sandeels *Ammodytes* spp. and Mackerel *Scomber scombrus* (Wanless 1984, Montevecchi & Barrett 1987, Martin 1989, Nelson 2002, Lewis *et al.* 2003), they are also known to scavenge opportunistically on a wide range of both bottom-dwelling demersal and pelagic fish species discarded by commercial trawlers (Hillis 1971, Hudson & Furness 1988, 1989, Berrow 1998, Hamer *et al.* 2000, 2007), Nelson 2002, Lewis *et al.* 2003, Furness *et al.* 2007). Berrow (1998) observed that Gannets were the most abundant seabird foraging on discards derived from pelagic trawlers in the Celtic Sea herring fishery. Borges *et al.* (2005) estimated that Irish beam trawlers discarded up to 67% of their catch by weight in



Plate 62. Gannet apparently choked by Lesser Spotted Dogfish, Baltray, Co. Louth, April 2014 (Eoin O'Flynn).

ICES division VIIa (Irish Sea) and that dogfish (*Scyliorhinus* spp.) represented one of the top four species discarded by all demersal fleet segments in Irish waters. Similarly, in the English Channel, Western approaches, Celtic and Irish Seas (ICES subarea VII), Enever *et al.* (2007) noted that *S. canicula* represented one of the top ten most commonly discarded demersal fish species.

Gannets are generally quite selective with regard to which species and sizes of discarded fish that they target, especially if the abundance of preferred prey species is not particularly limited. For example, Furness *et al.* (2007) noted that Gannets tended to avoid discarded benthic invertebrates and fish that are difficult to swallow, especially species with long spines, or large flatfish. Although *Scyliorhinus canicula* lacks spines, its skin is quite rough due to the presence of numerous posteriorly pointed denticles while the Gannet's mandibles are serrated. It is also possible that the dogfish was still alive when discarded and may have put up a significant struggle to dislodge itself from the Gannet's gullet. Rodriguez-Cabello *et al.* (2001) reported a high survival rate for discarded *Scyliorhinus canicula*. It is possible that all of these factors may have contributed to the Gannet's inability to either swallow the dogfish or for the Gannet and the dogfish to extricate themselves from their mortal entanglement.

Perhaps the Gannet's general preference for fish species which are easy to swallow may account for the relatively few reports of Gannets choking on fish (Nelson 2002). Over a thirty year period, between 1970 and 2000, Camphuysen (2001) noted that the cause of mortality of Gannets (ca 450) found stranded (dead) on Dutch beaches could be attributed mostly to either oiling or entanglement in fishing nets. As far as we are aware, there is only one previous published report regarding Gannets choking on fish. Gray (1871) noted that "At various times I have discovered dead birds [Gannets] at the base of the cliffs there [Girvan, Ayrshire, SW Scotland], with gurnards [Triglidae] firmly wedged in their throats, and have been obliged to use a knife for cutting the spines before the fish could be taken out. Individuals have also been picked up on the water similarly situated". Clearly, some Gannets are not too choosy which prey species they target, possibly because they are inexperienced and/or there is a high level of competition for a limited food source.

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Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* preying on Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*: predator and prey both killed simultaneously by road traffic collision

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predation, road traffic collision, Sparrowhawk

On 26 March 2004 at approximately 17.30 hours, a fully grown female Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* was observed attacking a fully grown Jackdaw *Corvus monedula* on the main road (R263) in an urban area of Killybegs, Co. Donegal. During the ensuing struggle, both the predator and prey appeared to be oblivious to the busy road traffic which was veering around them. However, an on-coming truck eventually sealed their fate simultaneously, when it failed to avoid colliding with them.

