

# Irish Rare Bird Report 2017

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## Introduction

Although there were no new species to Ireland recorded in 2017, there were still several notable records for Ireland included in this report. These include the third Irish records of Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* (Mayo) in April and Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula* (Donegal) in May.

In addition, Ireland's fourth Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka* (Cork) was recorded in December, while a Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis* (Dublin) in May, a Yellow Warbler *Setophaga petecbia* (Cork) in August and a Scarlet Tanager *Piranga olivacea* (Cork) in October were all recorded for the fifth time.

Other highlights in 2017 included the seventh Swainson's Thrush *Catbarus ustulatus* (Cork) for Ireland, the seventh and eighth Marsh Warblers *Acrocephalus palustris* (Cork and Wexford), the 8th Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus* (Cork),

and the 10th to 12th records for Grey-cheeked Thrush *Catbarus minimus* (Cork).

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](http://www.irbc.ie/provisional/provisional.php), which is updated regularly. Most of the data in this report were taken directly from the 2017 Provisional List. The IRBC expresses its sincere gratitude to all those who provided information during 2017, either directly or indirectly. The committee also extends its grateful thanks to Kieran Fahy, Joe Hobbs, Roger Riddington and Andy Stoddart for their invaluable assistance.

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**Plate 21.** Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka*, Ring Strand, Ballymacoda, Cork, December 2017 (Andrew Malcolm).

Rarity Description forms may be downloaded from the IRBC website: [www.irbc.ie/records/records.php](http://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](mailto:photoArchive@irbc.ie).

### Rarities:

The full list of taxa requiring substantiating documentation can be found at [www.irbc.ie/records/desclist.php](http://www.irbc.ie/records/desclist.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](http://www.irbc.ie/announcements/announce1.php).

## 2017 Systematic List

The sequence and scientific nomenclature largely follows the IOC World List version 8.2 (Gill & Donsker 2018), replacing the previously referenced BOU British List (British Ornithologists' Union 2013). For an explanation of this change as well as other taxonomic decisions made by the IRBC please consult the Announcements page on our website at [www.irbc.ie/announcements/announcements.php](http://www.irbc.ie/announcements/announcements.php).

The three numbers in parentheses after each 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 excluding, the current year – where this total is enclosed in square brackets, totals are from 1st January 2010 only; (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. Please note that the finder's credits are placed in alphabetical order.

### Black Brant *Branta bernicla nigricans*

(0; 39; 0)

**Kerry** Adult, Sandy Bay, Castlegregory, 4th January to 17th February, photographed (M.O'Clery *et al.*), presumed returning individual.

### Canada Goose *Branta canadensis* (0; 41; 0)

**Galway** Zero: One, Belclare Turlough, 27th December 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 546), until 5th February, photographed (D.Breen *et al.*).

**Wexford** Zero: One, possibly of the race *interior*, WWR, North Slob, from 7th November 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 546) remained to 22nd March, photographed (T.Campbell, C.Ingram *et al.*).

### Cackling Goose *Branta hutchinsii* (0; 28; 3)

**Donegal** One: One, Culdaff, 3rd November, identified from photographs (C.Cardiff, C.Cassidy *et al.*).



**Plate 22.** Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*, Belclare Turlough, Galway, February 2017 (Dermot Breen).

**Mayo** One: One, Annagh Marsh and Termoncarragh between 28th March and 7th April, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*).

**Sligo** One: One, Lissadell, 14th and 15th October, photographed (M.Bell *et al.*).

### Russian White-fronted Goose

*Anser albifrons albifrons* (51; 114; 6)

**Cork** One: One, The Gearagh, from 11th November 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 546) remained until 23rd April, photographed (J.Lynch); Adult, Kilcolman Bog, 6th and 7th April, photographed (D.Suddaby).

**Louth** Five: Five, Lurgangreen, 6th to 25th April, photographed (E.Larrissey *et al.*).

### American Wigeon

*Anas americana* (0; 145; 1)

**Donegal** One: Male, Culdaff Estuary, 20th February (R.McLaughlin), and presumed same, 18th to 26th November, photographed (T. Campbell *et al.*) presumed returning bird last reported in November 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 546). Male, Malin Town, 20th February (R.McLaughlin), presumed second returning bird last reported in November 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 546); Male, Inch Island, Lough Swilly, 8th April (C.Ingram).

### Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis* (0; 40; 2)

**Cavan** One: Male, Pharisee Lough, 9th January (J.Donaldson).

**Galway** One: Male, Loughrea, 13th November 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 547) to 2nd January (É.MacLochlainn); Male, Rahasane Turlough, 15th November to 7th December, photographed (P.Troake *et al.*).

**Sligo** Zero: Male, Lough Gara, 11th December 2016, photographed (*Irish Birds* 10: 547), to 7th January (S.Feeney, D.Skehan), presumed returning individual.

**King Eider** *Somateria spectabilis* (4; 27; 2)

**Donegal** Zero: Eclipse male, off Murravagh Beach, Donegal Bay, 13th and 14th October (B.Robson *et al.*), presumed returning bird.

**Kerry** One: Female, Sandy Bay, Castlegregory, 2nd February to 27th March (P.Lehikoinen *et al.*), and presumed same 16th November to 28th December, (M.O'Clery *et al.*), photographed.

**Sligo** Zero: Adult male, Mullaghmore, from 10th October 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 547), until 11th January (per Birdguides), photographed; Male, Portavaud, Ballysadare Bay from 11th December 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 547), until 29th March 2017, photographed (S.Feeney), and, presumed same, Ballyconnell, 24th February (M.Boyle, A.McMillan).

**Wexford** One: female, Nethertown, 22nd June (J.Geraty, L.Geraty *et al.*), photographed.



**Plate 23.** King Eider *Somateria spectabilis*, Nethertown, Wexford, June 2017 (Luke Geraty).

**Surf Scoter** *Melanitta perspicillata* (6; 236; 15)

**Clare** Two: Adult male, Coolsiva Pier, Gleninagh, 11th March to 9th April (S.Doherty, A.G.Kelly *et al.*); Female/immature, Bridges of Ross, 1st October (V.Cashera, A.G.Kelly); presumed returning male, Coolsiva Pier, Gleninagh, 19th November to 25th December, photographed (P.Cullinan *et al.*).

**Donegal** One: Male, off Murravagh Beach, Donegal Bay, from 29th November 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 547) until 12th March (B.Robson), Adult male, Rosssnowlough, 13th October (B.Robson).

**Dublin** Zero: Adult male, South Dublin Bay, 22nd to 31st January, photographed (N.Keogh *et al.*); One, Skerries, 12th March (B.Caruthers, R.Hynes *et al.*).

**Galway** Two: Female, Carrickoogh, Inishmore, 24th and 25th October, photographed (R.D.Moore); First-winter female, Lettergesh,

29th October to 16th November, photographed (M.Mahoney, J.W.Sheehan).

**Kerry** Nine: Two first-winter males and a female/immature, off Gowlane Beach, Brandon Bay, 3rd January, photographed (M.O'Clery); Adult male and first winter male, Brandon Bay, 19th January (E.Carty); Adult male and two females, Brandon Bay, 8th March (M.O'Clery); Adult male, Reenroe, Ballinskelligs Bay, 14th January, joined by female, 18th January, remained until 4th March, photographed (P.McDaid); Female/immature, Rossbeigh, 25th September (M.O'Clery); Female/immature, Reenroe, Ballinskelligs Bay, 9th October to 27th December (P.McDaid), possibly returning bird from the spring; Male and female, Brandon Bay, 2nd December, presumed returning individuals, photographed (A.G.Kelly).

**Louth** Zero: Two adult males and a female, Salterstown, 5th to 25th March (N.Keogh, B.Porter *et al.*). Presumed same, Baltray, 18th March (A.G.Kelly), with four males and a female, Baltray, 19th March (G.Murray), presumed returning individuals.

**Mayo** One: Male and female, Claggan, Blacksod Bay, 9th March, with two males present, same location, 18th and 19th April, photographed (D.Suddaby, M.Reilly *et al.*), presumed returning individuals; Female/immature, Killala Harbour, 26th November, photographed (H.Lawson).

**Meath** Zero: Male and female, Laytown, 14th January, relocated Mornington, 15th January (A.G.Kelly *et al.*); Presumed same male, Bettystown, 5th February (P.Kelly); Presumed same female, Laytown/Bettystown coast, 1st and 2nd April (A.G.Kelly); presumed returning male and female, Bettystown, 15th to 19th December (A.G.Kelly *et al.*).

It is likely that the five off Baltray, Louth in March represents a maximum count of birds present along the North Dublin, Meath and Louth coastline since January 2017 and involves some returning birds from those present between January and April 2016 at The Hermitage, Louth (*Irish Birds* 10: 547), although the degree of overlap is unknown.

**Black Scoter** *Melanitta americana* (0; 1; 0)

**Kerry** Zero: Returning male, off Rossbeigh, 25th October 2016, remained until 3rd March, and again 24th October to 28th December, photographed (D.Farrar, M.O'Clery *et al.*).

The bird first found in January 2015 (*Irish Birds* 10: 394) returned again for its third winter.

**Pacific Diver** *Gavia pacifica* (0; 2; 1)

**Dublin** One: One, non-breeding plumage, Bremore, 24th August to 1st September, photographed (A.G.Kelly, C.Foley *et al.*).

**Galway** Zero: Presumed returning adult, off Tawin, from 19th November 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 548) remained until 4th January (P.Troake).

**Meath** Zero: One, off Gormanstown, 27th August, photographed (A.G.Kelly, B.McCloskey), same individual as seen off Bremore, County Dublin over the period.

The Galway bird was considered to be the same individual found off Tawin in April 2014 (*Irish Birds* 10: 239), which was the second Irish record. The Dublin bird is the third Irish record, and first for the east coast. The first record for Ireland



was also off Tawin, Galway in 2009 and 2010 (*Irish Birds* 9: 288, 454).

### **White-billed Diver** *Gavia adamsii* (0; 19; 1)

**Clare** One: Moulting adult, Finavarra, 16th November (E.Dempsey *et al.*).

### **Wilson's Storm Petrel**

*Oceanites oceanicus* (2; 302; 189)

**At sea** Zero: One, 73 nautical miles south of Cape Clear Island, Cork, 17th June (N.T.Keogh).

**Clare** 17: One, off Bridges of Ross, 3rd August (F.MacGabhann, J.N.Murphy); Eight, off Bridges of Ross, 18th August, photographed (V.Cashera, D.Foley *et al.*); Four, off Bridges of Ross, 19th August (M.Boyle, A.Macmillan *et al.*); One, off Bridges of Ross, 26th August (D.Higgins, N.T.Keogh *et al.*); One, off Bridges of Ross, 27th August (S.Dennis *et al.*); One, 8 km north west of Loop Head, 27th August, photographed (N.T.Keogh *et al.*); One, off Bridges of Ross, 10th September, photographed (A.G.Kelly).

**Cork** 149: Nine, 15 nautical miles south of Toe Head, Cork, 21st June, photographed (P.Connaughton *et al.*); 40, south of Cape Clear Island, 25th July, photographed (P.Connaughton *et al.*); One, off Galley Head, 30th July (C.Cronin *et al.*); One, off Cape Clear Island, 31st July (S.Bayley); 56, south of Cape Clear Island, 6th August, photographed (P.Connaughton *et al.*); One, off Power Head, 6th August (D.O'Sullivan *et al.*); One, outside North Harbour, Cape Clear Island, 6th August

(S.Bayley *et al.*); One, off Cape Clear Island, 10th August (M.Boyle); 16, south of Cape Clear Island, 12th August, photographed (P.Connaughton *et al.*); Five, south of Cape Clear Island, 13th August, photographed (P.Connaughton *et al.*); Two, off Galley Head, 16th August (C.Cronin *et al.*); Four, south of Cape Clear Island, 19th August, photographed (P.Connaughton *et al.*); Eight, south of Cape Clear Island, 20th August, photographed (P.Connaughton *et al.*); Three, 12 miles south-east of Galley Head, 22nd August (P.Connaughton *et al.*); One, south of Cape Clear Island, 3rd September (P.Connaughton *et al.*);

**Donegal** Four: One, off Melmore Head, 29th August (O.Campbell, E.Randall); One, off Bloody Foreland, 8th September (T.Campbell, T.Gallagher *et al.*); One, off Arranmore, 8th September (A.MacMillan); One, off Bloody Foreland, 11th September (C.Ingram).

**Kerry** 17: One, between Little Skellig and Puffin Island, 25th July (J.N.Murphy); One, Coosgorm, Valentia Island, 27th July (J.Coveney); One, off Brandon Point, 30th July (F.Hawkins); One, south of Skellig Michael, 1st August (J.N.Murphy); One, between Little Skellig and Puffin Island, 14th August (J.N.Murphy); Seven, off Brandon Point, 18th August (E.Carty, M.Hanafin); Four, 10km south of Great Blasket Island, 25th August, photographed (E.Carty, M.O'Keeffe *et al.*); One, off Puffin Island, 28th August (J.N.Murphy);

**Mayo** Two: One, off Annagh Head, 6th August (D.Suddaby); One, off Kilcummin Head, 8th September (T.Charles, T.Cooney *et al.*).

As in 2016, the regular late summer pelagic trips out of Baltimore, Cork provided the bulk of the records in 2017. The degree of double-counting of individuals and overlap between such trips is unknown

### **Unidentified Albatross species**

**Waterford** One: One, unidentified to species, off Brownstown Head, 14th August (J.Lennon).

### **Zino's/Fea's/Desertas Petrel**

*Pterodroma madeira/feae/deserta* (0; 115; 6)

**Clare** One: One, off Bridges of Ross, 23rd August (M.Saunt *et al.*).

**Cork** Two: One, off Galley Head, 2nd August (C.O'Sullivan *et al.*); One, off Toe Head, 23rd September (A.Duggan).

**Kerry** One: One, off Brandon Point, 18th August (E.Carty).

**Mayo** One: One, off Annagh Head, 24th August (S.Pierce).

**Wexford** One: One, off Camsore Point, 10th September (K.Grace).

### **Barolo Shearwater** *Puffinus baroli* (1; 23; 1)

**Wexford** One: One, off Hook Head, 16th August (E.Dempsey).

This is the first record for the county.

### **Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra* (0, 2, 1)

**Mayo** One: One, Srawaddican Bay, 22nd April, photographed (B.Wilson).

This is the third Irish record, after the first over Phoenix Park, Dublin, 16th August 1987 (*Irish Birds* 3: 614), and one at Boltiagh Bog, Clare, 4th June 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 584).



**Plate 24.** Wilson's Storm Petrel *Oceanites oceanicus*, off Great Blasket Island, Kerry, August 2017 (Michael O'Clery).



**Plate 25.** Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*, Dungarvan, Waterford, December 2017 (Ian Stevenson).

### White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* (6; 28; 1)

**Dublin** One: One, over Phoenix Park, 2nd April (J.P.Cranney, P.Phillips).

The fifth record for Dublin and the first record in Ireland since 2010.

### Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* (103; 306; 26)

**Clare** One: Juvenile, Kilbaha and Cloghaun Lough, 7th to 14th October, photographed (A.G.Kelly, J.N.Murphy *et al.*).

**Cork** 13: Three, Long Strand, then four Red Strand, 26th October, photographed (C.Barton, C.Cronin *et al.*), with one remaining at Red Strand until 30th October (R.Cronin); One, Dunkettle, Cork Harbour, 27th October, photographed (B.Power); Two, Slattery Pool, Cork Harbour, 28th October (T.Gittings); One, Garretstown Marsh, 1st November (L.McGrath); Three, Rathbarry, 24th December (C.Barton), and five there, 27th December, with three remaining into January 2018, photographed (C.Cronin).

**Dublin** Two: Two, Lucan, 2nd November (L.Geraty).

**Galway** One: One, Mainistir, Inishmore, 29th December (P.O'Connell).

**Kerry** Two: Two, Ballinskelligs, 29th October (S.Lynch).

**Mayo** One: One, Crossmolina, 23rd December, photographed (J.Freestone, N.O'Malley).

**Offaly** One: One, Lough Boora Discovery Park, 26th December, photographed (P.Brady).

**Waterford** Two: Juvenile, Whiting Bay, 30th October, photographed (N.J.Bourke); One, Ballyrandle, Dungarvan, 5th December, found dead 13th December, photographed (D.Clarke *et al.*).

**Westmeath** Two: Two, Golden Island, Athlone, 5th December (T.Kelly).

**Wexford** One: One, Tacumshin Lake, 17th November, photographed (P.Kelly).

The Offaly record is only the fourth for the county, after one at an unknown location in November in 1840 (Thompson, 1850), one at Banagher on 15th November 1909 (Kennedy *et al.* 1954), and one at Shannonbridge from 17th January to 1st March 2014 (*Irish Birds* 10: 242). The record from Westmeath is also the fourth county record, after one shot at Tobergill on 5th October 1851 (Ussher and Warren, 1900), one at Lough Ennell on 9th October 1959 (*IBR* 7: 6), and one at Lough Kinale, Darragh on 14th April 2014 (*Irish Birds* 10: 549).

### Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* (92; 170; 7)

**Kerry** Two: Returning adult, Cromane Harbour, from 5th October 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 550) to 15th February, photographed (K.Griffin *et al.*); Sub-adult, Fertha Estuary, Cahersiveen, 27th July to 3rd August, photographed (D.Kavanagh, P.Mullarkey); presumed same, Inny Estuary, Ballinskelligs Bay, 13th August (J.Quinlan); returning adult, Cromane Harbour, 28th September to 29th December, photographed (M.O'Clery *et al.*); Adult, Portmagee, 23rd to 27th October (S.Lynch *et al.*).

**Waterford** One: Two adults and three juveniles, The Cunnigar, Dungarvan, from 15th October 2016 into 2017 (*Irish Birds* 10: 550), with three remaining to 31st December, photographed (M.Cowming jr *et al.*); Adult, Lisselan, Tramore, 12th May, photographed (A.Jacques).

**Wexford** Three: Two, Rosslare Back Strand, 26th February to 5th March, photographed (T.Shevlin); One, Tacumshin Lake, 8th to 27th March, also at Ring Marsh between 18th and 27th March, photographed (G.Lyons, D.Murphy);

**Wicklow** One: Adult, Broad Lough, 26th to 30th September, photographed (P.Keogh).

### Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* (161+; 46; 1)

**Galway** One: One, Muckrush, Lough Corrib, 26th October (A.O'Donail).

The sixth county record, with the last occurring at Clonboo, Muckrush and Curraghmore over the 2012-2013 winter (*Irish Birds* 9: 583 and 10: 77).

### Black-crowned Night Heron

*Nycticorax nycticorax* (27; 53; 4)

**Cork** Two: Juvenile, Youghal, 18th February (T.Nagle); Adult, Goleen, 21st May (L.McGrath, M.Nixon).

**Dublin** One: First summer, Rogerstown, 18th June, photographed (H.Grogan *et al.*).

**Limerick** One: Adult, Adare, 21st April to 5th May, photographed (M.Madden *et al.*).

There are 31 previous records for Cork, involving a total of 37 birds. The Dublin record is the first since one in Bushy Park, Terenure from Easter to September 1916 (Kennedy *et al.* 1954). The Limerick record is the second for the county, after one in Bruree on 5th November 1957 (*IBR* 5: 7).



**Plate 26.** Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*, Adare, Limerick, April 2017 (Tom Tarpey).

**Squacco Heron** *Ardeola ralloides* (11; 9; 2)

**Kerry** One: First summer, Ventry, 17th April to 1st May, photographed (B.Wilkens *et al.*); Adult, Ross Castle, Killarney, 25th June, photographed (E.Carty *et al.*).

The third and fourth records for Kerry, but the first in recent times, as the two previous records involved one on the River Laune on 10th June 1875, and one at Waterville on 17th September 1895 (Ussher and Warren, 1900)."

**Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis* (0; 299; 57)

**At sea** Zero: One on a fishing boat, 15 miles south-west off Fastnet Rock, 21st September, photographed (K.Geesley).

**Carlow** One: One, River Burren, Fenagh, 26th January (M.McCarthy).

**Cork** 16: Two, near Kinsale, 1st January (R.O'Driscoll), may have joined the seven individuals at Drake's Pool, Carrigaline, last reported 16th November 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 550), with nine individuals there on 9th January, photographed (D.Fitzpatrick); 10, Myrtleville, 21st January



**Plate 27.** Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*, Ventry, Kerry, April 2017 (Michael O'Clery).





**Plate 28.** Cattle Egrets *Bubulcus ibis*, Tacumshin Lake, Wexford, April 2017 (Victor Caschera).

(M.O'Keefe) and one, Lough Beg on same date (T.Kelly) likely involved the Carrigaline birds; 11, Drake's Pool, Carrigaline, 21st March to 5th April (D.Fitzpatrick *et al.*), also seen at Lough Beg on 3rd April (M.Kelly, J.N.Murphy); One, Inchydoney/White's Marsh, December 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 550) remained to 4th January (C.Cronin), joined by a second bird, 6th January (S.Cronin), with three present from 16th January to 1st May, photographed (K.Cronin); One, Timoleague, 16th January to 30th March (P.Connaughton); One, Pilmore, 21st February (L.Kelly); One, Cape Clear Island, 28th to 30th March, photographed (M.Cadogan); Four, Inishbeg, Skibbereen, 8th and 9th April (J.Mitchell, M.Mitchell *et al.*); Two, White's Marsh/Cul-de-sac pool, Clonakilty, 7th to 22nd November (S.Cronin *et al.*); One, Rineen, Unionhall, 7th December (J.Minihane).

**Donegal** One: One, Inver, 4th to 26th October, photographed (F.McDaid *et al.*).

**Limerick** Six: At least two, Mungret, from 28th March, with four there 1st April, photographed (T.Browne); Two, Coonagh Nature Reserve, 15th April, photographed (T.Tarpey).

**Sligo** One: One, Collooney, 22nd January to 13th February (K.O'Hara, L.O'Hara).

**Waterford** 12: One, Ballyneety, 27th February (J.A.Power) to 4th March, when two present, photographed (É.MacLochlainn *et al.*), with four present from 9th April (A.Jacques, É.MacLochlainn *et al.*); Two, Kilmurry, 1st and 2nd March, photographed (E.Burke), presumed to move to Ballyneety in April; Five, Kilmacleague from 11th March, photographed (M.Cowming jr *et al.*), also seen at Corbally on 28th March and Cloghernagh from 1st to 15th April, with six birds present 6th April (J.D.Power); One, breeding plumage, Saleen, 5th May (J.Farrell, D.Sinnott); One, Cloghernagh, found injured and later put down, 7th December (A.Jacques, P.M.Walsh), considered likely one of flock in area in April; One, Ballyshoneen, 31st December (P.Archer).