The Sparrowhawk is probably the commonest raptor in Ireland with resident breeding populations in all counties,

while the Jackdaw is a very abundant and widespread resident (Dempsey & O'Clery 2002). The Sparrowhawk is an opportunistic diurnal predator that is known to exploit a wide range of avian prey and other taxa. Benington (1971) referred to a total of 40 species of avian prey which he identified at two Sparrowhawk nesting sites near Lisburn, Co. Antrim. The prey species ranged in size from Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus* down to Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*. Although the percentage of prey species varied from year to year and from nest to nest, Benington (1971) noted that the following species accounted for 66% of the hawk's avian prey: Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos* (14%), Blackbird *Turdus merula* (12%), Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* (12%), Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* (7%), Dunnock *Prunella modularis* (7%), Robin *Eritbacus rubecula* (5%), Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus* (5%) and Greenfinch *Cbloris cbloris* (4%).

A number of other avian prey species of the Sparrowhawk and/or associated predator-prey interactions with it have been observed in Ireland, involving both wild and domesticated species: Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*, Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*, Dunlin *Calidris alpina* (as *Tringa variabilis*), Hoopoe *Upupa epops*, Skylark *Alauda arvensis*, Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*, Redwing *Turdus iliacus* (as *Turdus musicus*), Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*, Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*, Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*, Dove *Columba* sp., Wagtail *Motacilla* sp., Sparrow *Passer* sp., Peafowl *Pavo* sp. and Lovebird *Agapornis* sp. (Thompson 1849, Byron 1926,



Plate 63. Sparrowhawk and Jackdaw killed by road traffic, Killybegs, Co. Donegal, March 2004 (Declan Quigley).

Bradshaw 1943, Campbell 1948, Workman 1953, Declan Quigley pers. obs.).

The Sparrowhawk has also been observed to exploit a number of mammalian prey species in Ireland: Brown Rat *Rattus norvegicus*, Wood Mouse *Apodemus sylvaticus*, House Mouse *Mus (musculus) domesticus*, Common Pipistrelle Bat *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, Spornano Pipistrelle Bat *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and Grey Squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis* (Benington 1971, McComb 2004, Kelleher 2008), and, according to Dempsey and O'Clery (2002), the Sparrowhawk may also prey on large insects.

Although there is a large volume of published literature on the impact of road traffic on avian species in several European countries and the USA (Erritzoe 2002, Erritzoe *et al.* 2003, Møller *et al.* 2010, Bujoczek *et al.* 2011, Guinard *et al.* 2012), there is very little published data relating to Ireland (Butler 1992, Smiddy 2002). A survey of the impact of the recently opened Tralee by-pass road (Co. Kerry) on Barn Owls *Tyto alba* is currently in progress (Lusby 2014).

Over a thirteen month period between June 1986 and June 1987, Butler (1992) recorded a total of 70 avian road casualties, involving 17 species, along a 3.9 km stretch of third class road in Co. Tipperary. Five species accounted for 71.5% of the total mortalities: Blackbird (24.3%), Song Thrush (12.9%), Rook *Corvus frugilegus* (12.9%), Woodpigeon (11.4%) and Jackdaw (10.0%). Although three Corvid species (Jackdaw, Rook and Magpie *Pica pica*) accounted for 28.6% of the total mortalities, no raptors were recorded.

During a general survey carried out on various roads in east Co. Cork and west Co. Waterford between 1972 and 2000, Smiddy (2002) recorded a total of 1,002 avian road casualties which included 53 species. Five species accounted for 57.5% of the total mortalities: Rook (21.1%), Blackbird (16.8%), Woodpigeon (7.3%), Song Thrush (6.6%) and Dunnock (5.7%). Aquatic species and waders accounted for a significant percentage of the total mortalities (11.7%), which reflected the presence of a small lake and other wetland and estuarine habitats within the study area. Four Corvid species (Rook, Magpie, Hooded Crow *Corvus corone* and Jackdaw) accounted for 26.3% of the total mortalities, while five raptor species accounted for 2.8%: Sparrowhawk (0.9%), Barn Owl (0.9%), Long-eared Owl *Asio otus* (0.5%), Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* (0.4%) and Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus* (0.1%).

Over a twelve month period between July 1984 and June 1985, Smiddy (2002) carried out a more intensive study of avian road casualties, covering a total of 38,358-km of road mostly in in east Co. Cork and west Co. Waterford. A total of 492 avian mortalities were recorded, involving 13 species. Five species accounted for 75.4% of the total mortalities: Rook (48.2%), Blackbird (8.9%), Woodpigeon (7.5%), House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* (7.3%) and Song Thrush (3.5%).

Four Corvid species (Rook, Magpie, Hooded Crow and Jackdaw) accounted for 53% of the total mortalities. One species of raptor was recorded: Barn Owl (0.4%).

Glue (1971) noted a sizeable increase in United Kingdom road mortalities for Sparrowhawk over two long-term periods, 1911–1954 and 1955–1969, from less than 1.0% to 6.0%, respectively. Newton *et al.* (1999) noted a significant increase in UK Sparrowhawk mortalities between 1963 and 1992, followed by a 50% decline in mortalities between 1992 and 1997, reflecting the national population recovery following the reduction in the use of organochlorine pesticides (aldrin/dieldrin) over the latter period. They noted two peaks in the monthly frequency of recorded mortality: August–September, affecting mainly recently independent juveniles and March–April, affecting similar numbers of adults and juveniles. The sex ratio of mortalities was significantly biased towards females (0.8 male to 1.0 female) and juveniles accounted for 64% of the overall mortalities. The most important causes of mortality were attributed to collisions (65.4%), particularly with windows (28.6%) and road casualties (10.3%).

Between 1992 and 2001, Sparrowhawks accounted for 0.2% of the total number of raptors killed by vehicles (3,344 cases involving 16 species) on a 300-km stretch of motorway in eastern France (Baudvin 2004). Between 1995 and 2007, Sparrowhawks accounted for 6.6% of the total number of dead and injured raptors (7,021 cases involving 30 species) recorded at a wildlife rehabilitation centre in Barcelona, Spain (Molina-Lopez *et al.* 2011). Vehicle collisions accounted for 8.1% of the total number of raptors, and 5.6% of Sparrowhawk cases.

Thompson (1849) recalled “An observant friend, when one day driving into Belfast, remarked, almost immediately in front of the vehicle, a sparrow-hawk to dash down at a fieldfare, and strike the ground with so much violence as to raise a cloud of dust. It rolled over the body several times, measuring, at least, half the breath of the road, before recovering itself. It is not, therefore, surprising that this species should sometimes fall a victim to its temerity”.

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Do whales eat seabirds in the Celtic Sea?

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Keywords: Celtic Sea, cetacean, seabird, cetacean-seabird interaction

Associations between seabirds and cetaceans are well documented and range from mutually beneficial to parasitic (Evans 1982). Corraling of prey by cetaceans can lead to a superabundance of fish at the surface of the sea making prey available to seabirds (Au & Pitman 1986). In the Celtic Sea, three species of Balaenopterid whales are seasonally abundant during autumn and winter: Fin *Balaenoptera physalus*, Minke *Balaenoptera acutorostrata* and Humpback *Megaptera novaeangeliae* Whales (O'Brien *et al.* 2009, Wall 2013). Whales are known to associate and consume bait balls comprising Herring *Clupea harengus* and Sprat *Sprattus sprattus* in the Celtic Sea (Whooley *et al.* 2011, Ryan *et al.* 2014). This feeding activity often attracts hundreds of foraging seabirds; a cue used by researchers to locate whales.

Methods

Observations were made opportunistically while conducting photo-identification and biopsy sampling of Fin and Humpback Whales from the whale-watching vessel *Holly Jo* during December 2008 (Ryan *et al.* 2014).