**Wexford** 16: Seven, Tacumshin Lake/Tomhaggard area from October 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 550) to April, photographed (K.Grace, P.Kelly *et*

*al.*); Additional birds in same area as follows: One, 20th February (N.Keogh, B.Porter); One, 12th March (P.Kelly); One, 16th March (H.Servignat); Two, 18th March (P.Kelly); One, 1st April (P.Kelly); One, 4th April (P.King, S.Mahon *et al.*), resulting in a peak flock size of fourteen birds present between 4th and 18th April. This number began decreasing rapidly during May such that just one bird was left on 29th June; Four, Cahore, 8th May, with two on 9th and 10th May (B.Haslam *et al.*); One, Tacumshin Lake, 30th October, photographed (N.Keogh); Up to four, moving between Killag and Tacumshin Lake, 12 November to 31st December (E.Dempsey, A.G.Kelly *et al.*); One, Cahore, 18th November to 26th December, photographed (C.Cardiff *et al.*).

**Wicklow** Three: Two, Broad Lough, 12th March (M.Boyle, A.McMillan); One, Killoughter, 5th April to 16th May, also seen at Castlegrange, Five Mile Point and BWI East Coast Nature Reserve, photographed (C.Cardiff *et al.*).

It is hard to know the degree of double-counting, with birds moving between sites, particularly in Cork and Wexford.

### **Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea* (1; 25; 1)

**Wicklow** One: First summer, BWI East Coast Nature Reserve, 30th June to 11th July, photographed (T.Shevlin *et al.*).

The second record for Wicklow after one at Kilcoole and Killoughter on 28th and 29th April 1996 (*Irish Birds* 6: 67).

### **Great White Egret** *Ardea alba* (0; 102; 13)

**Clare** One: One, Lough O'Grady, near Scarriff, from 30th November 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 551), remained to 21st January, photographed (F.MacGabhann, J.N.Murphy); One, Lough Inchiquin, 29th December 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 551), relocated to Lough Atedaun, near Corofin, 20th January (J.N.Murphy), until 26th January (P.Cullinan); One, in flight near Latoon, 18th March (J.N.Murphy), and presumed same, Shannon Airport Lagoon, 23rd April (P.Brennan).



**Plate 29.** Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*, East Coast Nature Reserve, Newcastle, Wicklow, July 2017 (Dick Coombes).



**Plate 30.** Great White Egret *Ardea alba*, The Gearagh, Cork, April 2017 (Richard Mills).

**Cork** Two: One, The Gearagh, 19th April to 20th May, photographed (A.Duggan *et al.*); One, Lissagriffin Lake, 30th May, photographed (M.Mitchell, J.Mitchell).

**Galway** Two: One, Muckrush, Lough Corrib from 5th November 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 551), remained to 8th February, when second bird also present (D.Breen); One, flying over M18 south of Gort, 30th May (P.Troake); Two, Lough Corrib (Angliham and Muckrush) from 17th September to 31st December, presumed same as February individuals (D.Breen, T.Griffin *et al.*).

**Kerry** One: One, Caherfealane Pier, 20th September and 15th October, photographed (M.O'Clery *et al.*).

**Laois** One: One, Shanahoe Wetlands, 4th December (D.Finnamore).

**Roscommon** One: One, Clanwich Island, Lough Ree, 16th July, photographed (M.Craven).

**Tipperary** One: One, Two Mile Gate, Ballycuggeran, 17th October (S.Biggane).

**Waterford** Two: One, Dungarvan, 27th February (F.O'Connell); One, flyover, Dungarvan, 15th October (C.Flynn).

**Wexford** Two: Two, Lady's Island Lake, 26th March (P.Kelly), and presumed one of these, Tacumshin Lake, 8th April (B.Haslam, P.Kelly). The Laois record is the second record for the county, after one at Ballycolla on 2nd January 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 584). The Roscommon record is the third county record, after singles at the Shannon Callows on 17th October 1999 (*Irish Birds* 6: 549), and 18th to 20th April 2012 (*Irish Birds* 10: 78). The Tipperary record is the second county record, after one at Ashton's Callows on 3rd June and 9th August 2009 (*Irish Birds* 9: 258).

## Continental Cormorant

*Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis* (0; 66; 1)

**Kerry** One: One, Black Rock, 28th November, photographed (D.O'Connor).

## Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus* (0; 7; 1)

**Cork** One: Juvenile, Barry's Head, 7th to 30th October, photographed (S.Cronin *et al.*).

The eighth Irish record, and fourth for Cork.



**Montagu's Harrier** *Circus pygargus* (23; 64; 1)

**Cork** One: Adult male, East Bog, Cape Clear Island, 29th April, photographed (S.Bayley, J.Proudfoot, S.Bayley *et al.*).

There are nine previous records for Cork, involving 10 birds. The fourth record for Cape Clear Island, with the last one there on 24th October 1981 (*Irish Birds* 2: 209).

**Black Kite** *Milvus migrans* (0; 21; 2)

**Cork** One: First year, north of Midleton, 23rd April, photographed (P.Moore *et al.*).

**Wexford** One: One, Ring Marsh and Tacumshin Lake, 15th to 18th April, photographed (B.Haslam *et al.*).

**Crane** *Grus grus* (29; 170; 4)

**Galway** One: One, in flight, Inishbofin, 2nd May (G.Condron, T.McCormack *et al.*).

**Kildare** One: One, in flight, Ballinafagh, 10th May (D.Wyer).

**Wexford** Two: Two, Cahore, 14th May (J.Ryan).

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta* (36; 121; 10)

**Dublin** One: Adult, Baldoyle Estuary, 21st April, photographed (J.Hayes *et al.*).

**Waterford** Two: Two adults, one colour-ringed as chick in Germany in July 2010, Kilmaclegue, 4th May, photographed (D.Suddaby).

**Wexford** Seven: Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 1st to 7th April, photographed (M.Boyle, P.Kelly *et al.*); Five adults, Tacumshin Lake, 20th to 29th April, photographed (G.O'Sullivan *et al.*), also seen Lady's Island Lake, 28th April; First summer, Tacumshin Lake, 5th to 15th May, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*).

There are only two previous records for Waterford, with one shot in 1880 (Ussher and Warren, 1900), and one at Tramore Backstrand on 31st March 1997, which had previously been in Wexford (*Irish Birds* 6: 296).

**Pacific Golden Plover**

*Pluvialis fulva* (0; 15; 1)

**Wexford** One: Juvenile, Bannow Island, 18th October to 8th November, photographed (K.Mullarney *et al.*).

**2016 Wexford** Two: Adult summer, Tacumshin Lake, 20th to 22nd July, photographed and sound-recorded (V.Cashera, K.Mullarney *et al.*); Adult summer, Tacumshin Lake, 14th August, photographed (P.Archer *et al.*).

This is the first juvenile recorded in Ireland, with 14 of the previous 15 records involving adults, as well as one first-summer bird. There have been nine previous county records.

**American Golden Plover**

*Pluvialis dominica* (1; 297; 18)

**Clare** One: Juvenile, Loop Head, 18th October (J.N.Murphy).

**Cork** Three: Juvenile, Cockle Strand, Mizen Head, 24th September (D.Ballard); Juvenile, Ballycotton, 27th and 28th October (P.Moore *et al.*); Juvenile, Clonakilty Estuary, 2nd to 8th December (P.Connaughton *et al.*).

**Kerry** Five: Juvenile, Carrahane Strand, 12th September (E.Carty); Juvenile, Carrahane Strand, 2nd to 25th October, photographed (D.Farrer *et al.*); Juvenile, Cashen Estuary, 6th to 19th October, photographed (D.Farrer); Adult-type, Kerry Head, 14th October (M.Hanafin); Juvenile, Beale Strand, 19th October, photographed (A.Ash).

**Mayo** Two: One, Termoncarragh, 20th April, photographed (D.Suddaby); Juvenile, Cross Lough, The Mullet, 18th October (D.Suddaby).

**Meath** One: Juvenile, Mornington, 15th October, photographed (A.G.Kelly).

**Sligo** One: Adult, Inchmore, Lough Gara, 18th November (S.Feeney).

**Wexford** Five: Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 29th August, photographed (D.Bakewell, K.Mullarney); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 13th October (P.Kelly); Juvenile, Bannow Bay, 17th October, joined by second juvenile on 25th, with one remaining to 3rd November, both later seen at The Cull, 14th & 15th November, photographed (K.Mullarney *et al.*); One, Tacumshin Lake, 10th November (D.Murphy).

Several records remain pending, following requests for additional information about the age of birds, or more details of the record for flyover sightings.

**Semipalmated Plover**

*Charadrius semipalmatus* (0; 6; 0)

**Mayo** One: Second calendar year, Achill Island, 13th to 30th September, photographed (O.Metcalf, T.Jones *et al.*), considered same as recorded between 2nd and 14th October 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 553). Considered the same as the 2016 individual, re-found by the same observers the following autumn.

**Little Ringed Plover**

*Charadrius dubius* (0; 156; 13)

**Carlow** Zero: The juvenile at Carlow Sugar Factory Lagoons, Laois, 7th August, was also seen on the Carlow side of the river (B.Power).



**Plate 31.** Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*, Broadmeadows, Swords, Dublin, April 2017 (Tom Shevlin).

**Cork** Two: Adult, Clonakilty, 6th May, photographed (R.T.Mills), and presumed same, with a second bird, White's Marsh, 7th May (A.Duggan *et al.*).

**Dublin** Two: Two adults, Broadmeadows, Swords Estuary, 22nd and 23rd April, with one remaining until 27th April, photographed (N.Griffin, A.G.Kelly *et al.*).

**Laois** One: Juvenile, Carlow Sugar Factory Lagoons, 7th August, photographed (B.Power).

**Wexford** Seven: One, Tacumshin Lake, 13th May (P.Kelly); Two juveniles, Cahore, 27th June, with one remaining until 30th June, photographed (C.Cardiff *et al.*); One juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 5th August joined by a second on 6th August, with a peak of three on 10th August, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*). Two were present, 26th August, one of which was considered to be a new bird, with one bird remaining until 17th September; Three juveniles, Lady's Island Lake, 13th August (D.Daly *et al.*), presumed same individuals; Juvenile, Ring Marsh, 26th August, photographed (P.Kelly), presumed one of the Tacumshin birds above.

**Wicklow** One: Adult female, Kilcoole, 22nd and 23rd June, photographed (A.Butler *et al.*).

The record from Laois and Carlow is the first record for both counties. Several records remain pending, following requests for additional information about the age of the individuals or more details of the sightings.

## Kentish Plover

*Charadrius alexandrinus* (4; 11; 1)

**Wexford** One: Male, Tacumshin Lake, 16th and 17th April, colour-ringed in France, photographed (K.Mullarney *et al.*).

The first record since one at the same site between 25th April and 2nd May 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 462).



**Plate 32.** Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*, Tacumshin Lake, Wexford, April 2017 (Killian Mullarney).

## Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus* (146; 184; 16)

**Clare** Three: Three, The Burren, 1st May, photographed (M.Burke).

**Cork** Three: One, Lissagriffin, 5th May (D.Ballard); One, Galley Head, 5th October (C.Cronin); Juvenile, Dursley Island, 18th October (K.Grace).

**Kerry** Six: Five, Mount Brandon, 23rd April, photographed (M.Connaughton); One, heard only, Mount Brandon, 20th May, sound-recorded (K.Kelly).

**Sligo** One: One, Lenadon Point, 17th April, photographed (D.Cotton *et al.*).

**Wexford** One: Juvenile, Hook Head, 17th October, photographed (K.Mullarney).

**Wicklow** Two: Two females, Mullaghcleevaun, 8th May (J.Murphy).

The Sligo record is the first record for the county.

## Long-billed Dowitcher

*Limnodromus scolopaceus* (2; 135; 9)

**Kerry** Four: One, Carrahane Strand, 26th August (P.McDermott); One, Carrahane Strand, 18th to 22nd September (K.Kelly *et al.*); Two, Baile an Reannaigh, Smerwick Harbour, 25th October (P.McDermott).

**Limerick** One: One, Ringmoylan, 18th May, photographed (P.Troake).  
**Mayo** One: Juvenile, Termoncarragh Lake, 27th September (D.Suddaby *et al.*).

**Mayo** One: Juvenile, Termoncarragh Lake, 27th September (D.Suddaby *et al.*).

**Wexford** Three: Juvenile moulting into first summer plumage, Tacumshin Lake, from 21st October 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 555), until 22nd April (B.Haslam); Adult, Bannow Bay, 27th August to 2nd October (D.Bakewell *et al.*); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 1st October, joined by a second juvenile, 6th October to 19th November, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*), with one remaining into 2018.



**Plate 33.** Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus*, Tacumshin Lake, Wexford, October 2017 (Paul Kelly).

## Hudsonian Whimbrel

*Numenius phaeopus hudsonicus* (0; 3; 1)

**Sligo** One: Juvenile, Easkey, 3rd September to 3rd October, also seen Carrowmacbrien, 4th September, photographed (S.Feeney *et al.*).

The first record for Sligo. The previous records involve singles in Tralee Harbour, Kerry on 1st October 1957 (IBR 5: 11), Tacumshin Lake, Wexford on 27th September 1980 (*Irish Birds* 2: 392), and Mizen Head, Cork from 20th to 25th September 2011 (*Irish Birds* 9: 470). There is also a record of one, 105 nautical miles west-southwest of Fastnet Rock, Cork, on 24th August 1960 (*Irish Birds* 9: 245). At sea records are not included in the species totals.

## Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis* (0; 4; 1)

**Dublin** One: Adult, Broadmeadows, Swords Estuary, 6th to 9th May, photographed (V.Caschera *et al.*).

The first county record, the first in spring, and only the fifth Irish record. The last record was at Great Island, Cork on 20th August 1999 (*Irish Birds* 7: 397), while the three previous records all occurred in Wexford, in August.



**Plate 34.** Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*, Broadmeadows, Swords, Dublin, May 2017 (Victor Caschera).

## Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* (0; 165; 10)

**Clare** One: First winter, Islandavanna, Clarecastle, 22nd to 24th October, photographed (C.Cullen *et al.*).

**Cork** Four: Juvenile, Clogheen Marsh, 13th August (K.Woods); One, in flight, Lighthouse Road, Cape Clear Island, 26th August (D.Fitzpatrick *et al.*); Juvenile, Lissagriffin Lake, 1st September (P.Moore); First winter, Cape Clear Island, trapped and ringed, 1st and 2nd October, photographed (M.O'Donnell *et al.*).

**Galway** One: First winter, Inishmore, 5th to 10th October, photographed (A.Ash *et al.*).

**Kerry** One: Juvenile, Cappagh Beach, Cloghane, 9th to 11th September, photographed (I.Jones *et al.*).

**Mayo** Two: Juvenile, Cross Lough, The Mullet, 20th to 28th September, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*); Juvenile, Termoncarragh Lake, 26th and 27th September (D.Suddaby).

**Wexford** One: First winter, Tacumshin Lake, 7th October to 15th November, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*).

Another good year for this regular American wader. The majority of records come from Cork, Kerry and Wexford, but there have now been seven Clare records, six Galway records, and eight Mayo records.



**Plate 35.** Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*, Cappagh Beach, Kerry, September 2017 (Michael O'Clery).

## Spotted Sandpiper

*Actitis macularius* (1; 47; 3)

**Cork** One: First winter, Cape Clear Island, 5th to 13th October, trapped and ringed and later taken by Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*, photographed (S.Bayley, M.O'Donnell *et al.*).

**Dublin** One: Juvenile, Rogerstown Estuary, 23rd and 24th August, photographed (B.Carruthers *et al.*).

**Kerry** One: Juvenile, Rough Point, Castlegregory, 29th August, photographed (P.Troake *et al.*).

The first record for Dublin. There have been 17 records in Cork, and eight in Kerry.





**Plate 36.** Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*, Cape Clear Island, Cork, October 2017 (Ciaran Cronin).



**Plate 37.** Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla*, Derrymore Strand, Kerry, September 2017 (Michael O'Clery).



**Plate 38.** White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*, Tacumshin Lake, Wexford, November 2017 (Paul Kelly).



**Plate 39.** Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii*, Tacumshin Lake, Wexford, September 2017 (Dermot Green).

## Semipalmated Sandpiper

*Calidris pusilla* (0; 222; 11)

**Cork** Four: Juvenile, The Gearagh, 3rd September, photographed (J.Lynch); Juvenile, Ring Strand, 3rd September (D.O'Sullivan); Juvenile, Lissagriffin Lake, 4th September (D.Ballard); Juvenile, Clogheen Marsh, 28th September to 7th December, photographed, (C.Cronin, C.O'Sullivan *et al.*).

**Kerry** Four: Juvenile, Carrahane Strand, 3rd September (E.Carty); Juvenile, Derrymore Strand, 6th September, photographed (M.O'Clery); Juvenile, Blennerville, 7th September (E.Carty); Juvenile, Baile an Reannaigh, Smerwick Harbour, 7th to 13th September, photographed (J.Crosher *et al.*).

**Wexford** Three: Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 13th to 21st July, photographed (K.Mullarney *et al.*); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 31st August to 6th September, photographed (K.Mullarney *et al.*); Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 7th to 10th September, photographed (K.Mullarney *et al.*).

The long-staying bird at Clogheen Marsh, Cork was the first recorded in December. There have been two birds that stayed into November, one at Ballycotton, Cork in 2010 that stayed until 21st November (*Irish Birds* 9: 296), and one at Tacumshin Lake, Wexford in 2016, which remained until 28th November (*Irish Birds* 10: 557).

## White-rumped Sandpiper

*Calidris fuscicollis* (0; 337; 15)

**Cork** Four: Adult, Lough Erril, Cape Clear Island, 26th and 27th August, photographed (S.Bayley, E.Dempsey); Adult, Muckross Estuary, 28th August (M.Mitchell, J.Wyllie); Adult, Muckross Estuary, 9th to 11th September, photographed (J.Lynch *et al.*); Juvenile, Ring Strand, 30th October (D.O'Sullivan).

**Donegal** One: Juvenile, Lough Swilly, 21st to 23rd October (C.Ingram *et al.*).

**Galway** One: Adult, Mannin Bay, Ballyconneely, 8th August, photographed (D.Breen).

**Kerry** Three: Adult, Carrahane Strand, 13th to 29th September,

photographed (D.O'Connor *et al.*), also seen at Black Rock between 21st and 25th September; Two juveniles, Carrahane Strand, 24th October, photographed (D.O'Connor), also seen Black Rock Strand, with single birds at Black Rock Strand, 6th November, and Carrahane Strand, 7th November.

**Mayo** One: Juvenile, Corragaun Lough, 26th to 30th October (D.Breen, E.McGreal *et al.*).

**Wexford** Five: Adult, The Cull, 7th to 13th August, photographed (K.Grace *et al.*); Adult, Tacumshin Lake, 10th August (P.Kelly *et al.*); Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 18th October, joined by first winter, 29th October until 4th November, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*); First-winter, Tacumshin Lake, 1st to 3rd December, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*).

The Donegal record is only the fourth for the county, while the record for Galway is the seventh for the county.

## Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii* (0; 165; 6)

**Cork** One: Juvenile, Muckross Estuary, 10th to 18th September, photographed (T.C.Kelly *et al.*).

**Kerry** One: Juvenile, Ballycarbery, Cahersiveen, 1st to 3rd September, photographed (P.McDaid).

**Sligo** One: Juvenile, Long Rock and Dunmorran Strand, Aughris, 1st to 14th September, photographed (D.Skehan *et al.*).

**Wexford** Three: Two juveniles, Tacumshin Lake, 31st August to 9th September, photographed (J.F.Dowdall, K.Mullarney *et al.*); Juvenile, The Cull, 24th September (P.Kelly).

The Sligo record is only the second for the county, following one at Ballysadare Bay from 21st September to 1st October 2000 (*Irish Birds* 7: 94).

## Red-necked Phalarope

*Phalaropus lobatus* (3; 52; 2)

**Cork** One: Adult-type, off Galley Head, 11th June (P.Moore, D.O'Sullivan).

**Wexford** One: Juvenile, Tacumshin Lake, 16th September, photographed (C.tenBohmer *et al.*).





**Plate 40.** Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*, Tacumshin Lake, Wexford, September 2017 (Tom Shevlin).

### **Bonaparte's Gull**

*Chroicocephalus philadelphia* (1; 80; 2)

**Cork** One: Adult, Kennedy Quay, Cork City, 12th to 14th February, photographed (J.Diggin *et al.*), presumed same, The Gearagh, 19th and 20th February, and Coolcower, Lee Reservoir, 3rd to 11th March (A.Duggan *et al.*).

**Kerry** One: First winter, Kenmare, 11th March to 21st May, photographed (F.Moore *et al.*).

### **Laughing Gull** *Leucophaeus atricilla* (0; 43; 2)

**Galway** One: Adult, Creggoduff Strand, Slyne Head, 3rd February (D.Breen).

**Sligo** One: Sub-adult, Staid Abbey, Agharrow, 18th to 31st August, photographed (M.Bell *et al.*), also seen at Lislary and Streedagh up to 22nd August, and then relocated on 31st August at Long Rock, between Aughris Head and Dunmorán Strand.

The first record for Sligo. There are six previous records for Galway, with the last in 2006.

### **Kumlien's Gull**

*Larus glaucooides kumlieni* (0; 321; 13)

**Cork** Three: First-winter, Ballycotton, 17th January (P.Moore); Adult, Kilkeran Lake, 28th to 31st January, photographed (C.Barton); First-winter, Kinsale Harbour, 5th February (R.O'Driscoll).

**Donegal** Zero: Fourth-winter, Moville, 30th December 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 561), presumed same, 30th January (T.Campbell, R.Smith) and 18th November, photographed (T.Campbell, R.Murray *et al.*).

**Galway** Three: First-winter, Rossaveel, 24th January to 19th February, photographed (D.Breen *et al.*); First-winter, Rusheen Bay, 12th March, photographed (A.Ash); Adult, Omey Strand, 20th December, photographed (D.Breen).