Results and discussion

On 3 December 2008 approximately 11 km south of Glandore Harbour, County Cork (Grid Ref. W301211 and co-ordinates 51.438°N, 9.005°W) three dead gulls (two Kittiwakes *Rissa tridactyla* and one European Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*) were found floating in the water. In the immediate vicinity an estimated 12 Fin, five Minke and four Humpback Whales were observed engaging in surface lunge-feeding behaviour (Kot *et al.* 2014). One of the Kittiwakes and the Herring Gull were first year birds. The carcasses were found within 20m of each other and neither exhibited rigour mortis. The Herring Gull was taken aboard for closer inspection and it appeared in good physical condition: the sternum was not protruding and it was recently dead and was still warm. On 11 December 2008 an estimated 12 Fin and five Humpback Whales were again recorded lunge-feeding just 4km from the previous location (Grid Ref. W268254 and co-ordinates 51.471° N, 9.052° W). During this second event a total of 25 dead seabirds of several species, including auks (Common Guillemot *Uria aalge* and Razorbill *Alca torda*), Herring Gull, Kittiwake and Gannet *Morus bassanus* were found floating at the surface. Some of those examined were still warm and a juvenile Gannet which was still alive was taken onboard and later released alive.

While not observed directly, the authors believe that these birds were most likely ingested and regurgitated or else struck by the whales during lunge-feeding. Given that the dead birds were mostly juveniles it is possible that they were inexperienced and hence more vulnerable to being struck or ingested while feeding on fish in association with the whales. The range of bird species found dead and in such discrete locations supports this view. It is possible that whales would regurgitate incidentally ingested birds, however three species of auklet have been found in Humpback Whale scat in Alaskan waters (Dolphin & McSweeney 1983, Haynes *et al.* 2013).

It is uncertain which species of whale may have caused the mortalities, but Fin Whales were most likely given their greater abundance and propensity to surface lunge-feeding during the observations. Fin Whales are generally more abundant in the study area (Whooley *et al.* 2011) and probably pose a greater threat of incidental mortality to seabirds here than Minke or Humpback Whales. Lunge-feeding by Fin Whales requires a high swimming speed (>3ms⁻¹) in order to generate sufficient inertia to inflate the buccal cavity which doubles the whale's body volume (Orton & Brodie 1987, Goldbogen *et al.* 2006, 2007). Minke and Humpback Whales have slower swimming speeds and have a smaller gape by comparison, and are thus presumably less of a risk to seabirds. There is a paucity of literature on the incidental capture of seabirds by whales (Haynes *et al.* 2013). To our knowledge,

this is the third published account of such an interaction which likely reflects a lack of observer vigilance as opposed to the rarity of the event (Dolphin & McSweeney 1983, Haynes *et al.* 2013). It is possible that such events could contribute to significant juvenile mortality in seabirds if environmental and biological conditions conducive to surface lunge-feeding by whales prevail in inshore waters.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Tom Kelly (University College, Cork) for his constructive comments and encouragement.

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Reviews

The Life of David Lack: father of evolutionary ecology

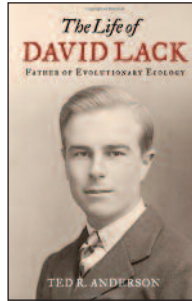
Ted R. Anderson. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2013.

ISBN: 978-0-19-992264-2, Hardback, x + 246 pp.

The name of David Lack is well known to ornithologists worldwide for his seminal books on evolutionary ecology, and equally to many people with only a passing interest in birds; the latter because many of his books were written in a style that made them understandable to non-scientists (e.g. *The Life of the Robin* (1943), *Swifts in a Tower* (1956)). The author, Ted Anderson, is an American with a long teaching career at several United States (US) universities behind him. He never met David Lack, although admits to having been influenced by his books, so one could say he comes to the subject with a clear and open mind. David Lack published 13 books during his career, and Anderson takes each one in turn and writes a chapter around it. This is a good approach and the reader gets a real sense of what Lack was thinking at any stage in his career.

David Lack worked during a period in history when there was a major shift in emphasis from 'specimen-based research in geographical variation' to 'field studies of the behavior and ecology of the living bird'. Lack played a pivotal role in this transformation. One of his best known books, *The Life of the Robin* (1943) was published following four years of field study at Dartington Hall (Devon), where he taught biology, his first job. However, his work on the Robin was not the first, and Lack acknowledged the earlier pioneering study by Irish ornithologist James Parsons Burkitt (note that on page 194 'Burkitt' is incorrectly spelled 'Birchett'). While at Dartington he made a trip to Tanganyika to visit Reg Moreau. The trip involved a combination of air and train travel and took nine days to complete and cost him £196 of his own money, which he later described as 'the best investment I ever made'; a far cry from travel as we know it today. Moreau's work on migration (*Palearctic-African Bird Migration Systems* (1972)) greatly influenced Lack, and he was later to invite Moreau to work at Oxford (where Moreau also edited the journal *Ibis* for the British Ornithologists' Union). Lack also made his first trip to the US while at Dartington (1935), making many important contacts that would stand him well in his later career, such as Joseph Grinnell (California) and Ernst Mayr (New York).

His next book was *Darwin's Finches* (1947), and this together with a three-part paper 'The Significance of Clutch-Size' published in *Ibis* (1947/48) form the basis for why he is regarded as the 'father of evolutionary ecology' today. This



became the most frequently cited paper ever published in *Ibis*. The book stemmed from an expedition to the Galapagos Islands during a sabbatical from Dartington in 1938/39, and is 'arguably Lack's most significant book'. Lack was returning across the US in August and September 1939 and was in New York with his friend, Ernst Mayr (a German citizen), when it was announced that their respective countries were at war. Back in Britain, Lack worked on radar stations around the coast during the Second World War, where he made discoveries about bird migration, and showed that the 'angels' seen on the radar screen by the non-ornithologist operating technicians were actually migrating birds. This was a subject he later studied after the war ended.

Apart from his influential books, Lack is best known as the second head of the Edward Grey Institute (EGI) at Oxford from 1945 to his death in 1973. He initiated many new research programmes at the EGI, including the still-running work on Great Tits at Wytham Wood, following a visit to see Niko Tinbergen in the Netherlands in February 1946. Tinbergen, the celebrated behavioural ecologist, was later to join Lack at Oxford, where he set up the Animal Behaviour Research Group (ABRG). Lack also began work on Common Swifts at Oxford villages, which developed into the long-term study at the tower of the University Museum from 1948 onwards, and the book *Swifts in a Tower* (1956).

Lack's *The Natural Regulation of Animal Numbers* (1954), *Population Studies of Birds* (1966), *Ecological Adaptations for Breeding in Birds* (1968), and *Ecological Isolation in Birds* (1971) are texts well known to everybody who has studied almost any aspect of avian ecology. Although essentially a shy and retiring man, he also presented radio programmes, gave public presentations and wrote for non-scientific periodicals.

Perhaps it is to be expected that Lack (like many other scientists) would not see eye-to-eye with everybody he encountered in a long career in science. His strained relationship with Max Nicholson was well known, and went back to his appointment to the EGI (Max Nicholson supported James Fisher for the job). Bill Bourne was a student of his at EGI, but his thesis on bird migration using radar was rejected, and some suggested this was because Bourne had a disagreement with Lack over publication of some of this work. Incidentally, Bourne published a paper on this migration work

in *Irish Birds* (1: 199–206) in 1978. Lack disagreed with Vero Copner Wynne-Edwards over his views on his ‘group selection hypothesis’, discussed in his book *Animal Dispersion in Relation to Social Behaviour* (1962).

The relationship between David Lack (as head of the EGI) and Charles Elton (as head of the Bureau of Animal Populations (BAP)) was described as one of the ‘enduring mysteries’ of 20th century ecology. The two worked side by side at Oxford, separated by a door which was apparently always kept locked. Elton worked on mammal population dynamics, especially of cyclic species such as lemmings and voles, and on their avian predators, which were also cyclic. Although students from both institutes freely interacted, their directors remained aloof. Ted Anderson suggests that a ‘professional principle of competitive exclusion’ may have been at work here; ‘one’s closest intellectual colleague is often one’s greatest rival’. The same principle is well known in

politics; the greatest threat comes from within one’s own party, not from the opposition.

David Lack supervised a total of 19 Doctor of Philosophy students during his career at the EGI. All of them distinguished themselves in their chosen fields, and many are well known today in ecological circles to Irish readers, e.g. Chris Perrins, Ian Newton, Derek Scott (of Dursley Island) and Mike Fogden (of Cape Clear Island Bird Observatory).