**Kerry** Four: Second-winter, Tralee from December 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 561) remained to 21st February, photographed (L.Geraty, S.Geraty), and presumed same, 10th to 29th December, photographed (B.O'Connor *et al.*); First-winter and second-winter, Cashen Estuary, 14th March (D.Farrer); Adult, Reenard, 27th March, photographed (P.McDaid); Adult, Blennerville, 17th December (D.O'Connor).





**Plate 41.** Bonaparte's Gull *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*, Cork City, February 2017 (Harry Hussey).

**Waterford** Two: First-winter, Helvick Pier, 5th to 11th February, photographed (M.Cowming jr *et al.*); First-winter, Ballinagaul, 11th March (F.O'Connell, J.A.Power *et al.*).

**Wexford** One: First-winter, Rosslare Bay, 5th February (K.Grace, T.Shevlin), presumed same Rosslare Harbour, 30th April, photographed (P.Kelly).

### **Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans* (0; 16; 1)

**Limerick** One: Second-winter O'Callaghan's Strand, Limerick City, 15th January to 13th May, photographed (G.Hunt *et al.*), also seen at Thomond Weir, Honan's Quay, and Arthur's Quay over the period. The first record for Limerick, and the 17th for Ireland.

### **Gull-billed Tern**

*Gelocheilidon nilotica* (0; 21; 1)

**Cork** One: Adult summer, Muckross Estuary, Clonakilty, 26th April to 6th May, photographed (C.O'Sullivan *et al.*).

The fourth record for Cork, and the first since one on the Womanagh River, near Ballymacoda on the 20th and 21st May, 2006 (*Irish Birds* 8: 404).

### **'Orange-billed' Tern** *Sterna* sp.

**2016 Wexford** One: Adult winter, Carnsore Point, 26th August could not be identified to species (P.Cosgrove, L.Waters).



**Plate 42.** Kumlien's Gull *Larus glaucooides kumlieni*, Tralee, Kerry, February 2017 (Luke Geraty).



**Plate 43.** Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans*, Limerick City, January 2017 (Tom Tarpey).



**Plate 44.** Gull-billed Tern *Gelocheilidon nilotica*, Muckross Estuary, Cork, April 2017 (Harry Hussey).

### Forster's Tern *Sterna forsteri* (0; 39; 0)

**Galway** Zero: Returning adult winter, Nimmo's Pier, and several other sites in Co. Galway from 4th November 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 564) to 26th March at Furbo, photographed (A.Ash), presumed same, at several sites in Galway Bay, between 26th October and 22nd December, photographed (T.Griffin *et al.*).

**Louth** Zero: Adult summer, Soldier's Point, 19th July to 17th October, photographed (E.Larrissy *et al.*), presumed returning, also seen in Wexford.

**Wexford** Zero: Adult summer, Tacumshin Lake, 1st and 2nd July (T.Kilbane *et al.*), presumed same as Louth individual.

### White-winged Tern

*Chlidonias leucopterus* (9; 95; 1)

**Cork** One: Adult, Cape Clear Island, 1st July (S.Bailey *et al.*)

The 17th record for Cork, and the second for Cape Clear Island, following one which visited Sherkin Island on 19th July 2005 and Cape Clear Island the following day (*Irish Birds* 8: 387 and 599).

### Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus* (55; 31; 0)

**Galway** Zero: Female, Cloghernagun from 10th December 2016 (*Irish birds* 10: 564) remained until 31st January, photographed (D.Green).

**Mayo** One: Adult female, presumed returning individual, Tarmon Hill, Blacksod, 8th March, photographed (S.Stutz), then, presumed same, Tarmon Hill, 12th August to 30th September, photographed (D.Suddaby *et al.*), then, presumed same, Carrowmore Lake, 31st December (L.deBurgh-Whyte).

The Tarmon Hill female was first found in the same location in September 2006, when it was a second calendar year individual (*Irish Birds* 8: 404).

### Alpine Swift *Apus melba* (7; 72, 5)

**Cork** One: One, Ballyannan Wood, Midleton, 10th March (B.Power).

**Wexford** Three: One, Tacumshin Lake, 25th March (C.tenBohmer); One, Rosslare Strand, 8th April (A.Wheeler, M.Wheeler); One, Tacumshin Lake, 23rd April, photographed (P.Kelly).

**Wicklow** One: One, Five Mile Point, 20th to 22nd April, photographed (C.Cardiff *et al.*), also seen at Newcastle Airfield, East Coast Nature Reserve and Castlegrange.



**Plate 45.** Snowy Owl *Bubo scandiacus*, Cloghernagun, Galway, January 2017 (Dermot Breen).

### Wryneck *Jynx torquilla* (9; 335; 6)

**Cork** Two: One, Knockadoon Head, 18th October (P.Moore); One, Dursey Island, 30th October (P.Rowe *et al.*).

**Kerry** Two: One, Skellig Michael, 28th August (J.N.Murphy); One, Bray Head, Valencia, 1st October, photographed (S.Enright).

**Waterford** One: One, Whiting Bay, 8th October (C.Flynn).

**Wicklow** One: One, Newcastle, 2nd September, photographed (B.Smith).

The seventh and eighth records for Kerry, the 15th record for Waterford and the fourth record for Wicklow.

### Red-footed Falcon

*Falco vespertinus* (1; 32; 1)

**Cork** One: Male, Barryroe/Dunworley, 25th May (P.Connaughton).

The seventh record for Cork, with the last being an adult male at Owenahinch on 24th May, 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 586).

### Hobby *Falco subbuteo* (14; 368; 16)

**At Sea** Zero: One, over the Porcupine Seabight, approximately 256km/138nm south west of Mizen Head, Co. Cork, 23rd April, photographed (J.Power).

**Cork** One: First-summer, Dunkettle, 18th July (B.Power).

**Dublin** One: One, Rogerstown Estuary, 10th September (B.Carruthers, T.Kavanagh).

**Galway** One: One, Cloonasee, Kinvarra, 20th June (J.Meade).

**Kilkenny** One: Juvenile, Ahenny Slate Quarry, 23rd August (B.Pinchen).

**Waterford** Five: Adult, The Cunnigar, Dungarvan, 7th May (F.O'Connell); First-year, Helvick Head, 13th May, photographed (F.O'Connell, J.A.Power *et al.*); Adult, Coumaraglinmountain, 26th May (J.A.Power, B.Seridan); First-year, Carrigavantry, Tramore, 31st May to 3rd June, photographed (P.Archer *et al.*); First-year, between Curragh beach and Ballyquin, Ardmore; 2nd June (A.O'Brien).

**Wexford** Five: One, South Slob, 1st May (P.Kelly); First-year, Tacumshin Lake, 3rd to 10th May, photographed (T.Kilbane, P.King *et al.*); Immature, Tacumshin Lake, 26th May to 6th June (P.Kelly *et al.*); One, Killinick, 28th May (K.Grace); One, South Slob, 5th June (P.Farrelly).

**Wicklow** Two: First-summer, Kilcoole, 10th July (N.T.Keogh, I.O'Sullivan); Adult, Broad Lough, 19th September (E.Dempsey).

### Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio* (7; 183; 2)

**Cork** Two: Juvenile, The Slob, Youghal, 1st to 3rd October, photographed (B.Power *et al.*); Juvenile, Mizen Head, 27th October (D.Ballard *et al.*).

### Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator* (2; 106; 2)

**Waterford** One: Female, Brownstown Head, 17th April, photographed (É.MacLochlainnn *et al.*).

**Wexford** One: Male, Great Saltee Island, 23rd May, photographed (G.Murray, P.Phillips).

### Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus* (0; 62; 5)

**Cork** Two: One, Toor Pier, Mizen Head, 3rd to 9th October, photographed (G.Murray, P.Phillips); One, Dursey Island, 5th October (K.Grace).





**Plate 46.** Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus*, Inishmore, Galway, October 2017 (Dermot Breen).

**Galway** Two: One, Bun Gabhla, Inishmore, 7th to 8th October, photographed (D.Breen *et al.*); One, Kilronan, Inishmore, 11th October (J.N.Murphy *et al.*).

**Kerry** One: One, Sleah Head, 4th and 5th October, photographed (S.Enright *et al.*).

Five in one year is good, equalling the tally from 2000. However, the best year to date remains 1995, with nine records involving 10 birds. The Kerry record is the fifth for the county, while the two in Galway bring the county total to six, with four recorded on Inishmore, and two on Inishbofin.

## Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus* (62; 156; 2)

**Cork** One: Male, Cape Clear Island, 2nd May (S.Bayley).

**Wexford** One: Female type, Great Saltee Island, 21st April (D.O'Sullivan).

The first records since 2015.

## Short-toed Lark

*Calandrella brachydactyla* (1; 80; 1)

**Cork** One: One, Cape Clear Island, 19th to 30th October, photographed (E.O'Donnell *et al.*).

## Red-rumped Swallow

*Cecropis daurica* (0; 53; 2)

**Cork** One: One, Midleton, 10th May (P.Moore).

**Wexford** One: One, Greenore Point, 28th April, photographed (A.A.Kelly, P.Kelly).

## Siberian Chiffchaff

*Phylloscopus collybita tristis* (2; 123; 27)

**Cork** 13: Two, Ballycotton, 15th January (R.McLaughlin); Two, Curragheen River near Cork Institute of Technology, Cork City, 15th January (M.O'Keeffe); One, Carrigaline, 23rd January (S.Bayley); One, Cape Clear Island, 18th October (S.Bayley); One, Cape Clear Island, 29th October, photographed (A.G.Kelly *et al.*); Two first-winters trapped and ringed, Cape Clear Island, 1st November, photographed (S.Bayley *et al.*); One, Cape Clear Island, 15th November (S.Bayley); One, Knockadoon Head, 21st November (P.Moore); One, Ballycotton, 30th November, photographed (R.McLaughlin); One, Midleton, 29th December, photographed (P.Moore).

**Dublin** One: One, Kilbogget Park, Cabinteely, from 29th December



**Plate 47.** Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla*, Cape Clear Island, Cork, October 2017 (Victor Caschera).





**Plate 48.** Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*, Cape Clear Island, Cork, October 2017 (Tom Shevlin).

2016 (*Irish birds* 10: 568), remained to 13th April, photographed (N.T.Keogh); One, Tolka Valley Park, from 31st December 2016 (*Irish birds* 10: 568), remained to 26th January, photographed (D.O'Mahony); One, Ranelagh Gardens, 11th February (M.Carmody).

**Galway** One: One, Lough Atalia, 21st January, sound-recorded (N.T.Keogh).

**Kerry** Five: One, Ross Castle, Killarney, 5th February (M.O'Clery); One, mouth of River Finglas, Camp, 8th March (M.O'Clery); One, Dunquin, 20th November (D.Farrar); Two, Ross Castle, Killarney, 8th to 30th December, photographed (D.Farrar *et al.*).

**Mayo** Two: One, Tamon, Blacksod, 17th October (D.Suddaby); One, Annagh, Mullet Peninsula, 5th November (D.Suddaby *et al.*).

**Wexford** Five: Two, Cahore from 30th December 2016 (*Irish birds* 10: 568), remained to 21st January, with one still present 12th March, photographed (C.Cardiff, T.Cardiff); One, Rosslare Harbour, from 31st December 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 568), remained to 8th January, photographed (P.Kelly); One, Cahore, 2nd January, in addition to two already present, photographed (C.Cardiff); One, Kilmore Quay, 2nd and 3rd January (K.Grace); One, Greenore Point, 7th to 22nd January, photographed (P.Kelly); One, Tacumshin, 16th December (P.Kelly); One, Cahore, 16th December (C.Cardiff).

## Radde's Warbler

*Phylloscopus schwarzi* (0; 20; 2)

**Clare** One: One, Kilbaha, 30th October, photographed (J.N.Murphy *et al.*).

**Cork** One: One, trapped and ringed, Cape Clear Island, 1st November, photographed (S.Bayley *et al.*).

The first record for Clare, and the 12th for Cork.

## Hume's Warbler *Phylloscopus humei* (0; 3; 0)

**2016 Cork** One: One, Cape Clear Island, 23rd October (G.Jones).



**Plate 49.** Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi*, Kilbaha, Clare, October 2017 (Tom Tarpey).

The first record for Cape Clear Island, and the third for Ireland, after singles at Knockadoon Head (Cork) from 18th December 2003 to 6th January 2004 (*Irish Birds* 7: 567), and Hook Head (Wexford) from 28th December 2003 to 29th February 2004 (*Irish Birds* 7: 567).

## Greenish Warbler

*Phylloscopus trochiloides* (0; 40; 1)

**Wexford** One: Singing male, Great Saltee Island, 28th and 29th May, photographed (J.F.Dowdall *et al.*).

The second record in May, and the earliest, just ahead of one on Cape Clear Island, Cork on 30th May 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 600). There are also two June records; one, Rockabill, Dublin, 3rd June 1996 (*Irish Birds* 6: 85), and an adult male, Great Saltee Island, Wexford, 13th June 1995 (*Irish Birds* 5: 470).

## Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris* (0; 6; 2)

**Cork** One: First-winter, Crookhaven, 7th to 10th October, photographed (A.Duggan, P.Leonard *et al.*).

**Wexford** One: Singing male, Cahore, 27th June to 9th July, photographed (C.Cardiff *et al.*).

The Cork record is the fifth for the county, and the first since 2014, when a singing male was at the Old Head of Kinsale on 9th June (*Irish Birds* 10: 254). The three other Cork records were in autumn. The Wexford record is the third for the county, with the previous two also in June; a male at Tacumshin on 22nd and 23rd June 1996 (*Irish Birds* 6: 85), and a singing male at Carnsore Point on 3rd June 2007 (*Irish Birds* 8: 604).



**Plate 50.** Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*, Great Saltee Island, Wexford, May 2017 (Tom Shevlin).



**Plate 51.** Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*, Cahore, Wexford, July 2017 (Tom Shevlin).





**Plate 52.** Melodious Warbler *Hippolais polyglotta*, Galley Head, Cork, September 2017 (Sean Cronin).

### Melodious Warbler

*Hippolais polyglotta* (2; 208; 3)

**Cork** Two: One, Barry's Head, 24th September (D.Fitzpatrick); One, Galley Head, 24th and 25th September, photographed (C.Barton, C.Cronin *et al.*).

**Wexford** One: One, Great Saltee Island, 2nd September (J.F.Dowdall *et al.*).

### Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina* (2; 221; 1)

**Wexford** One: One, Hook Head, 28th September, photographed (C.Foley, D.Foley *et al.*).

### Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria* (6; 209; 5)

**Cork** Two: First-winter trapped and ringed, Cape Clear Island, 30th September to 5th October, photographed (S.Bayley *et al.*); First-winter, Dursey Island, 18th October (K.Grace).

**Galway** Two: First-winter, Kilmurvey, Inishmore, 9th October, photographed (N.T.Keogh); First-winter, Kilmurvey, Inishmore, 19th October (H.Delaney).

**Kerry** One: First-winter, Coumeenoule, 7th to 9th October, photographed (D.Farrar *et al.*).

The Kerry record is the sixth for the county, with the first county record occurring at the same site on the 11th and 12th September 2008 (Irish Birds 9: 98).

### Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans* (2; 53; 1)

**Wexford** One: Male, showing characteristics of Eastern Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans albigularis*, Great Saltee Island, 21st April, photographed (T.Buckley, S.Millar *et al.*).

### Rosy Starling *Pastor roseus* (41; 111; 1)

Clare One: Adult, Kilkee, 22nd August, photographed (E.O'Flynn).

The ninth record for the county, with the last one at Spanish Point on 13th June 2012 (Irish Birds 9: 603).



**Plate 53.** Grey-cheeked Thrush *Catharus minimus*, Galley Head, Cork, October 2017 (Calvin Jones/Ireland's Wildlife).





**Plate 54.** Grey-cheeked Thrush *Catharus minimus*, Rossscarbery Pier, Cork, October 2017 (Dick Coombes).



**Plate 55.** Grey-cheeked Thrush *Catharus minimus*, Red Strand, Cork, October 2017 (Richard Mills).

## Grey-cheeked Thrush

*Catharus minimus* (0; 9; 3)

**Cork** Three: One, Dirk Bay, Galley Head, 19th to 22nd October, photographed (C.Barton, C.Cronin *et al.*); One, Rossscarbery Pier, 20th to 23rd October, photographed (C.Cronin *et al.*); One, Red Strand, 26th and 27th October, photographed (C.Barton, C.Cronin *et al.*).

The eighth to tenth records for Cork, and probably the first time an observer has found the same species of American vagrant on consecutive days? All three birds remained for a few days and were seen well by many observers. There have

now been three species of American thrush recorded in Dirk Bay, Galley Head, with a Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus* there on 25th and 26th October 1998 (*Irish Birds* 6: 398), and a Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus* on 11th October 2008 (*Irish Birds* 9: 99).

## Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus* (0; 6; 1)

**Cork** One: One, Cape Clear Island, 14th October, photographed (S.Bayley, R.H.Coombes *et al.*).

The third record for Cape Clear Island, and the fifth for Cork.



**Plate 56.** Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus*, Cape Clear Island, Cork, October 2017 (Tom Shevlin).



**Plate 57.** Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka*, Ring Strand, Ballymacoda, Cork, December 2017 (Andrew Malcolm).

### Pied Wheatear

*Oenanthe pleschanka* (0; 3, 1)

**Cork** One: First-winter female, Ring Strand, 11th to 15th December, photographed (A.D.Malcolm *et al.*).

The fourth Irish record, and the second for Cork, after one at Knockadoon Head on 8th to 16th November 1980 (*Irish Birds* 2: 113). There have also been singles at Ballinaclesh, Wexford on 19th and 20th November 1983 (*Irish Birds* 2: 571), and Loop Head, Clare from 5th to 8th November 1988 (*Irish Birds* 4: 249).

### Blue-headed Wagtail

*Motacilla flava flava* (0; 75; 3)

**Cork** One: Male, Galley Head, 9th May, photographed (C.Barton).

**Wexford** Two: Male, Cahore, 1st July, joined by 2nd male on 2nd, with one remaining until 22nd July, photographed (C.Cardiff *et al.*).

### Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi* (2; 125; 3)

**Cork** Two: One, Mary Mac's, Cape Clear Island, 22nd October (V.Cashera *et al.*); One, Dursey Island, 4th November (S.Enright).

**Wexford** One: One, Hook Head, 23rd October (K.Grace).

### Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus* (0; 56; 4)

**Cork** Two: One, Lissagriffin, 10th to 14th October, photographed and sound-recorded (C.Foley, D.Foley *et al.*); One, Cape Clear Island, 28th October (V.Cashera).

**Donegal** One: One, Tory Island, 17th September (R.Vaughan).

**Wexford** One: One, Tacumshin Lake, 29th October (K.Grace, P.Kelly). The Donegal bird is the second record for the county, and for Tory Island, after one there on 30th September 2015 (*Irish Birds* 10: 422).

### Buff-bellied Pipit *Anthus rubescens* (0; 22; 1)

**Galway** One: One, Mweenish Island, 12th September, photographed (P.Troake).

This is the third record for Galway, after singles at Truska Marsh, Slyne Head on 2nd and 3rd October 2010 (*Irish Birds* 9: 309), and Inishmore, 5th to 8th October 2013 (*Irish Birds* 10: 96).

### Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta* (1; 167; 14)

**Cork** Two: One, Baltimore, 28th October (J.Wyllie); One, Pilmore Strand, 4th to 15th November, photographed and sound-recorded (B.Power, D.O'Sullivan *et al.*).



**Kerry** One: One, Kilshannig, 19th February (M.Hanafin)

**Wexford** Seven: One, Tacumshin Lake from November 2016 (*Irish birds* 10: 574) remained to 28th January (K.Grace); One, Ballinoulart, Cahore, from November 2016 (*Irish birds* 10: 574), remained to 2nd January, when a second bird was also present (C.Cardiff, T.Cardiff); Two, breeding plumage, Tacumshin Lake, 8th April, with one still present 9th April, photographed (P.Kelly *et al.*); One, Tacumshin Lake, 29th October, with two on 4th November and 2nd December, photographed (K.Grace, P.Kelly *et al.*); One, Cahore, 2nd November to 16th December, photographed (C.Cardiff); One, The Cull, 14th November, photographed (K.Mullarney).

**Wicklow** Four: Two, Broad Lough from 1st December 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 574) to 18th February, with one remaining to 12th March (M.Boyle, A.McMillan); Two, Broad Lough, 18th February (four birds seen), with three present 19th February (R.H.Coombes, J.Ivory *et al.*); One, Broad Lough, 15th November (H.Servignat).

## Scandinavian Rock Pipit

*Anthus petrosus littoralis* (0; 127; 16)

**Clare** Three: One, Clahane, 27th February, with three there from 11th March to 21st March, photographed (J.N.Murphy).

**Cork** One: One, Pilmore Strand, 26th November (D.O'Sullivan).

**Donegal** Three: One, Dawros Point Lighthouse, Rosbeg, 19th March (P.McDaid, P.McDaid jr *et al.*); Two, Tory Island, 23rd March (R.Vaughan).

**Galway** One: Singing male, Galway Docks, 9th March to 10th April (N.T.Keogh).

**Kerry** Three: One, Black Rock, 8th February, and two there from 13th March, photographed (D.Farrar, D.O'Connor *et al.*); One, Kilshannig, 19th February (M.Hanafin).

**Louth** One: One, Clogher Head, 12th April (E.Larrissy).

**Wexford** Two: One, Carnsore Point, 4th March (K.Grace); One, Rosslare Harbour, 5th March (P.Kelly).

**Wicklow** Two: One, Broad Lough, 19th February, with two present 11th March, photographed (C.Cardiff, T.Cardiff).

The two birds at Black Rock, Kerry were present as a breeding pair from mid-March, with two fledged young seen on 12th June (D.O'Connor).

## Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

(Unknown; 225; 48)

**Cork** 25: One, Toe Head, 15th October (H.Hussey, D.O'Sullivan); Female, Cape Clear Island, 15th October, photographed (T.Shevlin *et al.*); Two, Cape Clear Island, 16th to 18th October (V.Cashera *et al.*); One, Cape Clear Island, 20th October (P.Moore); Two, Garinish, 23rd October (P.Moore, D.O'Sullivan); 12, including a flock of 11, Cape Clear Island, 26th October (S.Bayley, V.Cashera *et al.*); One, Dirk Bay, 26th October, photographed (C.Cronin *et al.*); One, Mizen Head, 27th October (D.Ballard); One, Cape Clear Island, 29th October (S.Bayley); Female trapped and ringed, Cape Clear Island, 1st November, photographed (S.Bayley *et al.*); One, Midleton, 13th November (P.Moore); One, near Taur village, 30th November (P.Moore).

**Kerry** One: One, Burnham Wood, 17th October (M.O'Clery).

**Limerick** 16: Two, Curraghchase Forest Park, 5th November (T.Tarpey), with 11 there, 20th November (T.Tarpey, G.Hunt), 12 on 22nd November (P.Cullinan), 15 on 22nd November (P.Cullinan, J.Fox



**Plate 58.** Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*, Cape Clear Island, Cork, October 2017 (Tom Shevlin).

*et al.*), 16 on 23rd November (D.Farrar, M.O'Clery), and a report of 15 to 20 birds on 9th December, photographed (C.ten Bohmer).

**Mayo** One: One, Mullet Peninsula, 28th October (D.Suddaby).

**Wexford** Four: Two, Tacumshin Castle, 15th October (P.Kelly); One, Hook Head, 17th October (J.Lovatt); One, Hook Head, 28th October (K.Grace).

**Wicklow** One: One, Newcastle, 21st November (E.Dempsey).

An unprecedented irruption of Hawfinches occurred in the UK and to a lesser extent Ireland in October 2017, possibly as a result of Storm Ophelia pushing birds from central Europe further west than usual (Bucks Bird Club, 2017). Several records remain pending, following requests for additional information of records of flyover sightings.

## 'Northern' Bullfinch

*Pyrrhula pyrrhula pyrrhula* (4; 1)

**Cork** One: Adult male, Dursey Island, 15th to 18th June, photographed (D.Scott *et al.*).

The last accepted record was of a female on Tory Island on 25th and 26th October 2004 (*Irish Birds* 9: 311), which was part of an exceptional influx into Britain and Ireland that autumn. There were other records in Ireland reported at the time, and these were summarised by Pennington and Meek (2006), however no descriptions of these sightings were submitted to the Committee.

## Common Rosefinch

*Erythrura erythrura* (0; 240; 5)

**Clare** One: First-winter, Kilbaha, 8th October (N.Lynch, T.Lynch).

**Cork** One: First-winter trapped and ringed, Cape Clear Island, 12th to 15th October, photographed (S.Bayley, M.O'Donnell *et al.*).



**Galway** Two: One, Inishbofin, 15th October (A.McGeehan); First-winter, Onaght, Inishmore, 26th October, photographed (R.D.Moore).  
**Mayo** One: First-winter, Tarmon, Blacksod, 12th September (D.Suddaby).

### Mealy Redpoll

*Acanthis flammea flammea* (21; 101; 1)

**Donegal** One: One, Tory Island, 20th September, photographed (R.Vaughan).

A second individual reported present on Tory Island for several weeks up to 25th March was accepted as a Common Redpoll *Acanthis flammea*, showing features of Mealy Redpoll. There were additional records in 2017 of this Appendix 1 subspecies for which descriptions have not yet been received.

### Greenland Redpoll

*Acanthis flammea rostrata* (13; 41; 2)

**Donegal** Two: One, Tory Island, 13th September, with two present from 17th to 20th September, and one still present 29th September, photographed (G.Meehan, R.Vaughan *et al.*)

**Arctic Redpoll** *Acanthis hornimanni* (0; 12; 0)

**2015 Dublin** One: One, Lucan, 27th February to 1st March, photographed (S.Geraty), was accepted as *exilipes*.

**Yellow Warbler** *Setophaga petechia* (0; 4; 1)

**Cork** One: One, Mizen Head, 21st and 22nd August, photographed (P.Dillon-Hooper, E.Dillon-Hooper *et al.*).

The fifth record for Ireland, and the third for Cork.

### Blackpoll Warbler

*Setophaga striata* (0; 10; 1)

**Mayo** One: First-winter, Blacksod, 7th to 15th October, photographed (B.Robson, D.Suddaby *et al.*).

The 11th record for Ireland and the second for Mayo, after one at Termon on the Mullet Peninsula on 9th November 2012 (*Irish Birds* 9: 608).

**Baltimore Oriole** *Icterus galbula* (0; 2; 1)

**Donegal** One: Second calendar year male, Tory Island, 15th May, photographed (A.Meenan).

The third record for Ireland, and the first for Donegal. The two previous records were from Cork, with the first at



**Plate 59.** Scarlet Tanager *Piranga olivacea*, Mizen Head, Cork, October 2017 (Calvin Jones/Ireland's Wildlife).

Baltimore on 7th and 8th October 2001 (*Irish Birds* 7: 238), and the second on Cape Clear Island on 12th to 19th October 2006 (*Irish Birds* 8: 415).

**Little Bunting** *Emberiza pusilla* (3; 49; 3)

**Cork** Three: One, Cape Clear Island, 26th October, photographed (V.Caschera, M.Stewart); One, Galley Head, 27th October (C.Cronin); One, Mizen Head, 28th October (N.Linehan).

**Rustic Bunting** *Emberiza rustica* (0; 20; 1)

**Cork** One: One, Cape Clear Island, 15th to 23rd October, photographed (S.Bayley, D.Foley *et al.*).

The 19th record for Cork, and the 11th for Cape Clear Island.

**Scarlet Tanager** *Piranga olivacea* (0; 4; 1)

**Cork** One: First-winter, Mizen Head, 3rd to 6th October, photographed (H.Hussey *et al.*).

The fifth record for Ireland, and the fourth record for Cork. The last record was at Garinish on the Beara Peninsula, 7th to 11th October 2008 (*Irish Birds* 9: 101).



**Plate 60.** Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla*, Cape Clear Island, Cork, October 2017 (Victor Caschera).



**Plate 61.** Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica*, Cape Clear Island, Cork, October 2017 (Tom Shevlin).



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## Appendix 1: Category D records

### Category D1 records

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

### Canada Goose *Branta canadensis* (0; 41; 0)

**Galway** Zero: One of unknown origin, Lydacan, associating with Whooper Swans, 28th November, photographed (P.Troake).

### Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens* (70; 50; 0)

**Wexford** Six: Six white morph adults, Cahore, 28th and 29th June, photographed (S.Millar, P.Phillips *et al.*).

### Ruddy Shelduck

*Tadorna ferruginea* (75; 0; 0)

**Donegal** One: Male, Farland Bank, Inch Island, Lough Swilly, from 15th October 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 577) to 8th April, photographed

(C.Ingram *et al.*), also recorded at Burnfoot, 4th January (L.Feeney, M.Murphy *et al.*).

**Waterford** Zero: First-winter male, Kilmacleague and Tramore Backstrand, 1st to 31st October, photographed (M.Cowming *et al.*), also seen at Creadon Beach, 9th December (J.Finnegan), same individual recorded in Co. Wexford.

**Wexford** Two: First-year female, Tacumshin Lake, 17th May to 6th June, photographed (K.Mullarney *et al.*), also recorded at Cahore, 20th to 22nd May (C.Cardiff, T.Cardiff *et al.*); First-winter male, Rosslare Backstrand, 29th September, photographed (K.Mullarney), also seen Bannow Island, 28th to 31st December (P.Dwan *et al.*), and also seen in Co. Waterford.

### Wood Duck *Aiz sponsa*

**2016 Kerry** Zero: Male, Lough Leane, 29th July to 19th June, 2017, photographed (Á.Ní Shúilleabháin).

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## Appendix 2: Contributors

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## 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](http://www.irbc.ie/records/desclist.php) and [www.irbc.ie/records/desclist1.php](http://www.irbc.ie/records/desclist1.php)) which, after circulation to the Irish Rare Birds Committee 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.

### 2017 records not proven

#### **Lesser Scaup** *Aythya affinis*

Male, Lough Gill, Kerry, 9th November.

#### **Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea*

One, Toomore, Cork, 30th September.

#### **Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

One, Letterkenny Golf Course, Donegal, 28th January to 2nd February.

#### **Black Kite** *Milvus migrans*

One, Old Head of Kinsale, Cork, 14th April.

#### **Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

One, Forest access near Shay Elliot Memorial, Glenmalur, Wicklow, 16th March.

#### **Water Pipit** *Anthus spinoletta*

One, Killougher, 13th February.

#### **Scandinavian Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

Eight, Broad Lough, 24th September.

## 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 2017 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 report.

#### **Wilson's Storm-petrel** *Oceanites oceanicus*

Two, Bridges of Ross, Clare, 12th August.

#### **Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla*

One, Cape Clear Island, Cork, 29th August.

#### **Siberian Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*

One, Cape Clear Island, Cork, 22nd January and 22nd February.

#### **Richard's Pipit** *Anthus richardi*

One, Cape Clear Island, Cork, 31st October.

## Appendix 5: Corrigenda to previous reports

**Lesser Scaup** *Aythya affinis* – Incorrect statistics were given in the Irish Rare Bird Report 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 547). The text (0; 38; 3) should be replaced with (0; 38; 2).

**Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus* – The text for sightings in Waterford should read as follows: “Waterford Two: Nineteen, Tramore Back Strand, from 29th December 2015 (*Irish Birds* 10: 401) remained to 8th January, with twenty on 4th January, when they were joined by a new bird, thereafter numbers dwindled until two remained on 16th January, photographed (L.Benson, S.King, H.Servignat *et al.*); One, 6th February, Ballinlough, Kill, photographed (M.Cowming); One, Tramore Back Strand, 19th February, 27th February and 28th March, photographed (M.Cowming, B.Howell, L.Howell), presumed to be the long-staying individual present since 20th September 2014.” In addition, incorrect statistics were given in the Irish Rare Bird Report 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 549). The text (103; 259; 46), should be replaced with (103; 259; 47).

**Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis* – The text for sightings in Wexford should read as follows: “**Wexford** 23: One, Tacumshin Lake, from 30th October 2015 (*Irish Birds* 10: 399) remained throughout the year, and, until 8th April 2017, photographed (P.Cutler, A.Power *et al.*); One, Ring Marsh and Our Lady's Island Lake, 11th June, photographed (A.A.Kelly, P.Kelly); Five, Murrintown, 15th October (D.O'Ceallaigh, O.O'Sullivan); At least six, Tacumshin Lake, 20th October into 2017, comprising, one from 20th October (D.Finnamore, H.Sheppard), two from 28th October (N.Keogh), three from 29th October (P.Kelly), four from 30th October (P.Kelly), five from 20th November (P.Kelly), six from 25th November, when they were joined by the long staying individual present since October 2015, all remaining in to 2017, photographed (A.A.Kelly, P.Kelly), and, presumed same flock, Tomhaggard, 27th December into 2017 (K.Grace *et al.*); Three, Killane, 5th to 19th November (T.Murray); Two, South Slob, 12th November, photographed (P.Kelly); One, WWR, North Slob, 19th November, photographed (P.Kelly); Three, Our Lady's Island Lake, 11th to 24th December (B.Clarke, E.Dunne, G.Murray *et al.*); Two, Inish and Ballyteige Slob, 20th December (T.Murray).” In addition, incorrect statistics were given in the Irish Rare Bird Report 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 550). The text (0; 256; 43) should be replaced with (0; 256; 49).

**Great White Egret** *Ardea alba* – The record of one, Lough Atedaun, near Corofin, Clare, 29th December 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 551) should read as follows: “Clare One, Lough Inchiquin, 29th December 2016 (G.Pearson).”

**Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans* - Incorrect statistics were given in the Irish Rare Bird Report 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 562). The text (0; 13; 2) should be replaced with (0; 13; 3).

**Siberian Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita tristis* – The record of two, Cahore, 30th December (*Irish Birds* 10: 568) was incorrectly included with the Wicklow sightings, and should read as follows “Wexford Two, Cahore, 30th December 2016 (C.Cardiff)”. The 2016 total for Wicklow was Five, not Seven as published, and the 2016 Wexford total was Nine, not Seven as published. In addition, incorrect statistics were given in the Irish Rare Bird Report 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 567). The text (2; 69; 55) should be replaced with (2; 68; 55).

**Radde’s Warbler** *Phylloscopus schwarzi* – The 2016 total for Cork was Two, not Three as published. In addition, incorrect statistics were given in the Irish Rare Bird Report 2016 (*Irish Birds* 10: 569). The text (0; 17; 4) should be replaced with (0; 17; 3).

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## Abbreviations used

- BOU: British Ornithologists’ Union.  
IOC: International Ornithological Congress.  
WWR: Wexford Wildfowl Reserve.

# Irish Ringing Report for 2017

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This report summarises bird ringing undertaken in Ireland in 2017. In the first part, species totals are presented separately for Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, and also for birds ringed as pulli or full-grown. Collective data from previous years is also shown to provide a context for, and comparison with, ringing activity in previous years. Data are sourced from previous reports and the BTO website.

The second part highlights some interesting recoveries of birds ringed in Ireland, or ringed elsewhere are controlled in Ireland. In addition to those from the BTO database, a call

went out to ringers running colour-ringing schemes in Ireland (mostly by word-of-mouth) to see if any additional interesting recoveries could be added to this section. A trawl of the internet (notably <http://www.irishbirding.com/birds/web> and the Irish Ringer's Facebook Page) was also undertaken. As the number of colour-ringing schemes increases, the data from these projects becomes more valuable not just in terms of

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**Plate 62.** Cuckoo (Brian Burke).



movements but also survival and other aspects of behaviour. Also, these data may be held by the individual researchers rather than by the BTO. The authors would therefore appreciate any further colour-ring records that may be of interest for future inclusion in this report.

## Birds ringed in 2017

A total of 25,690 birds from 138 species were ringed in 2017 (see Table 1). This is very slightly up on the total number ringed in 2016 (25,081), but slightly below the average number ringed over the preceding five years (26,018). The total number of species ringed, at 138, is just one below the high total of 139 in 2016, with the some notable ringing rarities including two Bewick's Swan\*, a pullus Osprey, single Spotted Sandpiper and Lesser Yellowlegs, another Iceland Gull (after one last year), one Wood Warbler (the first since 2006) and one Hawfinch.

With the exception of Mute Swan and White-fronted Goose, the numbers of wildfowl ringed were low, with the single Teal being the lowest ringing total for that species in recent years, a stark reduction in the past ten years, when nearly 1,400 were ringed in 2007. The number of Storm Petrels ringed in 2017 (1,353) was the lowest in over ten years, and nearly 1,000 less than the 5-year (2012-2016) average of 2231. The numbers of Shags ringed (32) was also at the lowest total for over 10 years, although Gannet (10) was the highest since 2011, and Grey Heron (20) was the highest number ringed since 2004.

For raptors, 2017 again saw record numbers of Peregrines ringed (138), and Hen Harriers (20) were just one below the 2016 total. By contrast, the number of Buzzards ringed (25) was the lowest since 2010, and the Sparrowhawk total (15) was the lowest since 2008.

Several wader species saw their highest ringing totals for over ten years in 2017, including Golden Plover, Jack Snipe, Snipe and Woodcock. Apart from two Woodcock, all these birds were ringed as adults, suggesting that work associated with ongoing Woodcock research may be having spin-off benefits in terms of catching species using similar habitats at night.

Gull ringing in 2017 was a mixed bag; Herring Gull had the highest numbers (196) ringed since 2008 whilst Black-headed Gull had the lowest total (92) ringed in over ten years. The number of terns reported ringed in 2017 was collectively the lowest for over ten years. Roseate Terns had just 229 ringed, over a thousand less than the 5-year mean of 1,378. The number of auks ringed continues to be below the five-year mean. The single Puffin that was ringed was the lowest since 2007, and Black Guillemot numbers continue to be below the 5-year average.

The increased ringing total for Barn Owl (142) continues the positive trend observed in 2016, exceeding the 5-year average of 83. AS in 2016, the majority of Barn Owls ringing in 2017 were pulli. Although productivity in 2017 didn't match the record-breaking 2016, this was partially offset by an increased number of nesting attempts, following the success of the 2016 nesting season (J. Lusby pers. comm.).

Passerine ringing in 2017 continued the upward trend observed in 2016, with the 2017 total exceeding the 2012-16 mean by over 17%. Once again, many common species had the highest numbers ringed over that period, including Jackdaw, Goldcrest, Blue Tit, Long-tailed Tit, Chiffchaff, Blackcap, Whitethroat, Sedge Warbler, Wren, Song Thrush, Dunnock, Greenfinch and Goldfinch. Part of the reason for these increases may be linked to species whose Irish populations are increasing, such as Blackcap, Reed Warbler or Goldfinch. Alternatively, it may be that populations are recovering from previous lows. Continued increases in Greenfinch, which also had the highest numbers ringed in 2016 since 2007, may be showing signs of the population recovery following impacts of disease. Surprisingly, Chaffinch had the lowest total ringed since 2008 – are they being usurped in gardens by Greenfinch and Goldfinch? The total number of Swallows ringed (830) was the lowest in over ten years, yet House Martin numbers ringed (156) were the highest in that time. This, as for other species, may reflect targeting of species for projects or by individual ringers.

Once again, the numbers of birds ringed in Ireland clearly show the effects of specific studies on certain species, such as Mute Swan or Brent Geese, birds of prey such as Peregrine or Barn Owl, nesting terns or some passerine species (notably Swallow). With a relatively small ringing community in Ireland, focusing on targeted projects is likely to be more effective than more general ringing in terms of scientific validity and ringers on the island of Ireland are perhaps better placed than those in Britain to make greater relative contributions with their ringing efforts. However, that likely means greater coordination and cooperation in those efforts than has been the case previously (with a few notable exceptions) is required to make this happen.

## Selected Recoveries

A selection of recoveries of birds ringed in Ireland and recovered elsewhere, or birds ringed abroad and recaptured in Ireland are provided below. These (and more) are available in the BTO's online ringing report (<https://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/ringing/publications/online-ringing-reports>). However, some interpretation and context for the records is added here in text to highlight particularly interesting information highlighted by these data.

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For Latin names mentioned in the main text, see Table 1.

**Table 1.** Ringing totals for 2017 with previous five-year mean for comparison

Species	Juvenile/adult			Pullus			Total 2017	Five-year mean 2012– 2016
	Northern Ireland	Rep. of Ireland	Sub- total	Northern Ireland	Rep. of Ireland	Sub- total		
Mute Swan <i>Cygnus olor</i>	0	136	136	0	0	0	136	69.2
Whooper Swan <i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1.2
Bewick's Swan <i>Cygnus columbianus</i>	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	0.0
White-fronted Goose <i>Anser albifrons</i>	0	43	43	0	0	0	43	30.0
Greylag Goose <i>Anser anser</i>	5	0	5	0	0	0	5	23.8
Barnacle Goose <i>Branta leucopsis</i>	0	19	19	0	0	0	19	3.8
Brent Goose <i>Branta bernicla</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	154.4
Shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Mandarin Duck <i>Aix galericulata</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Wigeon <i>Anas penelope</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.4
Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	31.8
Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1.4
Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.4
Tufted Duck <i>Aythya fuligula</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Eider <i>Somateria mollissima</i>	19	0	19	0	0	0	19	14.6
Goldeneye <i>Bucephala clangula</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Fulmar <i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	0	15	15	0	2	2	17	36.2
Manx Shearwater <i>Puffinus puffinus</i>	244	1	245	365	0	365	610	614.0
Storm Petrel <i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>	54	1299	1353	0	0	0	1353	2230.8
Leach's Petrel <i>Oceanodroma leucorhoa</i>	0	3	3	0	0	0	3	7.4
Gannet <i>Morus bassanus</i>	0	10	10	0	0	0	10	2.4
Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	0	0	0	0	326	326	326	257.8
Shag <i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>	0	10	10	0	22	22	32	103.2
Little Egret <i>Egretta garzetta</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5.4
Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>	0	20	20	0	0	0	20	1.0
Little Grebe <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0.0
Red Kite <i>Milvus milvus</i>	0	0	0	11	2	13	13	10.6
White-tailed Eagle <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>	0	0	0	0	3	3	3	1.8
Hen Harrier <i>Circus cyaneus</i>	0	0	0	0	20	20	20	8.8
Goshawk <i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.2
Sparrowhawk <i>Accipiter nisus</i>	5	10	15	0	0	0	15	32.8
Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo</i>	2	14	16	0	9	9	25	45.4
Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	0	0	0	0	51	51	51	66.6
Merlin <i>Falco columbarius</i>	0	0	0	0	12	12	12	9.2
Peregrine <i>Falco peregrinus</i>	0	0	0	0	138	138	138	96.6
Water Rail <i>Rallus aquaticus</i>	3	5	8	0	2	2	10	3.2
Spotted Crake <i>Porzana porzana</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Moorhen <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.0
Coot <i>Fulica atra</i>	0	10	10	0	0	0	10	9.2
Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	1	4	5	0	0	0	5	111.6
Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	0	3	3	0	4	4	7	22.8
Golden Plover <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	1	5	6	0	0	0	6	1.6
Lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	5	0	5	0	0	0	5	17.0
Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i>	0	3	3	0	0	0	3	184.6
Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14.4
Curlew Sandpiper <i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.8
Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina</i>	2	209	211	0	0	0	211	137.4