This is in my opinion an excellently written book, and one that is very favourable to Lack. One might say that Anderson papered over the cracks, but while some of the hypotheses proposed by Lack have been honed and modified by later ornithologists in the light of new research, the main thread of his thinking still holds true, and this can be seen by the frequent citation of his work over 40 years after his death.

Pat Smiddy

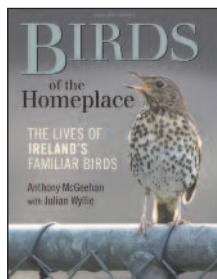
Birds of the Homeplace: the lives of Ireland’s familiar birds

Anthony McGeehan with Julian Wyllie. The Collins Press, Cork, 2014.

ISBN: 978-1-84889-229-3, Hardback, viii + 232 pp.

Here is another book from the pen of Anthony McGeehan (with Julian Wyllie). It is well produced, as one would expect now from this publishing house. In many ways it follows similar lines to that of their previous book, *Birds Through Irish Eyes* (*Irish Birds* 9: 516). I sensed a somewhat different tone to this book, and I believe it is the better for it, but McGeehan’s sharp and precise writing style has, happily, not changed. Some areas already dealt with in *Birds Through Irish Eyes* are revisited, but this did not affect my enjoyment of this book, and I believe it has important messages contained within it. This book is essentially laid out in two parts. Firstly, there are 25 chapters on different topics with titles such as ‘Territory and nests’, ‘Moult’, ‘Migration’ and ‘Voices of Blue, Great and Coal Tit’, as well as information on binoculars, telescopes and cameras. These chapters take up more than half of the pages. Secondly, there follows a species accounts section which covers a range of common (or familiar) species, residents as well as migrants, summer as well as winter visitors, which everybody has the capacity to see most of in any given year without too much difficulty. All are land birds, with the exception of the gulls, although these also occur frequently in terrestrial habitats.

Chapter 23 is an interesting one, although only taking up four pages, where several ‘hot’ topics of the day are touched upon; climate change, Common Agricultural Policy, predator



control, bog conservation, renewable energy (wind turbines). All of these issues have been the subjects of much research, but still the species affected by them continue to decline in many cases, although not in all. I was struck by the reference to damage to Estonian bogs, some of which are protected; we have our own parallel where protected bogs are routinely damaged, indeed encouraged by some legislators. The shift in mindset to the use of renewable energy forms

is welcomed by the authors, but not to the use of turbines (“bird and bat mincing machines”) erected across wilderness areas (although they do not adequately explain what are the ‘green’ alternatives). The Irish government has recently announced it is going to consider nuclear energy as an option in a review of future energy needs, although currently energy production by nuclear means is ruled out by legislation.

Could the same mortality rates for birds and bats at wind turbines be occurring here, as has been reported for some European countries? We have little published information, and a recent report on bats (Roche *et al.* 2014) indicates that in the Republic of Ireland “there is little evidence available on the impacts of wind turbines on bats due to the lack of published research”. The report concedes that “it is unlikely that bat mortality is not occurring”, but research to study the problem is underway. Twenty-one bat species are now considered to be potentially affected by wind turbines in Europe, and four of

these occur in Ireland. There are clearly many conflicts between modern living and the environment and the animals and plants with which we share this planet.

There is much information contained within this book about the lives of birds that one generally cannot find in a field guide; indeed one would have to dig deep in specialist handbooks and other publications to find some of it. There are also many personal observations which indicate the extraordinary capacity of the author(s) to grasp detail, often in difficult observational circumstances, and to note them down; things that less observant watchers do not even see, or think worthy of recording. I believe some aspects dealt with deserve a wider audience than in a book of this sort, especially the

part dealing with voice. This book is well researched (and referenced) and contains accurate information on several aspects of how the birds dealt with life. It should also help the reader to understand how birds might be affected by our actions at home, in our gardens, and at a wider landscape level.