**Table 1.** (continued)

Species	Juvenile/adult			Pullus			Total 2017	Five-year mean 2012– 2016
	Northern Ireland	Rep. of Ireland	Sub- total	Northern Ireland	Rep. of Ireland	Sub- total		
Ruff <i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.6
Jack Snipe <i>Lymnocyrtus minimus</i>	10	8	18	0	0	0	18	1.0
Snipe <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	9	39	48	0	0	0	48	10.0
Woodcock <i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	75	100	175	0	2	2	177	35.0
Black-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa limosa</i>	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	10.4
Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	94.8
Whimbrel <i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	0	3	3	0	0	0	3	0.4
Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i>	2	2	4	0	0	0	4	22.0
Common Sandpiper <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.2
Spotted Sandpiper <i>Actitis macularia</i>	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.0
Lesser Yellowlegs <i>Tringa flavipes</i>	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.0
Greenshank <i>Tringa nebularia</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.4
Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i>	8	34	42	0	0	0	42	66.2
Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25.6
Ivory Gull <i>Pagophila eburnea</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Kittiwake <i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	20	0	20	0	21	21	41	102.4
Black-headed Gull <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	11	2	13	0	79	79	92	269.0
Mediterranean Gull <i>Larus melanocephalus</i>	0	3	3	0	16	16	19	27.2
Common Gull <i>Larus canus</i>	0	1	1	56	0	56	57	44.4
Lesser Black-backed Gull <i>Larus fuscus</i>	4	4	8	0	63	63	71	62.2
Herring Gull <i>Larus argentatus</i>	4	39	43	0	153	153	196	56.0
Iceland Gull <i>Larus glaucoideus</i>	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.2
Glaucous Gull <i>Larus hyperboreus</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Great Black-backed Gull <i>Larus marinus</i>	0	2	2	0	40	40	42	71.4
Little Tern <i>Sterna albifrons</i>	0	0	0	0	256	256	256	221.8
Sandwich Tern <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	0	4	4	264	392	656	660	899.0
Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i>	0	40	40	0	1404	1404	1444	1792.8
Roseate Tern <i>Sterna dougallii</i>	0	1	1	0	228	228	229	1377.8
Arctic Tern <i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	0	5	5	0	23	23	28	168.8
Guillemot <i>Uria aalge</i>	0	10	10	0	0	0	10	4.6
Razorbill <i>Alca torda</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8.2
Black Guillemot <i>Cephus grylle</i>	1	2	3	21	74	95	98	117.4
Little Auk <i>Alle alle</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Puffin <i>Fratercula arctica</i>	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	16.6
Feral Pigeon (Rock Dove) <i>Columba livia</i>	0	25	25	0	0	0	25	9.8
Stock Dove <i>Columba oenas</i>	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	3.2
Woodpigeon <i>Columba palumbus</i>	5	5	10	4	2	6	16	16.0
Collared Dove <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	2	20	22	2	0	2	24	11.4
Cuckoo <i>Cuculus canorus</i>	0	4	4	0	0	0	4	1.0
Barn Owl <i>Tyto alba</i>	0	20	20	2	120	122	142	83.4
Long-eared Owl <i>Asio otus</i>	1	2	3	0	9	9	12	2.2
Short-eared Owl <i>Asio flammeus</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Swift <i>Apus apus</i>	0	0	0	0	9	9	9	20.4
Kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i>	4	2	6	0	0	0	6	6.2
Wryneck <i>Jynx torquilla</i>	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.0
Great Spotted Woodpecker <i>Dendrocopos major</i>	2	0	2	0	2	2	4	0.8
Chough <i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.4
Magpie <i>Pica pica</i>	7	7	14	0	2	2	16	14.8
Jay <i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	0	20	20	0	0	0	20	8.2
Jackdaw <i>Corvus monedula</i>	47	107	154	0	17	17	171	61.4
Rook <i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	1	154	155	0	0	0	155	64.6



Table 1. (continued)

Species	Juvenile/adult			Pullus			Total 2017	Five-year mean 2012– 2016
	Northern Ireland	Rep. of Ireland	Sub- total	Northern Ireland	Rep. of Ireland	Sub- total		
Hooded Crow <i>Corvus cornix</i>	0	2	2	3	2	5	7	10.2
Carrion/Hooded Crow <i>Corvus corone/cornix</i>	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.4
Raven <i>Corvus corax</i>	0	0	0	0	166	166	166	141.4
Goldcrest <i>Regulus regulus</i>	276	790	1066	0	0	0	1066	376.4
Firecrest <i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	0	14	14	0	0	0	14	0.4
Blue Tit <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	328	861	1189	120	408	528	1717	1261.2
Great Tit <i>Parus major</i>	278	717	995	71	324	395	1390	1270.6
Coal Tit <i>Periparus ater</i>	184	336	520	3	216	219	739	608.6
Skylark <i>Alauda arvensis</i>	1	16	17	0	0	0	17	20.4
Sand Martin <i>Riparia riparia</i>	345	439	784	0	0	0	784	586.2
Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>	58	664	722	25	83	108	830	1771.2
House Martin <i>Delichon urbicum</i>	4	152	156	0	0	0	156	22.4
Cetti's Warbler <i>Cettia cetti</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Long-tailed Tit <i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	88	212	300	0	0	0	300	221.8
Yellow-browed Warbler <i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>	3	17	20	0	0	0	20	16.4
Radde's Warbler <i>Phylloscopus schwarzi</i>	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.0
Bonelli's Warbler <i>Phylloscopus bonelli</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Wood Warbler <i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.0
Chiffchaff <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	61	346	407	0	1	1	408	249.8
Willow Warbler <i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	230	375	605	0	17	17	622	532.4
Blackcap <i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	154	281	435	0	0	0	435	291.0
Garden Warbler <i>Sylvia borin</i>	1	4	5	0	0	0	5	2.2
Barred Warbler <i>Sylvia nisoria</i>	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.4
Lesser Whitethroat <i>Sylvia curruca</i>	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	1.6
Whitethroat <i>Sylvia communis</i>	10	66	76	0	3	3	79	37.6
Subalpine Warbler <i>Sylvia cantillans</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Grasshopper Warbler <i>Locustella naevia</i>	2	14	16	0	11	11	27	12.0
Booted Warbler <i>Iduna caligata</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Sedge Warbler <i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	312	331	643	0	3	3	646	324.8
Reed Warbler <i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	59	19	78	0	0	0	78	28.0
Waxwing <i>Bombycilla garrulus</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.6
Treecreeper <i>Certhia familiaris</i>	13	8	21	0	0	0	21	27.8
Wren <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	203	312	515	0	0	0	515	382.0
Starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	40	59	99	0	64	64	163	167.4
Dipper <i>Cinclus cinclus</i>	8	72	80	7	131	138	218	366.0
Ring Ouzel <i>Turdus torquatus</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Blackbird <i>Turdus merula</i>	203	293	496	11	10	21	517	460.8
Fieldfare <i>Turdus pilaris</i>	7	3	10	0	0	0	10	4.0
Song Thrush <i>Turdus philomelos</i>	61	147	208	3	3	6	214	130.6
Redwing <i>Turdus iliacus</i>	9	264	273	0	0	0	273	91.2
Mistle Thrush <i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	3	2	5	4	0	4	9	5.4
Spotted Flycatcher <i>Muscicapa striata</i>	3	13	16	5	4	9	25	22.0
Robin <i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	232	335	567	0	8	8	575	518.2
Pied Flycatcher <i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	1.2
Black Redstart <i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2
Redstart <i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	2	1	3	0	0	0	3	2.2
Whinchat <i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.4
Stonechat <i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	12	48	60	0	0	0	60	36.8
Wheatear <i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	10	1	11	0	0	0	11	7.8
Dunnock <i>Prunella modularis</i>	152	229	381	0	4	4	385	276.4
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	226	581	807	0	27	27	834	712.2

Table 1. (continued)

Species	Juvenile/adult			Pullus			Total	Five-year mean
	Northern Ireland	Rep. of Ireland	Sub-total	Northern Ireland	Rep. of Ireland	Sub-total	2017	2012–2016
Tree Sparrow <i>Passer montanus</i>	10	9	19	0	0	0	19	70.6
Grey Wagtail <i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	1	13	14	0	0	0	14	27.8
Pied Wagtail <i>Motacilla alba</i>	9	38	47	4	0	4	51	47.2
Tree Pipit <i>Anthus trivialis</i>	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.4
Meadow Pipit <i>Anthus pratensis</i>	65	211	276	0	3	3	279	304.4
Rock Pipit <i>Anthus petrosus</i>	17	16	33	0	0	0	33	10.4
Chaffinch <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	236	624	860	0	0	0	860	1138.8
Brambling <i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	0	5	5	0	0	0	5	2.4
Greenfinch <i>Chloris chloris</i>	40	675	715	0	0	0	715	434.8
Goldfinch <i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	161	1454	1615	0	2	2	1617	1195.0
Siskin <i>Carduelis spinus</i>	73	114	187	0	0	0	187	419.2
Linnet <i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	89	59	148	0	0	0	148	109.6
Twite <i>Carduelis flavirostris</i>	1	5	6	0	0	0	6	4.4
Lesser Redpoll <i>Acanthis cabaret</i>	177	597	774	0	0	0	774	692.4
Common Redpoll <i>Acanthis flammea</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.8
Redpoll (Common/Lesser) <i>Acanthis flammea/cabaret</i>	1	24	25	0	0	0	25	25.2
Common Rosefinch <i>Carpodacus erythrinus</i>	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.2
Bullfinch <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	53	109	162	0	0	0	162	146.8
Hawfinch <i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.0
Yellowhammer <i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	25	15	40	0	0	0	40	74.6
Little Bunting <i>Emberiza pusilla</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.4
Reed Bunting <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	60	64	124	0	0	0	124	129.0
2015 Total	5,155	14,559	19,714	982	4,994	5,976	25,690	
5-year mean (2010-14)	5,785.2	12,833.6	18,618.8	1,683.6	6,924.0	8,607.6		27,226.4
Number of species							138	127.4

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Z90252 First-year Male 05-03-2013 Katesbridge: 54°18'N 6°9'W (Down)  
Dead 12-05-2016 Vindheimar, Vallholmur: 65°30'N 19°22'W (Skagafjarðarsýsla) Iceland 1,442km NNW 3y 2m 7d

Alive (neck collar seen) 18-04-2015 Sogn, Laxardal: 64°21'N 21°33'W (Kjósarsýsla) Iceland 1,594km NNW 12y 4m 12d  
Freshly dead (shot) 01-10-2016 Eystra-Midfell, Hvalfjardarstrond: 64°22'N 21°45'W (Borgarfjarðarsýsla) Iceland 1,601km NNW 13y 9m 25d

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

1390174 Adult Female 06-12-2002 North Slob: 52°21'N 6°24'W (Wexford)  
Alive (colour rings seen) 05-10-2011 Hvanneyri, Andakill, Borgarfjardar: 64°34'N 21°46'W (Borgarfjarðarsýsla) Iceland 1,619km NNW 8y 9m 29d  
Alive (neck collar seen) 24-09-2013 Hvanneyri, Andakill, Borgarfjardar: 64°34'N 21°46'W (Borgarfjarðarsýsla) Iceland 1,619km NNW 10y 9m 18d  
Alive (neck collar seen) 31-03-2014 Laxardalur: 64°19'N 21°33'W (Kjósarsýsla) Iceland 1,592km NNW 11y 3m 25d

There is a total ban on shooting White-fronted Geese in Iceland since 2006. However, some shooting still continues.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

W43414 First-year Male 25-09-2016 Ballycragh Park: 53°16'N 6°20'W (Dublin)  
Alive (colour rings seen) 24-01-2017 Lough Shark Ni: c. 54°17'N 6°17'W (Down) 115km N 0y 3m 30d  
W43416 First-year Male 25-09-2016 Ballycragh Park: 53°16'N 6°20'W (Dublin)  
Alive (colour rings seen) 24-01-2017 Lough Shark Ni: c. 54°17'N 6°17'W (Down) 115km N 0y 3m 30d

A family of Mute Swans was ringed in Ballycragh Park, Firhouse, Dublin in 2016. They disappeared. In 2017, 4 Juveniles were spotted on Lough Shark in Northern Ireland. The colour rings of 2 of them were read. Instead of the usual 2 – 5 Km for initial dispersal, these had gone straight to Northern Ireland!

### Whooper Swan *Cygnus Cygnus*

W13348 Adult Male	25-01-2005	Caerlaverock: 54°58'N 3°29'W (Dumfries and Galloway)
Caught by ringer	14-02-2007	Caerlaverock: 54°58'N 3°29'W (Dumfries and Galloway) 0km 2y 0m 20d
Caught by ringer	19-02-2008	Welney Swan Pipe: 52°31'N 0°16'E (Norfolk) 367km SE 3y 0m 25d
Unknown	01-07-2017	Site Confidential: (Londonderry) 224km W 12y 5m 6d

### Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

NLA Nestling	04-07-2016	Den Oever: 52°55'N 5°1'E (Noord-Holland) The Netherlands
8061816 Alive (ring read in field)	01-10-2016	Christchurch Harbour: 50°41'N 1°47'W (Bournemouth) 529km WSW 0y 2m 27d
Alive (ring read in field)	03-10-2016	River Taw, Barnstaple: 51°4'N 4°11'W (Devon) 663km WSW 0y 2m 29d
Alive (colour rings seen)	01-11-2016	Ferrybridge, Weymouth: 50°34'N 2°28'W (Dorset) 578km WSW 0y 3m 28d
Alive (colour rings seen)	07-02-2017	Cunnigar, near Dungarvan: 52°3'N 7°36'W (Waterford) 859km W 0y 7m 3d

### Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

GC81725 Nestling	29-05-2009	Ardfrý, Oranmore: 53°14'N 8°59'W (Galway)
Alive (colour rings seen)	05-09-2017	Rosscarbery: 51°33'N 9°1'W (Cork) 186km S 8y 3m 7d
GC81736 Nestling	15-06-2009	Ardfrý, Oranmore: 53°14'N 8°59'W (Galway)
Alive (colour rings seen)	03-01-2017	River Maigue, Adare: 52°33'N 8°47'W (Limerick) 76km S 7y 6m 19d

More records of the interesting dispersal of young birds down the west coast from the nesting colony in Co. Galway.

### Gannet *Morus bassanus*

1234557 Nestling	26-06-1986	Great Saltee: 52°6'N 6°37'W (Wexford)
Sick (natural causes)	16-04-2017	Ain Harrouda, Casablanca: 33°39'N 7°28'W (Morocco) Morocco 2,051km S 30y 9m 21d

At over 30 years, this is an old bird. The longevity record for this species is 37 years 4 months and 16 days.

### White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*

ZY3422 Nestling Female	07-07-2014	Site Confidential: c. (Clare)
Alive (wing-tag seen)	05-10-2014	Portumna: c. 53°4'N 8°14'W (Galway) 22km NE 0y 2m 28d
Alive (wing-tag seen)	10-12-2014	Luska Bay: c. 52°57'N 8°16'W (Tipperary) 12km ENE 0y 5m 3d
Alive (wing-tag seen)	19-09-2017	Site Confidential: (Argyll and Bute) 420km NNE 3y 2m 12d

### Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

1489542 Nestling	08-07-2017	Site Confidential: (Highland)
Alive (colour rings seen)	19-09-2017	Broad Loch: 52°59'N 6°2'W (Wicklow) 563km SSW 0y 2m 11d

### Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

FH74726 Adult	26/02/2013	Sandymount Strand, Dublin Bay. 53°18'54"N 6°12'3"W
CV Alive (colour rings seen)	05/05/2017	Stokkseyri, Iceland 63.83857, -20.86837
FH74725 Adult	26/02/2013	Sandymount Strand, Dublin Bay. 53°18'54"N 6°12'3"W
CU Alive (colour rings seen)	12/04/2017	Stokkseyri, Iceland 63.83857, -20.86837
FH74726 Adult	22/01/2014	Sandymount Strand, Dublin Bay. 53°18'54"N 6°12'3"W
XT Alive (colour rings seen)	05/05/2017	Stokkseyri, Iceland 63.83857, -20.86837
FH74785 Adult	26/02/2013	Sandymount Strand, Dublin Bay. 53°18'54"N 6°12'3"W
II Alive (colour rings seen)	05/05/2017	Colonsay, Scotland 56.0272191241 -6.22351889511

These birds were colour-marked as part of BirdWatch Ireland's Dublin Bay Birds Project, funded by Dublin Port Company.

### Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Nestling	09-07-2010	Fahrefter Koog-Voorland, . 54042N8048E Germany.
Alive (colour rings seen)	25-04-2017	RSPB Harbour Reserve, Belfast Lough. 932km E 6y 9m 16d

### Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

NAW Adult Female	28-06-2014	Bylot Island, Nunavut: 73°7'N 79°54'E (North West Territories) Canada
81142603 Alive (colour rings seen)	01-09-2015	Omey Strand, Claddaghduff: 53°32'N 10°9'W (Galway) 4,809km WSW 1y 2m 4d

The population of Ringed Plover in the Northeast of Canada migrates south through Greenland, Iceland, Ireland and Britain and winter in west Africa.



**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

DE77546 Adult	30-01-2014	Boosterstown: 53°18'N 6°12'W (Dublin)
Freshly dead (shot)	28-05-2017	Turukhansky District: 63°34'N 88°46'E (Krasnoyarsk Russian Federation 5,596km E 3y 3m 28d)

This is one of the furthest distances travelled by a Bar-tailed Godwit wintering in Ireland or Britain.

**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*

PLG First-year	31-08-2016	Ujscie Wisly, Swibno: 54°21'N 18°55'E (Pomorskie) Poland
JT62626 Alive (colour rings seen)	05-10-2016	Banna: 52°21'N 9°50'W (Kerry) 1,921km W 0y 1m 4d

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

ISR Adult	22-05-2016	Sandgerdi, Gullbringu: 64°1'N 22°42'W (Gullbringusýsla) Iceland
8108478 Alive (ring read in field)	27-03-2017	Seafield, Quilty: 52°48'N 9°29'W (Clare) 1,462km SSE 0y 10m 5d
Alive (ring read in field)	24-11-2017	Seafield, quilty, Co. Clare: 52°48'N 9°29'W (Clare) 1,462km SSE 1y 6m 2d
ISR Adult	17-05-2016	Sandgerdi, Gullbringu: 64°1'N 22°42'W (Gullbringusýsla) Iceland
8109423 Alive (ring read in field)	24-11-2017	Seafield, quilty, Co. Clare: 52°48'N 9°29'W (Clare) 1,462km SSE 1y 6m 7d

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

PLG Second-year	27-07-2014	Ujscie Wisly, Swibno: 54°21'N 18°55'E (Pomorskie) Poland
JT45672 Alive (colour rings seen)	01-03-2017	Donaghadee: 54°38'N 5°31'W (Down) 1,579km W 2y 7m 2d
PLG First-year	05-09-2016	Ujscie Wisly, Swibno: 54°21'N 18°55'E (Pomorskie) Poland
JT62886 Alive (colour rings seen)	15-12-2016	Newcastle: 54°12'N 5°53'W (Down) 1,610km W 0y 3m 10d
PLG Adult	20-07-2016	Ujscie Wisly, Swibno: 54°21'N 18°55'E (Pomorskie) Poland
JT58259 Alive (colour rings seen)	02-12-2016	Banna: 52°21'N 9°50'W (Kerry) 1,921km W 0y 4m 12d
PLG Adult	10-08-2016	Ujscie Wisly, Swibno: 54°21'N 18°55'E (Pomorskie) Poland
JT61237 Alive (colour rings seen)	05-12-2016	Annagh, Belmullet: 54°13'N 10°4'W (Mayo) 1,881km W 0y 3m 25d

PLG Adult	25-07-2016	Ujscie Wisly, Swibno: 54°21'N 18°55'E (Pomorskie) Poland
JT58746 Alive (colour rings seen)	10-01-2017	Rosscarbery: 51°33'N 9°0'W (Cork) 1,896km W 0y 5m 16d
SVS Adult	18-07-2011	Nidingen: 57°18'N 11°54'E (Holland) Sweden
3572894 Caught by ringer	15-02-2017	Harper's Island, Cork Harbour: 51°54'N 8°18'W (Cork) 1,431km WSW 5y 6m 28d

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

EY08910 First-year	06-01-2014	Kilmacrenan: c. 55°1'N 7°46'W (Donegal)
Freshly dead (shot)	09-04-2017	Khlepen, Sychevskiy District: 55°58'N 34°28'E (Smolensk Oblast) Russian Federation 2,662km E 3y 3m 3d

**Black-headed Gull***Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

CZP Nestling	14-06-2016	Ceska Skalice, Kralovehradecky Kraj: 50°22'N 16°3'E (Hradec Kralove) Czech Republic
ET11795 Alive (colour rings seen)	29-09-2017	Whitegate, Cork Harbour: 51°49'N 8°13'W (Cork) 1,702km W 1y 3m 15d
LIK Nestling	03-06-2006	Kretuonas, Ezeras, Svencionys: 55°15'N 26°4'E Lithuania
HV09573 Alive (colour rings seen)	12-10-2012	Antrim Marina: 54°42'N 6°14'W (Antrim) 2,063km W 6y 4m 9d
Alive (colour rings seen)	31-12-2017	Antrim Marina: 54°42'N 6°13'W (Antrim) 2,062km W 11y 6m 28d
ISR Nestling	19-06-2003	Breidabolstadir, Alftanes: 64°6'N 22°0'W (Kjósarsýsla) Iceland
571487 Alive (ring read in field)	23-03-2014	Antrim Marina: 54°42'N 6°13'W (Antrim) 1,369km SE 10y 9m 4d
Alive (ring read in field)	24-12-2017	Antrim Marina: (Antrim) 1,368km SE 14y 6m 5d

**Mediterranean Gull***Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

Nestling	08-06-2016	Inish Island, Lady's Island, Lake, Wexford, Ireland 52°12'N 6°23'W
2X4N Alive (colour rings seen)	07-10-2016	Kilkieran Harbour, Co. Galway: 53°32'N 09°73'W 256km 0y 3m 29d
Alive (colour rings seen)	31-01-2017	Funchal, Madeira 35°64'N 16°91'W 2333km 0y 7m 23d

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

SFH	First-year	06-08-1995	Maaninka, Pohjois-Savo: 63°4'N 27°13'E (Kuopio) Finland
ST177028	Alive (ring read in field)	28-02-2016	Antrim Marina: 54°42'N 6°14'W (Antrim) 2,125km WSW 20y 6m 22d
	Alive (ring read in field)	02-01-2017	Antrim Marina: 54°43'N 6°13'W (Antrim) 2,124km WSW 21y 4m 27d
NOS	Nestling	09-07-2016	Norsk Hydro Austevik, Karmøy: 59°18'N 5°16'E (Rogaland) Norway
5182366	Alive (ring read in field)	14-07-2017	Millisle: 54°36'N 5°31'W (Down) 837km SW 1y 0m 5d

**Sandwich Tern** *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

DD79308	Nestling	23-06-2015	Lady's Island: 52°12'N 6°23'W (Wexford)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	30-06-2017	Foce Regi Lagni, Castel Volturno: 40°58'N 13°57'E (Caserta & Napoli) Italy 1,985km SE 2y 0m 7d
DN56796	Nestling	23-06-1986	Ogilby Island: 54°31'N 5°39'W (Down)
	Dead	19-12-2017	Botrivier Lagoon, Mereenbosch: 34°21'N 19°4'E (Republic of South Africa) 2,959km SE 31y 5m 26d

The longevity record for this species is 30 years 9 months and 14 days. DN56796 would have broken the record but the finder did not report the condition of the bird. It may have been long dead.