Reference

Roche, N., Aughney, T., Marnell, F. & Lundy, M. 2014. *Irish Bats in the 21st Century*. Bat Conservation Ireland, Virginia.

Pat Smiddy

Recent publications on Irish birds

Pat Smiddy

Books and Reports

Cooper, A. 2011. *The River Shannon – a journey down Ireland's longest river*. Collins Press, Cork.

The bird life seen during a trip on board a 100-year old boat in 2009 is described.

Lusby, J & O'Clery, M. 2014. *Barn Owls in Ireland. Information on the ecology of Barn Owls and their conservation in Ireland*. BirdWatch Ireland.

Where and when Barn Owls occur in Ireland, what they eat and how they live, along with practical information on nest boxes, rat poisons and more. Available from Birdwatch Ireland, or downloadable in PDF format from www.irishraptors.blogspot.ie.

O'Clery, M. 2014 The Dingle Peninsula Bird Report, 2011–2013. Corca Dhuibhne (West Kerry) Branch BirdWatch Ireland.

A detailed systematic list of birds of the area, and articles on White-tailed Eagles, Little Egrets, Brent Geese and Cuckoos in Kerry.

Papers

Baker, R.A. 2013. Birds, bugs, bogs, botany and biodiversity: some clergymen naturalists associated with Ireland. *Irish Naturalists' Journal* 33: 28–34.

The ornithologists dealt with are E.A. Armstrong (1900–1978), C.W. Benson (1836–1919) and P.G. Kennedy (1881–1966).

Cresswell, W. 2014. Migratory connectivity of Palaearctic-African migratory birds and their responses to environmental change: the serial residency hypothesis. *Ibis* 156: 493–510.

This paper has relevance to Irish migratory species.

Crowe, O., Musgrove, A.J. & O'Halloran, J. 2014. Generating population estimates for common and widespread breeding birds in Ireland. *Bird Study* 61: 82–90.

Almost 62 million individuals of 51 common breeding species were estimated, the most numerous being Wren (6 million), Swallow (5.8 million) and Robin (5.4 million).

Ennis, T. 2013. Records of Ivory Gull (*Pagophila eburnea*) in Northern Ireland. *Irish Naturalists' Journal* 33: 75–76.

There are two records, both first-winters, for Northern Ireland.

Graham, C.T., Wilson, M.W., Gittings, T., Kelly, T.C., Irwin, S., Sweeney, O.F. McD. & O'Halloran, J. 2014. Factors affecting the bird diversity of planted and semi-natural oak forests in Ireland. *Bird Study* 61: 309–320.

Irwin, S., Kelly, D.L., Kelly, T.C., Mitchell, F.J.G., Coote, L., Oxbrough, A., Wilson, M.W., Martin, R.D., Moore, K., Sweeney, O., Dietzsch, A.C. & O'Halloran, J. 2013. Do Irish forests protect habitat for species of conservation concern? *Biology and Environment: Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 113B: 273–279.

Includes data on birds of conservation concern.

Kelly, T.C., Smiddy, P. & Graham, C.T. 2014. The origin of the avifauna of Ireland: a preliminary Island Biogeography Theory perspective. In: Sleeman, D.P., Carlsson, J. & Carlsson, J.E.L. (eds) *Mind the Gap II: new insights into the Irish postglacial*. Pages 44–52. Irish Naturalists' Journal, Belfast.

Magnusdottir, E., Leat, E.H.K., Bourgeon, S., Jónsson, J.E., Phillips, R.A., Strøm, H., Petersen, A., Hanssen, S.A., Bustnes, J.O. & Furness, R.W. 2014. Activity patterns of wintering Great Skuas *Stercorarius skua*. *Bird Study* 61: 301–308.

See also *Bird Study* 59: 1–9.

Ó hUallacháin, D. 2014. Nest site location and success rates of an urban population of Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus* in Ireland. *Biology and Environment: Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 114B: 13–17.