**Little Tern** *Sternula albifrons*

NW45321	Nestling	22-06-2017	The Breaches, Kilcoole: 53°5'N 6°2'W (Wicklow)
	Caught by ringer	18-08-2017	Murraceira: 40°7'N 8°49'W (Coimbra) Portugal 1,456km S 0y 1m 27d
NW45402	Nestling	05-07-2017	The Breaches, Kilcoole: 53°5'N 6°2'W (Wicklow)
	Caught by ringer	09-09-2017	Salinas Do Samouco, Setúbal: 38°43'N 9°1'W (Setúbal) Portugal 1,613km S 0y 2m 4d
NW38945	Nestling	17-06-2017	The Breaches, Kilcoole: 53°5'N 6°2'W (Wicklow)
	Caught by ringer	22-08-2017	Marismas Del Odiel, Huelva: 37°16'N 6°55'W (Huelva) Spain 1,759km S 0y 2m 5d

It's amazing that these Little Terns are only 2 months old and have already flown to Iberia.

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

ST67346	Adult	26-08-2015	Sandymount Strand, South Dublin Bay: c. 53°18'N 6°12'W (Dublin)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	28-11-2016	Kartong: 13°4'N 16°45'W (Gambia) The Gambia 4,570km SSW 1y 3m 2d

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

ISR	Second-year	05-08-2017	Einarslundur, Hofn, Hornafjörður: 64°16'N 15°10'W (Austur-Skaftafellssýsla) Iceland
549110	Freshly dead (injury)	15-10-2017	Roonagh, near Westport: 53°45'N 9°51'W (Mayo) 1,206km SSE 0y 2m 10d

**Waxwing** *Bombicilla garrulus*

NW59009	First-year Female	15-12-2016	New Scone, Perth: 56°24'N 3°23'W (Perth and Kinross)
	Alive (colour marks seen)	05-02-2017	Thomastown: 52°31'N 7°8'W (Kilkenny) 497km SSW 0y 1m 21d
NW82804	First-year Male	18-12-2016	Ballater: 57°2'N 3°3'W (Aberdeenshire)
	Alive (colour rings seen)	07-01-2017	Sligo Town: 54°15'N 8°27'W (Sligo) 460km SW 0y 0m 20d

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

Z899058	Adult Female	08-09-2015	Pollardstown Fen: 53°10'N 6°50'W (Kildare)
	Caught by ringer	19-04-2017	Ascona, Locarno: 46°9'N 8°46'E (Ticino) Switzerland 1,367km SE 1y 7m 11d

This bird was at the eastern limit of the flight-path from Ireland to Africa.

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

DLC858	Adult	20-05-2017	Copeland Bird Observatory: 54°41'N 5°32'W (Down)
	Caught by ringer	04-06-2017	Gosforth Park, Newcastle-upon-Tyne: 55°1'N 1°36'W (Tyne and Wear) 254km E 0y 0m 15d

An unusual movement in an easterly direction during the breeding season.

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

NOS	First-year Male	02-09-2017	Birkeland: 58°21'N 6°9'E (Rogaland) Norway
HH71035	Caught by ringer	30-09-2017	Cape Clear Bird Observatory: 51°26'N 9°30'W (Cork) 1,259km SW 0y 0m 28d

**Radde's Warbler** *Phylloscopus schwarzi*

D158089	Full-grown	09-10-2016	Brownstown Head: c. 52°7'N 7°5'W (Waterford)
	Caught by ringer	11-10-2016	Brownstown Head: c. 52°7'N 7°5'W (Waterford) 0km 0y 0m 2d
	Alive (ring read in field)	15-10-2016	Barry's Head: c. 51°42'N 8°24'W (Cork) 102km WSW 0y 0m 6d
	Alive (ring read in field)	18-10-2016	Barry's Head: c. 51°42'N 8°24'W (Cork) 102km WSW 0y 0m 9d

This recovery was omitted from the 2016 Ringing Report.

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

NOS	First-year	15-10-2010	Utsira: 59°19'N 4°52'E (Rogaland) Norway
7519849	Freshly dead (cat)	12-12-2017	Clashbredane, Kilmichael: 51°48'N 9°0'W (Cork) 1,207km SW 7y 1m 27d

**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

RF68665	First-year	13-03-2013	Edenderry: 53°20'N 7°5'W (Offaly)
	Unknown (ring only)	07-10-2017	Fla, Buskerud: 60°22'N 9°33'E (Buskerud) Norway 1,275km NE 4y 6m 24d

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

RF16713	Nestling	24-04-2008	Cardtown Bridge: 53°1'N 7°35'W (Laois)
	Caught by ringer	08-01-2016	Mounthall Bridge: 53°1'N 7°36'W (Laois) 2km 7y 8m 15d
	Caught by ringer	30-01-2017	Mounthall Bridge: 53°1'N 7°36'W (Laois) 2km 8y 9m 6d

At 8 years, 9 months and 6 days, this Dipper extends its own longevity record in Britain and Ireland from ringed birds on the BTO database, and now exceeds a bird recaptured after 8 years, 9 months and 4 days in Cork (Smiddy *et al.*, 2016). As noted before, the fact that the two oldest Dippers from UK and Irish ringing data are both Irish Dippers suggests that the *bibernica* may be longer lived than the UK *gularis* subspecies; further studies (using colour-ringing) to evaluate survival are ongoing in both Cork and the around the Slieve Blooms.

**Dunnock** *Prunella modularis*

TC72469	First-year	24-08-2016	Dunes near Mouth of River Bann: 55°9'N 6°45'W (Londonderry)
	Caught by ringer	02-11-2017	University of Ulster, Coleraine: 55°8'N 6°40'W (Londonderry) 6km ESE 1y 2m 9d

TV72362	Adult Male	20-05-2017	Slemish: 54°52'N 6°5'W (Antrim)
	Caught by ringer	29-05-2017	Ecros Ballymena: 54°52'N 6°16'W (Antrim) 11km W 0y 0m 9d

Irish Dunnocks are thought to be very sedentary, rarely moving more than 1 kilometre, so these movements are significant.

**Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

VX04600	Adult Male	09-12-2000	Bray: 53°11'N 6°5'W (Wicklow)
	Caught by ringer	30-03-2003	Treswell Wood: 53°18'N 0°51'W (Nottinghamshire) 349km E 2y 3m 21d

**Lesser Redpoll** *Acanthis cabaret*

Y516129	First-year Male	17-10-2015	Copeland Bird Observatory: 54°41'N 5°32'W (Down)
	Caught by ringer	31-10-2017	Water Drill, Shuart, St Nicholas- At-Wade: 51°22'N 1°15'E (Kent) 585km SE 2y 0m 14d
S765295	First-year	16-03-2017	Culford School: c. 52°17'N 0°40'E (Suffolk)
	Caught by ringer	12-06-2017	Milltown, Belfast: 54°34'N 5°58'W (Belfast) 507km WNW 0y 2m 27d
Y516430	Adult Male	09-10-2016	Copeland Bird Observatory: 54°41'N 5°32'W (Down)
	Caught by ringer	11-02-2017	King's Norton: c. 52°23'N 1°57'W (West Midlands) 347km SE 0y 4m 2d
Z799157	Adult Male	25-10-2015	near Blackburn Meadows: c. 53°25'N 1°22'W (South Yorkshire)
	Caught by ringer	27-01-2017	Dunmurry: 54°32'N 6°0'W (Antrim) 327km WNW 1y 3m 2d
Z311617	First-year Male	27-12-2015	Bracken Croft: c. 54°45'N 1°22'W (Durham)
	Caught by ringer	09-10-2017	Copeland Bird Observatory: 54°41'N 5°32'W (Down) 267km W 1y 9m 12d
D158392	First-year	06-10-2017	Brownstown Head: c. 52°7'N 7°5'W (Waterford)
	Caught by ringer	26-10-2017	Minsmere Nature Reserve: 52°14'N 1°37'E (Suffolk) 594km E 0y 0m 20d
D158366	First-year	06-10-2017	Brownstown Head: c. 52°7'N 7°5'W (Waterford)
	Caught by ringer	27-10-2017	Portland Bill: 50°30'N 2°27'W (Dorset) 370km ESE 0y 0m 21d
Y516259	First-year Male	18-10-2015	Copeland Bird Observatory: 54°41'N 5°32'W (Down)
	Freshly dead (cat)	15-11-2017	Ballina: 54°5'N 9°8'W (Mayo) 243km WSW 2y 0m 28d



AEB2603 Full-grown 07-10-2017 Brownstown Head:  
c. 52°7'N 7°5'W (Waterford)  
Caught 29-12-2017 Athgarvan, Newbridge:  
by ringer 53°9'N 6°46'W (Kildare)  
116km NNE 0y 2m 22d

### Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

S361450 First-year Male 01-12-2016 Bradden: c. 52°7'N 1°3'W  
(Northamptonshire)  
Caught 07-03-2017 Bradden: c. 52°7'N 1°3'W  
by ringer (Northamptonshire) 0km  
0y 3m 6d  
Freshly dead 24-05-2017 Uggoon, Moycullen:  
(hit glass) 53°19'N 9°10'W (Galway)  
562km WNW 0y 5m 23d

Z043898 First-year Female 22-01-2016 Braytown, near Wool:  
50°40'N 2°14'W (Dorset)  
Freshly dead 15-03-2017 Leap: 51°34'N 9°7'W (Cork)  
(hit glass) 492km WNW 1y 1m 21d

S554626 First-year Female 01-11-2016 Portland Bill: 50°30'N 2°27'W  
(Dorset)  
Caught 03-12-2017 Harty's Quay, Rochestown:  
by ringer 51°52'N 8°23'W (Cork)  
442km WNW 1y 1m 2d

Z882510 Adult Male 13-11-2015 High Bridge, Williton:  
51°9'N 3°18'W (Somerset)  
Caught 07-01-2017 Corca Teine, Templemore:  
by ringer c. 52°48'N 7°49'W (Tipperary)  
359km WNW 1y 1m 25d

S168239 Full-grown Male 03-04-2016 High Bridge, Williton:  
51°9'N 3°18'W (Somerset)  
Caught 22-04-2017 Brownstown Head:  
by ringer c. 52°7'N 7°5'W (Waterford)  
283km WNW 1y 0m 19d  
S600656 First-year Male 15-03-2017 Littleton Brick Pits:  
51°37'N 2°35'W  
(South Gloucestershire)  
Freshly dead 27-05-2017 Dunadry: 54°41'N 6°9'W  
(hit by car) (Antrim) 417km NNW 0y 2m 12d  
Z852491 First-year 17-12-2015 Wood Farm, Stanton Under  
Bardon: c. 52°41'N 1°20'W  
(Leicestershire)  
Caught 23-02-2017 Coolcush, near Dungannon:  
by ringer 54°28'N 6°45'W (Tyrone)  
409km WNW 1y 2m 6d  
Z195768 Adult Male 26-12-2015 Dunmurry: 54°32'N 6°0'W  
(Antrim)  
Caught 05-11-2016 Kilmartin: 56°7'N 5°29'W (Argyll  
by ringer and Bute) 178km N 0y 10m 10d  
Caught 24-04-2017 Kilmartin: 56°7'N 5°29'W (Argyll  
by ringer and Bute) 178km N 1y 3m 29d

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# Notes

## Effects of the Wexford Opera Festival firework display on roosting Greenland White-fronted Geese *Anser albifrons flavirostris*

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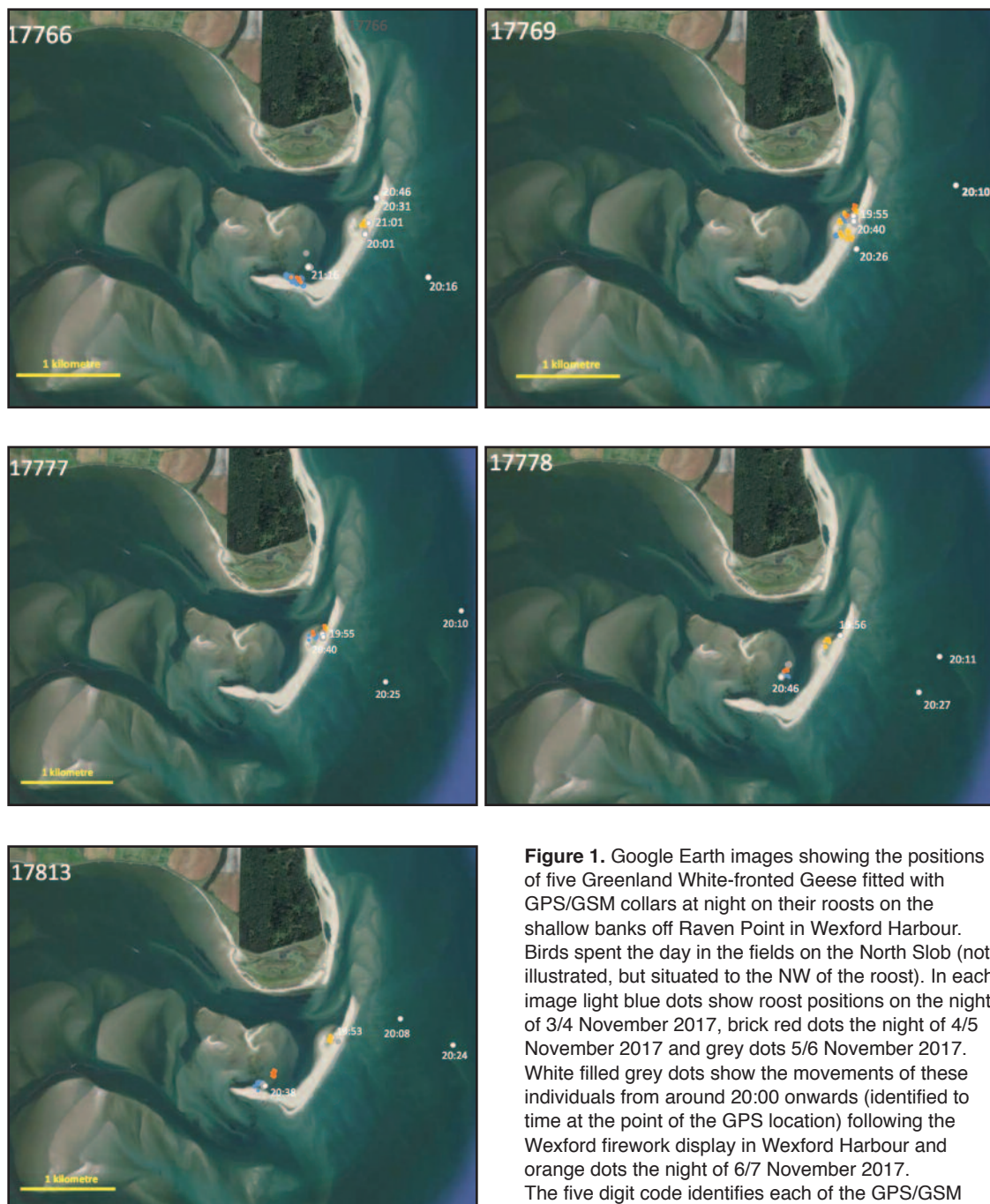
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Many humans enjoy the spectacle of fireworks lighting up the black night sky and their thunderous associated sounds, usually linked to some joyous celebration. However, these powerful, loud noises and intense emissions of light represent a major source of unpredictable disturbance to unsuspecting wild animals unfamiliar to such powerful stimuli (e.g. Pedreros *et al.* 2016) and even among pets, such as dogs (e.g. Levine *et al.* 2007). Indeed, we actively use pyrotechnics to scare and displace birds and animals from societally sensitive areas. For example, in the case of feeding geese on agricultural land to reduce economic loss (Kear 1963), displace birds from landfill sites (Cook *et al.* 2008) or urban areas (Fairaizl 1992), at airports to reduce bird strike risk (Bradbeer *et al.* 2017) or to disrupt aggregating Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* roosts (Wynne-Edwards 1929). The simultaneous use of fireworks at major display centres and at private arrangements throughout many countries to celebrate national events such as the New Year and the 4th of July is widespread. It is therefore not surprising to find that such simultaneous mass New Year firework displays displace thousands of waterbirds, as revealed by weather radar studies in the Netherlands (Shamoun-Baranes *et al.* 2011). Because of the difficulties of studying avian responses to fireworks at night, Shamoun-Baranes *et al.*

(2011) lamented the lack of knowledge relating to the degree of their adverse, short- and long-term effects on wildlife. In this note, we present data from a GPS tracking study of Greenland White-fronted Geese *Anser albifrons flavirostris* night roosting on banks in Wexford Harbour and their short-term responses to a relatively geographically confined and short firework display associated with the Wexford Opera Festival.

We caught Greenland White-fronted Geese at Hvanneyri, west Iceland on 23 and 25 September 2017 using cannon nets over baited barley on grass hayfields and fitted five adult females with Ornitela OrniTrack-N35 35 g collar GPS/GSM devices (<http://www.ornitela.com/small-goose-neck-collar-transmitter>). All five females returned to winter at Wexford Slobs (identified below by their unique five digit device codes) and were repeatedly seen in the field by AJW and provided frequent (programmed to 15-minute intervals) and precise (76% to within 10 m) positions of all birds by day and night. Although caught as part of a larger project to study breeding ecology, behaviour and movements of the geese, these marked individuals gave us the opportunistic possibility to study the effects of fireworks on their movements. The firework display scheduled to take place along Wexford Harbour quayside on the opening night of the Wexford Opera Festival on 19 October 2017 was postponed (due to bad weather) until 20:00 hr on Sunday 5 November 2017. The fireworks were set off along the quayside in the town, situated between 6.2 and 6.7 km due west of the banks in the mouth of Wexford Harbour where the geese roost. During the period prior to this and immediately after, we were able to follow the movements of the tagged geese from the time the display started (Fig. 1). Figure 1 shows the roosting positions occupied by each of the five geese during the two nights before the firework display. None of the geese showed signs of movement off the roosting points on the banks at this time. In contrast, on the night of the firework display, the positions generated by the tags showed that all five birds flew broadly eastwards from their roosting site at some point immediately after 20:00 hr. However, all had subsequently returned either to a point close to the same roosting areas (17769, 17777, 17778) or to a new roosting place on the same bank (17766, 17813). The apparent duration of the flights did not exceed 45 minutes (based on 15-minute interval positions) and although the positions did not necessarily detect the furthest flights from the original roost position, the furthest distance



**Figure 1.** Google Earth images showing the positions of five Greenland White-fronted Geese fitted with GPS/GSM collars at night on their roosts on the shallow banks off Raven Point in Wexford Harbour. Birds spent the day in the fields on the North Slob (not illustrated, but situated to the NW of the roost). In each image light blue dots show roost positions on the night of 3/4 November 2017, brick red dots the night of 4/5 November 2017 and grey dots 5/6 November 2017. White filled grey dots show the movements of these individuals from around 20:00 onwards (identified to time at the point of the GPS location) following the Wexford firework display in Wexford Harbour and orange dots the night of 6/7 November 2017. The five digit code identifies each of the GPS/GSM devices deployed.

recorded as flying east from the roosting areas varied between 0.76 and 1.58 km in 2017 (Table 1, mean  $1.13 \pm 0.14$  SE). In October 2018, one of the telemetry birds tracked in November 2017 (17766) was back at Wexford Slobs in time to experience

the Wexford Opera Festival firework display again in that year on 19th October 2018 (the other birds bearing devices all returned after this date). It was therefore possible to follow the response of 17766 in a subsequent year, subject to the



same stimulus (see Fig. 2). On this occasion, the display started at 19.40 hrs in the same area and lasted until 19.50 hrs, after which 17766 again flew eastwards following the start of the fireworks. This bird was recorded at least 1.346 km (Table 1) east from the roost point from which it had previously been recorded that evening, but had returned to the roost bank within 45 minutes, where it remained until the morning flight back to feeding fields (Fig. 2). Interestingly, a more modest and shorter duration firework display took place in connection with Wexford Winterland Parade from 17.00 hr on 24 November 2018 and an air-sea rescue helicopter from Waterford undertook extensive search and rescue in the Irish Sea 8km east of the Raven goose roost from 18.00 hr onwards on the night of 26 November 2018. On both occasions, the five tagged birds were present on the roost and gave sufficiently frequent positions to show they remained within the same vicinity and showed no response to these particular stimuli.

Although we have no direct evidence, it seems likely (based on the responses of the five tagged geese) that the entire roost of Greenland White-fronted Geese was displaced into the air by the Wexford Opera Festival firework display which started at 20:00 hr on 5 November 2017. Assuming that the tagged birds were representative of at least some of the flock, it seems likely that they flew east for more than 1 km before circling back to settle at, or relatively near to, their original roosting area in the mouth of Wexford Harbour and were likely all resettled within an hour of the first fireworks. Although we had only one instrumented bird to provide data in 2018, it seems likely this was also the case in the latter year as well.

These results represented a unique opportunity to confirm that fireworks, even when limited to a single site,



**Figure 2.** Google Earth images showing the positions of the Greenland White-fronted Goose fitted with GPS/GSM collar 17766 showing its position on the night of 19 October 2018 on the roost on shallow banks off Raven Point, Wexford Harbour. This was the only telemetry bird back at Wexford Slobs in time for the firework display that night. It had spent the day feeding on the fields on the North Slob (not illustrated but see Fig.1). The red dot shows its roost position 18:38-19:23, the firework display started at 19:40 and finished at 19:50, the white point shows the position of 17766 at 19:53 and the yellow circle defines its positions between 20:08 and 07:38 next morning (20th October) the last position before it returned to feed in the fields.

**Table 1.** Maximum distance (km) recorded between the furthest positions registered for each Greenland White-fronted Goose disturbed from their original roosting resting position prior to being disturbed by the Wexford Opera Festival fireworks display. Five figure digits indicate the identifier codes of the telemetry devices fitted to each bird.

Bird identifier (telemetry device code)	Disturbance date	Furthest distance from prior roosting site (km)
17766	5 November 2017	0.758
17769	5 November 2017	1.030
17777	5 November 2017	1.576
17778	5 November 2017	1.000
17813	5 November 2017	1.303
17766	19 October 2018	1.346

more than 6 km from a roost of c.7,000 Greenland White-fronted Geese caused at least some of the geese (and probably all) to take flight and fly more than 1 km. It would also appear that because the firework display was relatively short-lived, all geese had settled within an hour, returning close to their original roost site in each case. This confirms the importance of the shallow banks in Wexford Harbour that constitute the only safe roosting areas in this region for these birds at night and the need for statutory protection of such sites. This would also seem to confirm that for the tagged geese at least, although disruptive and adding the extra energy-expenditure of a displacement flight, the relatively limited duration of fireworks caused only a short-term response and did not result in longer-term displacement from the roost site. Nevertheless, in being forced to cease sleep, appraise the threat, take to the air and abandon their normal undisturbed



**Plate 63. Greenland White-fronted Geese**  
(Michael O'Clery)

roosting state in an area associated with safety, the geese may be forced into a flee response (Wingfield *et al.* 1998), which can potentially adversely affect immune-competence abilities (Tarlow & Blumstein 2007). Although we have no evidence of birds becoming lost and disorientated from this particular disturbance event, it occurred in the heart of a European Union Birds Directive Special Protection Area in part designated for the globally important aggregations of Greenland White-fronted Geese. It seems likely (but not possible to show from our results) that other waterbirds were also affected in Wexford Harbour at the same time, although experience from elsewhere shows that different species exhibit different responses to fireworks in the same area (e.g. Huckabee 2005). The much more modest, shorter duration firework display on 24 November apparently had no displacement effect, so clearly the response is likely related to stimulus strength. In the case of the far more intense, prolonged and geographically dispersed firework activity (such as occurs widely throughout other parts of the world on the night of 31st December of each year), the likely effects are evidently far more widespread and potentially damaging to waterbird populations (Shamoun-Baranes *et al.* 2011). It

also seems likely that such relatively short-term disruptions to normal behaviour will have less effects on the fitness of individuals concerned than compared to the same disturbance to breeding or moulting birds, which are potentially more disruptive and likely to have impacts on condition and/or reproductive success/survival. We should also be prudent and not over interpret these results from so few individuals, given that factors such as age and sex (all tagged geese were adult females), breeding status and previous experience are likely to affect the nature of individual responses to the same stimuli. However, these observations confirm the need to understand better the effects of increasing sources of light and noise pollution on the fauna of our protected areas and with special consideration for fireworks because of their strength, intensity and extent of visual and aural stimulus.

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A study of the distribution and density of Swift *Apus apus* nest sites in four neighbouring counties (Laois, Offaly, Westmeath and Tipperary)

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Perhaps the most iconic and intriguing of our urban bird species, the Common Swift *Apus apus*, is a summer migrant that breeds throughout Europe and much of Asia and winters in southern Africa. However, in recent decades there has been much concern for Swifts as their numbers have been in decline throughout many parts of their range. The recent *Bird Atlas 2007-11* shows there has been a substantial loss of 26% in range in Ireland since 1970 (Balmer *et al.* 2013) and the latest Countryside Bird Survey data shows an alarming 39% decline in relative abundance between 1998 and 2013 (Crowe *et al.* 2014). The reasons for their decline vary and are subject to debate, but it is thought that the loss of available nest sites due to the renovations of old buildings (Concern for Swifts. 2013) and the impacts of climate change affecting prey species and weather patterns are significant factors.

Swifts are relatively poorly studied in Ireland but are the subject of much conservation action by groups and individuals such as Northern Ireland Swift Group, Swift Conservation Ireland, Dublin Swift Group and Wild Kildare. Prior to these surveys, whole county assessments have been undertaken in Mayo by Swift Conservation Ireland and in Kildare by BirdWatch Ireland Kildare Branch.

In 2017 and 2018, BirdWatch Ireland undertook detailed surveys in four bordering counties in the midlands and south.

The whole-county surveys aimed to assess Swift nest site distribution and densities by finding active Swift nests across the counties. Over two years, counties Offaly (2017), Laois, Westmeath and Tipperary (2018) were surveyed. The project also made active efforts to encourage local involvement and community groups (mostly Tidy Towns groups) to take part in monitoring efforts. We encouraged local participation both to upskill individuals to monitor their local populations in future years but also to foster an appreciation for these birds and encourage efforts to conserve the species.

Existing records of Swift activity and nesting were investigated in advance of survey visits to help plan the survey schedule and prioritise locations with large Swift colonies. Records were gleaned from a myriad of sources, including local birdwatchers, previous local surveys (Mullingar 2015), NPWS Rangers, the National Biodiversity Data Centre, BirdWatch Ireland Branches/datasets. This process identified a lack of detailed data (beyond presence-absence data) on the species. A total of 222 towns and villages (herein referred to as localities) were surveyed in all four counties. Known Swift colonies and sites radial to the main target settlements were surveyed; these sites included castle ruins and other heritage sites that existed on the outskirts of surveyed towns and villages. All localities were visited on at least one occasion to ascertain whether Swifts were present. Repeat visits were made to all localities where Swift activity was found. Between one and five survey visits were required to adequately survey localities based on their overall size and the density of nesting Swifts. Structures were categorised as one of eight building types: house/residential, church/religious, public, small business, industrial, school, heritage site, and other.

Swifts visit Ireland to nest between May and August, thus survey work took place during this period. Survey visits were carried out before 11am and after 6pm where possible to maximise encountering peak Swift activity. Survey visits were carried out during dry, calm weather to increase chances of encountering Swifts. A standardised survey form was designed to capture survey location, date, time, weather conditions and Swift activity. Details of Swift nest locations were recorded, including information on location (locality), building type,

**Table 1.** Summary results from the County Offaly, Laois, Westmeath and Tipperary Swift Surveys 2017/18.

County	Year surveyed	Localities surveyed	Localities with confirmed nest sites	Total confirmed nest sites	Individual colonies
Offaly	2017	47	19	165	75
Laois	2018	46	19	149	84
Westmeath	2018	43	15	203	69
Tipperary	2018	86	24	275	122
Total		222	77	792	350



position of nest entrance, number of individual nests present, and photos of each nest site entrance were captured. All records were captured electronically online through an ArcGis Online survey form.

Of the 222 localities visited across the four counties 76 (34%) had at least one nest site confirmed. A total of 792 individual nest sites were identified and recorded. All nest sites were contained within 350 structures. County Tipperary had the highest density of nest sites with 275 recorded across 24 localities in 122 structures. County Westmeath had the second highest density of nests with 203 recorded in 17 localities in 69 structures. A total of 165 nest were confirmed in County Offaly in 19 localities and within 75 structures. County Laois had the lowest density of total nests confirmed with 149 recorded in 16 localities and in 84 structures (Krastev *et al.* 2017, 2018, Hayes *et al.* 2018).

The information compiled from these surveys has given us baseline data from which to monitor Swift population numbers locally over time. The survey work has identified most importantly where the Swifts are and where conservation efforts need to be focused. Perhaps where the small colonies are holding on. Localities with important numbers of Swifts have been identified, such as Clonmel where 20% of the entire nesting Swift population of County Tipperary resides; with 76 nests confirmed this equates to over twice the number found in any other Tipperary town or village. The survey identified what building types are important for nesting Swifts and shows considerable variation across the counties. Key sites containing large colonies were identified in the four counties which if lost would make a significant impact on breeding Swift populations locally. Sites such as St. Loman's Hospital in Mullingar which contains 40 active nest sites equating to almost 20% of the entire nesting population in County Westmeath. The location of all nest sites locations and associated information is made available live through an

online ArcGis webpage: [www.bit.ly/29uOeJC](http://www.bit.ly/29uOeJC). Records can still be added at this web address and BirdWatch Ireland gladly accept records retrospectively. Full survey reports are available to view and download on the BirdWatch Ireland website here: [www.bit.ly/2qIqJoT](http://www.bit.ly/2qIqJoT).

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## Charles Joseph Patten: professor and Irish ornithologist

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Charles J. Patten (1870-1948) was an Irishman who made significant contributions to Irish ornithology during the first two decades of the twentieth century despite being resident in Sheffield, England for almost all that time. His published works reveal an evident enthusiasm and skill in field

observation combined with a professional expertise in anatomy, curiosity about the bigger picture and skills in taxidermy.

He was acquainted, at least professionally, with Ireland's best known ornithologist R.J. Ussher and, as Nairn (2014) points out, with a "forgotten Dublin ornithologist" Alexander Williams. Patten cannot be called a forgotten ornithologist, although Hutchinson (1989) does not mention him in his *Birds in Ireland* and he is not included in Cabot's (1999) otherwise comprehensive chapter on over a hundred 'Naturalists and their Works'. Kennedy *et al.* (1954) give him credit for several rare species (e.g. Aquatic Warbler *Acrocephalus paludicola* and Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*) and Hutchinson (1997) has a number of references to him. Three obituaries of Patten were published



**Plate 64.** *The Aquatic Birds of Great Britain and Ireland* (Patten 1906). The caption reads: *The Bare Sloblands at First Ebb. Crouched on the ooze, watching the approach of an immense flock of shore-birds.* The location nor the identity of the figure is given, but Patterson (1907) identifies the man as Patten himself. Photo. W.D. Latimer (Image Courtesy of the National Library).

(Anon 1948, 1949a, 1949b). Patten's work as an ornithologist in Ireland is always mentioned in these pieces but none give an idea as to the scope and type of this work (nor of any bird work in Britain). This short biographical article aims to improve on the Irish aspect of this and to illustrate that Patten's published bird observations ranged from distant to microscopic, for beginners to specialists and that in his writing he had, as one obituarist put it: "a flair for direct approach and clarity of interpretation" (Anon 1949b). This author has only looked briefly into Patten's British work but the aforementioned obituarist states that he contributed "largely to the pages of *The Irish Naturalist*". Nevertheless, he did publish papers and was cited in *British Birds*, *Zoologist* and *Naturalist*.

C.J. Patten was born in Dublin. He attended Trinity College, Dublin and was evidently academically gifted. He graduated in Biology and Medicine in 1896, receiving a triple first with a Gold Medal for exceptional merit and was a Prizeman in Natural Science, along with other awards. He was immediately employed in Trinity's Department of Anatomy where, for five years, he conducted important far-reaching research on the "topographical relations and surface anatomy of the heart, lungs and pleural cavities" using new techniques of preservation in formalin (Anon 1948, 1949a). This led him

to become Professor of Anatomy at Sheffield University in 1901 until his retirement in 1935. As with his ornithology, Ireland never left him and he almost literally took part of Dublin with him to Sheffield when he modelled a new Department of Anatomy on that of Trinity's "down to the detail of the parquet flooring" (Anon 1948). Before he left for Sheffield he had been Honorary Secretary of 'The Dublin Naturalists' Field Club' (Barrington *et al.* 1900) and had written nine notes and papers for *Irish Naturalist*, including two longer 'monographs' on the Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* (Patten 1900) and the Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius* which seem to have been a precursor to his main published book, *The Aquatic Birds of Great Britain and Ireland* (Patten 1906).

The book received a thoughtful and glowing review in *Irish Naturalist* (Patterson 1907) and Fisher and Lockley (1954) proved its longevity by including it in a selective bibliography of important sources for their book, *Seabirds*. Patterson, who was an experienced ornithologist from Belfast and well-versed in the ornithological literature of the time, stated that Patten had "enriched the literature of the British avifauna in general and of the Irish avifauna in particular" and that "we in Ireland are especially grateful for the many new

facts brought to light as to the habits of our waterbirds". Hutchinson (1997) was correct in stating that the Irish influence in Patten's book was obvious. In the preface Patten says "Field-work on the Irish coast, carried out during more than twenty years, has been supplemented more recently by investigations into the avifauna of many other districts of the British sea-board...", which means he was a serious ornithologist making field notes by the age of sixteen. R.J. Ussher helped to revise the manuscript. The frequent use of the word 'slob-land' for any wet, soft, oozy land immediately puts the Irish reader in mind of Ireland and Plates show Gannets *Morus bassanus* on the Skelligs, Cormorants *Phalacrocorax carbo* nesting in Scots Pine in Connemara and Black-headed Gulls *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* on The Lake at St. Stephen's Green, Dublin. Given that Patten's book post-dates Ussher and Warren (1900) by only six years and that those authors acknowledge correspondence with Patten it is fair to say that the copious Irish content in Patten's book compliments Ussher and Warren in its different style and emphasis — the latter an unequalled account of the distribution of Irish birds at the time and the former with its emphasis on the birds themselves, anatomy and behaviour illustrated by very many personal accounts and anecdotes and with many references to recent literature.

His first paper to *Irish Naturalist* (Patten 1898) was a systematic list of the birds of Dublin Bay with aids to identification "for the observer and collector" hoping to counteract the seeming lack of interest in the subject, for instance: "*Tringa subarquata* Guld. Curlew Sandpiper... When flying, the light colour over the lower back also distinguishes the bird. This part is dark in the Dunlin". In his second paper he examined eighty-seven nests of Little Terns *Sternula albifrons* on Dollymount Strand, Dublin from 1891 to 1899 and found that the majority (sixty-seven) conformed to a certain type of deliberate construction which he suggested maximised heat transfer to the eggs, which are large in relation to the size of the bird (Patten 1899). He also acknowledges, in trained scientists' fashion, that his data is limited and of a local nature. In fact, Ussher and Warren (1900) made good use of the paper and included a photograph from it in their book, *The Birds of Ireland*.

His observations took him to different parts of Ireland. He watched White-fronted Geese *Anser albifrons*: "Sometimes the flock may consist of more than one species of goose. For instance, I recollect seeing numbers alight on a marsh in a valley on the wild coast of western Kerry.... To the best of my belief, the flock consisted of some fifty birds, out of which over forty were White-fronted, and the remainder Bean-Geese (*Anser fabalis*). Two of the latter species appeared to act as sentinels..." The foot-note reads: "It might be suggested that the supposed Bean-Geese were only the sombre-plumed immature White-fronted Geese. But this is

unlikely for two reasons, (a) immature birds do not act as sentinels to the flock, (b) the number of adults in a flock would hardly exceed the immature birds to such an extent" (Patten 1906).

All mentions of Patten refer to his interest in migration, especially in relation to his observations from lighthouses. In his own words he "started light-house migration work in 1911" and between 1912 and 1920 he published at least forty-five notes on the more significant observations in *Irish Naturalist*. He was sent specimens by lighthouse keepers, but not in a systematic way or from all Irish lighthouses as per Barrington (1900). In fact, almost all his published records were from Tuskar Rock (Wexford) with a few from Maiden's (Antrim), Rockabill (Dublin) and Slyne Head (Galway). This interest led to his being responsible for two 'firsts' for Ireland. He was sent a Western Black-eared Wheatear *Oenanthe hispanica hispanica* which had struck Tuskar Rock lighthouse on 16 May 1916. It was the black-throated form (Patten 1917). He was actually present when a Sora Rail *Porzana carolina* "struck the lantern with great force... and fell lifeless in the font of the Lighthouse" at Slyne Head Light-Station at 3am on 11 April 1920 (Patten 1923). There has only been one other Irish record (Hobbs 2017). Both specimens were given to the Natural History Museum, Dublin. He was fastidious in his sharing of these events. He says he published a note about the Black-eared Wheatear discovery in *The Irish Times* and *The Daily Express* (Dublin) as well as in *Nature* and *Irish Naturalist* (Patten 1917). The Sora Rail discovery was published in *Ibis*, *British Birds* and *Irish Naturalist*. His personal encounter with the Sora Rail was surely a providential reward for his dedication to Irish lighthouses and their birds.

Several of the records were obtained during an extended stay on Tuskar Rock in June and July 1912: "I have recently returned after nine weeks' residence at the Tuskar Light Station, off the south-east coast of county Wexford, where I have been prosecuting the study of bird-migration. I obtained several interesting records, including those of some rare species" (Patten 1912c), which certainly belies an enthusiasm for lighthouses and their birds. He made several other shorter visits to the Rock.

Visits to another lighthouse, on the inhabited island of Inishtrahull (Donegal), were probably less exacting than to Tuskar Rock. In March 1913, stepping onto the island, he immediately discovered a previously undocumented breeding colony of up to fifty individuals of Tree Sparrows *Passer montanus* (Patten 1913) in the absence of any House Sparrows *Passer domesticus*, which he discusses at length. Seven months later he was on the island again, in July, August and September (Patten 1915). Extracts from his daily log on arrival on Friday 18 July 1913 give some idea of his *modus operandi*: "Rose 7.30 a.m. Fine warm morning; wind, light. Spent forenoon in arranging tradesmen, kitchen for laboratory



and office, and adjacent spare room for photography; also prepared fishing tackle" (Patten 1948). On September 8 1913, the year after the first Irish breeding of the Eider Duck *Somateria mollissima* had been proved on Inishtrahull, Patten observed two female or immature birds. He later learnt that one had been shot and already eaten by the islanders and, although he was disappointed not to have the opportunity to preserve the skin, he was glad to learn the head had been cast into a cornfield so that he could examine it and confirm from the diagnostic "central tracts of feathers of the upper segments of the beak..." that it was indeed a Common Eider, not a King Eider *Somateria spectabilis*. Furthermore, "the conditions of the bones in the head which I obtained indicated marked immaturity", suggesting, he implies after some discussion, that they had bred in the vicinity. He then discusses at length the historical records and updates the probable present status as "Resident in very small numbers in the north or north-eastern coastlands of Ireland, the numbers being augmented by migrants probably every autumn, and winter" (Patten 1915). This is more or less its status as described in Hutchinson (1989) who says that there were over 100 pairs on Inishtrahull by 1962.

As would be expected, Patten often refers to Barrington's (1900) landmark study of birds and lighthouses, 1881-1897. Patten's hands-on approach allowed him to question a few of Barrington's statements and conclusions and some differences of opinion reached *Irish Naturalist*. Having spent nine weeks on Tuskar in 1912 he was in a position to contradict at length Barrington's short hypothesis that, after receiving only four Wrens *Troglodytes troglodytes* from east coast light-stations, one of which was from Tuskar and the other three from Maiden's (Antrim): "This may mean that the Wren chooses the route between Antrim and the S.W. of Scotland as the shortest passage from Ireland to Britain—a selection not unnatural in the case of the shortest-winged British bird" (Barrington 1900). Patten (1912a) explains that, in fact, he had once seen "large numbers" of Wrens during daylight hours on Tuskar Rock and at night they did not often hit the lantern but were found on the rock or quietly flitting around the balcony railings and would not have been noticed or picked up by light keepers for Barrington's survey. He then makes a reasoned argument that short-winged birds are not necessarily poor fliers, and certainly not the Wren, concluding "Structurally the Wren is a strong framed bird and its wing musculature is in no way inferior in development to that of the smaller warblers of somewhat similar body-weight; its reproductive powers are notoriously great, its voice is particularly strong, and altogether physiologically it seems to be a markedly hardy bird".

His published notes on birds were always thoughtful, his anatomical expertise often providing extra information and discussion. For instance, Patten (1912b) gives an account of a

large Skylark *Alauda arvensis* captured by the light keeper as it struck the lantern of Tuskar Rock Light-Station on 18 May 1912. Histological examination found tubules to be "actually congested with countless swarms of ripe spermatozoa... From the condition of the genitals one would not think the bird purported effecting a much longer pilgrimage, but rather that it would alight at the earliest opportunity and commence mating. Possibly it may have lost its mate... The male then in its eagerness to procure another mate may have become stimulated to migrate. That it had flown some distance and not simply crossed directly from the mainland of Co. Wexford is shown by the fact that the gizzard and in fact the whole digestive tract were completely empty". It was the latest reported migrating Skylark at the time.

He had already visited the Blaskets in 1897, and at other times, and Achill Island in 1907 on bird watching holidays before he took part as a 'non-publishing participant' on the Clare Island Survey. This was the multi-disciplined survey of the Mayo island and surrounding districts involving over one hundred eminent European scientists. In fact, Patten collected almost all of the ornithological data on Clare Island on which Ussher (1912) based his summary of the birds. He spent a total of 45 days during five visits to the island in March, July, September, December 1910 and July 1911. The five other participants spent a total of twenty days between them. Ussher says "I was supplied by Professor C.J. Patten with voluminous field-notes... with many skins and photographs taken there by him". Interestingly, in the light of Patten's book, *The Aquatic Birds* published four years earlier, Ussher tells us that Patten "made land birds his special study". The information in Ussher (1912) could not do justice to such a work effort because the contemporary bird-life of the island studied by Patten is rather diluted by Ussher with historical records and data from the surrounding districts of the mainland. Nevertheless, anatomical inquisitiveness and thoughts of home appear. On the House Sparrow: "Of a series of birds taken there Patten remarks that the feet are more slender and the beak not so heavy as in Sheffield Sparrows, the plumage markings being very rich and distinct in the male".

On the evidence of his published work in *Irish Naturalist* and *Irish Naturalists' Journal* his Irish ornithological fieldwork appears to have largely ceased around 1920. Apart from that, throughout his career in England Patten wrote about human anatomy, the anatomical and psychological/moral aspects of primate/human evolution and the memory factor in biology. He gave lectures on birds to British Association meetings and radio broadcasts on birds to children that were later expanded into two books. In one of these, *Triumphs in Bird-life* (Patten 1931), he shows a musical/poetical bent in the section headings describing the songs of thirteen birds: "The blackcap's sweet and soulful music... The shimmering song of the wood-warbler... The

sedge-warbler's loquacity...". In fact, he was apparently an excellent mimic of bird sounds. He was a member, and one-time President, of the Sheffield Naturalists' Field Club.

E.M. Nicholson, in *Birds and Men* (1951), saw that the aim of an ornithologist was "to look at birds..., to describe faithfully and... to measure resourcefully and accurately, to speculate stimulatingly but tentatively, to set things in their historical and biological perspective,..." Charles J. Patten certainly did all these things in relation to the birds of Ireland while heading a University Department in Sheffield with all the administration, teaching and research that this entailed. That he successfully combined his academic career in Sheffield with his Irish ornithology is inferred by the fact he was made Emeritus Professor after his retirement in 1935, "an honour by no means automatic" (Anon 1948).

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## Probable breeding by Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* at Bellacorick cutaway bog, County Mayo

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The breeding range of the Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* extends in a continuous band across northern Europe and Asia, from Scotland in the west to the Kamchatka Peninsula in the east (Hagemeijer & Blair 1997). The Greenshank is an autumn and winter visitor to Ireland and has a distinct coastal distribution (Hutchinson 1989). Nesting by the Greenshank was recorded at Achill, County Mayo in 1972 and 1974 and probably occurred in 1971 and possibly in 1973 (Ruttledge

1978). This series of records represents the only known breeding of the species in Ireland and also the most westerly breeding record in the world (Nethersole-Thompson 1979). Hillis (2007) considered that a record of a Greenshank in the Partry Mountains, County Mayo on 29th August 2006 indicated that breeding could have occurred more recently.

In the *Bird Atlas 2007-11* (Balmer *et al.* 2013), breeding Greenshank were found to be restricted to the bogs and moors of the northwest Highlands and Hebridean islands in Scotland, with a 6% range expansion recorded in Britain since the 1988-91 *Breeding Atlas*. Gains were most evident in the western part of the range, with losses recorded in parts of the eastern fringes of the Scottish range. However, no breeding occurs south of the island of Mull.