O'Toole, L. 2014. The Eurasian Crane (*Grus grus*) in Ireland - another extinct bird or a key species for an ancient belief system? In: Sleeman, D.P., Carlsson, J. & Carlsson, J.E.L. (eds) *Mind the Gap II: new insights into the Irish postglacial*. Pages 53–65. Irish Naturalists' Journal, Belfast.

Quigley, D.T.G. & Keddle, L. 2013. Urban coastal Domestic Cat *Felis catus* (L.) predation on Curlew *Numenius arquata* (L.). *Irish Naturalists' Journal* 33: 76.

A neutered male Cat brought a live Curlew into a house through a dog-flap; the Curlew later flew off apparently unharmed.

Roycroft, D., Irwin, S., Wilson, M.W., Kelly, T.C. & O'Halloran, J. 2008. The breeding bird community of Balrath Wood 2007. *Irish Forestry* 65: 60–70.

Smiddy, P. 2013. The characteristics of Irish Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*) pellets. *Irish Naturalists' Journal* 33: 8–13.

Smiddy, P. 2013. Skeletal biometrics of Dunlin (*Calidris alpina* (L.)). *Irish Naturalists' Journal* 33: 73–74.

The skeletal parts were obtained from the pellets of Short-eared Owl.

Smiddy, P. 2014. Breeding birds in Ireland: success and failure among colonists. In: Sleeman, D.P., Carlsson, J. & Carlsson, J.E.L. (eds) *Mind the Gap II: new insights into the Irish postglacial*. Pages 89–99. Irish Naturalists' Journal, Belfast.

Smith, M., Bolton, M., Okill, D.J., Summers, R.W., Ellis, P., Liechti, F. & Wilson, J.D. 2014. Geolocator tagging reveals Pacific migration of Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* breeding in Scotland. *Ibis* 156: 870–873.

One of the geolocator 'fixes' in August 2012 on leaving Scotland was very close to the north Mayo coast, the most regular Irish breeding site.

Vickery, J.A., Ewing, S.R., Smith, K.W., Pain, D.J., Bairlein, F., Škorpilová, J. & Gregory, R.D. 2014. The decline of Afro-Palaeartic migrants and an assessment of potential causes. *Ibis* 156: 1–22.

Nothing specifically Irish, but many of our declining breeding migrants probably suffer from the same causal factors on their breeding grounds, during migration and in their African wintering grounds.

Correction

Colhoun, K. & Cummins, S. 2013. Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland 2014-2019. *Irish Birds* 9: 523-544.

The following corrections should be made to the text and Tables:

Page 523, Abstract: “185 species assessed” should read “202 species assessed”. “90 on the Amber list” should read “91 on the Amber list”. “58 on the Green list” should read “74 on the Green list”.

Page 526, Results: “185 regularly occurring species” should read “202 regularly occurring species”. Percentages should read “18% (37 species) on the Red list, 45% (91 species) on the Amber list and 37% (74 species) on the Green list”.

Page 527, bottom of column 2: “The remaining 58 species (31%)” should read “The remaining 74 species (37%)”.

Page 531, Table 2: The following species should be added:

Smew should be W SPEC 3

Water Rail should be A B

Robin should be G B

Page 532, Table 3: The following species should be added.

Species	BOCCI 2	Category
Grey Phalarope	G	P
Pomarine Skua	G	P
Arctic Skua	G	P
Little Auk	G	P
Sabine’s Gull	G	P
Ring-billed Gull	G	Non breeder
Yellow-legged Gull	G	Scarce
Iceland Gull	G	Scarce
Glaucous Gull	G	Scarce
Firecrest	G	P
Waxwing	G	W (irruptive)
Fieldfare	G	W
Song Thrush	G	B
Redwing	G	W
Black Redstart	G	P
Siskin	G	W

Page 542, References: The following correction should be made:

Cummins, S., Bleasdale, A., Douglas, C., Newton, S., O’Halloran, J. & Wilson, H.J. 2010. *The status of the Red Grouse in Ireland and the effects of land use, habitat and habitat quality on their distribution*. Irish Wildlife Manual No. 50. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Dublin.