The present note reports on a series of observations of territorial Greenshank behaviour at the Bellacorick cutaway bog (Grid reference F980230) between 2012 and 2018 (apart from 2014 when no survey took place). The site has been described by Copland *et al.* (2011). Bellacorick bog, which is part of the Oweninny Bog Group, comprises an extensive area (about 5,000 ha) of cutaway bog that is in the process of re-vegetation since peat harvesting by Bord na Móna ceased in 2003. The cutaway bog habitats vary from bare peat to rush dominated flats, with incipient fen and bog vegetation as well as shallow ponds and lakes. There are remnants of uncut blanket bog throughout the site and several stands of conifer plantation (planted in the 1980s), as well as frequent self-seeded pines in the cutaway. Altitude of the site varies between approximately 80 m and 100 m asl. The site adjoins extensive tracts of mostly intact lowland Atlantic blanket bog, including the Knockmoyle Nature Reserve.

The observations were made during breeding bird surveys to support the environmental impact assessment for a wind farm. At ca. 19.00 hours on 2nd May 2012, BM heard an

unfamiliar loud 'wader type' call/song and eventually narrowed it to a Greenshank perched on the top of a lodgepole pine of approximately 4 m high. The perched bird was observed for more than 30 minutes giving almost continuous call notes in bursts of between 6 and 18 at a time. It then engaged in a song flight, rising to heights greater than 100 m and gliding downwards before rising again in a wave-like manner, while singing continuously. This swooping flight display continued as the bird drifted several hundred metres from the observer. Over the next 90 minutes there were calls from various locations within 500 m of the original observation and it was considered that two birds were present (though not seen together).

While a site visit by one of the authors (JKL) on 29 May 2012 proved negative, a Greenshank was observed on six dates between 19 June and 3 July 2012. On these visits, the bird was always highly vocal, calling "chu-woo" in bursts as on the first evening. On 20 June, the Greenshank was highly agitated in response to a passing Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*. On several occasions, the calls were so numerous that the observer (JKL) considered that there had to be two birds involved. A Greenshank was observed flying into the adjoining Nature Reserve on one occasion.

In 2013, breeding surveys took place between 12 May and 26 June. A Greenshank was again recorded on several dates in the locality where it had been seen in 2012 but also at several other locations within the wider Bellacorick site area. Again, a bird was observed singing from a small pine tree on the cutaway bog. Overall, however, there was less activity than in 2012.

Surveys in 2015 were of a lower frequency but a Greenshank was again recorded displaying and singing in the same general area as before on 6 May and 8 June.

More frequent visits were made in 2016, with regular records of Greenshank between 21 April and 8 July. Again, the bird was in active display and was frequently heard singing bursts of the 'chu-woo' call. A wooden post was used regularly by the bird as a song post. On 27 June, a walk-over survey disturbed the bird and it was seen on a bog stump calling a rapid "chic, chic, chic" repeatedly over several minutes. Later on the same day, the Greenshank was seen to rise in an agitated state towards a passing Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*. Further observations of the Greenshank were made in this area, which was being defended by the bird, until 8 July.

Surveys in 2017 were of less frequency than in 2016. A displaying Greenshank was again recorded on several dates between 20 April and 25 May though the level of activity was low.

In 2018, during the first phase of wind farm construction, Greenshank were recorded between 19 April and 13 June. Similar display behaviour was witnessed as in previous years but two birds together were seen on 10 May and on 10 June by DMcL and JKL respectively. On two dates in June, the birds



**Plate 65.** Much of the cutaway is dominated by regenerating bog vegetation and swards of rushes. Self-seeded pines are frequent and were often used as song posts by the Greenshanks (B. Madden).





**Plate 66.** View of developing wetland habitat in cutaway frequented by breeding waders including Greenshank and Dunlin (B. Madden).



**Plate 67.** Fossil pine stumps are a feature of the cutaway bog site – in 2018 the Greenshanks were seen associating with such stumps where nesting was suspected (B. Madden).

were located close to piles of fossil pine stumps in an area of cutaway bog. As it appeared that the Greenshanks were holding territory at this location, construction works were restricted within a distance of at least 300 m.

The breeding status evidence (after Balmer *et al.* 2013) from the series of observations on Greenshank between 2012 and 2018 indicates that probable breeding occurred in 2012, 2016 and 2018 and at least possible breeding in the other survey years. Sharrock (1976) wrote that it is easy to find Greenshank on their breeding grounds but that the nest is one of the most difficult to find of all in Britain and Ireland. He noted that few Atlas records (1968-72) refer to nests and that distraction and aggressive behaviour by birds provided much of the evidence for confirmed breeding. We are confident that 2012 was the first year that Greenshank was present at Bellacorick, as breeding bird surveys had been undertaken in the three years previous to 2012 and there had been no sighting of Greenshank.

Greenshanks usually arrive on their Scottish Highland breeding grounds in late March or early April, with the cocks returning ahead of the hens. The average date of clutch completion in north-west Sutherland was 7 May, with 24.4 days being the mean incubation period (Nethersole-Thompson & Nethersole-Thompson 1986). Towards the end of a fledging period of 25-31 days, one of the parents, usually the hen, deserts mate and brood. Allowing for some variation by a breeding pair on the edge of the species' global range, the timing of some of the behaviour of birds recorded at Bellacorick can be correlated to stages of the Scottish breeding cycle. The initial observation on 2 May 2012 of a Greenshank in full song display may indicate that eggs were soon to be laid, while the absence of sightings of birds on 29 May 2012 could have been due to low activity during the

incubation stage. Later, the strong aggression behaviour towards a passing Kestrel on 20 June 2012 could suggest that young birds were present. Similarly, the highly agitated behaviour of the Greenshank towards the surveyor and later towards a passing Grey Heron on 27 June 2016 would suggest that young birds may have been present. In 2018, the sighting of the pair on two occasions in June at an expected nesting location (pile of pine stumps) would suggest that breeding was still in progress and probably well advanced.

In all the years of observation, the birds were recorded in a core area of cutaway bog of approximately 2 km<sup>2</sup> in extent. This comprised regenerating bog vegetation interspersed with developing shallow lakes and ponds and with some fragments of uncut blanket bog. In 2018, the actual nesting site was considered to be within a pile of fossil pine stumps that had been extracted from the bog during former commercial operations. Rush and sedge dominated flats are a feature of the site and this element of the vegetation often restricted observations of birds on the ground. When birds were observed on the ground, they were usually seen feeding or resting in open wetland habitat or else perched on posts or stumps.

The cutaway blanket bog habitat at Bellacorick occupied by the Greenshank can be considered as a variant of the classic flows and peatlands used by breeding birds in Scotland (Nethersole-Thompson 1979). There the birds are most associated with extensive tracts of wet, blanket bog where lochs and tarns are plentiful. In other parts of the breeding range in Scotland, dry heather moor often with rocky ridges and clumps of trees is used for nesting, though Nethersole-Thompson noted that nesting Greenshanks generally avoid long heather. Interestingly, Nethersole-Thompson (1951) recorded some breeding birds 'in old or worked peat-mosses',

though these worked bogs would not have been to an industrial scale as at Bellacorick (where the majority of the site was bare peat as recently as 2003). Habitat conditions at Bellacorick, where heather growth on the cutaway is patchy and mostly of low stature and there are frequent dystrophic or oligotrophic pools and small lakes, fit well within the range of habitats used by breeding Greenshank in Scotland. A further feature associated with Greenshank nesting sites in Scotland and elsewhere is the presence of nest 'marks', which are typically dead wood, a tree stump or a stone (Nethersole-Thompson 1979). Hagemeijer and Blair (1997) write that 'the Greenshank nests on the ground, typically beside a piece of dead wood or at the base of a tree'. The presence of dead wood is a feature at Bellacorick by way of fossil tree stumps throughout the site. The habitat used by the Greenshank which nested in County Mayo in the early 1970s is described as open treeless moorland in the vicinity of a shallow lake and at an altitude of ca 75 m asl.

During the observations, we distinguished a number of different calls, as follows:

- Regular song call of 'chu-woo-chu-woo', which was delivered frequently in sustained bursts and at a fair speed. A richer, more musical variant of this was heard several times when the bird was in a highly excited state, such as in song flight on the first evening of observations in 2012. Nethersole-Thompson (1951, 1979) describes the normal song as sustained bursts of 'too-hoo-too-hoo'. The song call was often audible at distances of up to 1 km or more.
- An alarm call of 'chic-chic-chic', which was sometimes repeated continuously over several minutes and often from a bird perched on a post or mound. Nethersole-Thompson (1979) considered 'chipping' the most important call in the breeding season, being used in peals or bursts in many different emotional situations including during territorial or sexual displays and while attacking predators.
- The normal 'chu-chu-chu' call of Greenshank, which is the usual cry of excitement, winter or summer alike, was also heard at times from flying birds. Nethersole-Thompson (1979) wrote that this basic call is used in situations of slight alarm and excitement such as when birds are disturbed from feeding sites.

While unexpected, the recent finding of Greenshank breeding in western Ireland (since the previous occasion in the early 1970s) is perhaps not too surprising as the species has shown a range expansion of 6% in Britain since the 1988-91 *Breeding Atlas* and a 2% expansion since the 1968-72 *Breeding Atlas* (Balmer *et al.* 2013). Interestingly, the present series of records of Greenshank coincides with the reappearance in County Mayo of another boreal 'wet bog' breeder, Red-necked

Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus* (Perry 2013, Newton 2016). However, what is remarkable about Greenshank being discovered at the Bellacorick site is that industrial peat production has ceased as recently as 2003 and that the present vegetation on the cutaway is largely a result of the comprehensive rehabilitation programme carried out since by Bord na Móna.

Copland *et al.* (2011) had shown the Oweninny cutaway bogs as important sites for breeding birds and especially wader species and highlighted the potential for cutaway bog sites to develop habitats for scarce and declining bird species in Ireland. In addition to Greenshank, the Bellacorick site also supports regular breeding by Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*, Teal *Anas crecca*, Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*, Dunlin *Calidris alpina*, Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*, Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* and Common Gull *Larus canus*. With habitats still developing on the cutaway, further species of conservation importance may be expected to colonise the site in the future.

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## Red Knot *Calidris canutus* summering and moulting in Ireland

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From autumn through to spring, Ireland is host to large numbers of migratory and wintering waders some of which occur in populations of national and international importance (Boland & Crowe 2012). In addition, several wader species breed in Ireland although declines have been reported (Balmer *et al.* 2013). Until recently, little attention has been given to the occurrence of non-breeding, but summering, waders at coastal wetlands. However, recent studies in Dublin Bay reported that most wader species were present continuously or frequently throughout the summer months although numbers were considerably lower than during the migratory and wintering period (Holohan 2008, Cooney 2017). Only a small number of species that are common winter visitors, including the Red Knot *Calidris canutus*, were recorded intermittently and in very low numbers, usually in single digits. This reported pattern in occurrence was consistent with the previously reported status of Knot in summer (Hutchinson 1989). This note documents the occurrence of a large summering/moulting flock of Knot at Dundalk Bay, County Louth, from May to July 2018.

The Red Knot population that typically winters in Ireland, *Calidris canutus islandica*, breeds in the Queen Elizabeth Islands of high arctic Canada west of Prince Patrick Island and in northern Greenland, on the east coast north of 70°N and on the west coast north of about 75°N (Møltøfte 1985, Godfrey 1992). Within the Irish Sea, largest numbers occur outside of the breeding season at sites from Dublin Bay to Strangford Lough on the Irish coast and from the Dee to the Inner Solway on the British coast (Boland & Crowe 2012, Frost *et al.* 2018). In spring, only adult birds return to their nesting grounds. Second year birds do not migrate to the breeding grounds but remain at their wintering sites in Europe (Dietz *et al.* 2010) where they undergo primary moult from late May to August/September (Ginn & Melville 1983). However, a small number of second year birds have been recorded in Ireland in June and early July (Morrison & Wilson 1992). It is also suspected that some birds in their third year stay to summer in Europe. In the UK, monthly counts for the Wetlands Bird Survey (WeBS) have shown that Knot also occur, albeit in smaller numbers, in summer mainly in England and Northern Ireland (Frost *et al.* 2018). The Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-

WeBS) is focussed on the period from September to March (Boland & Crowe 2012), but accepts data from other months, and there have been occasional counts of Knot reported from a small selection of sites outside the core monitoring period. Occasional observations of birds outside the wintering period in Ireland have been published in local and national bird reports or on online websites. It is noteworthy that during systematic counts in Dublin Bay, Knot have only been recorded sporadically and usually in very small numbers up to mid-May but were usually absent in June (Hutchinson & Rochford 1974, Cooney 2017, Dublin Bay Birds Project).

The first post-nuptial migrant Knot return to Ireland in mid-July (weeks 27 and 28) and occasionally in late June (week 26), after departure in March they become increasingly scarce in April (Hutchinson 1989, BTO/RSPB/BirdWatch Ireland/SOC/WOS 2018, *Irish Birding* 2018). Single birds or small flocks occur very irregularly in May and June for short periods at coastal and inland sites (Ussher & Warren 1900, Kennedy *et al.* 1954, Ruttledge 1966, Cooney 2017, *Irish Birding* 2018), but there is currently no evidence that the species summers in Ireland. It has previously been suggested that birds recorded in June and early July were migrants that had gone slightly astray during passage to their moulting grounds in the Dutch and German Wadden Sea (Hutchinson 1989). Large flocks remaining for more than a few days in mid-summer have been very rare, but they have occurred. For example, 200 birds were recorded on 22 June and 400 birds on 4 July 1963 in Wexford Harbour (IBR 1964), 40 to 50 birds were recorded at Rosslare Backstrand County Wexford in late June/early July 1970 (Merne 1971) and a maximum of 50 birds were reported at Rockabill Island County Dublin from 6 to 14 June 1995 (Cooney & Madden 1996). More recently, a flock of at least 150 at Balbriggan County Dublin on 27 June 2015 was composed mostly of grey plumaged second-years with one or two in red plumage (*Irish Birding* 2018). It is likely that a flock of 200 at Salterstown Dundalk Bay the following day were the Bremore birds. At Rosslare Backstrand, 236 were recorded on 26 June 2018 and 149 on 1 July 2018 (*Irish Birding* 2018). One bird in the July flock had been colour-ringed at Altcar, Merseyside in March 2018. Both flocks were composed of second years with a few adults on the latter date. Unfortunately, because these observations only refer to late June or early July and/or in most instances the age of the birds were not reported, it is not possible to determine if these flocks summered in Ireland. However, it is very possible that these observations relate to flocks visiting Irish sites for short periods but summered elsewhere.

Dundalk Bay County Louth (54°00'N 06°20'W) is a large exposed estuary on the east coast of Ireland. The inner bay is shallow with large areas of sandflats and mudflats that are fringed by extensive saltmarshes. The bay is a designated EU Natura 2000 site and the rich fauna of the inter-tidal sediments



support large numbers of wintering waterfowl many of which occur in numbers of International and All-Ireland Importance (NPWS 2018). Historically the bay has been an important site for migratory and wintering waders (Hutchinson 1979) and annual monitoring by the Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS) has reaffirmed its importance since 1994/95 inclusive (Crowe 2005) with a five year mean peak count of 38,191 waders for the period 2011/12 to 2015/16. Of the 38,191 birds 7,062 (18.5%) were Knot. This large wintering population of Knot represents 44% of the most recent All-Ireland estimate of 16,210 (Burke *et al.* 2018) ranking Dundalk Bay as the premier site for this species in Ireland. The Irish wintering population fluctuates over time (Boland & Crowe 2012) and, due to a recent short-term increase, Knot have been moved from the Red list to Amber list of birds of conservation concern (Colhoun & Cummins 2013). However, there is evidence of a longer term decline in Ireland (Burke *et al.* 2018) and a decline has also been reported in Britain where Knot is an Amber listed species (Eaton *et al.* 2015, Hayhow *et al.* 2017).

At the commencement of a broader study of non-breeding/summering waders at Dundalk Bay in mid-May 2018, several hundred Knots were observed on the mudflats in the northwest corner of the bay. Subsequently, it was discovered that they were roosting daily at low tide on mudflats between Soldier's Point (54°00'33"N 6°21'16"W) and on the bank of the Castletown River (54°00'45"N 6°23'49"W), on the north side of Dundalk Town. A total of 23 counts were made at the roost sites from 27 May to 22 July (weeks 21 to 29). Highest numbers were recorded from weeks 21 to 28, with a weekly average of 363 birds and a maximum of 480 on 11 June (Table 1). These birds were present for at least seven weeks, arriving about mid-May or possibly earlier with departure commencing on 10 or 11 July, as 400 birds were present on 9 July, 97 birds on 12 July, three on 15 July and one on 16 July. This summering/moulting flock was composed mainly of second year birds identified by their lack of summer plumage, but about 5% were assessed to be non-breeding adults in summer plumage (third years or older). Despite daily observations, no birds were observed again after 16 July until a flock of 40 arrived on 22 July. The composition of this flock differed from the earlier flock as it contained 21 second years and 19 adults in full breeding plumage. These birds were present for only one day and were not considered to be part of the earlier flock that summered at this site. Single birds were observed

occasionally but not daily until the main post-nuptial passage migration commenced on 2 August with the arrival of 800 to 1000 birds of which ca 90% were in breeding plumage.

This record of Knot at Dundalk Bay from mid-May to mid-July 2018 confirms that this species summers/moults in Ireland. More importantly, the number of birds present exceeded the 1% threshold of 160 birds for national importance (Burke *et al.* 2018). This is particularly noteworthy as this species is generally considered to be quite rare in June. In addition, unlike previous reports in June that were presumed to be passage migrants straying off-course, the history of several of these Dundalk birds has been established. A total of 11 colour-ringed birds were observed however the codes of three birds were not deciphered. Eight had been colour-ringed at Altcar (53°32'02"N 3°05'13"W), Merseyside in England: three in September 2017 and five in March 2018. Four of these birds were re-sighted for the first time since being ringed. In addition, two birds ringed in September 2017 and one ringed in March 2018 had been reported on the Merseyside coast on various dates up to 1 May 2018 before moving west to Dundalk Bay. A second year bird, with cipher ELA, also ringed on 30 March 2018, was resighted in Merseyside on 16 April and Walney Island, Cumbria on the 23 and 24 June before being recorded at Dundalk Bay on 9 July. This particular record provides evidence of ongoing movement of birds from Britain to Ireland approximately six weeks after the summering flock was first recorded at Dundalk Bay. Furthermore, two birds with ciphers AV and CLE that summered at Dundalk were sighted at Crosby, Merseyside on 4 September 2018, approximately 4 km from the site where they were ringed in September 2017 and March 2018 respectively.

The extent to which inter-estuarine movements of summering Knot occurs between Britain and Ireland is poorly understood and requires further investigation. However, the occurrence of this summering/moulting flock at Dundalk Bay in 2018, coupled with the histories of the ringed birds, suggests that Knot from large summering populations on the northwest coast of Britain (Smith & Greenhalgh 1977, Smith 2017) may occasionally or perhaps even regularly utilise wetlands on the east coast of Ireland. However, it is important to note that 2018 was a particularly unusual year as Knot were largely absent from their regular summering sites in Merseyside. Based on re-sightings of colour-ringed individuals

**Table 1.** Weekly maximum counts of Knot at Dundalk Bay, 2018.

	May		June				July		
Week number	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Maximum count	220	295	370	480	310	477	348	400	40

it would appear that a portion of the Merseyside flock relocated to Dundalk Bay in 2018. Given that Dundalk Bay is the most important site for the species in Ireland and that second year birds remain close to their wintering grounds in summer, it is possible that they occur more frequently than the 2018 observations suggest. This can only be confirmed if systematic monitoring is carried out from May to early July annually. Nonetheless, the presence of this summering/moulting flock of Knot in 2018, in numbers that consistently exceeded the threshold of national importance, is significant. These observations support the results of a recent study that highlighted the importance of Irish coastal wetlands in summer for migrant, summering and moulting waders many of which will become part of future breeding populations (Cooney 2017).

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## A Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis* overwintering in Co. Cork

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The Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis* breeds widely throughout much of Europe and Asia but in Ireland it remains a scarce passage migrant with a few possible but no confirmed breeding records (IRBC 1998). The nearest breeding population of Tree Pipit to Ireland is in the United Kingdom where the range has declined by nearly 30% since the first *Breeding Atlas* (Balmer *et al.* 2013). While there are no published data on the occurrence pattern of Tree Pipits in Ireland in recent years online searching does not indicate any obvious change in occurrence patterns.

On 7 November 2017 while walking across a field near Midleton County Cork a pipit was flushed from a crop of mixed turnip and kale. It circled overhead calling and from the calls it was apparent that it was either a Tree or an Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni*. The following day the bird was again located in the same field and identified as a Tree Pipit.

The bird remained faithful to the same 4 ha field throughout its lengthy stay, and was never seen in any other field. When flushed the bird would either fly up and circle before landing back in the field or else fly to one of the boundary hedgerows where it usually perched high up in an Ash tree *Fraxinus excelsior*. The individual was very vocal, calling each time it flew which aided considerably in locating it.

Meadow Pipits *Anthus pratensis* were a constant presence in the field with occasionally up to thirty present however, the Tree Pipit rarely associated with them and if flushed it flew off on its own. The mixed brassica crop in this field was sown

as a GLAS (Green, Low-Carbon, Agri-Environment Scheme) measure designed to maintain green cover on tillage fields during the winter to prevent nutrient run-off and leaching. This crop has a lower seeding rate than an equivalent commercial crop and therefore it is not as dense at ground level and maintained a canopy approximately 20 cm in height, this proved to be an ideal foraging area for Meadow Pipits and also Song Thrushes *Turdus philomelos* which were present in high numbers.

During the study period night temperatures dropped as low as -3° C but this seemed to have no effect on the bird as it stayed throughout the winter. The Tree Pipit was last seen on the 25th February 2018 by which time three quarters of the field had been grazed by cattle. This was just a few days before Storm Emma deposited eight inches of snow on the field.

Tree Pipits normally winter in sub-Saharan Africa and India (Alstrom & Mild 2003). An online request for wintering records in Europe yielded several December records in Scandinavian countries and one from the UK (M. Shorten, pers. comm.). Tree Pipit is a common breeding species within its normal range it is possible that some winter records have gone unreported. This appears to be the first wintering record for Ireland.

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